

## Commendable Pride?

- A. pride: The quality of being proud. A high or overweening opinion of one's own qualities, attainments, or estate, which gives rise to a feeling and attitude of superiority over and contempt for others; inordinate self-esteem.
- B. Scripture has plenty of condemnation of human pride.
1. It will bring a man low. **PRO 29:23.**
  2. It will bring shame. **PRO 11:2.**
  3. It is the basis of contention. **PRO 13:10.**
  4. It is the prelude to destruction. **PRO 16:18.**
  5. God resists the proud. **JAM 4:6.**
  6. "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy..." (**PRO 8:13**).
- C. Have you ever heard statements like these?:
1. "I'm proud to be an American."
  2. "I'm thankful that I am not as other men..." **LUK 18:11.**
    - a. Paul was once impressed by his blamelessness. **PHIL 3:6-7.**
    - b. To blame is to censure (an action, or a person for his action).
    - c. One may be blameless in that he has not violated a code of conduct.
    - d. One may also be blameless (technically) if he was not caught for a violation, or if he was wrongfully acquitted of a violation.
    - e. Sinners can never truly claim blamelessness before God, as Paul found. **ROM 7:7.**
  3. "I'm proud of my record/accomplishments/abilities/gifts/knowledge, etc." But see **1CO 4:7; 8:1-2.**
  4. "I'm proud of you, son/daughter." Be careful with this one. Don't let a sense of thankfulness and appreciation for good character be an inlet to sin.
- D. One's heart may be *lifted up* positively or negatively. **2CH 17:6 c/w 2CH 26:16; 32:25.**
1. The Hebrew word (*gabahh*, H1361) translated "lifted up" in **2CH 17:6; 26:16; 32:25** is rendered "haughty" in **PSA 131:1; PRO 18:12; ISA 3:16; EZE 16:50; ZEP 3:11** and "proud" in **JER 13:15.**
  2. With a little leeway, Jehoshaphat may be said to have been "proud" in a positive sense in the Hebrew. But this is a stretch.
  3. We read of not glorying in one's own abilities or achievements but rather *glorying in the Lord*. **JER 9:23-24 c/w 1CO 1:27-31; 2CO 10:15-18.**
  4. Paul also spoke of glorying in the cross of Christ (**GAL 6:14**) and of a *confident boasting*. **2CO 11:10-17.**
    - a. The verb "glory" means, "to exult with triumph, rejoice proudly."
    - b. Paul was "proud" of Christ, His blood, His cross, His grace, His gospel.
    - c. Paul was decidedly not ashamed of the gospel. **ROM 1:16.**
    - d. There is a considerable difference between glorying in oneself and glorying in the flawless, incorruptible God and His works.
- E. What about **PSA 31:23** where it is said that the LORD "...plentifully rewardeth the proud doer"?
1. Is this a commendable pride, along the lines of Jehoshaphat (**2CH 17:6**) or of Paul's confidence of boasting (**2CO 11:17**)?
    - a. Could it be said that this reward is to the likes of Paul for his unabashed dedication to Christ in duty, per **2TI 4:7-8**?
    - b. Could this refer to the greater reward for faithfulness in small things? **MAT 25:20-23.**
  2. Considering what we have already seen, the text is at best ambiguous, and therefore not a proof text for the conclusion that God is commending pride here.

3. God not only rewards faithfulness, He also rewards sinners.  
**DEU 32:41; ISA 3:11; PRO 26:10.**
    - a. The self-promoting Pharisees already had their reward. **MAT 6:2, 5, 16.**
    - b. The vain rich fool was even *plentifully* rewarded. **LUK 12:16.**
    - c. The Psalmist was perplexed at the prosperity of the wicked. **PSA 73:3-12.**
    - d. But these rewards go no further than this life. **LUK 12:20.**
  4. In context, the *proud doer* of **PSA 31:23** is the wicked. **vs. 18-20.**
    - a. The text sets forth a contrast between two classes: the faithful and the proud.
    - b. This is not an uncommon contrast. **JOH 5:28-29; ROM 2:6-11.**
- F. Soteriology which affirms God's indebtedness to the sinner is full of excluded pride.  
**ROM 3:27; 4:4.**
1. The assumption of the false creditors on Judgement Day is that they deserve good reward.  
**MAT 7:21-23**
  2. The response of the redeemed in that day will be akin to bewilderment, not demand.  
**MAT 25:34-39.**
- G. Be thankful when God dispenses gifts with thorns. **2CO 12:7.**