

# **Sabbath School**

## *Pride vs Humility*

April 18, 2026



### **Memory verse**

Luke 14:11 KJV

For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Why is the **peacock** often seen as an example of pride? Look at me! The world revolves around me and my interests and opinions.

## **Selfishness and pride go hand in hand.**

Defining terms is important so that we're all on the same page. Never take for granted that everyone has the same definition or understanding of words or phrases that you do. The dictionary obviously gives generally accepted definitions, also you should study the Greek origins of the word found in the Bible, seeing the word in context in the Bible, listening to each other's perspective is helpful,

These are just to name a few ways to define terms.

**Pride** as it turns out, is a *complex* word. Are there different types of pride?

Here's the negative definition,

pride <sup>1</sup>



 [prahyd] / praid /

NOUN

- 1 a high or inordinate opinion of one's own dignity, importance, merit, or superiority, whether as cherished in the mind or as displayed in bearing, conduct, etc.

**Antonyms:** [humility](#)

**But is it sinful?**

Proverbs 16:18 KJV

Pride goeth before destruction, And an *haughty spirit* before a fall.



A "haughty spirit" refers to an attitude of pride, arrogance, and superiority, where an individual looks down on others and often disregards the need for God. It is characterized by self-exaltation, disdain, and a lack of humility, often leading to a "fall" or destruction.  Battle For Your Life +2

Here is a detailed breakdown of the concept based on biblical, historical, and practical contexts:

## 1. Biblical Definition and Context

- **Proverbs 16:18:** The most prominent reference is "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (KJV/NKJV).
- **Meaning:** A haughty spirit is the inner, arrogant posture that precedes an eventual downfall or failure. It is described as a "lifting up of spirit" or "exalted heart".
- **Divine Perspective:** The Bible states that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6) and that a haughty spirit is detestable to Him.

- **Related Scriptures:** Proverbs 18:12 ("Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty"), Proverbs 6:16-19 (haughty eyes are among the things God hates), and Proverbs 11:2.  Battle For Your Life +4

## 2. Characteristics of a Haughty Spirit

- **Superiority:** Thinking more highly of oneself than necessary.
- **Disdain:** Looking down on others and treating them as inferior.
- **Unteachability:** An unwillingness to accept correction or instruction.
- **Self-Reliance:** Relying on oneself rather than on God.
- **Lying/Exaggeration:** Often accompanied by an inflated view of one's own achievements or knowledge.  Battle For Your Life +2



### 3. Consequences and Examples

A haughty spirit is seen as a "spiritual disease" that leads to failure in both personal and spiritual life.  Battle For Your Life

- **Lucifer:** Often associated with the pride that led to his fall from heaven.
- **King Nebuchadnezzar:** His arrogance led to a period of madness and humbling (Daniel 4).
- **Pharaoh:** His haughtiness resulted in the destruction of his army.  Quora +2

### 4. Overcoming a Haughty Spirit

The antidote to a haughty spirit is the cultivation of humility.  Battle For Your Life

- **Cultivating Humility:** Actively practicing dependence on God and acknowledging one's own limitations.
- **Gratitude:** Thankfulness keeps the heart low before God.
- **Accountability:** Seeking input from others to detect signs of a swelling ego.

## **Here's some positive definitions,**

From dictionary.com.. Taking pleasure or satisfaction in something done by or belonging to yourself or believed to reflect credit upon yourself.. "She took pride in her work" for example.

National pride for another example.. "The flag makes him proud of our country" 



A lion pride is a social unit of 2–40 lions, typically consisting of related females, their cubs, and 1–4 resident males. They are the only truly social cats, living in territories where females hunt together and raise cubs cooperatively. Prides face threats from rival lion coalitions, and new males often kill cubs to establish their own lineage. [Wikipedia +4](#)

## Define Humility





## humility

/hyŭo'milədē/

Humility is the quality of being free from pride, arrogance, and self-preoccupation, characterized by an accurate, modest view of one's own importance and abilities. It involves acknowledging personal limitations, valuing others, and having a teachable spirit, often described as thinking of oneself less, rather than thinking less of oneself.



Merriam-Webster +3

The Bible consistently upholds the state of **humility** as a positive virtue. In fact it is presented by Jesus as a *foundation* of the Kingdom of God, as we'll see.

**Can there be a negative side to humility, if taken to the extreme?** First of all, we're not supposed to take anything to the extreme.



As we go along, we'll talk about the fine line between healthy and sinful pride. Taking pride in ourselves, our work, our characters vs arrogance and demeaning other people. We'll also talk about **spiritual pride**, and how it can be catastrophic to your witness, and leave you wide open to deception.

## *The Tight Fingers of Pride*

Pride. When you think of this word, you might picture a proud politician, a rich or famous person, or a peacock. *Pride* is a feeling that you are more important or better than other people. Indeed, pride is a feeling—one that cannot, and should not, be relied upon.

Pride first began with Lucifer, the covering cherub, who was in close service to God. We don't know when or how those thoughts of selfishness crept into his heart, but we do know that these thoughts propelled the universe into what we know as the great controversy. We see that Satan is the opposite of God. (Compare [Isaiah 14:12-14](#) and [Philippians 2:5-11](#).) As a result, our world has battled the consequences of sin ever since Satan planted doubt in Adam and Eve's minds and then tempted them to love and trust self above God.

***Read [1 John 2:15-17](#). What three main points does this passage teach you about pride and loving the world?***

There's no clearer place in the Bible where sinful pride is displayed than the **fall of Lucifer**, that started this mess to begin with,

## Isaiah 14:12-15 KJV

[12] How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! [13] For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: [14] I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. [15] Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Satan fell because of his ambition to be equal with God. He desired to enter into the divine counsels and purposes, from which he was excluded by his own inability, as a created being, to comprehend the wisdom of the Infinite One. It was this **ambitious pride** that led to his rebellion, and by the same means he seeks to cause the ruin of man. [<sup>8</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:702.](#)

**Ambition** is another tricky term. It can



good or bad. When is it good, and when is it bad?

"A strong drive or desire to achieve something, typically involving determination and hard work"

Matthew 6:33 KJV

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

If your ambition is within God's plan and His will for your life, and if you have your priorities straight, it's a good thing!

Example,

1 Timothy 3:1 KJV

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

**Desire** here means to aspire, to strive for. Certainly falling within the common definition of ambition. If your life's



ambition is to bring honor and glory to God, it's good.

But if your **ambition** is selfish in nature, it falls more with Lucifer's prideful ambition. Is God even in the equation of your ambition?

1 John 2:15-17 KJV

[15] Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

[16] 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. [17] And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the **will of God** abideth for ever.

Notice here that there's a clear delineation between worldly pride vs following God's will.

God's will always  
leads His people to  
servanthood.

Luke 22.27, Philippians 2, John  
12.26, John 13, Eph 5.21

The underlying  
character trait of  
servanthood is  
**humility.**

**Can you live a life of servanthood and still be prideful? No, the two are not**

compatible.

Probably the very best example in the Bible contrasting Pride vs Humility is here,

### **Luke 18.9-14** 📖

Notice what evidence the Pharisee used to prove his righteousness.. fasting and tithing. Both are good and biblical, but can also easily be done for an outward show. Notice he didn't say for example "I have forgiven my brother from my heart"

Notice why Jesus says the Pharisee was **not** righteous.. he "despised others" seen in vs 9

Matthew 22:37, 39-40 KJV

[37] Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

[39] And the **second** is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. [40] On these two commandments hang all the

law and the prophets.

He was a **commandment breaker**, which begins in the heart, like we've talked about in Righteousness by Faith.

**Why was the Publican different?** Unlike the Pharisee, who was relying on his own self made righteousness, the Publican saw his *real* sinful condition. Seeing our sinfulness, and our helplessness, *drives* us to a state of humility before a holy God.

Luke 5:8 KJV

When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

Pridefulness is a sure sign you're relying on your OWN righteousness for your salvation.

Matthew 7:21-23 KJV

[21] Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of

heaven; but he that doeth the **will of my Father** which is in heaven. [22] Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? [23] And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

We see the **spiritual pride** in vs 22,



"The voice of a stranger" is the voice of one who neither respects nor obeys God's holy, just, and good law. Many make great pretensions to holiness, and boast of the wonders they perform in healing the sick, when they do not regard this great standard of righteousness. But through whose power are these cures wrought?

If those through whom cures are performed are disposed, on account of these manifestations, to excuse their neglect of the law of God, and continue in disobedience, though they have power to any and every extent, it does not follow that they have the great power of God. On the contrary, it is the miracle-working power of the great deceiver. He is a transgressor of the moral law, and employs every device that he can master to blind men to its true character. We are warned that in the last days he will work with signs and lying wonders. And he will continue these wonders until the close of probation, that he may point to them as evidence that he is an angel of light and not of darkness.—**The Review and Herald, November 17, 1885.**

**Notice they did not say "We have cast out demons through the power of the Holy Ghost"**

# Why is Moses a great example of humility?

TUESDAY ↑

April 14

## *Moses, Humble Servant*

The grand halls of the Egyptian palace boasted of opulence, pleasure, and ease. "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds" ([Acts 7:22](#), NKJV). A life of power, riches, and popularity were his for the taking, yet Moses chose something very different. "As historian, poet, philosopher, general of armies, and legislator, he stands without a peer. Yet with the world before him, he had the moral strength to refuse the flattering prospects of wealth and greatness and fame, 'choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.'" — [Ellen G. White, \*Patriarchs and Prophets\*, p. 246.](#)

***What*** does [Hebrews 11:24-26](#) tell us about why Moses chose a different path and humbled himself?

Hebrews 11:24-26 KJV

[24] By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; [25] choosing rather

to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; [26] esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Moses made a **choice** (it's all about choice) to live a life of self sacrifice and humility, and lead a stubborn people for 40 years! vs a life of ease, wealth and power. Jesus had that same choice,

Matthew 4:8-10 KJV

[8] Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; [9] and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. [10] Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Satan is probably not going to come along

and tempt you into pride by offering you the world. But he does know your personalized weakness. He'll go after that. **But** if you have a firm, unshakable understanding of what true success and greatness in this brief life is all about, he can't touch you. The disciples did not,

WEDNESDAY ↑

April 15

### *The Greatest Offense*

Imagine being a disciple of Jesus. You travel with Him, eat with Him, sleep near Him, and learn from Him as He transforms countless lives, including yours. People clamor after Him, and you realize how special it is that He chose you to be one of the 12 closest to Him. Then you start to wonder: Who really is the greatest of all the disciples?

In [Luke 22:24-27](#), read Jesus' response to the disciples' dispute about what greatness means. What one statement captures the heart of Jesus' message here?

Most of the **parables** of Jesus started with the phrase, "the kingdom of God is like.."



Luke 22:24 KJV

And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

When the disciples were arguing about who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom, they were speaking from **pride** and a fundamental misunderstanding of the kingdom of God. They were thinking in earthly, worldly terms, not spiritual.



The disciples came “unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Many do not realize that by walking humbly with God, we place ourselves in a position where the enemy cannot take advantage of us.... Only when we submit, as willing children, to be trained and disciplined, can God use us to His glory.—**Manuscript 102, 1904.**

**Why is a child the best example for humility?**

**Is this a reasonable expectation for adults?**

**How can you actually DO this?**

Not only is it possible, it's a *requirement*, because the kingdom of God is all about that simple humble faith.

**Luke 22:27 NKJV**

For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

## **The Upside Down Kingdom**

If you pray and ask, God will send you multiple ways to live this principle out in your life.

**It's a fine line between healthy and sinful pride.** The Sabbath School lesson points out a number of the key identifiers, so that you can know if unhealthy pride is in your life,



- ≡ ○ Feelings of superiority.. dominating the conversation for example, never asking questions to learn from others

- ≡ ○ Never admitting you're wrong. Never even entertaining the idea you might be wrong!
- ≡ ○ Needing control of every situation
- ≡ ○ Putting others down.. pointing out their faults, but never considering your own.
- ≡ ○ Never encouraging others
- ≡ ○ Constantly pointing out your accomplishments, but not looking to accomplishments of others