

THE SIN OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

**"Everyone that is proud of heart is an abomination to the Lord."
– Proverbs 16:5.**

PRIDE would seem to be an inordinate and excessive amount of self-esteem or self-conceit. Everyone should have a reasonable amount of self-appreciation, to the extent that he would be able to know what powers he really has, so that he will not be negligent in the use of these. The feeling that would lead one to think he had no ability when he had ability would be an injurious kind of humility, an excessive humility. There are, indeed, differences of talents – some having a larger number and more valuable talents than others. These are to be esteemed and appreciated, but they are not to be a matter of pride.

Some use the word pride incorrectly. They say "I am proud of my family," when they mean, "I rejoice in my family," or, "I am very pleased with my family – I am glad that my family is what it is." To have an inordinate prejudice that would appreciate everything done by one's family or one's friends and depreciate everything done by the family or the friends of another would be wrong. There is no excuse for pride – and especially none for self-conceit. It is generally due to ignorance; although, of course, when due to ignorance, it is the more excusable.

The pride mentioned in our text is not due to ignorance. It is too great an appreciation of self. All such pride, the Lord tells us, is an abomination in His sight. This is not merely that God does not like it, but that there must be a reason why He abhors it. No creature has any real cause for pride. As the Apostle asks, "What have we that we have not received from the Lord?" We have absolutely nothing. If we had ten talents instead of one, our ability would be nothing to be proud of; we did not produce these talents.

On the contrary, they were given to us. But to display the talents or to boast about them would show that we thought they were our own, and that we were proud because of our possession of them.

No man has a right to be proud because of receiving something from another. To that extent he is a debtor, a recipient. In the case of humanity, we are all recipients of the Father's favor. All of the blessings of life – both temporal and spiritual – are of Divine provision for us. And if we have many of these blessings, there is still no occasion for pride. Pride implies a self-sufficiency.

The Scriptures represent Satan as saying that he would like to have an opportunity of displaying his wisdom, his ability. He was confident that he could do something. He did not realize that everything that he had received came from God, and that the one blessed could not rise higher than the Fountain of Blessing. He did not realize that his wisdom and powers were inferior to those of God. Hence, Satan became a transgressor.

We may be sure that if the Lord's people cultivate any heart pride, they have thus a sign that they are not right in the sight of God. Even before they become the Lord's people He has assured them that if they are of a proud heart He will not receive such into His family, will not beget them of the Holy Spirit. Humility is the essential of all who would be of the Lord's family. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." – 1 Peter 5:6; Matthew 23:12.

PRIDE LEADING TO DESTRUCTION

Yet there is a spirit of pride in the world. Some are proud of their ancestors; others are proud of their talents, etc. It would not be good that God should bless those who have any other than a grateful feeling of being a recipient of Divine blessing. In fact, the Time of Trouble that is just upon us is the result of pride. All people seem to be proud. We may not be able to judge of the heart, but we

do know of their attitude – their feeling of self-sufficiency. Each nation feels that theirs is the greatest talent, theirs are the finest guns, theirs the best everything; and it is this feeling of self-sufficiency that led the nations into the present conflict. Some of them express themselves as trusting that the Lord is on their side. They think that the Lord has always favored them – they are so good and so great that God could not help giving them the victory; and under these delusions they have gotten into this great war.

In respect to this great war and all the troubles that will ensue the Scriptures say, "The proud, yea, 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." (Malachi 4:1.) Pride leads into all sorts of mischief. Before the Millennium is over, God will see to it that there will not be a root of pride in the whole earth. So at the end of the Millennium there will be no pride amongst the inhabitants of the earth, but there will be an appreciation of God and of what He has done for mankind. There will be a spirit of thankfulness, gratitude, just as we believe it is in Heaven.

