



-- Introduction: Pride is like spiritual cyanide.

(The facts below are adapted from the Center for Disease Control.)

- Cyanide is a rapidly acting, potentially deadly agent that can exist in various forms... So is pride.
- Cyanide sometimes is described as having a “bitter” smell, but not everyone can detect this odor... The same is true of pride. Although the world can’t always smell it, it is always bitter to God.
- Hydrogen cyanide gas can be used as a weapon of chemical warfare... Satan constantly uses pride against God’s people in spiritual warfare.
- Cyanide is a natural product of certain foods and plants... Pride is a natural product of sinful people.
- Cyanide gas is most dangerous in small, enclosed places where its poison becomes trapped... The same is true of pride. It does the most damage when it becomes enclosed in the smallness of self.
- Cyanide prevents the cells of the body from receiving oxygen until they shrivel and die... Pride prevents our spirits from receiving the oxygen of God’s grace, causing our spiritual lives to shrivel up.
- Cyanide primarily attacks the heart and the brain because they use the most oxygen... In the same way, pride takes root in our hearts and destroys our thinking.

- Some of the symptoms of cyanide poisoning are:
 - Restlessness: Prideful Christians are rarely if ever satisfied.
 - Weakness: Prideful Christians make weak warriors for Christ.
 - Convulsions: When life is all about self, people often behave like emotional roller coasters—up and down.
 - Abnormal Heartbeat: The heart of a prideful Christian stops beating for Christ and starts beating for self.
 - Loss of Consciousness: Prideful Christians lose sight of their purpose in Christ.
- Finally, the CDC says that “Survivors of serious cyanide poisoning may develop heart and brain damage.” ... The same is certainly true of pride, as we will see in our text for today.

Big Idea: In the body of Christ, pride is a pernicious poison.

- Read Luke 9:46-50
- Pray

1.) Pride poisons our perception. (v. 44-46)

- A. Perception = “Ability to see, capacity to understand.”
- B. Christ wants us to see the cross.
 - 1. The Main Point of Last Week’s Message: “We miss the message until we concentrate on the cross.”
 - 2. Everything about the cross opposes human pride.
- C. Self-focus is powerful evidence that we misunderstand the main message.
 - 1. Even while Jesus was trying to tell them about His impending death (v. 22, 31, 44), they were thinking about themselves.
 - 2. Because they were so absorbed in the smallness of self, they were blinded to history’s most important event.
- D. Self-focus is bound to characterize everyone who fails to concentrate on the cross.
 - 1. In our fallen world, Satan uses everything imaginable to keep our eyes off the cross of Christ.
 - 2. Steven Curtis Chapman – “Wake up and see the glory!”

- Pride poisons our perception of what really matters.

2.) Pride poisons our peace. (v. 46)

- A. Peace = “Unity, state of mutual harmony and tranquility”
 - Illustration: Our Cats in Laramie: Before and after Cosette
 - B. God is adamant that we are unified.
 - 1. Ephesians 4:3 – *“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*
 - 2. John 17:23 – *“May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”*
 - C. Pride creates divisive arguments.
 - 1. v. 46 – *“An argument started among the disciples.”*
 - a. It wasn't enough that they had political enemies in Israel.
 - b. It wasn't enough that they had supernatural enemies, such as demons.
 - c. Now, the disciples were making enemies of each other by arguing about their pecking order and the glory they felt they deserved.
 - 2. Pride poisons our unity by pitting people against each other.
 - 3. Arguments inspired by pride are usually pointless.
 - Titus 3:9 – *Avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.*
 - Countless are the church splits inspired by completely silly issues.
- Pride poisons the peace that God commands us to cherish in our relationships with one another.

3.) **Pride poisons our passion.** (v. 46-47)

- A. Passions = “Desires, hopes, hearts”
- B. God desires to be our greatest desire.
 - 1. Psalm 73:25-26 – *“Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”*
 - 2. Mat. 22:37-39 – *“Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment.*
- C. Pride infects us with the poison passion of selfish desires.
 - 1. v. 46 – *“An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest.”*
 - a. This argument may have been inspired by the fact that Jesus chose only three of them (Peter, James, and John) to accompany Him on the Mount of Transfiguration. (v. 28)
 - b. Perhaps they were still boasting about “what they had done” when Jesus gave them power and sent them out. (v. 10).

- c. Regardless of why they were arguing, what they were arguing for was entirely selfish.
- 2. Even as Jesus was calling them to concentrate on His humble sacrifice, they fought for personal glory.
- D. Proudful arguments reveal the corruption of our hearts.
 - 1. v. 47 – The phrase, “*Jesus, knowing their thoughts*” literally means, “*Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts...*”
 - 2. Pride is an issue of the heart.
 - a. Luke 6:45 – *The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.*
 - b. Proudful words and actions reveal a passion in the heart for self.

-- Pride poisons the passion we should keep for Christ.

4.) Pride poisons our perspective. (v. 46-48)

- A. Perspective = “The way we see and understand reality, our point of view”
- B. Pride honors those who get the most.
 - 1. v. 46 – The disciples’ thought greatness meant acquiring personal power, glory, and fame.
 - 2. Pride is more interested in “serve us” than “service.”
 - 3. Pride is more interested in receiving praise from people than giving praise to God.
 - 4. 2000 years later, society maintains the same misunderstanding about true greatness.
- C. Christ honors those who serve the most.
 - 1. v. 48 – “*Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.*”
 - a. Welcome here is the Greek word “*de, comai,*” which means “to receive, accept, and show hospitality.”
 - b. Humbly serving even the most insignificant in society is greatness to Christ.
 - 2. Matthew 20:26-28 – “*Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*”
- D. From the perspective of God’s kingdom, the least will be the greatest.
 - 1. v. 48 – *For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest.*”
 - 2. This is why Jesus employs the example of a small child.

- a. The word translated “small child” here is the Greek word “*paidi, on,*” which usually means “a small child such as an infant or toddler.”
- b. A toddler is the best human illustration of a believer in God’s Kingdom.
 - i. Just like toddlers, we have no accomplishments in which to boast before God.
 - ii. Just like toddlers, we are completely dependent.
- 2. The better we understand and acknowledge our complete dependence upon Christ’s righteousness and God’s grace, the better servants of Christ we will become.

-- Pride poisons our perspectives about true greatness.

5.) **Pride poisons our partnership.** (v. 49-50)

A. Partnership = “Our affiliation with the worldwide body of Christ.”

B. v. 49 – “*We saw a man driving out demons in your name...*”

- 1. Christ gives this man commendation, not rebuke.
- 2. From Acts 19:13-19, we can assume that this man was not falsely calling upon the name of Jesus.

C. v. 49 – “*...we tried to stop him because he is not one of us.*”

- 1. In their pride, the disciples seem more concerned with getting credit than getting converts.
- 2. Proud Christians are prone to think that no one can be a soldier of Christ unless he wears their uniform and fights in their regiment.

D. v. 50 – “*Whoever is not against you is for you.*”

- 1. We may not agree with everyone, every church, or every group on every doctrine.
- 2. However, everyone who preaches the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, should be looked upon as allies and not enemies.
- 3. Philippians 1:18 – “*The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice.*”

-- Pride poisons our worldwide partnership in the Gospel.

Humility: The Antidote to Pride

-- 1 Peter 5:5-6 – *“All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”*

Five Responses (in reverse order):

5.) Because pride poisons our partnership, humble believers delight in the Gospel, not in personal glory.

4.) Because pride poisons our perspective, humble believers seek to be a blessing not to get a blessing.

-- Too many churches have too many consumers and not enough servants.

-- Acts 20:35 – *“You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”*

3.) Because pride poisons our passion, humble believers desire always to bring glory to God and not to themselves.

-- When we work at our jobs or serve in the church, do we aim to bring attention to God or to ourselves?

-- Luke 9:23 – *“Then he said to them all: ‘If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.’”*

2.) Because pride poisons our peace, humble believers pursue unity.

-- If our unity as the Body of Christ at FBC Carmi is not a chief priority to you, then please check your heart for pride.

-- Titus 3:10-11 – *Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.*

-- Come tonight for the second part of our summer sermon series: Principles of Unity.

1.) Because pride poisons our perception, humble believers must concentrate upon the cross.

-- Humility happens to those who refuse to forget that we are sinners saved solely by God's mercy and grace.

-- Philippians 3:10-11 – *“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like*

him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

-- Humility happens to those who meditate upon the message of the cross until they are overwhelmed by the kindness God has shown us in Christ.

-- Share the GOSPEL

-- Pray

-- Invitation