

What Unhealthy Pride Looks Like

Subtle Signs of Pride in your Co-workers, Spouse, Family, Church Staff and Everybody Else Around You

The Secretly Proud Person

By Ronald McDonald

A friend told me the other day that I'm a very prideful man, and I said to myself, "Dude's just jealous". So I told my wife what he said and she said, "Ah, come on. You're a humble man. Seriously. You're not cocky and flashy and arrogant and all that." But later that same week, I was reading a book that said the most prideful people aren't usually the bragging arrogant types. They're the nice friendly helpful ones at work.

That got me to thinking that maybe my definition of pride wasn't very complete. Now I really wondered, What are examples of pride? So, I googled "Signs of pride list" and "Spiritual pride" and couldn't believe what I found. I was all over the list. I read about 40 articles and lists written by well-known psychologists, theologians, pastors and even the Wikipedia entry and consolidated them all here. I put them into 4 groups; **Pride of Spirituality, Pride of Knowledge, Pride of Power and Pride of Appearance**. So I went back to my wife and said, "Hey honey, I think I found out the root of all of our problems in marriage and work and ministry and all that. ME!!! I'm the problem. Listen to this list of signs of pride that I found." I started reading my list to her and she laughed and said, "Wow! You are prideful. I didn't know that's what pride looked like." So I asked her to pray for me. And then said, "Oh, and there were some other signs that I found on the list." Her jaw dropped as I read hers. She said, "Oh no! I didn't realize I was so prideful either. Will you pray for me too?"

God had been resisting me. It was like his palm was firmly planted in my forehead as I walked through life and it was really uncomfortable. And it was constant. He doesn't bodyslam the proud, he just resists them, but he gives grace (free gifts that we didn't deserve or earn, unmerited favor) to the humble. Could it be that God is resisting you in your relationships or business or church or whatever area of your life? Only by pride comes contention.

There are about 24 different categories one could be prideful in. Most people are pretty humble in most categories and just prideful in one or two. You'll see your relatives, spouse, boss, employees, friends and president all over this list. But don't forget this. Pride is one of the most destructive and heinous sins you can commit.

My dad used to say, "The reason we shouldn't sin isn't because the Bible says not to or because it's wrong or because we could get caught or because it could mess up our future or because we'll miss out on blessings. **No! We should try not to sin because it hurts our relationship with God.**

Ever heard this? "Yeah, maybe I've got a little pride. But if you want to get along with me you've just got to grow a pair. It's just the way I am and you'll just have to deal with it". For you to know you have even a little bit of pride and not care about it, is to raise your fist in God's face and say, "Hey God, I don't care that I'm regularly walking and living in this sin of pride and I'm okay with not having all that great of a relationship with you either". If that's you, then watch out. God is resisting you and you have some humiliation coming, which is the process of becoming humble, because he loves you and those around you so much. **"God opposes, resists, abhors, tears down, brings down, has scattered, is scornful to, reprimands, will punish, is angry at, every arrogant person, those who have a proud look, those whose pride wells up, arrogant scoffers. "The prideful man – will be brought low, humiliated, disgraced, doomed, destroyed, humbled, will not go unpunished, was deposed from his royal throne and his honor was removed."** Prov 3:34, 11:2, 16:5, 15:25, 29:23, Ps. 18:27, 101:5, 119:21, Is. 2:11, 12, 10:12, 2 Chr. 32:25, Dan. 5:20, Luke 1:51, James 4:6. This is a really serious thing.

We'll never conquer pride, but if we know what it looks like when it flares up, we can knock it back down before too much damage is done. If people can't recognize what the signs of cancer look like, then they'll never know they need help. I hope this list helps you understand what pride looks like as much as it's helped me.

How They Define Pride

Our SELF or Ego is basically who we are as a person. It's not good or bad, it's just what makes us, us. Unhealthy pride happens when we do or say things for the purpose of people praising our SELF or for making our SELF feel good or putting our SELF ahead of someone else's SELF. Pride wants our SELF to be praised, get glory, be worshiped and be highly talked about, even when we're not in the room. Unhealthy pride can give us an elevated view of our own SELF that is not accurate, but we truly start to believe it and act to reinforce what we've come to believe as true. And when someone questions or challenges the view of our SELF as not accurate, the fireworks begin.

Here are some of the definitions of pride I found

- Pride is being SELF-ish
- Thinking excessively about SELF
- Pride's base is too much SELF-love
- Thinking the worth of our SELF is higher than it actually is
- SELF-worship
- Preoccupation with our image or SELF
- Pride is narcissism (in love with our image or SELF)
- Pride is SELF-centered or EGO-centric (everything revolves around us)
- Pride wants to keep the focus on SELF
- SELF-ness

"Satan disguises submission to himself under the ruse of personal autonomy. He never asks us to become his servants. Never once did the serpent say to Eve, 'I want to be your Master'. The shift in commitment is never from Christ to evil; it is always from Christ to self. And instead of his will, self-interest now rules and what I want reigns. And that is the essence of sin." - Dennis F. Kinlaw (1922 - 2017)

"Instead of being motivated by SELF-ish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility (THE OPPOSITE OF PRIDE OR SELF-ISH), be moved to treat one another as more important than your SELF. Each should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well." Philippians 2:3-4

"Jesus said to him, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as you love your SELF. All the law and the prophets depend on these two commandments' " Matthew 22:37-39

"Love is patient, love is kind, it is not envious. Love does not brag, it is not puffed up. It is not rude, it is not SELF-serving, it is not easily angered or resentful." (All the negatives are symptoms of pride) | Corinthians 13:4-5

The same list of examples of what pride looks like, is here twice, one after the other. The first list immediately below does not have much explanation attached to the signs of pride. Further down the page is the same list, but with a much fuller explanation of each sign of pride with some links to deeper explanations. If you don't agree, then google "pride defensiveness" or "pride depression" or "pride low self esteem" or "pride critical" to learn why so many people consider it a sign of pride. But be careful not to judge a person's heart because of their actions or words. You can't always tell. A friend of mine, who is a huge servant and genuinely humble, told me that when he serves others, he usually thinks to himself, "I sure hope they feel cared for and loved". But now and then he serves and says, "I bet they think I'm quite the servant. I bet they think I'm humble". Don't try to play God and judge the heart.

Pride of Spirituality

Try really hard to confirm the fact that they're spiritual

Asceticism - They reject money, pleasure, joy, fame or possessions (They mistakenly think God likes that)

1. Brag about how NOT materialistic they are
2. Excessively give away nice possessions or money that God gives them
3. Tell everyone, "I gave up a high paying career to do this ministry"
4. Make excuses for the physical blessings in their life
5. Look down their SELF righteous noses at the wealthy or successful

Super Christians

1. Spiritualize every conversation
2. Speak with a different accent or voice about spiritual stuff
3. Think they're more spiritual or righteous than others around them
4. Feel morally superior
5. Despise and detest sinners
6. Insist on having certain roles in the church that they're disqualified or not qualified for, just to prove to people that they're spiritual
7. Talk a lot about their spiritual gift of apostle or prophet, but not about the less public ones
8. Talk about how much they pray
9. Look down on or badmouth Christians or other denominations who believe differently than they do about spiritual gifts
10. Talk about their fasting SO THAT people know they're fasting ***"When you fast, do not look sullen like the hypocrites, for they make their faces unattractive SO THAT people will see them fasting. I tell you the truth, they have their reward."*** Matthew 6:16

Prayer isn't from the heart ***"Whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray while standing in synagogues and on street corners SO THAT people can see them. Truly I say to you, they have their reward."*** Matthew 6:5

1. Rehearse or spruce up their public prayers using different words and phrases that they would never say when praying alone
2. Talk to the people when they say they are praying to God. ie. Give mini-sermonettes, remind the audience of the week's schedule, etc.
3. Say, "I'll pray for that" when they absolutely have no intention of praying for it. But it sounds spiritual for sure.

False Humility - Humility is seeing yourself and what you do the way it actually is. Pride is not seeing yourself or what you do the way it actually is.

1. Don't accept compliments, but instead say, "Thank you but no. It was all God" (If it were all God, it would have been WAY better than you did it)
2. Say that they're lower and worse than everyone else
3. Tell you that they're humble, "In my humble opinion"

Pride of Knowledge

Try really hard to confirm the fact that they're smart

Unteachable

1. Get irritated if someone tries to teach them something
2. Know it all
3. Answer "I know, I know" or "Yeah, I already knew that"

4. Too smart for a formal education or training. "But what could I learn?"

Highly opinionated

1. Often interrupt people mid-sentence "I don't mean to interrupt, but..."
2. Finish other people's sentences "I know what you're going to say. You were going to say..."
3. Often try to prove people wrong
4. If questioned they say, "Don't you think I know what I'm doing?"
5. Don't listen to the ideas or wisdom of those they lead
6. Use big words and then explain them to you
7. Despise and detest people of other political beliefs

Defensive when corrected or criticized - If you ever get defensive in marriage, then you have pride and it has to be dealt with. We think the best defense is a great offense when our pride is hurt. "With pride comes only contention..." Proverbs 13:10

1. Attack back when questioned or confronted about a mistake or wrong
2. Struggle admitting a wrong
3. Defend their kids and attack anyone who addresses their kid's wrong behavior (because they think it reflects bad on them)
4. Refuse to or are slow to say, "I was wrong. Will you forgive me?"
5. Blame everyone else but themselves
6. Set up excuses in advance so it isn't their fault
7. Lie or make up excuses when corrected or criticized
8. Say things like, "Everybody makes mistakes. Heck, you make mistakes too"

Argumentative - Just have to be right

1. Don't discuss differences to learn, just to show off how much they know
2. "Told you so". Remind you about when they were right and you were wrong
3. Get the last word
4. Argue strange, hard to defend beliefs or doctrines to impress with their intellect

Critical - Highlight other's flaws to make their SELF feel better

1. Quick to correct or criticize spouses, kids, pastors and other leaders
2. Criticize with no intention of building up or improving the situation
3. Harsh teasing to tear down
4. Negative and complain a lot
5. Don't show much mercy
6. Mean spirited

Pride of Power

Try really hard to confirm the fact that they're capable. "But once he became powerful, his pride destroyed him. He disobeyed the LORD his God..." 2 Chronicles 26:16

Controlling - Being obeyed gives their SELF a nice feeling, sense of power

1. Excessively taking care of and shielding their older children
2. Pay the consequences for their kid's irresponsibility
3. Manipulate to keep their adult children close
4. Try to control or sway their adult children's marriages
5. Use women and keep them hanging on
6. Throw their wedding ring, threaten to boycott events, scream, threaten divorce, withhold affection or hit

Legalistic - Control through excessive rules - their SELF feels really nice when they are obeyed

1. Don't want kids to rebel mostly so that the parent's SELF or Image isn't tarnished
2. Must have the appearance of spirituality in strict dress codes and grooming
3. King James Version is the only version you can read (huge red flag)
4. Hold to a few chosen Old Testament laws
5. No movies with magic in them, no alcohol, cigars, dancing, playing cards, secular music, tattoos, piercings, no Halloween and absolutely no work on Sundays (except for pastors and church staff, of course)

Won't submit - It makes their SELF falsely feel inferior if they have a positional leader, though it has nothing to do with wisdom, knowledge or ability.

1. Want the autonomy to decide how to live their life, so won't submit or surrender to God. ***“God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. So submit to God. But resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.” James 4:5-8***
2. Hate being told to do anything
3. Will submit in the little things, but not in the big things
4. Church members won't submit to church leaders
5. Citizens won't submit to government
6. Wives won't submit to husbands
7. Children won't submit to parents
8. Employees won't submit to employers. They like to spell BOSS backwards. Double S-O-B

Self Reliant - Don't want or think they need guidance, help or wisdom from God or man. *“When they were fed, they became satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud; as a result, they forgot me!” Hosea 13:6*

1. Independence
2. Fear or worry a lot because they depend on their own abilities
3. Hate to rely on others
4. Think their abilities are superior to others
5. Don't let others make decisions
6. Are bothered when a decision is made without them
7. Don't see much need for prayer
8. Willing to help, but not be helped
9. Willing to financially support, but can't ask for support
10. Rarely say the words “Thank you” to God or man ***“But Hezekiah was ungrateful; he had a proud attitude, provoking God to be angry at him...” 2 Chronicles 32:25***

Excessive need for credit, praise or admiration

1. Hungry to be made mention of for accomplishments, service or selflessness
2. Lie about events or accomplishments, way beyond embellishing a story to make it fun
3. Lie to take credit for things they didn't do
4. Don't give compliments or credit to whom it is due
5. Hate sharing the spotlight
6. Shoot down or don't share other people's good ideas

Importance - They feel that the value of their SELF grows with accomplishments, status, wealth or success. *“By your great skill in trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart is proud because of your wealth.” Ezekiel 28:5*

1. People who exploit others to get rich i.e. Health and wealth televangelists, those who prey on the elderly's money etc.
2. Think their worth to God is based on their sacrifices of time, family or money
3. Think that everybody needs their help

Workaholic - believes work gives their SELF more worth

1. Believe that the value of their SELF is based on performance
2. Obsessed with praise for their discipline, schedule, productivity or busyness
3. Love the feeling of their SELF being praised and built up more than they care about the SELF of their kids who don't believe their SELF is worth much anymore
4. Work long hours doing work of 2 - 3 people. Often called a Workhorse or a Machine
5. Serve or work so much that it hurts their family relationships
6. Volunteers for everything
7. Hungry to be depended on
8. Can't say no
9. People pleaser
10. Can't set boundaries
11. Addicted to power and control
12. Don't delegate much

Grandiosity - Think they are superior to the common man, in their essence, to the point that some even believe they are god-like

1. Condescending and disdainful attitude toward people because of their tastes being inferior to theirs in food, restaurants, sports, movies and other likes and dislikes
2. Look down their noses, demeans, belittles, intimidates, bullies others who's likes or dislikes differ from their own superior ones
3. Have an unrealistic sense of, and sustained view of, their own SELF as better than other people
4. Have a strong sense of personal uniqueness or coolness
5. Believe that few people have anything in common with their SELF
6. Believe that their SELF can only be understood by very few and special people

Boastful and arrogant "*Proud men will be brought low, arrogant men will be humiliated...*" Isaiah 2:11

1. Overly materialistic hoping people will think more highly of their SELF
2. Skillfully brag about their successful ministry, in a humble sounding way
3. Hint around at their success
4. Claim that they're a genius or one of the best ever or one of the best on their team
5. Talk a lot about their importance, status, accomplishments, possessions, education, title, position, credentials or financial status
6. Name drop the high-status people they associate with
7. Surround themselves with good looking or successful people
8. Think certain tasks would lower their image or value of their SELF
9. Think they're above certain tasks
10. Feel entitled to high treatment
11. Feel superior to or are prejudiced towards less wealthy, refined, educated or less successful people or those from a different country or culture

Inconvenience others - the world revolves around their SELF. Self-centered, ego-centric, self-absorbed

1. Feel powerful when people have to wait on them. I often wonder if people who drive slow in the fast lane and won't let people pass are just jerks or just ignorant
2. Regularly make everyone wait on them to get to the meeting so they can start
3. Inconsiderate. Don't consider other people's time

Not interested in other people

1. Rarely ask questions of others because they're more interested in their SELF than in the SELF of others
2. Dominate conversations talking about their SELF thinking or how much they know SO THAT we're impressed with their SELF
3. Rarely compliment people
4. Wait to be served instead of serve

5. Neglect others
6. Not generous
7. Abandon their family to pursue their own SELF feeling good

Low SELF-esteem or SELF-worth - Humility is seeing your own SELF the way it actually is. Pride is not seeing your own SELF the way it actually is

1. Constantly thinking of their SELF and what others think about it
2. Feel inferior
3. Think they're not worthy of a good spouse or job
4. Constantly dating abusive people
5. SELF-loathing
6. Believe that people don't like them
7. Avoid successful or attractive people
8. Put their SELF down so that others affirm and build them up
9. Often say that they're ugly
10. Make excuses for their nationality "but I'm of European descent"
11. Self-conscious for lack of education, beauty, social or economic status
12. Don't share their shortcomings or needs

Depression - There are a lot of legitimate medical and traumatic reasons for depression. Focus on SELF and believing what's not true about their SELF is a very common one. Pride is a major cause of depression for hundreds of millions of people (much more about why this is here, on the second list)

Shyness - this isn't about introvert or extrovert

1. Overly concerned with others opinions of their SELF
2. Social isolation
3. Are afraid of not being liked
4. Are afraid of being criticized
5. Are afraid of being rejected again
6. Are afraid of embarrassing themselves

Highly Sensitive

1. Read into innocent remarks as demeaning, threatening or critical
2. Can't laugh at themselves when they do something funny
3. Can't accept good natured teasing
4. Have a hard time forgiving
5. Are offended when their idea, ability or motive is questioned
6. Quick to be angry

Envious - think that when others have things they don't, it makes their SELF look bad. *"For where there is jealousy and SELF-ishness, there is disorder and every evil practice..."* James 3:16-17

1. Constantly compare themselves to others
2. Bothered when someone equal to them has success
3. Wants other people's status symbols to make their SELF look better
4. Sabotage those close to them so good things or success won't happen
5. Believe other people are envious of them

Pride of Appearance

Try really hard to impress people with their looks or physique - Synonyms - Narcissistic, SELF-love, Conceited, SELF-glorification, Egotistic, SELF-worship. *"Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom on account of your splendor..."* Ezekiel 28:17 Though it is important that we do the best with the hand we were dealt, especially for our spouse.

1. Feel their appearance gives their SELF more worth
2. Think their beauty makes their SELF superior to others
3. Flaunt their figure/physique so others will praise them
4. Spend excessive time on hair, clothing, weight, body shape to impress
5. Anorexia or bulimia
6. Work hard to avoid the appearance of aging
7. Often post photos or videos of themselves exercising
8. Spend excessive time for their SELF to look good while neglecting family

Two things to remember:

1. Don't shoot the messenger. I'm just reporting the facts, ma'am. These signs of pride are what I found and copied down and then consolidated here for your reading pleasure. Most were on several of the lists.

2. If you only saw your SELF in a couple of places on this list, then you just have a little bit of cancer. You need to be desperate for treatment. Everyone is infected with Pride. Don't be okay with it. This is serious.

“But then Hezekiah and the residents of Jerusalem humbled themselves and abandoned their pride, and the LORD was not angry with them for the rest of Hezekiah’s reign.” 2 Chronicles 32:26

“if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. NOW my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place.” 2 Chronicles 7:14-15

“Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you.” James 4:5

“But one who is humble, has a lowly spirit, will gain honor, wisdom, be exalted, shown favor, be listened to, receive grace” (free gifts that we don’t deserve or earn. Unmerited favor) Proverbs 3:34, 29:23, 11:2, James 4:5, 10, 2 Chronicles 7:14

Don’t Miss This. Super Important

“The sacrifices God desires are a humble spirit - O God, a humble and repentant heart you will not reject.” Psalm 51:17

God is not after your perfect behavior. He is after a humble spirit and a contrite heart. I looked up what the word “contrite” meant and it said, “repentant or remorseful”. When my wife and I read the list and saw ourselves on it in some places, we immediately pleaded with God to help us keep our pride down and be more humble. We don’t want it at all and we are really sorry that we have been so prideful for so long. And now we question ourselves all the time, “Is what I’m about to say or what I just said, prideful? Because we really don’t want to be prideful, even though we still act pridefully. But a lot less. This is exactly what God wants from us. A humble spirit and a contrite heart.

“For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.’” – Isaiah 57:15

Three Pride Illustrations

Fighter in the Ring

We are in a fight with Prideman, a 600 lb 1% body fat former Navy Seal, who has us by the ankles slamming us down over and over again. It's a tag team match and God is reaching his hand in there for us to tag so he can fight for us, but he won't tag us. But we keep on saying, "No, I'm alright God. I've got this, but would you mind helping me by squirting some water in my mouth next time around?" as Prideman keeps slamming us over and over again. There may be 21 of the pride categories where we don't struggle, but one area where we do. I encourage you to be Humbleman and tag God's hand to wage war for you in that category. "God, I'm ready for you to fight Prideman instead of me. I can't do it. You need to take over completely." That's what humble people say.

My SELF says, "No, I can handle this! I just won't be this way anymore! I'll turn over a new leaf!" This always fails. Only God can change how I am ... and He really, really wants to.

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." – Matt. 11:28-29

"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time..." 1 Pet. 5:6

Pride Monster

Imagine you're in a canoe and there is a big pride sea-monster that never stops chasing you and it wants to eat you and it's coming up and down in the water chasing right behind you. So you paddle like crazy to not get bit. Imagine you paddle super hard for a long time and you get really far ahead of it and so you put down your paddle and kick up your feet and take a break. And that's when the pride monster catches up to you and bites you hard.

Two Dogs

Two hungry dogs and only one dish of food. The dog who eats the most is the one who gets stronger and wins the fight. Pridedog is more aggressive and pushier than Humbledog and so pushes Humbledog out of the way and eats all of the food unless someone purposefully pulls back on Pridedog's chain. That is when Humbledog eats all of the food and wins. Here are some things you can do to feed Humbledog.

- Be thankful everyday by telling God 20 things you're thankful for
- Compliment little things you like about others around you
- Learn about others. Practice asking people 5 questions. Maybe these. What's your name? How long have you lived here? Why did you move here? What do you do? How did you get interested in that?
- Share your pride struggles with people close to you and ask them to pray for you and to tell you when they see your signs of pride.

How Extreme Pride Slips In

Particularly for public figures like pastors, CEO's, singers, athletes, actors and actresses, pride slips in subtly and undetected. And after several years of being innocently complimented and praised, we start believing things about our SELF (ego) that are over-inflated above what is actually true. And that view of our SELF begins to feel actual and normal. And then we say and do things so that others think as highly about us as we do. And we do that because we deeply believe that how highly we think about our SELF is accurate and true. We start thinking more about our own SELF than the SELFS of others around us. Did you know that the career with the highest rate of adultery is a pastor.

How Humility Happens to Hard People

They say that pride is the last thing to leave before a lot of people come to Christ. They're tired of trying to fight it on their own and when they've tried everything else and have been humbled, then they turn to God. They say, "God, I've got a problem with pride and I'm asking that YOU wage war on it. I'll stand aside. Please fight it for me." Until a person gets to that point and is serious, Life's not going to be easy. It usually takes losing a spouse, the kids, a job

or a few nights in the car before someone raises their hand and says, “Hi, my name is Ronald McDonald and I’m a pride-a-holic and I need help.”

Self-Centered Churches and Man Boobs

I was listening to a non faith based marriage book the other day and the author said that Narcissism and Grandiosity (both forms of pride) are a huge problem in America. A lot of it started in the early 1970’s when personal trainers and tons of self help books became super common. “You can do it. You’ve got what it takes. You are worth it. There are no losers. We don’t keep score. We don’t give grades. Everybody wins and everybody passes.”

We clearly live in a self-centered (prideful) society. So how wouldn’t that not bleed into the church? Most churches rightly have the slogan “To know God and make him known”, but rarely do sermons magnify God. In other words, make God look bigger and clearer so we know him better. In my experience, there are more self-help type sermons about how to become a better Christian than there are about what God is like. Most songs are about us worshiping rather than about God being worshipped and stats say that only 2% of people have ever led someone to faith in Christ. Evangelism is a rare thing because not many are concerned about the SELF of others more than they are their own SELF. (More about this paragraph later.)

So if God is not very much the focus of our teachings nor our worship, then it makes sense that 85% of youth who grow up in church, stop going to church when they leave home. Because they don’t know very well what God is like, they don’t really like him that much. If they knew the God that I know, they would want 10 of him in their lives.

Essential Oils and Man Boobs

I recently read a study to my family that said Lavender and Tea Tree Oil probably cause man boobs to grow on prepubescent boys. My 10 year old son’s eyes got as big as saucers and we all started to laugh because we have Tea Tree and Lavender shampoo and conditioner out in the shower. He immediately stopped using it just in case the study were true.

So the question came up, since my wife is so into essential oils, why would anyone use those oils on prepubescent boys when there are hundreds of other scents that smell similar or do the same thing (if they even do anything)? Is the reward of what Tea Tree and Lavender give you worth the risk of man boobs? Why do anything even closely similar. And if a study said there were an essential oil that eventually would give you the strength and stamina and the heart of a stallion if you rub a drop on your chest once a week, you can bet I’d be slathering it on there every few days. If you knew for sure that it couldn’t hurt? Why wouldn’t you? But if it could possibly be the wrong thing to do, why even try it?

You can’t go wrong having a church that is focused on knowing and magnifying God each and every week in sermons and song, but you could go wrong focusing on our SELF most of the time and God sometimes.

I was talking with a worship leader from Canada and he agreed. He said we live in a society plagued with individualism. He said that if we went back in time a hundred years ago, people would think we were crazy and self-centered if we lived like we do now. But it’s become normal.

Self-Help Churches

So many churches have turned into Self Help Churches. “We won’t talk about your sin here because that would be telling you that you’re wrong or not in a good state. Instead, here are all of the things you can get out of God for your SELF if you accept Christ. You’ll be happier. You can go to Heaven. You can have an abundant life. You can be powerful, but I’m not saying that you’re not already powerful and really important, but you could be even more so if you give your life to Christ. You can be healthy. You can be wealthy. You can get peace, even in storms. And joy

too. You can have a healthy community. Today can be the first day of the rest of your life. "I'll see you at the top". These are all good things you'll learn in your Bible reading and in Bible study.

Heaven forbid we offend someone by telling them that they're on the wrong team and in need of someone to save them from having to pay the penalty of their sin because they aren't capable to do it by themselves. You would now be considered a toxic person.

And then, once they're on the team, they hear, "Here's how YOU can be a better Christian. How YOU can forgive more. How YOU can be kinder. Here's how YOU can be more servantlike. How YOU can be more loving. How YOU can be more Christlike. Here's how YOU can be more merciful. Here's how YOU can be more filled with grace." Here's how you can have more faith. Here's how you can get more power. Here are 5 steps to getting more out of the Holy Spirit. POWER. P - plead O - optimism W - weep E - earn it R - reward.

Self-Centered Songs

Note here: This seems logical to me, but I'm still not exactly sure what to think about this.

Here are definitions of Praise and Worship from the dictionary.

Praise - To express warm approval or admiration of (usually for an act).

Worship - The feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity.

If there were a music video of the "Praise and Worship" song we're singing on Sunday morning, who would the camera be focused on most? Would it be focused on me on a mountaintop with my hands raised to Heaven as I talked about how I was singing to Him and how I can't stop singing and how I raise my voice to do it and how nobody can stop me from singing? Would it be me looking into a mirror admitting that I am not worthy of Him? Me on my knees praying to God asking for strength and courage and endurance and more of his power and love in me? Or would it be focused on our all wise and patient God who is kind in all of his works and on our loving and compassionate Jesus on the cross and about how powerful of a creator he is. Or Is God sitting on his throne tapping his fingers saying to himself, "I wonder when I get a song"?

I analyzed the top 40 most sung songs in churches according to CCLI and highlighted the parts that magnified or talked about God's attributes or character in some way. This is what I found.

9 songs - almost 100% focused on God.

10 songs - 50% of the words were about God and 50% about the worshiper.

12 songs - 25% of words were about God and 75% focused on the worshiper.

9 songs - mentioned God with only 3 to 8 words and focused on the worshiper with the rest.

There may be a place for a warm up song or two. A prayerful song. A song to get us into the right posture for Worshipping and Praising God. I'm not sure. But remember this, just because it's on the radio doesn't mean it's a worship song. Because it's a Psalm, doesn't mean that is a worship song. Imagine singing "Break the teeth of my enemies, oh God" in church. It's just a nice song that God inspired them to write to build up and encourage believers. We can worship in a lot of ways, like in giving money, working hard etc. Sometimes, even a secular song will get me focused on God and I'll worship Him in that. But like the essential oils, if there are so many hundreds of songs that magnify and praise God, why not pick one of those instead of the warm up songs? There is no way we could go wrong singing songs about all of the things that we love about God. But WHAT IF God considers our ME songs as self-centered? What if he does tap his fingers while we sing to ourselves?

2nd list with more explanation and links to articles

Pride of Spirituality

Appearing Really Spiritual

People should be spiritually minded. God loves that. It's the way we're supposed to be. But when we want everybody to recognize and talk about and praise us for how spiritually minded we are, that's not good. So we say and do things for the purpose of reinforcing that we're spiritual, in their minds. The only people Jesús was publicly against were those who did and said things so that people would think they were spiritual. The Pharisees prayed fancy prayers, made it obvious they were fasting, let everyone know when they tithed etc. so that their image (SELF or ego) would be raised up in the eyes of everyone around them. And then praised for being so spiritual.

Rejection of Material Possessions

Rejection of Material Possessions Sometimes with good intentions, people think that God is pleased when we don't have things of value. Righteous living. And then in their pride can say, "If only those materialistic people were as righteous as I".

- Reject money, fame, joy or pleasure (also called Asceticism) monks (vows of poverty), clergy, pastors, theologians, trained and missionaries are infamous for this, while humble people accept God's blessings as a reward from Him. "I gave up a really high paying corporate job to do this ministry".
- Brag about how few possessions they have or how humbly they live so that people will recognize they are not materialistic and therefore very spiritual.
- Embarrassed or make excuses about owning nice things or big houses.
- Look down their noses at the rich or at those who have a lot of nice things
- Excessively generous partially out of obedience to what God has put on their hearts to do and partially for the purpose of confirming in people's minds that they aren't eating mammon for breakfast and are still spiritually minded. They reject God's rewards or gifts to them and think that that shows their commitment to God. "Dang, that guy sure is committed to God. I don't think I could do or live like that."

Churchy Language and Prayers

Spiritualize everything

- They only talk about spiritual things so that people will think they're spiritual.
- Prideful people spruce up their public prayers with churchy vocabulary or higher volume that they never use when talking to God alone, to make sure people recognize that they're spiritual. We're not talking about people who pray and are passionate and their heart and personality come out while praying. Be careful not to judge one's heart. But if prayers are changed so that those listening are impressed with us and think, "That guy is a real spiritual man. He sure can pray", then that's always pride.
- Practice their public prayers
- Prideful people often speak differently, use a different accent or voice or put on a different face or behavior to help people recognize that they're spiritual. Walking and pacing and flailing the arms is not wrong if it's for presentation or for a purpose. Again, be careful not to think you can judge the thoughts and intents of someone else's heart. Only God can do that.
- They think they're more spiritual than spouses and church members.

False Humility

Prideful people fake their humility. They try extra hard to be humble for the purpose of people thinking that they're humble so they'll be praised for being so humble. A very humble friend of mine, who serves everybody ahead of himself, confessed to me that every once in a while he does something really selfless and servant-like and walks away saying to himself, "I bet they think I'm pretty humble". That's not True Humility. It's called False Humility. It's just a matter of the heart.

- Prideful put themselves down as if they are lower than everybody else. This may even flow from a genuine desire for humility, but humility is seeing your SELF the way you accurately are. Pride is seeing your SELF NOT the way you actually are.
- Treat themselves badly - "I am not worthy" or "I'm a loser".
- Prideful people don't easily accept compliments. They put one hand in front of you like they're stopping traffic and with the other they point to the heavens while vigorously shaking their head and mouthing the words, "No no no - God, God". If someone says that to you, you can say to them, "That really seemed like it was all you. If it had been God, then it would have been WAY better than that". Their pride wants those watching to say, "Whoa, that guy is humble. He must be really spiritual". The right response would be to say something that is actually true, "Thank you. That was very kind of you to say. God has given everybody gifts and I believe this is what he gave me". Or, "It's easy to do good work when God surrounds me with some great people." or "Thank you for the kind words. Mom and Dad made me take lessons for years and years."
- Prideful people skillfully brag in a humble way. "Can you believe how great God is. They asked me to speak at the Prayer Breakfast again." or "Please pray for my church. We don't know how to handle all of the growth." They brag about their work, accomplishments, ministry, earnings etc. because if they just flat out bragged about their SELF, they wouldn't look too spiritual.
- Prideful people tell you they're humble and say, "In my humble opinion".
- Only confess insignificant sins - Prideful people confess little sins and say things like, "I really struggle with coveting my neighbor's old Toyota Land Cruiser everytime I drive by their house." As if that's as bad as their sin gets, so you think they're spiritual.
- They take a lot of pleasure in SELF-rightness feelings of being morally superior to most other Christians, which makes them feel better about their own failings.

Pride of Knowledge

They try really hard to make sure people think they're smart

"The wise person accepts instructions, but the one who speaks foolishness will come to ruin."

Unteachable

I asked a friend of mine, who wanted to start a church, if he had considered formally studying the Bible. He looked at me and asked, "But what could I learn?" He felt he knew everything already.

- Prideful people say they don't need to be trained or educated because that would mean their SELF wasn't capable enough to be successful without someone's help. Prideful people want to say, "I became a successful and accomplished self-made man by myself. I didn't need anyone to teach me anything because I'm that smart or capable. I'm sure you're impressed with me".
- Prideful people think they have all the answers to life and somehow don't need or see the value in other people's perspectives.
- They are know-it-all's and say, "I already knew that".
- They are highly opinionated and argumentative.
- Use big words knowing that they will probably have to explain what they mean.
- Irritated if someone tries to teach them something because that makes their SELF feels ignorant.

Not Genuinely Interested in Other People

- They don't ask questions to learn about people because they aren't interested in other people more than they're interested in their own SELF. So why would they want to know how many kids a person has, if their parents are still alive, what parts of work they enjoy or their favorite past times?
- Dominate conversations with talk of themselves or about the subject at hand to impress you so you think they're smart.
- Though credentials and titles are sometimes necessary to establish authority so they'll listen to or negotiate with you, prideful people insist on a lofty title or talk a lot about their credentials so that others will be more impressed and think more highly of them.

Poor Listeners

- Interrupt people mid-sentence. I once knew a con-man who used to regularly interrupt me and say, "I'm sorry. I don't mean to interrupt but..." And he conned me.
- Hear out people's ideas and nod their head, with no intention of using their idea.
- Finish others' sentences or say, "I know what you're going to say. You're going to say...."
- Open their mouth kind of and make slight noises with their lips and act like they're going to start talking so you stop talking so they can start. If you pause mid-thought to take a breath, they start talking.
- Assume they know all there is about the subject and so tune out
- Don't listen to those they lead
- Prideful people listen to others just to see if they can fix them or bless and impress them with their wisdom and knowledge.

Argumentative

Prideful people argue strange, new or uncommonly held beliefs or doctrines and argue them well so that people are impressed with their intellect.

- They get the last word
- Prideful people don't discuss their differences with the hope of possibly learning something. They argue to show how much they know.
- Prideful people don't hesitate confronting someone to say what they think is right.
- They can't handle being wrong.
- Argue and hold to strange or uncommonly held beliefs. To show that they can argue and should be respected for their ability to argue. Flat Earth, The Millenium has already past. Moon landing was fake. Note: There are exceptions though. Like I genuinely believe in Bigfoot. There's just too much evidence. And I once saw Nessie's shadow in Loch Ness from way up high, but my wife doesn't believe me.

Critical

Helpful or constructive criticism is used by God in our lives to build us up and make us more fruitful. And a lot of people can be critical only because they want to help us improve. The key is how we deliver that criticism and that we do it sparingly. We need to ask ourselves, "Would it make a difference if I critique this?" If it won't, then just let it go. A good practice is to ask permission to give the criticism, "Would you like a thought about how to make that even better?"

Unnecessary criticism is just mean. It tears down, doesn't help and makes people feel bad. It is usually based in poor self-worth and shame. Prideful people measure themselves against others. When someone near them does a good thing, it makes their SELF feel inferior, and so they tear them down for no reason other than to make their SELF feel better. When we put the spotlight on other's flaws, that's a defense that puts the shortcomings of our SELF in the shadows.

- Quick to correct or criticize their spouse, kids, pastor, teacher, youth pastor or others in leadership positions.
- Negative all the time. Complain a lot about the weather, their health, circumstances, job, church.
- Tear others down by joking or teasing harshly
- Always give the punishment deserved instead of showing mercy

Pride of Power

Thinking that they're more important than others or trying to make sure people think they're capable.

Pride and a Controlling Nature

Here is a comprehensive article full of psychobabble about why the need to control, feel superior and be mean to others is such a huge sign of pride. <http://mindrenewal.us/page6.html>

Control

Control is trying to give yourself security. But remember, you are one cancer cell away from being in control.

- Proudful people control their spouse, children, friends and co-workers.
- Proudful parents create dependent children by providing everything for them and not letting them suffer the consequences of their irresponsible actions. They want to keep them around to be needed. A form of control.
- Proudful people manipulate to get their way by throwing their wedding ring across the room or throw some sort of tantrum whether it's really quiet or really loud. They try to condition you to go with their idea everytime.
- Proudful people say it's my way or no way. They threaten to boycott the trip or activity by saying, "Nevermind, I don't even want to go now" if they don't get their way.
- They purposefully drive slow in the fast lane so they have control, not considering that the person behind them who may have an urgent matter.

Legalistic

Legalism is when a really religious sounding person or people crave for their SELF to be respected and praised through power and control. They force their own questionable or easily debatable standards and rules on their followers. When people obey them, it makes their SELF feel good. "It's sin to wear shorts like that or eat pork or watch movies that have magic in them or drink beer or work on Sunday or smoke cigars or play poker or say 'darn or gosh' or get a tattoo or pierce your nose or read any version of the Bible other than the King James Version or or.... This form of Pride has kept more people away from God than maybe any other. I know so many people raised in legalistic homes who now, as adults, mock Christians and try to keep people from God.

Spiritually abusive people like this understand that Christians won't follow an arrogant obviously proud person. So they cloak it in religious churchy language and weak and inconsistent biblical justifications. If it's not black and white in the New Testament, then we are to follow the Holy Spirit's leading, but the legalistic leader wants us to follow their leading instead. They argue it relentlessly so you'll obey and they'll be dominant and their SELF will feel important and be praised.

- They misinterpret and misuse the Bible to justify their rules, but their real interest is being right or having control.
- They don't want their kids to look rebellious on the outside because they think that reflects bad on their own SELF and then they will look bad. It's about appearing spiritual rather than being spiritual.

They force their own questionable or easily debatable standards and rules on their followers. When people obey them, it makes their SELF feel good. "It's sin to wear shorts like that or eat pork or watch movies that have magic in them or drink beer or work on Sunday or smoke cigars or play poker or say 'darn or gosh' or get a tattoo or pierce your nose

Submission

Prideful people don't submit easily and rebel against their leaders, spiritual or secular and falsely see it as a weaker position. God as our leader. Wives against their husbands; children against their parents; employees against their bosses; citizens against their government. They believe they can make better decisions than the leader in their lives. And they often can, but it's not about that.

It's not about the best decision, but it's about being a faithful follower. It's important that we share our ideas and wisdom and concerns with those in authority over us and then help make their decision into the best decision.

Leadership needs to say, "I've heard your idea and their idea. We're going with their idea. It may not be the best idea, but let's make it into the best idea. The leader needs to be humble and listen to those they lead, especially when their initial thought wasn't as good as someone else's.

Prideful people don't like being told what to do. This doesn't mean to not question or share wisdom with our leaders, but without a fight, submit.

Hungry for Attention

Prideful people get hurt and resent it if they aren't made mention of and recognized for their accomplishments, acts of service or selflessness. They say and do things for attention and say or do things so that people take great notice of them and regard them highly and talk about them when they're not there.

Prideful people lie. They don't just embellish a story to make it more entertaining but flat out lie with numbers and circumstances to make their SELF look better.

Self Reliance

- Fearful and worry a lot. They put more faith in their plans and ability to take care of themselves than in God to take care of them. And therefore live in fear that their plans will fail. Shows our lack of trust in God and our self-reliance because we are hugely preoccupied with our SELF and don't have control.
- Say they depend on God, but they don't. They depend on their own abilities.
- They hate to rely on others because they believe that help to accomplish something is a sign of weakness.
- Don't often say thank you to God or man, because that would be admitting they needed help and won't get total credit.
- Willing to help others, but not accept help in the same area they helped
- Don't need to pray much because they don't think they need the help, grace or guidance
- Don't think they need God's help, direction, grace, courage or hope. So why pray?

Take Credit for Things

- Prideful people lie to take credit for things they didn't do.
- Prideful people don't give compliments or credit to people who deserve it because they think it makes them look bad in contrast.
- Don't like to share praise with others
- Prideful people don't need to pray because that would mean God did it and they wouldn't get credit for it.
- Prideful people shoot down other people's good ideas because it wasn't their own and even condition others to eventually stop sharing ideas. They make fun of them or roll their eyes or tell them that they are not wise for saying that.

Workaholic

Prideful people are serve or work obsessed, addicted to power and control in a compulsive drive to gain approval and public recognition of success. They believe that their SELF or image, the prestige and status and general emotional well-being they get from being praised for their work or service, is so much more important than the SELF or emotional well-being of their spouse and kids.

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-workaholics/201112/understanding-the-dynamics-workaholism%3famp>

- Prideful people in leadership positions don't delegate as often as they should because no one can do it as well or as quickly as they could.

Crave Importance

Prideful people feel and believe that value is added to their SELF because of their status or accomplishments. They feel that they are worth more by doing or appearing a certain way.

- Purposefully make people wait on them. They seem to enjoy the power of everyone waiting for them. They are regularly late for appointments and meetings that can't start without them. They like feeling control even though they know they're causing others to fall behind in their own schedules or are keeping them from important matters. I know a con man who regularly made his wife wait in the car for lunch, sometimes up to three hours beyond when they had agreed. His wife told my wife, "He's the proudest man I know".

Overachiever Pride

- Sometimes when a child didn't feel unconditionally loved by their parents or guardians just for who they were, but only for how they performed, then life is a competition to not just do their best, but to do things better than everybody else so they can prove that they are worthy of the love of their parents and friends.

Low Self Esteem

True humility isn't thinking less of your SELF, but thinking of your SELF less. [Here is a great psychobabble article](#) about why low self esteem and depression is a huge sign of pride.

Humility is seeing your SELF the way it actually is. Knowing what is true about who you are. If you are a naturally gifted musician or have become excellent at tennis through years of hard work, then it's right to acknowledge that because those are things that are true about your SELF. If humble people are not very good at managing people or not very coordinated or don't have much fashion sense, they are comfortable admitting it because it's true about their SELF.

Pride is NOT seeing your SELF the way it actually is. Not believing what is accurate and true. If you're a physically attractive person but tell everyone that you're ugly or if you have a very likable personality but say that people don't like you, then that is pride because it isn't true. Prideful people who aren't very good at coming up with creative marketing ideas or who are clearly not very good at leading people, won't stop insisting that they are and are offended if someone speaks the truth to them. Prideful people don't believe what is true about their SELF.

- Won't ask for forgiveness because that would mean that their SELF isn't great and was wrong and they are okay living in that sin of not asking for forgiveness. Asking for forgiveness is not dependent on the other person admitting their wrongs too.
- Lie about accomplishments and sometimes not just kind of lie, but they lie almost beyond belief. They are desperate for us to think highly of them.

Embarrassed easily

Embarrassment is a sign that pride is being attacked.

1. Proud people think they're above doing lowly tasks and immediately think, "I, of all people, shouldn't have to do that. That task is for someone lower than myself."
2. Proud people fear people seeing them doing lowly tasks because they fear that others will think they must not be very powerful or important if they have to do a lowly task.
3. Proud people wait to be served and don't often serve others because they don't think of others as more important than themselves.
4. Proud people think they're better than others. This one can be hard to detect because a person can appear to be humble and caring on the outside.
5. Proud people are easily offended when others question their motives or ability to do something. They say, "Don't you trust me" or "Don't you think I know what I'm doing?"
6. Depression - Always thinking about the bad condition of their own SELF

Envy

When the prince of a kingdom chooses a princess from a neighboring kingdom to be his bride, everybody is happy for her. Nobody is envious. If the prince chooses a local girl from his kingdom to be his bride, then envy is strong from all of the other local girls in the kingdom.

Envy is the feeling of discontent or resentful longing for somebody else's career, good looks, talent, job promotion, wisdom, fame, social position, spirituality, character, sense of humor, wealth, possessions or other status symbols or positive qualities. By having those things, they think they'll show everybody that the lie they have slowly come to believe about their SELF is true. It is especially hard on them when someone who is their equal rises above them economically or in social standing.

1. Proud people believe others are envious of them because "wouldn't everybody be envious of what I've got?"
2. Proud are envious when the spotlight is on someone they feel they are superior to. Then they whisper to the person next to them, "They're not all that".
3. Proud people sabotage other people's work or don't use someone else's good idea because they think that if that person is praised, then they will look lesser.

Materialism

Proud people try to impress with their success by showing us their possessions.

Proud people are not generous with their money. They are SELF-ish and would rather use their money to buy things that they feel validate their untrue feelings of who they are.

Defensiveness

- Think the best defense is a great offense when their SELF feels attacked (when their pride is hurt).
- They condition people to NEVER confront them again by attacking them back with their past mistakes or failures so it takes the focus off of the proud person's problem.
- Proud people make up excuses when they're corrected or criticized.
- Proud people say things like, "Everybody makes mistakes" or "you make mistakes too" when they have no choice but to accept blame.

Depression

There are a lot of legitimate medical and traumatic reasons for depression. Focus on SELF and believing what's not true about their SELF, is a common reason. Pride is a major cause of depression for millions of people.

Shyness

We can be wired as introverts purposefully by God from birth. This isn't about introverts or extroverts

- Proud people are very shy. They are overly concerned with others' opinions of them which is usually a reflection of being obsessed with self.
- Proud people don't invite people to their home because it's not nice enough or they can't afford to entertain big.
- Proud people have a hard time sharing their real spiritual needs or other junk because they're afraid they won't be liked anymore.
- Proud people fear what people will think of them and are overly consumed with man's opinion of their SELF which is usually a sign of obsession with self.
- Proud people don't like reaching out and being friendly at church or in other social settings.

Pride of Appearance

They try really hard to make sure people think they're valuable and they believe their SELF is more valuable if it looks good

Arrogance, Immodesty, Narcissism, Pomposity, Pride, Self-Importance, Self-Love, Self-regard, smugness, swagger, self-admiration, self-exaltation, swelled head, conceited, display, pretension, self-worship, show, ostentation,

We should take healthy pride in our appearance and do the best with what we've got and for our spouse. Dignity is a good thing. But this is not:

Understanding Why We Have Pride and How it Works

God wants us to be proud of our work or family or to try the best with what we've got. And when we're recognized and affirmed for doing well, it feels good and right. That's healthy pride. The apostle Paul said that he was "proud" of some of the early churches.

When we're supported, protected and affirmed growing up, then that builds a solid firm structure or base inside of us. It gives us a **STRONG** ego, or good sense of what's true about our SELF. It's a good and healthy thing. If we weren't supported, protected and affirmed, then we often develop a **BIG** ego. And that's no bueno. Since a strong floor or structure wasn't built up inside of us to tell us what our SELF is accurately worth, we have to guess at our value or worth.

So we try to build up or inflate our SELF to where we think a healthy place should be, but usually over-inflate or prop it up way higher than what is accurate by saying and doing things to show others what we've guessed is accurate about us. And that's when the praise and worship of us starts and that makes us think that what we believe about our SELF is true. Pride can even distort our mind to think that even our junk is good and right.

Conclusion

I really hope this list and explanation has helped you understand what pride really looks like and has given you a desire to not have it in your life. And remember, don't shoot the messenger.