

GOD IS ABLE ... to Humble the Proud!

Daniel 4:37

Sermon preached by John L. Kachelman, Jr.
Judsonia Church of Christ, Judsonia, Arkansas

Introduction:

- I. Our lesson focuses upon the root source of ALL sin – PRIDE! (Proverbs 13:10)
The Corinthian Church was filled with trouble because it was dominated by pride. God's Word told them how dangerous the dominance of pride is.
 1. 1 Corinthians 4:6 – “puffed up” is from an interesting Greek term that refers to one being “self-inflated.” It is a metaphor describing one who has become over-inflated as if by an air pump (from PHUSA, φυσιώ bellows).
 2. 1 Corinthians 5:2 because of their over-inflated sense of importance, they could not follow God's will.

- II. Pride is Satan's most powerful weapon (1 John 2:15-16). Many fall victim to pride and are so deceived by it they do not realize their peril until it is too late.
 1. When Severus, Emperor of Rome, found death approaching, he cried out, “I have been everything; and everything is nothing!” Then, ordering for the urn to be brought which was to hold his ashes once cremated, he said, “Little urn, you will contain the remains of one for whom the world was too little”
 2. How sad to witness someone lose everything of value because pride dominates their heart!

- III. Even though pride is Satan's greatest weapon, and man's greatest fault, it is not able to overcome God! God is able to overcome pride! (Daniel 4:37)

Body:

- I. Examples of God's ability to humble the proud.
 - A. **SATAN**
 1. Satan illustrates the tragic face of pride.
 2. He rebelled against God because Satan's pride convinced him that he could overpower God. The story of his rebellion is that of utter defeat by God's power (Revelation 12:7-9, 20:10; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6).

3. Even today Satan's pride keeps him at war with God's will (2 Thessalonians 2:4-12).
4. Even though Satan is powerful, he can be resisted (James 4:7). Thus, we find that God is able to humble his greatest foe!

B. PHARAOH

1. Exodus 5:2 pride blinded Pharaoh.
2. Because of his pride, Pharaoh made Egypt suffer through 10 plagues, yet his heart became harder.
3. Ultimately Pharaoh's pride led him to chase Israel across the Red Sea only to find death in drowning. When Pharaoh's corpse washed upon the shore, Moses and Israel were assured that God IS ABLE to humble all who are proud!

C. HAMAN

1. His proud ways are described in the Old Testament book of Esther.
2. Haman's pride led him to plan the extermination of all Jews. Mordecai was the special target of Haman's pride. Haman had a 75-foot gallows built upon which to hang Mordecai (Esther 5:14).
3. But Haman's pride led to his own death and he was lynched instead of Mordecai. As Haman hung with a broken neck and limp arms, it was a somber reminder to all passing by that God is able to humble the proud!

D. KING SENNACHERIB

1. He was the King of powerful Assyria. His armies were victorious in every war. No one could withstand his force!
2. He invaded Israel and demanded a full surrender (2 Kings 18:13). Sennacherib's pride was arrogantly displayed (2 Kings 18:20, 29-30; 2 Chronicles 32:10,11,15,16).
3. Israel was not deceived by this proud King (2 Chronicles 32:7,8).
4. In one night 185,000 Assyrian soldiers were killed (2 Kings 19:35). Sennacherib returned to Ninevah without pride (2 Chronicles 32:21).
5. Here was a man who thought he was a world dictator, but he tragically learned that God is able to humble those who are proud!

E. KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR

1. Daniel 4:30 summarized the arrogance of this man.
2. Pride led this King to become an animal (Daniel 4:31-33).
3. Ultimately Nebuchadnezzar humbled himself and acknowledged God's greatness.

F. KING BELSHAZZAR

1. Daniel 5:1-4 portrays his pride. He thought he was able to drink out of the gold and silver vessels which had been used for God in the temple.
2. This proud behavior received a prompt answer (Daniel 5:5). This armless hand wrote a message of doom for a proud heart. The King's pride vanished, his face went pale, hips collapsed, and knees knocked together. (Recount Daniel's rebuke 5:20-23). Before the night was over, this proud King was dead! (Daniel 5:30). He had walked in pride but God had humbled him.

G. Many others could be described.

1. King Herod (Acts 12:22) tried to share the praise only given to God.
2. King David (1 Samuel 13:14) succumbed to pride and 70,000 died (1 Chronicles 21:1-4).
3. The Pharisee (Luke 18:11,12) proudly congratulated himself and put himself on a pedestal, but Christ condemned him.
4. These Bible stories remind us that all men struggle with pride. We must be careful that we do not allow pride to destroy our souls as it has done to so many others! (Proverbs 11:2; 21:4).

II. Exhortations to all assembled today! From these references we are able to discover significant lessons.

A. Let us learn that no one can fight God forever!

1. History tells us that powerful Kings, prosperous nations, great civilizations will ultimately be humbled. Yes, even modern “Super powers”!
2. One may have great wealth, handsome appearances, and vast wisdom. Some may think they are above God's law, but God will humble the proud! (Psalm 37:1-2).
3. Others may live humbly among men and demonstrate no arrogance, yet fail to submit to God's will for their lives, but they too are

controlled by pride! They too are resisting God! They too will face a tragic fate unless they humble themselves in obedience (Matthew 7:21-23; Daniel 5:22-23a).

B. Let us learn that either we must humble ourselves before God, or He will do it for us!

1. Romans 14:11 – One may deny God and refuse obedience but eventually the acknowledgment will be made!
2. 1 Peter 5:5-6 – Here are the choices we must make! How tragic that some will hear and understand but allow pride to control them!

C. Let us learn what we must do to humble ourselves before God.

1. The Apostle Paul illustrates this – Acts 8:1,3; Philippians 3:4-6).
2. Paul's pride was conquered – 1 Corinthians 15:10; Galatians 2:20.
3. How?
 - a. It began with his choice (Acts 26:14b – "goad"; 22:10).
 - b. It progressed with his repentance (Acts 9:9).
 - c. It was demonstrated with his immersion (Acts 22:16).
 - d. It was evident in his life (Galatians 6:14).

Conclusion:

- I. Pride is a monster that is killed only by crucifixion! (Galatians 2:20). It is killed only when you are willing to do everything God asks (John 7:17a).
- II. Friends, pride cannot be ignored, restrained, or covered up—it must be killed! Only God is able to kill our pride! Are you willing to let Him humble you for His service? You can quickly measure your pride by asking – "Have I done all God asks?" "Am I willing to do His will?" Your answer reveals if pride has control of your heart! (Daniel 4:34, 35, 37).