

Dealing with Pride

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by Stanley Hasegawa



Men have an issue with pride. We are always checking on how we are being perceived with respect to others. We keep track of our stats, standing and status. We are hypersensitive to evidence that we are being dissed. Because we are so concerned about our standing and status, we are constantly tempted to inflate ourselves in order to attain a higher standing and thus higher status.

For the sake of our pride, we may try to attain a higher status in one of two ways. We pump ourselves up with subtle or not so subtle boasting; we deflate others by putting them down. Humility, on the other hand, is having a right view of ourselves that depends on faith rather than stats, standing and status.

"For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith." ([Romans 12:3](#))

Humility refuses to gather stats (keep score) in order to think well of ourselves. Humility refuses to compare stats in order to think well of ourselves. Humility refuses to use stats to determine the relative value of ourselves and others (judging others) in order to think well of

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ourselves.

"Do not judge according to external appearance, but judge with proper judgment." ([John 7:24](#))

"Let each one examine his own work. Then he can take pride in himself and not compare himself with anyone else." ([Galatians 6:4](#))

"Do not judge so that you will not be judged." ([Matthew 20:16](#))

Envy is a form of pride. Envy is thinking about how proud we would be if only we had the stats, standing and status of another person. Gloating over another person's downfall is a form of boasting. God does not want us to boast in this way, even if the person we are tempted to gloat over is evil:

"Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and when he stumbles do not let your heart rejoice, lest the Lord see it, and be displeased, and turn his wrath away from him." ([Proverbs 24:17-18](#))

There is one more way that we try to improve our standing, our status. Someone once stated that it's not where we live or how much we make that is an indication of our standing, it's who will have lunch with us. We pick out someone important like the senior pastor, and try to gain standing with that person. We will often ask ourselves, what would pastor so-and-so think of what we are doing? Or we think, wow, if I did that, wouldn't pastor so-and-so be impressed.

We need to make a subtle distinction. We should not do something so that some outstanding Christian would think well of us, hang out with us. We are not to seek to please men for our own sakes (for their sakes yes, for our own sakes no). Rather, we must do as we think some outstanding Christian would do as they imitate Jesus Christ himself.

"Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ." ([1 Corinthians 11:1](#))

I often try to make myself better rather than try my best to be who God made me to be. In the first case, I keep trying this and that hoping for an improved version of myself so I can better serve God, and oh by the way so I can think better of myself too. In the second case, I humbly rest in the thought that I don't need to improve myself in any way, shape or form. I just need to better respond to God's leading so that he can work powerfully through me just as I am. God wants us to seek to be worthy of praise from him rather than receive praise from other people. To the extent that we do the reverse and seek praise from people rather than praise from God, we reveal unbelief in our hearts.

"Obey with enthusiasm, as though serving the Lord and not people, because you know that each person, whether slave or free, if he does something good, this will be rewarded by the Lord." ([Ephesians 6:7-8](#))

"How can you believe, if you accept praise from one another and don't seek the praise that comes from the only God?" ([John 5:44](#))

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We are being transformed into the image of God from one degree of glory to another. How can we improve on that? In this sense there is no such thing as self-improvement. Seeking to improve ourselves is just a matter of vanity; a chasing after the wind; not much more meaningful than passing gas.

"And we all, with unveiled faces reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, which is from the Lord, who is the Spirit." ([2 Corinthians 3:18](#))

The only way to reflect the glory of the Lord, rather than seek our own glory is this:

"Keep thinking about the things above, not things on earth, for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God." ([Colossians 3:2-3](#))

The only way I know to stop being driven by stats, standing and status is to keep seeking, keep thinking about the things above rather than seeking and thinking about things on the earth. I want to seek praise from God in heaven rather than people on earth. By becoming a Christ-follower, I have died to stats, standing and status. My life is now hidden with Christ. It makes no sense to try to quantify my life with stats. There is no way to meaningfully evaluate my accomplishments in comparison with the accomplishments of any other person. There is no way for me to derive any sense of status from what I have accomplished. The one meaningful thing that is left for me to do is to keep on seeking and thinking about things above. I need to live in and for each moment without regard to what others think, because each moment provides me with the opportunity to love God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength.

I am richly blessed in my marriage. I have two grown children. I am semi-retired. I have been a computer programmer, systems analyst, househusband and homeschool teacher. I love to walk, talk and eat, and write short articles about devoting our lives to Jesus.

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