

Pride Explained Study Guide

Key Concepts

1. Two Types of Pride:

- **Obvious Pride:** Characterized by a focus on self-promotion, self-glorification, and a desire for others' approval. This pride is openly displayed through words and actions that draw attention to oneself.
- **Hidden Pride:** Often stems from emotional pain and results in self-focus, even in subtle ways such as seeking compliments or becoming controlling out of fear of being hurt again.

2. Pride's Disconnection from Service:

- Both types of pride hinder the ability to serve others selflessly, which contradicts Christ's command to be "servant of all."
- Pride distances individuals from God's grace, as the Bible says God "resists the proud but gives grace to the humble."

3. The Remedy for Pride:

- Healing begins with bringing emotional pain to Jesus in prayer, allowing Him to replace pain with peace.
- True healing involves biblical forgiveness—releasing others from the burden of past wrongs as God has forgiven us.
- Controlling one's thoughts is key to breaking the cycle of pride, as Scripture commands us to "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."

4. The Link Between Pride and Depression:

- Hidden pride often manifests in depression, with self-pity as a symptom. Self-focus prevents healing and service to others.
- Overcoming depression involves surrendering emotional pain to God and allowing Him to restore peace and lead us back to selfless service.

Biblical References

1. James 4:6 (ESV)

- "But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"

Key Insights: This verse clearly highlights the spiritual danger of pride. God

actively opposes those who are proud but is generous with grace to those who humble themselves. It sets a stark contrast between pride and humility, underscoring the importance of repentance and submission before God.

2. **Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)**

- "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."

Key Insights: Paul's call to humility contrasts pride with selfless concern for others. Pride leads to self-centeredness, while humility encourages believers to prioritize others, aligning with Christ's example of servanthood.

3. **Proverbs 16:18 (NASB)**

- "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."

Key Insights: This proverb warns of the inevitable consequences of pride. It emphasizes that unchecked pride leads to downfall and destruction, urging believers to examine their hearts for signs of arrogance before it leads to spiritual or moral failure.

4. **Matthew 23:12 (NKJV)**

- "And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Key Insights: Jesus teaches that pride leads to eventual humbling by God, while humility leads to exaltation. It reinforces the divine principle that true greatness comes from humility and service, not self-promotion.

5. **2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV)**

- "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Key Insights: This verse highlights the necessity of controlling thoughts, as pride often begins in the mind. Taking every thought captive ensures that prideful or self-centered thoughts do not gain control over one's actions or attitudes.

Practical Applications

1. **Self-Examination for Obvious Pride:**

- Regularly reflect on your conversations and actions. Are they centered around drawing attention to yourself? Do you frequently seek approval or recognition from others? Confess and repent of any tendencies to promote yourself rather than serving others.

2. **Healing Hidden Pride:**

- If you notice tendencies to control others or seek validation through self-deprecation, take these struggles to God in prayer. Ask Him to heal any emotional pain that may be fueling this pride and surrender your need for control to Him.

3. **Take Every Thought Captive:**

- Develop a habit of consciously monitoring your thoughts. When prideful or self-centered thoughts arise, immediately bring them before Christ. Replace them with Scripture and thoughts that align with humility and service.

4. **Pursue Humility by Serving Others:**

- Look for opportunities to serve others in small and significant ways, even when it doesn't benefit you or draw attention to you. Cultivate a heart that genuinely seeks to love and serve others without expecting anything in return.

5. **Daily Forgiveness:**

- Regularly practice forgiving those who have wronged you, no matter how difficult it may be. By releasing bitterness and pain, you free yourself from the hidden pride that comes with harboring unforgiveness.

Personal Reflections

1. **Heart Check:**

- Do I see evidence of obvious or hidden pride in my life? What areas of my heart need healing to avoid self-focus and enable me to serve others selflessly?

2. **Thought Control:**

- Are my thoughts often centered on myself, my achievements, or my hurts? How can I practice taking every thought captive and making it obedient to Christ?

3. **Humility in Action:**

- In what practical ways can I live out Christ's example of humility? How can I serve others in my family, community, and church without seeking recognition or praise?

4. **Surrender Emotional Pain:**

- Have I experienced emotional pain that I have not yet brought to God for healing? How can I begin the process of surrendering that pain and finding peace in Christ?

By recognizing and addressing both obvious and hidden pride, we open ourselves to God's grace and the freedom to serve others selflessly. Pride may come naturally, but humility is a spiritual discipline that requires intentionality, self-examination, and reliance on God's transformative power.
