

# THE KINGDOM KEY OF HUMILITY



## LESSON 1 // CLEANING OUT THE PRIDE

We all get off track spiritually at times. It usually happens gradually, like a boat that slowly drifts from its mooring. The great news is that God has made a way for us to get back on track.

A crucial part of getting back on track involves a very important key in God's kingdom—the kingdom key of humility. Throughout the Bible we are warned about the dangers of pride and encouraged to develop humility.

Pride is one of the most subtle and dangerous spiritual diseases we can contract. It has been said that “pride is a disease that makes others sick”! Let's look at how we can clean out pride and open the way for humility in our lives.

### 1. Recognize the serious problem of pride.

Pride is a very common spiritual problem. It subtly sneaks into our lives undetected and sets up camp. In fact, we can be full of pride and not even recognize it.

One reason many believers never see more of God's glory and grace at work in their lives is because of the presence of this ugly, destructive spiritual disease. The motivation to get the pride cleaned out of our lives starts with an understanding of how serious and sinful it is from God's perspective.

It's important for us to know what God says about the sin of pride and consequences that come to those who fail to address it. Scripture tells us that:

- *God hates pride (Proverbs 6:16; 8:13).*
- *Pride always leads to a spiritual fall (Proverbs 29:23; 1 Corinthians 10:12).*
- *Pride attracts God's active resistance (James 4:6).*
- *Pride is a sign of foolishness (Proverbs 30:32).*
- *Pride destroys lives and relationships (Daniel 4:28-33; Acts 12:21-23).*
- *Pride invites God's punishment (Isaiah 2:11-12; Ezekiel 7:10-11).*

### 2. Respond to the symptoms of pride.

It's not hard to add our affirmation to the seriousness and ugliness of pride, while still failing to see its presences in our own lives. That's why we must vigilantly guard against it.

One of the best ways to guard against pride is to become familiar with its symptoms. This kind of awareness helps us deal with pride when it shows up—or to see it coming and head it off.

Pride reveals itself in our lives as:

- *Self-boasting and self-promotion, in word or spirit (1 Corinthians 4:7).*
- *An attitude of indispensability (Psalm 103:15-16).*
- *An argumentative, contentious, opinionated spirit (Proverbs 13:10).*
- *Critical, judgmental words and attitudes (Matthew 7:1-5).*
- *Difficulty admitting weaknesses, failures or sin (Psalm 51:17).*
- *A resistant, uncooperative, stubborn or rebellious spirit (1 Samuel 15:23).*
- *A temperamental, easily-offended spirit (Proverbs 12:16; 1 Corinthians 13:5).*
- *Measuring one's service and giving (John 13:14).*
- *A self-righteous spirit (Luke 18:10-11).*
- *Hardness of heart (Daniel 5:20).*
- *Preoccupation with positions, possessions and prestige (Mark 10:35-45).*
- *Ingratitude (2 Timothy 3:1-2).*
- *Chronic discontent (1 Timothy 6:6-8, 17).*

Pride is a spiritual disease that will keep us from growing in humility. That's why it's so important to recognize and respond to pride by cleaning it out of our lives. God has given us the wisdom and practical insight in His Word to do this so we can pave the way for humility and grace to prevail.

**James 4:6b (NLT)** *God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.*

### **Discussion questions**

1. In what ways is pride a subtle and dangerous “disease”?
2. What does God's Word say about pride? How should this impact your attitude and response to it?
3. Look again at the list above of the symptoms of pride. Which of these do you most struggle with? How can you address the pride this represents so that it doesn't continue to impact your life?