

Declaring war on pride

Now in the same way that **humility is the wellspring of all the virtues**, as we have said, **pride is the root of every sin**. One of the most important matters in the Christian life is the disposition of our hearts before God. What is the posture of our heart as it relates to God in His holiness and us in our sinfulness? Are we like the proud and therefore blind Pharisee, to whom God is opposed? Or are we submissive and contrite, like the tax collector, realizing our own profoundly sinful condition and need of divine grace, with a clear vision of God's love to us through the Gospel? See here the very heart and foundational matter in **bearing the image** and becoming like Christ in Sanctification, it is the process whereby that grace of humility that was given in regeneration when we were saved, is growing and bearing fruit over time. We are progressing heavenward to Christlikeness overtime as we make the downward progression of humility, coming to that **clear vision** or **spiritual awareness** that **humility is** in greater degree over time. This of course happens also through the mortification of the pride that is in our hearts. Growing in humility starts with a recognition of our pride and an active killing of this sinful heart attitude, and the replacement of it with the godliness of humble child-like faith. We must come to see that sinful **posture of pride** is arrogantly lifted up against God's authority, bent on rebellion in defiance of His will, and willing to commit treason with contempt of His holy Law. The **great beast of pride must be slain in our hearts** if Christ will rule there!

Pride is the root of every sin

This truth is one in Scripture that is much like the doctrine of the Trinity. There is no specific verse that states that God is Triune as a proposition, but the whole Bible is filled with statements that put forth God's Tri-Unity and repetitively imply His Triune nature. So it is with **pride** being the **very nature of sin**. There is no specific verse that says pride is the nature of sin as a proposition, but the Bible continually exposes the sins of people in the course of history, and continually shows the nature of this activity to be an arrogant defiance of God. This is because the struggle with pride in our hearts is a struggle against **God's reign, His rule, His Lordship**. It is as if our will is saying, "*who rules me and determines my course of action?*" When we sin we commit **treason** against His Heavenly **Majesty**, in **defiance** we lift ourselves up against His **Kingship** and in **contempt** of His **Sovereignty** we commit **mutiny** as it were. This is why every sin is an arrogant defiance of God's authority and Law. **Sin always defies God, therefore it always is proud**, lifted up and haughty, as if to say "*I am my own God, I will not have this God to rule over me.*" Pride seeks to "ungod God," says Ralph Venning. Consider what is the **nature of sin** and what **motivates sin**, and what is the **disposition of the heart** that commits sin.

1. It is the **nature of sin to exalt oneself above God's rule** and in rebellion against Him violate His holy law. Sin transgresses, crosses over God's boundary, disregards His authority.
2. What **motivates** both intentional and unintentional sin is a disregard for the judgment of God and an arrogant dismissal of it, as if in our unbelief we do not think He will require justice, and defiantly transgress His will. Even unintentional sin does not regard God enough to be informed of His requirement for morally acceptable behavior.
3. Although the conscience may warn against sin because of our accountability to God, yet our heart proudly decides that our will is better than God's because ultimately what we want is greater and more important than what God wants. The **disposition of the heart** that sins is lifted up against God, and voluntarily overthrowing His rule in the heart.

Consider the **heart motivation of the first recorded sin** in creation, the **fall of Satan**. Look at the words that describe to motives and intentions in Satan's heart.

Isaiah 14:13-14 - 13 "But you said **in your heart**, **'I will ascend** to heaven; **I will raise my throne above** the stars of God, And **I will sit on the mount** of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14 **'I will ascend above the heights** of the clouds; **I will make myself like the Most High.'** NASB

Ezekiel 28:12-19 - 12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God, **"You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 "You were in Eden, the garden of God;** Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz, and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx, and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise, and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that **you were created** They were prepared. 14 **"You were the anointed cherub who covers,** And I placed you there. **You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 "You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you. 16 "By the abundance of your trade** You were internally filled with violence, And **you sinned;** Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. 17 **"Your heart was lifted up** because of your beauty; You **corrupted your wisdom** by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you. 18 "By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade, You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And I have turned you to ashes on the earth In the eyes of all who see you. 19 "All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified, And you will be no more.'"" NASB

Consider the **heart motivation of Adam and Eve** when they partook of the forbidden fruit. Knowing clearly the will of God and yet **defiantly transgressing** His command, in their pride our first parents **committed treason** against the Sovereign Majesty of God. Their desire in their hearts for what God had forbidden, and their desire to be like God, drove them to **defy God**.

Genesis 3:1-7 - 3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 **but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'**" 4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! 5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 **When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.** NASB

Consider the **heart motivation of the unbeliever** in this Gospel age. Knowing clearly that there is a God who requires righteousness of them, **in their pride they will not honor Him as God**, or give thanks to Him for His good gifts that He gives every day. In their **arrogance** they do not acknowledge God any longer, but instead transgress and violate His Law and will. They know God will hold them accountable, but **defy Him** anyway.

Romans 1:18-22 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because **that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.** 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, **have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.** 21 For even though **they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks;** but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. NASB

Romans 1:28-32 - 28 And just as they **did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer,** God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and, **although they know the ordinance of God, that those who**