

“This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you.”

(2 Timothy 1:6, NLT)

You and I are called to constantly “*stir up*” (NKJV) the embers and fuel the fire so we will remain a blazing inferno for Jesus

The fact is that when the fuel of any sort is depleted, fire will eventually go out

If we are going to see the results the early Church in the book of Acts experienced we must be...

People of the Word

Steadfast in Prayer

Embrace the Movement of the Holy Spirit

We Must Burn for Souls

Burning with Praise and Worship

Burning for Holiness

It can describe something that, even though it was once common, it has now become separated, consecrated, holy, and sacred

“And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.” (Romans 6:13, NKJV)

- Never again to be used in a common way
- “*Holy*” is in a category that is separate and sacred from other things

Burning for Humility

Pride is the direct opposite of humility and fatal to our spiritual passion

- We must learn how to identify it and remove it from our lives
- When we walk in true biblical humility it attracts a strong presence of God

What does Pride look like?

“These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.” (Proverbs 6:16–19, NKJV)

- Here is a list of seven deadly sins that God despises
- The very first one listed is Pride
- Pride is so detestable to God that He says *“By pride comes nothing but strife (contention)”*

If you look into all of the struggles, fights, divisions, and wars that have been fought throughout history you will find nearly all of them have their roots in pride – **James 4:1**

- Pride is fatal to man’s spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being
- Often fatal to his physical life
- It is the root of rebellion and is always accompanied by catastrophic results
- This is why God always has been and will always be against pride

Where it all began – The story of Lucifer

““You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.” (Ezekiel 28:14, NKJV)

- The Bible mentions three archangels that God created
- Michael – gives oversight to the heavenly armies
- Gabriel – the message bearer of heaven – God’s spokesman
- Lucifer – *“the anointed cherub who covers”*
- He was to be in the presence of God
- His name means, *“one who reflects light”* – *“light-bearer”*

The primary meaning of his name is not that of one who generates light himself but reflects light from another source

- He was designed like a mirror
- Specially designed to stand in God’s presence and reflect His glory
- If God did not shine on Lucifer he could not shine at all

“You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.” (Ezekiel 28:13, NKJV)

- He was like a glimmering piece of jewelry
- Covered with precious stones
- In the same way light falls on a diamond, God’s divine light reflected off the stones

Just the way we look in the mirror, he was a special mirror enabling God to look upon Himself and enjoy His splendor

Any jeweler will tell you that jewels only sparkle in the light and are invisible in the dark

- It is only in the light that the luster of a gem comes alive
- So it was true with Lucifer

““You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.”

(Ezekiel 28:14–15, NKJV)

- Something transpired inside Lucifer that was devastating to his God-assigned status as God’s mirror
- Somewhere along the way, he lost sight of the fact that he was only a mirror
- He began to nurse the notion that he was generating his own radiance
- Iniquity was found in Lucifer when he became self-focused and self-impressed
- He forgot he was only a mirror

““By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you.”

(Ezekiel 28:16–17, NKJV)

Lucifer didn't keep his pride and rebellion to himself

- As rebels always do he spread poison around through whispering words of insurrection
- His claims were so seductive that some angels were swept into the whirlwind of his seditious words
- Their affirmation only intensified the rebellion that swirled around within him

Lucifer became so enamored with himself that he lost sight of the fact that he was only a mirror

- He began to believe he was generating his own radiance

He merchandised himself, trying to sell his idea to the other angels in joining him in his insurrection against God

He became convinced that he deserved more power and authority – even the position of God Himself

Ultimately he gathered a group of angels and attempted to dethrone God and seize His position

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’” (Isaiah 14:12–14, NKJV)

The time had come and God put an end to Lucifer's rebellion
"Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. "Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?'"

(Isaiah 14:15–17, NKJV)

- The pride that was festering in Lucifer's heart was squashed in one moment
- God cast him and the other angels who followed him out of His presence
- The light went out and Lucifer was moved into outer darkness
- Satan has ever since been a doomed creature that functions in spiritual darkness
- The ultimate punishment for an angel created to live in the light of God's glory

"And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." **(Luke 10:18, NKJV)**

God is patient by nature and always gives time to repent, however, if one refuses to repent there comes a time when God says, *"Enough, I'm finished!"*

The devil has always been a master of mind manipulation
He knows how to penetrate minds with doubts, questionings, or thoughts of perceived wrongs

- He blows everything out of proportion
- He targets his victims until they become fully ensnared in bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness

From the time he was kicked out of Heaven until the present day, Satan has been operating in darkness in a vain attempt to regain the glory he lost

- He works through society, culture, and entertainment
- He strives to get people to worship him
- Praying o the hearts and minds of selfish men and women whose hearts are bent toward evil
- He continues to attempt to steal God’s glory
- His attempts will always be in vain
- He will forever be eliminated from his exalted position because of pride

Absalom was eliminated because of pride

When David was king of Israel, his throne shone gloriously for decades

- He had a son named Absalom
- David loved him and shared the glory of the kingdom with him
- Absalom became well known in the kingdom because of his close position to his father
- He became a “*mirror*” that reflected his father’s glory

Absalom’s future became very bright, but in reality, if he had not been David's son, he would likely have remained virtually unknown

- Gradually Absalom began to follow the same path as Lucifer
- He forgot that his position only mirrored his father’s glory
- He became self-impressed, deluded, and deceived

“Moreover Absalom would say, “Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.” And so it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him. In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”

(2 Samuel 15:4–6, NKJV)

- Absalom was disgruntled with his father
- He thought David had dealt incorrectly regarding the matter of Amnon and Tamar
- He began to bond with other disgruntled people who also had something against the king

Bitter people have a knack for gravitating towards other bitter people

- This is what happened with Absalom and others
- As they came together and shared their grievances they created the illusions that they were right and justified in their shared bitter feelings

Like Lucifer, Absalom tried to exalt himself over his father

- In the end, he was eliminated because of his pride

While leading an insurrection against his father’s throne, he was riding a horse and became caught by his long hair in the breaches of an oak tree

- He was then tragically stabbed to death by one of David's men
- Absalom should have been grateful for the privileged position that had been granted him
- Ingratitude and pride ultimately resulted in his elimination

Judas Iscariot was eliminated because of his own pride

“But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, who would betray Him, said,” ““Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.”

(John 12:4–6, NKJV)

- Mary had just anointed Jesus’ feet
- Judas was the treasurer of Jesus’ ministry
- Because of this position he probably enjoyed a greater degree of personal attention from Jesus
- This would have caused him to be well known and enjoy a good name in the sight of others
- If he would not have been given this position, it is likely his name would never have been known among the people

Over time Judas’ privileged position went to his head
He fell into the trap of thinking more of himself than he should have

- Day by day, little by little, Satan pounded Judas’ mind with thoughts of ingratitude
- His heart became filled with pride

Finally, there came a moment of disagreement between Judas and Jesus, and things didn’t go the way Judas thought they should

- At that moment, offense entered Judas’ heart
- Pride gave birth to betrayal

“Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.”

(John 12:1–3, NKJV)

- Martha showed her love by serving
- Lazarus showed his love by spending time at the table with Jesus
- Mary showed her love by anointing Jesus with expensive perfume
- Different people express their love in different ways

Spikenard was one of the most expensive perfumes that existed at that time

- It was uncommon
- It was extracted from grasses that grew in India
- The oils were squeezed out of the grass and dried into a lardlike substance
- Turning that substance into perfume was very costly
- Add to that the cost of transportation from India to Israel
- It was so expensive that very few people could afford it
- Most would have to buy cheap imitations
- Mary didn't bring a *“cheap imitation”* she brought Jesus *“the real thing”*

An ointment so valuable it was normally reserved and used as gifts for kings and nobility

The Bible says that the ointment was “*very costly*”

- Very – much or great
- Costly – honor or respect, or to attribute worth to something

Used together – something that is of great worth or considerable financial value

It's remarkable that Mary even possessed something so costly and valuable

- What's even more remarkable is what she did with it
- She poured it all out on Jesus' feet!

“How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, “Your God reigns!”” (Isaiah 52:7, NKJV)

- No other feet in the entire world were more beautiful than the feet of Jesus
- Jesus had utterly transformed her life and brought her brother back from the dead
- For Mary, every step that Jesus took was precious, honored, and greatly treasured

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Luke 12:34, NKJV)

- She poured out her most valuable treasure on the feet of Jesus
- She reached up and untied her long, beautiful hair and gathered it in her hands
- Then she leaned down and began to wipe Jesus' feet dry with her hair

The devil used Mary's act of humility and love toward Jesus to create an opportunity for prideful thoughts of bitterness, resentment, and offense to invade Judas' mind

- Mary's gift would have been almost a year's worth of a person's salary
- Jesus presented Judas how this gift was in line with God's greater plan
- He was offering him a way of escape from the trap of offense
- Judas didn't accept it

“But Jesus said, “Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.”” (John 12:7–8, NKJV)

- Jesus regularly demonstrated His love for the poor
- Of course, He cared for the poor
- To those who didn't have a heavenly perspective, it could have seemed like a waste of money
- Thoughts of offense and betrayal were probably racing through Judas' mind

“And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,”

(John 13:2, NKJV)

- Judas looks for a way to hand Jesus over to the Jewish leaders
- Perhaps he thought, *“I know better than You, Jesus, and I'm going to take charge and orchestrate events the way I think they need to be.”*

It wasn't long before pride took over Judas' heart and he sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver

- In the end, pride produced its harvest
- Judas was eliminated
- In every case in scripture where pride is in operation and the person doesn't repent, that person is eventually eliminated
- Lucifer – Absalom – Judas
- Countless others throughout history
- Anyone can be eliminated when pride goes unchecked

Pride is fatal — and we should hate it

We should also know how to identify it

- Prideful people think too highly of themselves
- Prideful people get easily offended (because they think they are not recognized properly or treated well enough)
- Prideful people usually come to a place of rebellion against authority
- Prideful people are ultimately eliminated and then often blame it on others

When pride is working in us, Satan's ultimate goal is to see that we make destructive choices and behaviors that will lead to our elimination from our God-appointed positions

“Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:18, NKJV)

Don't let pride get you stuck in its poisonous thought pattern that inevitably leads to dissatisfaction

This kind of toxic thinking will set you up for possible elimination in God's plan for your life

- I'm not appreciated around here
- They really should pay me more for all that I do
- I make this company look good
- I don't get the appreciation I deserve
- I will – I will – I will

“But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”” (James 4:6, NKJV)

- Proud – *“a person who has an exaggerated opinion of himself and his own importance”*
- Resists – *“a deliberate, premeditated arrangement of military might to crush an enemy”*

God is patient with everyone and will always give us time to repent and self-correct

- He is against pride – He resists it!
- No one wants to be found on the other side of being resisted by God

“But gives grace to the humble.”

- Humble – to make small, to reduce one's self-importance
- A person who has a modest view of himself rather than an exaggerated view
- This pictures a person who was formerly arrogant but has changed his attitude to become humble

For by the grace (unmerited favor of God) given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate *and* think of himself more highly than he ought [not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him.

Romans 12:3, AMPC

- To be humble doesn't mean that we berate or depreciate ourselves

It means we don't think too highly or have an exaggerated view of who we are, of what we have, or the accomplishments we have achieved

“But gives grace to the humble.”

- Grace – *“A divine touch that transforms an individual and gives him the ability to do what he could not do before”*
- An inward change that produces outward evidence
- Grace empowers you to have victory over sin
- Grace enables you to control your tongue
- It will transform you and influence changes in your behavior

If you say, *“I don't think I have a problem with pride”*, that in and of itself might be a sign that you do

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.”

(Psalm 51:17, NKJV)

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.” **(James 4:10, NKJV)**