

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Gospel Fluency

TITLE: Pride

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2:5-9

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The word *gospel* means Good News. When we read the word gospel in the Bible and in most other places, we know that it is referring to the Good News about Jesus. The idea of fluency is used most often in relation to being able to speak two or more languages. Yet the word fluent means to be able to express oneself easily and articulately, not necessarily just in foreign languages. So, when we talk about *gospel fluency* this summer, we are talking about being able to express and communicate the Good News about Jesus easily and articulately to yourself and others.

SUMMARY: Pride is a little hard to define. It is one of those unique words which is defined by itself. We all seem to have a general understanding of what it is. We know it when we see it, we can identify it, and we can feel it. There are common ways of defining it and spiritual ways. But if we were to break it down I believe there would be two tangible categories of pride:

Front Door Pride

This is the type of pride that we most often think of when we think of the word. It is invasive and obvious. It walks in right through the front door, unannounced. This is a boastful and arrogant pride. It is a posture that puts oneself above others in every imaginable way. It judges, assumes the worst, and looks down upon others, all the while never being able to see its own faults and shortcomings. This is the pride that is blinding and fills the owner with air so they are puffed up and short sighted in their worldview. It rarely sacrifices, never serves, and love is always defined by the giver.

Backdoor Pride

This version of pride is elusive and camouflaged. It is perhaps even more dangerous, too, because it is often misinterpreted as humility. This kind of pride slips in through the backdoor, unnoticed, but before long takes up residence. This is a pride that is ruled by 'insecurities'. But you will tell me, "Insecurities are not prideful, they are struggles." That is why this version is so deceptive. Insecurities are just that: IN-securities. All of the focus goes inward. Life is still all about you. Doubt is the fuel of our insecurities, most of which revolve around self-image and self-worth. But if we apply the words of God to our hearts and let them wash over us we quickly discover that we were created in the image of God and have been given unfathomable worth through Jesus. Our insecurities melt away at the faithful embrace of truth and love. Yet, we hold on, clinging to them for fear of letting them go. Instead of placing our security in the immovable rescuer, Jesus, we place it in ourselves, hence, our insecurities.

Context of Philippians 2:5-9: This is an unusual writing style for Paul. It is far more poetic in its cadence and therefore many believe this to be one of the earliest Christian hymns that Paul is weaving into his letter to the Philippians.

To really get the gist of it we need to read it in sequence starting in verse 1.

Verse 5: *Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus.*

- Paul is asking us, in light of verses one through four to indeed have that mindset. This verse seems to be a “two in one” verse. We find something we are commanded to do (have this mindset), but simultaneously are told that it is already ours through our union with Christ. Paul is declaring in one statement “this is yours so make it yours.” Paul is pointing us to Jesus as both the modeler and giver of what this looks like.

Verse 6 & 7: *Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.*

- These two verses display so clearly the unthinkable humility of Jesus. Though Jesus was God, he did not cling tightly to that status. Ever faithful to the Father, he emptied himself or made himself nothing. This is not to be understood as Jesus ceasing to be God, but rather that he gave up his rights as God. It was love that drove him to the cross. It was love that drove him to take on the form of man – to become one of us. These verses reveal that he who is entitled to everything, became that which serves everyone. God became a servant.

Verse 8 & 9: *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name.*

- The counterpoint to Jesus divine glory was the degrading suffering found in the cross. No other method, no other form of death was as low as the cross. The highest of Kings had become the lowest of servants. And yet it is in this movement in which God exalts Jesus and given him the highest of all possible names. In the currency of the Kingdom God brings up those who are low and lowers those who are high. The humble will be exalted and the proud will be humbled.

BIG IDEA: What really is pride? Simply put it can be thought of like this: anything opposite of what we see in Jesus at the cross.

For Discussion —

1. Where in your life are you prideful? Where does it creep in? Why?
2. Personally, what is the most difficult thing about maintaining humility?
3. Think about your everyday life. What are the things you think you’re “entitled” to. Why are these things hard to lay down and how is that connected with pride?
4. When is it the toughest for you to have the mindset of Jesus?
5. From this message, how are you encouraged to think differently about how God sees you? How you see God?
6. What are other ways to do Gospel Fluency as it pertains to your pride?