

Smart People, Dumb Choices

_____ - an arrogant, haughty estimation of one's importance. The cultivation, preservation, or exalting of self. Building up ourselves in our own eyes or in the eyes of others.

Prov 11:2 Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

Prov 13:10 Pride leads to arguments; those who take advice are wise.

Prov 16:5 The LORD despises pride; be assured that the proud will be punished.

Prov 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.

Daniel and King Nebuchadnezzar

Dan 2:47 The king said to Daniel, "Truly, YOUR God is the God of gods, the Lord over kings, a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this secret."

Daniel 3:28 "Praise to THE GOD OF Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! He sent his angel to rescue his servants who trusted in him. They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except THEIR OWN God.

Daniel 4:15-16 Now let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live like an animal among the plants of the fields. For seven periods of time (seven seasons), let him have the mind of an animal instead of a human.

Dan 4:30 "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by MY mighty power and for the glory of MY majesty?"

Dan 4:34-35 After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever. His rule is everlasting, and his kingdom is eternal. All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. He has the power to do as he pleases among the angels of heaven and with those who live on earth.

Dan 4:37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.

Daniel and King Belshazzar

Dan 5:20 But when his heart and mind were hardened with pride, he was brought down from his royal throne and stripped of his glory.

Pride

1. Pride blinds us to our own _____.
2. Pride blinds us to the _____ of our strengths and abilities.

1 Cor 4:7 What makes you better than anyone else? What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if all you have is from God, why boast as though you have accomplished something on your own?

3. Pride blinds us from understanding what we _____ know _____ hurt us.

Humility

1. Humility _____ God.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches.....For apart from me you can do nothing.

2. Humility accepts _____.

Pride will be your greatest _____ to intimacy with God.

Humility will be your greatest _____ in the Kingdom of God.

James 4:6 He gives us more and more strength to stand against such evil desires. As the Scriptures say, "God sets himself against the proud, but he shows favor to the humble."

THIS WEEK: (Read Phil 2: 3-11)

Here are a few questions that are designed to help you recognize choices that emanate from a spirit of pride. Ask yourself, without rushing through, if these have been instances in your life and in your thinking.

- When facing a tough decision, are you more inclined to analyze the facts before you pray for God's guidance?
- Do you compare yourself with others and rejoice when you have the edge or clear advantage?
- Does it irritate you for people to disagree with you?
- Do you have a "you're not qualified to criticize or correct me" attitude?
- Do you become offended when people don't give you the recognition, respect, or honor you think you deserve?
- Are you frequently appalled by what you perceive as other people's stupidity or limited knowledge?
- Do you think you usually know what's best for those in your circles of interaction?
- Do you find it difficult to admit your mistakes or to apologize even if you are clearly at fault?
- Are you more likely to correct or criticize someone than to compliment him?
- Do you offend people often?
- When someone offends you, do you mentally place him on your blacklist?
- Are you generally inflexible and closed to input on alternate ways of doing things in your personal or business life?
- In conversations with others, are you interested only in the things that concern or affect you?
- When you pray, do you tend to justify your transgressions versus being emotionally broken for hurting God?

These are hard questions. Answering affirmative to ANY of the questions is evidence that pride may be gaining a foothold in an area of your life. Each situation reveals a potential for an unwise choice.