



Pride
and
Humility

John M. Breneman

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*A Discourse, Setting Forth the Characteristics
of the Proud and the Humble*

By John M. Brenneman

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Original Preface

The following essay on Pride and Humility appeared some time ago in the *Herald of Truth*, and is now published in pamphlet form with additions and improvements, at the request of some of the brethren who have thought it proper and needful to republish the same for distribution, as a warning and a call to the proud, and an admonition and encouragement to all Christian believers, especially Mennonites, to remind them of their duties toward themselves and their children. May the God of grace (without whose help and blessing all our efforts are vain) grant his blessing on this humble work, which was written from good motives, and may it be a powerful and effectual voice of warning to many hearts, to convict them and move them to reflect, in this precious day of grace, on their soul's eternal salvation and peace. Yea, God grant that it may be a refreshment and a blessing to many a lukewarm and weary heart, and that it may redound to his honor alone, is the ardent prayer of the humble writer. Amen.

J.M.B.

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Present Publisher's Preface

Jesus spoke of the man who brought out of his treasure “things new and old.” Every generation needs to speak to its own generation with words that are fresh and current. But at the same time, “old” treasures exist that, although they may lack the luster of novelty, have a value that a new treasure can only gain with time.

This booklet is an “old” treasure. The truths presented in it are eternal. Nothing stops us from articulating those same truths in our day in our particular idiom. But neither should anything hinder us from picking up this “old” treasure and savoring its richness. Sure, some of the applications are dated. Sure, it was written for a particular set of churches (Mennonite). Sure, it is written in an English that is a bit quaint. We could have opted to change it to our modern way of speaking, but we have left it as it was originally written. Imagine an old oil painting being splattered over with a modern-art look!

To be sure, this booklet is no piece of art in its literary form. John Brenneman had little formal education and John Funk (who first published this booklet as a series of articles in his magazine, *Herald of Truth*) complained that everything Brenneman wrote had to be seriously edited before becoming publishable. Brenneman, it is said, attended grade school with his children sometimes, to catch up on his formal education. In writing he was behind, but in his preaching, his reputation is that of grandness.

The truths he sets forth in this booklet are timeless. And the applications are so practical. John Brenneman represented a Christianity that was interested in following Jesus 24/7/365. His was no mere intellectual religion. Pride represented an evil, an evil to be avoided. Humility was a virtue, a virtue that had practical outworkings at 7:34 a.m. on June 14, 1862 ... here and now, in the nitty-gritty decisions of life while at the breakfast table, while at the feed mill, and while at the dry goods store buying cloth for a dress. What moves us, pride or humility?

As mentioned, John wrote this book primarily for “his” people, the Mennonites of the mid to late 19th century among whom he labored as a preacher and bishop. The particulars which that generation struggled with may not fit the current reader. All we can say is look past the particular and grasp the underlying eternal principle

... and make particular applications to your own life from those principles, just as if John Brenneman would if he were writing the book today. Great principles without nitty-gritty, practical applications are certainly the proverbial “slippery slope” into apostasy.

John Brenneman was a very dedicated shepherd to his flock. As the western frontier opened to the Europeans, John was there to minister to the little congregations and individuals who found themselves isolated from fellowship. He travelled tirelessly on the frontier to strengthen the flock, to the detriment of his own farm back home. While he was “conservative” in his practical applications, he was “progressive” in his willingness to do what it took to spread the kingdom of God. Space does not permit a full biography here, but let it be said that his life was one of constant travel and labors for the frontier church. Only God knows the thousands of miles John Brenneman travelled to extol the humility of Jesus and expose the pride of self. And through this little book, John still preaches today.

—Mike Atnip, July 5, 2012

Pride and Humility

“God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”

1 Pet. 5:5

The apostle Peter begins this chapter with an exhortation to the elders or teachers, as to the manner in which they should care for the flock of Christ, which was committed to their charge. “Feed the flock of God which is among you,” he says, “taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away,” and which is of many thousand times greater value, than the filthy gains of this world can ever be worth.

He then proceeds to admonish the younger to be subject to the elder; which is at all times proper and well worthy still to be observed by our younger brethren and sisters in this our day. And finally, he exhorts all believers in general, saying, “Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility,” and then adds a reason for so doing that “God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” With these words he gave them clearly to understand that, as long as they seek to exalt themselves one over another and do not yield themselves in subjection one to another, it is clear evidence that they are not yet humble, but proud and filled with a spirit of exaltation.

The text treats of two entirely distinct classes of persons, which are as unlike and as opposed to each other as light is to darkness, or day to night. The proud constitute one class; the humble, the other. The one class God resists; to the other he gives grace.

Dear readers, it is through a sense of duty and love to my fellow-men, that I feel inwardly pressed to set forth, with the help of the Lord, in as clear a light as possible, for the edification of pilgrim travelers to a long eternity the exceeding great difference between these two classes of persons. That all may prove to which class they belong, may God direct and control my thoughts and mind as is pleasing to him, that it may redound to his honor and to the edification of my readers. Amen.

The pride of men is very displeasing to God, and is reckoned among the abominations of the wicked – Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2. It is directly the opposite to humility, and is placed in direct contrast with it in the text, as also in other passages: as, “A man’s pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.” – Prov. 29:23. “The eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.” – Is. 5:15.

In contrast with humility, the terms, “lofty,” “lifted up,” “haughty,” “high-minded” and “arrogant,” are also used, which, in this connection, express very nearly the same idea as that implied in the word proud; as in the following passages: “Behold every one that is proud, and abase him.” – Job 40:11. “When his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this.” – Dan. 5:20, 22. “Those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” – Dan. 4:37. “When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom.” – Prov. 11:2.

I believe that he who is proud, is also high-minded and haughty, as may be clearly seen from passages like these: “We have heard the pride of Moab (he is exceeding proud), his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.” – Jer. 48:29. “I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.” – Is. 13:11. “The beginning of pride is when one departeth from God, and his heart is turned away from his Maker. For pride is the beginning of sin, and he that hath it shall pour out abomination: and therefore the Lord brought upon them strange calamities, and overthrew them utterly. The Lord hath cast down the thrones of proud princes, and set up the meek in their stead. The Lord hath plucked up the

roots of the proud nations, and planted the lowly in their place.” – Ecclesiasticus 10:12-15.¹

A proud man has a puffed up and conceited mind, commonly esteeming himself very highly, and regarding others with contempt, or as unworthy of notice, and imagines that every one should bend in submission to him, whilst he in his exaltation frequently looks down on them with scorn, contempt and derision. He is conceited and high-minded, and thinks that he is better and smarter than other people, and does not like to receive reproof or advice. In short, he is usually a man of haughty, overbearing, imperious, vain-glorious, ambitious, self-exalted and high-minded disposition, and desires to be in the society of the great of the world, to be equal to them, and, if possible, to be the first among them. He loves to talk of himself, of his possessions, of his deeds, and abilities, and likes to be praised and held in high esteem by the people.

A feeling of superiority and of honor over others, which in his opinion is due to him ... and giving evidence of the same by a special show of splendor and magnificence.

The word “proud” is applied to various kindred qualities of character. It is used as descriptive of the man “that,” as Buechner says, “especially manifests, by his manner of deportment, a feeling of superiority over others, or of importance which he assumes to himself, and of honor which, in his opinion, is due to him, being especially desirous also, to enjoy the honors of an exalted station and wealth, and giving evidence of the same by a special show of splendor and magnificence. He is also vain and ostentatious.”

And again, Buechner says of this class, “They make an ill use of the respect bestowed upon them, wish to be more highly esteemed than others, are conceited, use much ceremony in what they do, treat others with disdain, despise and even oppress them.” Again he says, “The proud man is sunk in self-love, elates himself, elevates himself above others, forgets God and is unwilling to render to him due obedience for his love, imagines that his way of doing things only is right, and tries to carry out all his plans with

1 A quote from the Apocrypha.

a haughty ambition.” Pride, like many other evil things, proceeds from within, out of the heart, and defiles the man. Mark 7:22.

Its origin is of Satan, who was the first that fell thereby. And because he was envious and hostile towards man, who was created noble and glorious, he came haughtily to our mother Eve and by cunning and deceit persuaded her, that they would “not surely die” by eating the forbidden fruit. And by his haughty and deceitful spirit he planted in her heart the seeds of pride; for by persuading her that she and Adam, by eating of the fruit would become wise like God, he excited in her a desire to become wise, and “when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” Hence, from sin arose the necessity of wearing clothes. Here they fell through pride; for if they had remained steadfast in humility, they would not have fallen.

Man fell by pride

Thus by pride man fell, and it is only through humbleness of heart that he can be restored. We can here clearly see whence the origin of the great evil, pride, is. I think it may justly be called the Serpent’s seed, which was planted in our first parents, and from them all their posterity became infected and poisoned with the same. Hence, “pride was the first sin, and will be the last to be overcome,” as has been said. O detestable vice, the source of so great evil, from which none but the Lamb of God can deliver us! Pride exists, by nature, in man, in a greater or less degree, as long as he is not regenerated, and has not yet been changed from his old nature to a state of humility. Pride in a man’s heart cannot remain concealed, but, like the fruit of a tree, will crop out, and manifest itself in look and gestures. “Him that hath a high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.” –Ps. 101:5. “A high look and a proud heart is sin.” –Prov. 21:4. A man’s words oftentimes proclaim his pride. “With their mouth they speak proudly.” – Ps. 17:10. In short, it manifests itself and may be known by a man’s actions, deeds, and manner of deportment; as, for instance, in the case of the build-

ers of the tower of Babel. "Let us build us a city," they said, "and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name." This was an exceedingly haughty and presumptuous undertaking. But pride is of such a nature that it can not and will not be hid: it likes to be seen and to make great display, in order to make itself "a name." It is far too prevalent and is clearly visible in the needless splendor, costliness, and magnitude of houses, barns, etc., which are sometimes highly ornamented, and painted in a variety of colors, merely to make a magnificent show. It is frequently also to be seen in the manner in which houses are adorned and furnished within, being, like palaces, splendidly ornamented and fitted up with all kinds of new-fashioned, ornamental, and costly furniture, floors over-spread with brilliant and showy carpeting, windows decorated with fine drapery, and walls adorned with pictures.

Even among non-resistant professors of Christianity, may be seen some very unsuitable ornaments such as portraits of military heroes and officers armed with the instruments of death! The tables also are often strewed over with likenesses of mortal and deceased persons, which parents, children, and friends had taken, although it is strictly forbidden. See Ex. 20:4, Deut. 4:16, and 5:8. These lifeless pictures must then also be frequently looked at and exhibited to others. This, I fear, is "lust of the eyes." Oh, that we were so intent also on regaining the lost and noble image of God, and willing to labor that Christ may be formed in us! I believe sincerely that, if this image of God be effectually and truly formed within us, we shall feel but little concerned about these vain and perishable likenesses. Again, an evidence of pride is also seen in the costliness and extravagant

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manner of serving tables, each one desiring to equal or, if possible, to surpass the other in making great preparations and bestowing needless attentions and acts of politeness in imitation of the higher and fashionable classes of the world. Evidences of pride may also be seen in the costly and splendidly ornamented coaches and carriages, and in many other ways that cannot be here enumerated.

Pride manifested

But especially does pride, when it exists in the heart, manifest itself very plainly in the manner of dress and in the costly array with which poor dying mortals strive, frequently beyond their means, to decorate themselves, in order to gain the respect and esteem of a proud and wicked world. Indeed, many dress in the very height of fashion adorning themselves in the highest style of the world, and withal consider themselves good Christians. If such things can be pleasing to God, I must confess, that I have yet but little knowledge of the word of God and of true Christianity. Many, with all their pomp and decorations, still console themselves by saying, it does not matter so much about the externals, if only the heart is right. It is very true indeed that a good heart is the essential qualification in the true Christian character; but a good heart, beyond doubt, is also humble, and consequently can not exhibit any pride; for “a good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things.” I know there are persons who say that the religion of the Mennonites consists entirely in their manner of dress, and that, in their estimation, the style of dress decides the whole matter. But if this were true, then the state of the Mennonites would indeed be sad to contemplate; for if they had no other Christianity than their manner of dress, they would not have any at all. God forbid that a true Mennonite should believe that Christianity consists merely in simplicity of dress.

A genuine and true Mennonite assuredly believes that true Christianity is to be found only in the humble and regenerated heart, and that out of such a heart can proceed or be manifested no fruits of pride: but that it will much rather feel an aversion to, and abhor, all needless ornament and extravagance in dress. It is sadly true, however, that in our day there are some also who call themselves Mennonites, but indulge in the extravagancies of dress

and fashion, considering themselves good Christians withal and maintaining that it can make no difference what kind of dress one wears. But I think the name Mennonite is very unsuitable for such



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persons, as long as their manner of life is so directly contrary to the teachings of Menno. I am well aware that merely the name Mennonite will not profit us in the least, if we are not true Christians. Therefore, ye proud Mennonites (the humble are not meant), hear what Menno thinks of extravagance in dress. In his treatise on the faith of the woman whose sins Christ forgave, he says:

When she believed, her proud, worldly, haughty heart became humble, meek, and contrite. But they (pretended Christians) say they believe, though they indulge, without measure or restraint, in cursed pride, in foolish extravagance and superfluity of silks, velvets, costly raiment, gold rings, and chains, belts, pins, and buttons of silver, finely embroidered and ornamented shirts, cravats, collars, hoods, veils, aprons, velvet slippers, and many other like follies, not considering that the highly enlightened apostles Paul and Peter have in clearly expressed language forbidden all Christian women thus

to adorn their outward person; and consequently it is much more unbecoming in men, who are the examples to, 'and the head of the woman,' to indulge in such extravagancies." And again he says, "true believers walk honorably and modestly, avoid all manner of pride and superfluity, and make or desire no other clothes than those necessary for daily comfort and convenience." And further he says, "I, therefore, entreat you all, ye women, through the mercy of the Lord, that you take this poor, penitent sinner as an example, imitate her faith, humble yourselves before the Lord, renounce all your avarice, pride, uncleanness, and wickedness, and do not adorn yourselves with gold, silver, pearls, broidered hair, or costly array; but use such apparel as becomes those professing godliness, and is needful in your labors.

The above, I think, shows plainly enough what Menno Simons' views were in regard to ornament in dressing. But a greater than Menno is here. God himself testifies abundantly against it in his word, which is all the testimony we need; although there are those who say, the Mennonites have no ground in Scripture



A plainly-dressed Mennonite couple is contrasted with a fashionable couple of the same time frame (mid-1800s).



for their simple mode of dress. Such persons must have but very superficial knowledge of the Scriptures, or they willingly ignore these things. Whether simplicity of dress is but a human conceit; that is, whether it makes very little difference, how we dress ourselves, let the impartial reader judge, after reading what is said below. God himself made unto Adam and Eve coats, not of silk or costly linen, but of skins. This, it seems to me, was quite a simple form of dress, intended not for ornament, but simply as a covering to their nakedness.

Pride in adornment

That the outward adorning of the person is exceedingly displeasing to the Lord may be plainly seen from Ex. 33:4-6, "Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiff-necked people: I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee. And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb." And Deut. 22:5, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." And Is. 3:16-24, "The LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls [or, hairnets, which are now so prevalent], and their round tires like the moon, The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, The rings, and nose jewels, The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty."

Explanation is not necessary here. The Lord threatens, in very plain language, to take from the daughters of Zion (the church of God is sometimes called Zion) their outward ornaments. And in Ez. 23 he threatened to bring against the rebellious city of Jerusalem a people, before whom he would set judgment, that they might judge her, and he says (ver. 26), “They shall also strip thee out of thy clothes, and take away thy fair jewels.” And “it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord’s sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king’s children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.” – Zeph. 1:8. John the Baptist “had his raiment of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins.” This, it seems to me, must have been a very plain and simple garment. Jesus, speaking of John, said, “What went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appareled, and live delicately, are in kings’ courts.” – Luke 7:25. To be gorgeously appareled and to live delicately seem to belong together. Do the followers of Jesus live delicately? Do they love to be in kings’ courts? Are they not mostly of the poorer and humble classes of people? Yet there may sometimes be rich persons among them; but to such Paul’s admonition, “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded” (1 Tim. 6:17), will be highly necessary.

Jesus says, “There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.” And further he says, “In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment.” Jesus does not say that he was otherwise an open, turbulent sinner. It seems as though Jesus had in view the costly garments and the sumptuous or voluptuous fare, as being the main causes of his damnation. James warned the brethren that they should not have respect to a rich man in gay clothing in preference to a poor man in vile raiment. – James 2:2, 3. The scribes were mostly high-minded persons. Jesus, therefore, censured them, saying, “Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts.” – Luke 20:46. Here it seems to me, Jesus considered the desire to “walk in long robes” equally as much an indication of pride as the desire to hold the “highest seats” and “chief rooms.”

Peter expressly forbids women to adorn their outward person with the plaiting of the hair, and the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel; “but,” says he, “let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” This inward adorning may consist, in part, of that which the apostle Paul (Col. 3:12-14) enjoins, saying, “Put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; and above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.” “The king’s daughter (bride or wife) is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.” – Ps. 45:13.

Paul says, “I will that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.” – 1 Tim. 2:9, 10. How could anything be more clearly forbidden, than the putting on of costly and ostentatious apparel is here forbidden? Therefore, by commanding women to adorn themselves with

modest apparel, the apostle gives them clearly to understand that they should not be extravagant or ostentatious, but that due moderation in the putting on of apparel, as also in all other things, should be observed with shamefacedness and sobriety. He gives us clearly to understand also that, in those times, as is the case in our day, extravagance in dress and personal adornment were prevalent; and he further teaches, that women should adorn themselves as becomes those professing godliness (Christianity) with good works. From this we may infer that there prevailed a style of apparel that was unbecoming for women professing godliness. But to what extravagant, unbecoming, unnatural, repulsive, exorbitant, and shameless excesses many women of the present day adorn their person, every one who has powers of observation may

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readily perceive. How decidedly the apostle forbids women to adorn themselves with brodered hair; yet it is lamentable to see to what inordinate excess many of the present day ornament their person, not only with brodered hair, but also with gold, flowers, and plumes, together with many other odious and repulsive superfluities.

Hence, if such adornings as above described are not clear evidence of pride, I know no marks by which pride may be known to exist. Are not such persons intoxicated with pride? I think there is but little sobriety manifested in the deportment of such persons: but what pride, what ostentation is displayed! Each one desires to be “the greatest.” Should, then, the writings of the holy and highly enlightened apostle be of no force in this our day? Paul said to the Corinthians (I Cor. 14:37) that they should acknowledge that the things which he writes unto them “are the commandments of the Lord.” To the Romans (Rom. 12:2) he says, “Be not conformed to this world.” Is it, then not in one respect at least, a conformity to the world, to adorn one’s person in gorgeous and splendid apparel? Again he says (ver. 16), “Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.” Accordingly, then, there are (as we also know) two classes of people on the earth: the one low, and the other high; and to the former class the apostle exhorts the Romans to keep themselves. Now, dear reader, which seems to you to be the low class? Is it those who dress in a plain and simple manner; or those who dress in the highest fashions of the world and with outward adorning of the person? Does not sound reason teach that it is the former of these two classes? And where are “high things” chiefly to be found? Is it among the low, or the high class of men? The Savior also says, “That which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.” Now, what is more highly esteemed among men, generally, than costly and splendid apparel? Let your conscience answer. Alas! “why is earth and ashes proud?”

We might quote from the Scriptures many more passages testifying against outward adornment, but I think that a sufficient number has been quoted to convince those that believe the Scriptures and wish to live in obedience to them. And, now, dear reader, will you still maintain that there is no ground in Scripture for in-

sisting on simplicity of dress? Or that it is of no consequence in what manner we dress? Commonly those who oppose simplicity of apparel are such as themselves like to make a conspicuous appearance and set a high value on gorgeous styles of apparel. But he, whose heart still has pride within it, is also incapable of judging properly in this matter.

It is said that “the Hebrew name for garment is derived from a term signifying, he has been unfaithful. Thus our clothes are in fact nothing more nor less than a remembrancer of sin, reminding us of the first transgression. Is it not then a foolish ostentation, to seek honor in that which is but a memorial of our transgression by which we lost the image of God? It is just as though a thief, having received pardon, but being obliged to wear a rope around his neck as a memorial of his theft, should seek to make a display of the same.”

But I would not by any means undertake to describe a form or pattern how our garments should be made, except that they should be plain and simple according to God’s word. Christianity does not forbid the wearing of good, warm, comfortable, and clean clothes; but if the clothes are changed into a different style almost every year, and the outward person is decorated and adorned with vain and useless things which neither serve to protect against heat and cold, nor afford the body either comfort or profit, but which are much rather injurious, and used only for display and in imitation of the wicked world; I must believe that these are certainly a clear evidence, that pride is still existing in the heart.

David says, “Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off.” – Ps. 138:6. “Better is it to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.” – Pro. 16:19. If we are of a lowly mind, it will be altogether unnatural for us to aspire after high things.

Then, dear brethren and sisters, is it not greatly to be deplored that this fearful vice, pride, has been so extensively prevalent among us, and, like a contagious disease, is carrying off such vast numbers? Daily we see it increasing and men seeking only great honors in the world. Can we thus gain heaven? Oh! could we but take to heart St. John’s admonition: “Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world the love of the

Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world,” etc. Do we not see but too plainly the “pride of life” holding many of the so called Mennonites under its sway? And is this not a clear evidence of lukewarmness in religion? But God has plainly threatened such to spue them out of his mouth.

Happy is the man who can in truth say with David, “Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty.” – Ps. 131:1. There are, however, many at the present day, whose outward manner of dress



Which dress better represents pride and which better represents humility?



is altogether uncensurable; but when we come into their houses, and there behold on all sides the evidence of pride and extravagance, and see their children dressed in the highest fashions of the world, we cannot possibly believe that they are indeed “lowly in heart,” or that they really hate pride and wantonness. “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.” – Prov. 8:13.

No one will believe that I have a humble heart, however humble and plain my outward appearance may be, as long as I permit all manner of wantonness to be freely indulged in by my family, bringing them up from infancy in the most wanton and shameless fashions of the world, and thus offering them a sacrifice to the haughty prince of darkness! We are equally responsible whether bringing up our own children, or those only that may have been committed to our care and training. It would be an utterly vain and useless excuse for any one to say that the children he has in his care are not his own, but have been only adopted.

Pride in family members

Frequently, however, it may also be the case that, when the father wishes to admonish his children to modesty in dress, on account of his abhorrence to the wanton fashions of the world, the mother secretly encourages and aids them in their evil purposes, urging the father to indulge the children, and saying, "Oh let them alone, these and those have such things, and it is too hard that ours cannot also have them," etc.; as if it were a hard matter, if the children are not brought up in pride such as Satan desires, or as if the word of God, testifying against pride, made a hard demand. The "wicked and slothful servant" said, "Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man." – Matt. 25:24.

Mothers have a very great influence over their children and may aid much in keeping them under Christian discipline and instruction; but, on the other hand, they may, by their evil example, be instrumental in promoting their ruin. One would hardly think that there are to be found mothers professing Christianity who keep on hand two styles of clothing; the one fashionable and the other plain; the latter to put on when they attend public worship, the other, when they go among the higher and fashionable classes. What is to be the end of such hypocrites is plainly to be seen in the word of God. "Whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." And "no man can serve two masters." The end of the enemies of the cross of Christ is destruction. Phil. 3:18, 19.

O fathers and mothers, let us, for God's sake, fulfill our duty towards our children: they are precious gifts committed by God to our care, of which we have to give an account.

Some parents indeed pretend to assert that, when children have grown up and come to mature age, they will naturally see the folly of these things and put away the superfluous apparel. But it is manifest and easy to see, that, if they are permitted to have their own free will from their infancy up, to indulge in all the fashions of the world, this vice, pride, will thus have become so deeply rooted in them, that it will be far more difficult to induce them to renounce it, than if they had been accustomed from their youth up to a plain and simple mode. Too often it is the case, that, when they have their own free will (which is naturally prone to evil) from their youth up, on arriving at mature age, they commonly go with the majority, where their corrupt nature can have its own free will without restraint.

And the men also ...

And now, brethren, I would ask you out of love since women are so plainly and expressly forbidden, to adorn their person with plaiting of hair, gold, pearls, and costly array, whence then have the brethren the right to decorate their person with all manner of needless ostentation, trimming, combing, and disfiguring the hair after the silly fashions of the world? and such things, alas! are often to be seen even on your yet innocent little babes on your knees. Do you not consider what Jesus endured, on whose head our sins have inflicted such great sufferings? How, then, can you still say, after being admonished to abandon such vain customs, but still persisting in them, that you are “clothed with humility”? or that you are “kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love”? Is not your insubordination to be regarded as a clear proof that pride is still lurking in your hearts? Oh! that every brother and sister would sincerely take to heart Paul’s admonition, “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves.”

Pride is also further plainly manifested in our day by the manner in which the beard is worn by many, and whether the brethren are all entirely guiltless in this respect or not, they themselves no doubt best know. I entreat you to examine yourselves in this matter; for God knows your hearts. I do not maintain that there is in the least anything deserved on account of these plain modes of dress; but I do maintain that a humble heart no longer desires these

useless, gaudy, and fashionable decorations, and that we ought to be able to distinguish at least the humble Christian in general from the proud world by his outward deportment.

Therefore, ye watchmen of Zion, let us ever be mindful in our duty in this our important calling, that we warn the people in due season. Is it not to be feared that the watchmen are oftentimes in fault that this detestable vice has made such havoc in our churches, on account of their too great slothfulness in warning the people?

Pride is also further plainly manifested in our day by the manner in which the beard is worn by many.



Let us, therefore, “reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine,” wherever we see that it is necessary, “whether they will hear or whether they will forbear.” Let us “cry aloud and not spare, and lift up our voices like a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions and their sins” (Is. 58:1), lest we be found to be like those watchmen described in Is. 56:10. I fear that the reason why the watchmen are “dumb” and cannot reprove, is because so much evidence of pride is still found existing in their own houses, in themselves, and in their families. Oh! that we might not be of those who preach to others and are themselves cast away. “If

a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" – I Tim. 3:5. Many perhaps cannot reprove also "for filthy lucre's sake," lest their wages be thereby lessened.

Whosoever will indulge in this vice, cannot escape punishment. For "every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished." – Prov. 16:5. "A man's pride shall bring him low," and God "hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts." – Luke



The pride
of Korah,
Dathan,
and Abiram
brought the
wrath of
God upon
them.

1:51. Yes, he resisteth them, which we will now secondly consider.

God, who is greater than all; who is the Creator of Heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, things visible and invisible; by whom the "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear;" who stretches out the heavens like a curtain; to whom there is nothing impossible; who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient – this incomprehensible, great God "resisteth the proud." Though the proud often resist God, yet they cannot succeed, even though they should all conspire together; for "all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." – Is. 45:24. Yea,

God will make all the proud (who are his enemies) finally “his footstool.” He will subdue the proud and high-minded, and be victorious over them; for if he is against them, who can be for them? God has at all times resisted the proud: proud Satan he cast out of heaven.

He resisted our first parents after they had transgressed his command. He imposed on them their punishment, and “placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” When Cain rose up against his brother Abel and slew him, God said to him, “Now art thou cursed from the earth. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength: a fugitive and vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.” This, I think, was a resistance. But when men began to multiply on the face of the earth and would no longer be reproved by the Spirit of God, and their wickedness was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually, and God saw that all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth, and the end of their time had come, then did he resist them with a flood and destroy them from off the face of the earth. Those only were saved that were in the ark. And in the course of time, when men again multiplied, and, as it seems, through pride desirous of making themselves a name, began to build a city, and a tower whose top might reach heaven, the Lord again resisted them by coming down and confounding their language, by which means he “scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth,” and caused them to leave off to build the city.

Pride in Bible history

The people of Sodom and Gomorrah doubtless were also a very proud people, whom God resisted by raining fire and brimstone out of heaven upon them and laying them in ashes.

King Pharaoh, who must also have been a very proud man, in that he greatly oppressed the Israelites in Egypt, God punished with many plagues, and when he pursued Israel to the Red Sea with a large army God resisted them with a pillar of fire and finally destroyed him with his whole army in the Red Sea.

When Miriam spoke against Moses, as though he had assumed too much importance or authority, and, as it seems, she desired to be promoted herself, God also resisted and punished her, and she “became leprous, white as snow.” – Num. 12.

The Lord withstood also the proud and mutinous faction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, when he caused the earth to open her mouth and swallow them up, so that they and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit. – Num. 16. God visited Goliath by the hand of David.

**The humble
is usually
of a quiet,
meek, and
gentle
disposition,
knowing
when to be
silent and
when to
speak.**

And what was the fate of Haman, of whom we read in the book of Esther? When he rose up against Mordecai, and caused a gallows to be erected to hang him thereon, he himself was hung thereon.

In a peculiar manner did God resist king Nebuchadnezzar whose mind was hardened in pride. He was driven from men, and was wet with the dew of heaven, and did eat grass like oxen, till he knew that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. – Dan. 4. His son

Belshazzar God also resisted on account of his pride. – Dan. 5.

God also resisted the haughtiness of Herod, because he gave not God the honor, and he was smitten by the angel of the Lord and was eaten of worms. – Acts. 12:23.

It would require too much time and space to mention all the instances that might be adduced on this point. Of Capernaum Jesus said, “And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell.” The proud Jews, who would not have Jesus to reign over them, and would not believe his words of Salvation, could not escape the resisting power of God’s almighty hand. Their city and their temple were destroyed, and multitudes of them perished by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, and those that remained were scattered into all countries and nations.

Thus we see that God has, from the beginning of the world, resisted the proud, and will continue to resist them until he has subdued or destroyed them. What is it else than pride, that keeps so many thousands of persons from yielding obedience to the gospel of God? But God resists them with various plagues; as war, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, sickness, and punishments in various ways too numerous to be recounted here. And “he that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.” – Prov. 29:1.

He will resist them also at the great judgment-day, when he shall be revealed from heaven “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction.” When they shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets sitting in the kingdom of heaven, they will be cast out into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Or, he will say, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” At that day “all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” – Mal. 4:1. The proud will then no longer be able to stand before God, and will then “say to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?”

Oh, how fearful it will be for all the proud and high-minded to fall into the hands of almighty God! All ye proud, “repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” Not all, I suppose, that may read these words of admonition will assent to all I have said; but I do not in the least fear that a single person of truly humble heart will become offended, or disaffected, thereby; and though it may be a cause of offense to the proud, yet we know that these were also offended at the saying of the Savior. I am, however, glad that I am not alone, but that there are many brethren who are of like mind with me and have encouraged me to attack this monstrous vice; and I hope they will still sustain and aid me in it.

Humility

We will now consider the latter and more agreeable part of our text.

The humble man feels small, poor, bowed, cast down, and unworthy within himself, and esteems others more highly than himself. He never boasts or exalts himself or despises others, as did the proud and conceited Pharisee; but much rather laments his weakness, his failings, and imperfections. He “minds not high things, but condescends to men of low estate.” He does not conform to this world in all manner of empty pomp, and pride, and sinful wantonness. He is usually of a quiet, meek, and gentle disposition, knowing when to be silent and when to speak. He is at all times willing to give place and opportunity to others to express their opinions. In company he observes due modesty, and does not seat himself in the most honorable, but much rather in the lowest place at table. In his deeds, actions, and pursuits, he does not indulge in vain ostentation: his utensils, furniture, and apparel in general being simple and modest, free from useless ornament and decoration; for he feels no pleasure or gratification in such outward splendor; but much rather dissatisfaction, disgust, and abhorrence, knowing that such things are sinful, transient, and vain; and he strives rather to secure the inward ornamenting of the soul by the putting on of the spiritual and divine virtues.

In their corrupt nature, men are generally not humble; but they are more or less disposed to pride from their youth up, which is very displeasing to God. Though they were in the beginning created good and noble in the image of God, exalted and set over all other creatures, yet, by their fall through transgression, they became the poorest and most wretched of all creatures, and notwithstanding their depraved and dangerous state they still frequently imagine that all is well with them, whilst they are even miserable, poor, “blind and naked.” But God is too merciful to leave them in this wretched condition without help: he is calling, reproving, and convincing them through his Spirit and other means of grace, in order to awaken them from their sleep of sin; and as soon as a man hears and truly heeds this calling voice, and being convicted, sees that he is a poor, lost, and guilty sinner, and feels that his sins are a burden to him too heavy to be borne, he becomes so much

oppressed and bowed down by this burden that he becomes small and poor within himself. Such a person feels then like David, who exclaimed, "I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. All the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears." He feels as though he were the poorest and unworthiest of all men. Nay, he thinks he is no more worthy to be called a son or a child. He is glad to be reckoned as one of the least, or as a hireling. He can then, and will with a true heart, like the poor publican, smite his breast and pray, "God, be merciful to me a sinner;" or, like David, "create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

A man, thus truly penitent and humble in heart, truly turning to God, sincerely seeking him day and night in prayer and supplication, wholly offering himself in sacrifice to him, humbly submitting to his powerful hand, and desirous henceforth to live and continue faithful in his service to the end – such a man is, in the Scriptures,

called a humble man; and such are they to whom God gives grace; as, for example, the woman who was a sinner, and humbled herself at the feet of Jesus, washing them with tears and wiping them with the hairs of her head, unto whom he said, "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." All such penitent and humble sinners, seeking grace, shall obtain it of God through Jesus Christ. For "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," and "of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace," says John. Grace is, therefore, the opposite of merit; for when a man gives me that which he owes me, and which I have earned by labor, he gives it to me, not out of grace, but out of indebtedness. But if any one

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bestows on me good gifts, which I have not merited and which he does not owe me, he bestows them on me purely out of grace. Such a person, therefore, I might call gracious, inasmuch as he has bestowed on me his grace or made me a partaker of his grace; that is, he has given or granted me grace.

In like manner God has made us partakers of his grace, for he does not owe us any thing; but on the other hand we owe him ten thousand pounds, and have not one farthing with which to pay this great debt. But God will remit it out of pure grace, if we but with true penitence of heart humble ourselves before him and confess our sins before him, feel sorry on account of them, and from our heart pray to him in the name of Jesus for pardon; then “he giveth grace” to us. It is through grace, therefore, that such humble, penitent sinners are saved, and made “accepted” through his dear Son. “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.” – Rom. 11:6. Through grace we are regenerated, and born anew, and accepted through Jesus Christ as children, and made heirs of his eternal and heavenly kingdom; that is “he giveth grace to the humble.” He gives grace to them even in this life, inasmuch as he pardons their sins and blesses them in body and soul with all manner of good gifts; and in the life to come he bestows on them eternal and heavenly gifts and possessions, and eternal joy, rest, and happiness.

Grace to the humble

Oh how unspeakably great is this promise, “He giveth grace to the humble!” For the grace of God is of ten-thousand times greater value than the whole world with all its pleasure, pomp, honor, and glory can ever be. “My grace is sufficient for thee,” he said to Paul – as much as to say, “My grace supplies all your wants, you have need of nothing more.” I believe sincerely that whoever cannot content himself with the sufficiency of God’s grace can never have any real enjoyment; for the grace of God is sufficient for us in time and in eternity. If we are partakers of his grace and confide in it, we have all that we need in order to become happy, glorified and blessed in this world and in the world to come; and what more can we wish? But bear in mind, this grace is given only to the humble. O humility, noble virtue! how needful it is! It is worth

more than gold and wealth, and worldly glory. Without humility we have no promise of the saving power of grace; and without this saving grace no one can be a child, and consequently neither an heir, of God. Oh how necessary it is that we candidly examine ourselves whether we are in possession of this indispensable virtue, since on humility alone is bestowed this promise of grace. Without true humility of heart we have no promise of grace; but on the contrary we are threatened with God's resistance, and his threatenings stand equally as firm as his promises; for the words of Jesus are firm and unchangeable. "Every one that exalteth himself (like the proud Pharisee) shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself (like the publican) shall be exalted."

Reasons to humble ourselves

We have great cause to humble ourselves: First, on account of our sins, through which we have separated ourselves from God, who is so good, so holy, and so kind. O sin, what a detestable vice! It should cause us to bow down, to humble ourselves in the dust, and with shame to repent in sack-cloth and ashes. Oh! that we were not so obstinate and stiffnecked, and would no longer hesitate to humble ourselves and to bow under the mighty hand of God, since we are nothing at all without God's grace. Will we then wantonly continue to sin against the grace of God, since we have not for one moment any security of our life? Oh how great the long-suffering of God toward man, since he does not desire that any one should be lost, but that every one should repent of his sins, confess them, amend his life, and humble himself.

Secondly, we have cause to humble ourselves, because Christ has commanded it. "Seek righteousness, seek humility: it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." – Zeph. 2:3. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" – Mic. 6:8. "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God." – I Pet. 5:6. "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." – Phil. 2:3. "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." – Eph. 4:1, 2. "Be clothed with humility." – I Pet. 5:5.

Thirdly, on account of God's precious promises. "He giveth grace to the humble." He has also promised to dwell with them. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him



Our houses and chapels can manifest a spirit of pride or humility. Which of these two chapels exudes pride and which exemplifies humility?



also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." – Is. 57:15. "He shall save the humble person." – Job 22:29. "With the lowly is wisdom." – Prov. 11:2. "Honor shall uphold the humble in spirit." – Prov. 29:23. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." – Luke 18:14.

Fourthly, the threatenings of God. "He resisteth the proud." "He hath scattered the proud in the imaginations of their hearts." – Luke 1:51. "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: he shall not be unpunished." – Prov. 16:5. "A man's pride shall bring him low." – Prov. 29:23. "Every one that exalteth

himself shall be abased.” – Luke 18:14. “Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.” – Romans 11:20-21.

Fifthly, the example of Jesus Christ. He is “meek and lowly in heart.” Behold, what an unparalleled example of humility he left us, when he, the Lord of lords and King of kings, washed his disciples’ feet! How condescendingly our Lord and Master stooped and humbled himself. Greater humility, it seems to me, could not have been manifested than Jesus manifested on the occasion, when he said, “If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” Are we, then, all perfectly willing thus to stoop and to humble ourselves in conformity to the example of Jesus? Oh, how many Christian professors there are who refuse to do this! We should not, however, when we wash one another’s feet, expect thereby to gain our salvation, nor is it for the purpose of washing away outward impurity from the feet; but simply to show obedience, love, and humility; and to show that we are not ashamed of Jesus and of his words. For, if we perform merely the outward act of washing one another’s feet, and have not a genuine humility of heart and sincere love towards each other, we shall not in the least be benefitted by it; but rather thereby bring on ourselves greater sin. In lowliness of mind we should each esteem another better than himself. The richest and most highly esteemed should not think himself too good to stoop and wash the feet of the least and the poorest member. If Jesus had bid us do “some great thing,” would we not do it? How much rather, then, since he has said, “Ye also ought to wash one another’s feet,” inasmuch as he has given an example that we should do as he has done; and says, “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.”

“He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” – Phil. 2:8. Oh! consider, then. For if Jesus, the Lord of Heaven, thus stooped and humbled himself, took on him the form of a servant, was spit upon, scourged, and crucified for us, to reconcile us and to redeem us from the curse and from death; how it becomes us, to imitate his example and to follow his footsteps in humility!

Which will we choose?

Now, dear readers, having seen the great difference between the proud and the humble, what will we do? The former God resists, but he gives grace to the latter. Which, then, will we choose? God's grace, or to be resisted by him? I hope we will choose his grace. Though it is not otherwise to be obtained than by passing through the valley of humiliation, let us not on that account be frightened back; but truly bend and humble ourselves. Remember, Jesus was humble, he did not exalt himself. O, what should we not, therefore, willingly do, to obtain the grace of God? We should humble ourselves before him with fasting, with weeping, and fervent prayer, till he hears us and gives us grace. My brethren and sisters, allow me to speak freely to you. In what condition do we find ourselves? Are we humble at heart? It will not profit us in the least, if we only assume an outward, dissembling² form of humility, without genuine and unfeigned humility of heart; for this alone is valid in the sight of God. "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." – I Sam. 16:7. Yea, he is a Searcher of hearts, and all our thoughts are open to his sight and known to him. But if we are truly humble in heart, then, without doubt, "that which is highly esteemed among men," and which "is abomination in the sight of God," will also be abomination to us. For, if we are truly humble, we have also obtained his grace; and if we have his grace, we have also his Spirit; and if we have his Spirit, we are also his children; and if we are his children, we are also partakers of his divine nature, and if we are partakers of his divine nature, it is indisputably true that "that which is highly esteemed among men," and which "is abomination in the sight of God," must also be abomination to us. Let us, then, candidly as in the sight of God examine whether we do not still take too much pleasure in those things which are highly esteemed among men. God the Searcher of our hearts knows what is in our hearts: we cannot deceive him. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked."

However humble we may appear outwardly, yet as long as we approve of the needless and vain ornamenting and decorating of our houses and our families, and do not use our utmost diligence

² Deceptive, hypocritical.

to prevent and to do away with such abominations, I cannot possibly believe that “that which is highly esteemed among men,” is abomination to us; and if such vain and worldly aspirations have not yet become abominations to us, we have not yet been made partakers of the divine nature, and consequently cannot be children of God; for the children of God partake of the nature and character of God, which no one can deny. Oh! who should not



**Abase and humble yourself as did the penitent publican,
and you will also obtain mercy for your poor soul.**

seriously reflect on it, when beholding the wickedness and pride of the world. The majority seem to hurry willfully with the great tide of worldly ambition on the broad road to the abyss of ruin. How frightfully they pervert their being, so that they scarcely appear like human beings. It seems that they are not satisfied any more with the form which God gave them. We are forced to think of many, that they do not fear God, nor regard man.

Should this now come before the eyes or ears of any one who finds himself sunk and enveloped in the wickedness of pride, I would say to him: “Haste! haste! and deliver your precious soul: flee out of Babel! Flee! Flee, I pray you, out of the Sodom of this perverse and sinful world, that you be not partakers of its plagues. Oh! forsake hastily the broad road of vice, and humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, before it is forever too late. Oh! repent quickly and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.

Abase and humble yourself as did the penitent publican, and you will also obtain mercy for your poor soul. Seek grace in humility and not in pride; for again I say unto you, ‘God giveth grace to the humble,’ and not to the proud. Oh! come, then, I entreat you, every one who may read or hear this, if you have not already come. Hearken, ye can still find grace: come, all things are ready. ‘Come boldly unto the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.’ Come now and do not wait for a ‘more convenient season.’ ‘Look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God.’ Heb. 12:15. ‘The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.’”

I feel as though I could hardly cease to warn you, O wretched man! Examine yourself seriously and critically by the mirror here placed before you, and consider well what is your character and to which class you belong, whether to the proud or the humble. Oh! examine yourself: it is not a small matter. You may soon, very soon and unexpectedly, be removed from this world, to receive the rewards of God’s eternal grace, or to receive “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish,” which shall be to “every soul of man that doeth evil.” If you find yourself still in the way of the proud, turn, oh! turn, and have compassion on yourself, O man! admonished that the indignation of God be not your eternal lot. Permit yourself, I entreat you, to be persuaded.

In conclusion

In conclusion, I hope my readers will receive in love my humble exhortation, and examine it closely, and if they find the truth therein brought before them, I wish they might heartily embrace the cause and assist me to contend against pride, and to inculcate humility. Especially would I wish to invite my fellow-laborers to take the privilege and opportunity, to make further remarks on this subject, to improve or supply what is needed to fill up any deficiency that may yet exist. I wish with my whole heart to all the readers the saving grace of God, the love of Jesus, and the communion of the Holy Ghost. But know, I say again, that God gives this grace only to the humble. May he make this exhortation

a blessing to many hearts, that they may thereby be brought to reflect, and in humility to turn to God, if they have not already done so, and to entreat him for grace while grace is yet offered, that he alone may thereby be honored through Jesus Christ. Amen.

A sword against the enemy, is humbleness of heart:
From him who hath a humble mind he quickly must depart:
His haughty, proud, ferocious mien humility disdains,
He cannot even think to be where meekness humbly reigns:
It wounds him – cuts him to the heart – to see a humble mind,
Because his nature's haughty, proud – quite otherwise inclined.

If this book has blessed you, please let us know!

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Pride.

Who hasn't faced this destructive evil ... right in his own heart?

Pride is so elusive. Just when we think we have escaped its grasp, we suddenly come to realize that we may be proud of the fact that we are not proud! And like the Pharisee in Jesus' parable, we begin to think evil of publicans who are beneath our self-appraised dignity.

This book is an attempt to teach us humility, so that God's grace may flow in—and out—of us.

