

The Way of Wisdom: Pride & Humility

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

Theme: The proud and foolish trust in their own wisdom at the expense of their own downfall. The humble and wise put their trust in God and receive His blessings at Christ's expense.

Intro/Review:

The Proverbs compare and contrast the ways of the wise and the ways of the foolish. One of the defining characteristics of the wise is a humble spirit — the fool a proud spirit. But why do fools do what fools do? *Why are they proud?* Why do wise people do what they do? *Why are they humble?*

Modern technology, particularly AI, is held out by our culture as the soon-coming solution to all of humanity's problems. But technology is utterly powerless to combat human pride. We need the Spirit and Word of God for that!

I. Do Not Lean on Your Own Understanding

A. The proud “lean” on their own understanding.

- i. To lean on something is to put your weight on it, usually to rest; suddenly take whatever you're leaning on away and you will fall.
- ii. The “understanding” is our intellect, wisdom, and ability to discern the proper course of action in a given situation.
- iii. The proud credit their understanding for their success and either excuse or blame it for their failure... everything always comes back to their understanding.

B. The relationships of the proud are marked by self-seeking and bitterness.

- i. The closer you get to a get to a proud spirit, the more they will resist you. Some proud spirits are marked by boasting and harshness, others by people-pleasing.

C. The proud do not receive correction

- i. Proud people despise correction and hate those who reprove them.
15:12 A scoffer does not like to be reproved; he will not go to the wise.

7-8a Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;

Proverbs 9:25a says, “Strike a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence;”

ii. You can't correct a proud person because they are leaning on the thing you are trying to remove and correct.

D. The Proverbs are full of warnings to the proud

i. Proverbial warnings:

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”
Proverbs 16:18

“He who trusts in himself is a fool” Proverbs 28:26a

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” Proverbs 16:25

If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it. Proverbs 9:12

“A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.”
Proverbs 29:5

“When pride comes, then comes disgrace...” Proverbs 11:2a

“...he who hates reproof is stupid.” Proverbs 12:1a

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.” Proverbs 14:12

ii. We must avoid this attitude at all costs because it is so destructive!

II. Trust in the Lord With All Your Heart

A. The humble “lean” on God.

- i. The “heart”, in the Hebrew sense of the term is the center of our emotions, will, and intellect.
- ii. The only time a humble person is truly distraught is when the One they lean on – God – seems to be hidden from them.
- iii. The humble have no need to justify themselves. However, there are appropriate times for the humble to defend themselves for the edification of others (example of Paul in 2 Corinthians)

B. The humble receive correction gladly.

- i. It’s easy to remove and fix the understanding of a humble person because they aren’t putting weight on the thing you are trying to fix!

C. The Proverbs are full of blessings to the humble.

- i. Proverbial blessings:

“Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life...” Proverbs 10:17a

“If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you.” Proverbs 1:23

“...whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster” Proverbs 1:33

“Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days.” Proverbs 19:20

“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.” Proverbs 28:26

“It is better for a man to hear the rebuke of the wise than to hear the song of fools.” Ecclesiastes 7:5

III. Misunderstandings

A. Our understanding is not pointless, it is of great importance! Gaining understanding is the whole point of this book! (Proverbs 1:2)

- i. Our understanding of God is our chief means of loving him most deeply!
- ii. Childlike faith and understanding is not the marker of Christian maturity! (Hebrews 5:1-

B. Confidence does not equal arrogance.

C. Agreeableness does not equal humility.

D. Christian practice and language do not equal spiritual humility either.

III. Gospel Application

A. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart”

- i. The only requirement for regeneration is faith – “trust in the Lord with all your heart”. There are no other requirements. (Romans 10:10-11)
- ii. After salvation, salvation is still by grace alone. There are no additional requirements to maintain or preserve it. (As Legalism would have us believe).
- iii. Grace alone does not nullify the pursuit of holiness good works! (As Antinomianism would have us believe).

B. Telltale areas: relationships and correction, what happens when what they lean on is removed

Their relationships are marked by self-seeking and bitterness

Metaphor: porcupine, don't get too close

People-pleasing - They are just the nicest person, constantly laboring to earn the favor of those around them. They may repeatedly offer their help so that nearly everyone is in their debt. A rather convenient arrangement to get what you want...

Disagreeable type – relationships are marked by disunity, bitterness, and offense. Quickly shutdown the ideas of others, rarely listen to the ideas of others

7-8a Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you;

9:9 Give instruction[b] to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.

9:11 For by me your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life.

C. Proverbs is full of warnings to the proud

9:12 12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

11:2 When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom

12:1 “Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.”

1:24-33 “Because I have called and you refused to listen, have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded, because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when terror strikes you, when terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you. Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices. For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them...”

B. Telltale areas: relationships and receiving correction

Metaphor: a fluffy dog?

9:8b reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

C. Proverbial blessings to the humble

10:17 Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life,

1:23 If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you.

1:33 “...whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster”

III. Misunderstandings

A. Does this mean that our own understanding is of little importance?

The prevalence of this mindset is on the rise... “I just want to have a childlike faith”

To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight v2 1:5-6 Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles.

Hebrews 5: 11-14 “About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, or everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”

15:14 The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge

18:15 An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge

B. Can we ever be confident in our own understanding? How do I know the difference between confidence and arrogance?

- You can stand next to the wall, or you can *lean* on it. We are being encouraged to stand next to the wall without leaning on it.

Hebrews 10:35-36 “Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.”

24:5-6 A wise man is full of strength, and a man of knowledge enhances his might, for by wise guidance you can wage your war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory.

Titus 1:9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Titus 2:15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Jude v3 “Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.”

14:8 The wisdom of the prudent is to discern his way, but the folly of fools is deceiving.

21:2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the heart.

28:26 Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.

C. False humility in spiritual dealings

30:12 There are those who are clean in their own eyes but are not washed of their filth

“By this means he [the devil] deceives great multitudes about the state of their souls; making them think they are something, when they are nothing; and so eternally undoes them; and not only so, but establishes many in a strong confidence of their eminent holiness, who are in God's sight some of the vilest of hypocrites.” The Religious Affections

IV. In all your ways acknowledge Him - let's be specific

- a. **ALL your ways – ALL your heart - nothing hidden**
- b. **Spiritual Life**
- c. **Family life**
- d. **Friends**
- e. **Work life**
- f. **Church life**
- g. **Blessings**
- h. **Sufferings**

Gospel offer/consequences

What makes YOU different from all the rest of mankind? “I’m a faithful man”?

The damned are going to hell – but why? Because they are proud!!!!!! (tryna include some common sense moral inability references here to cut the crap haha)