

# DISCERNING PRIDE

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I know we probably don't need the reminder but before we begin tonight I just want to say: please let's all remember Israel. I think they're now saying that the number of casualties is double what we thought it was on Sunday. They're now saying that 1200 were killed. That's a huge number regardless of the country.

When we look at the size of Israel, there's only about ten or eleven million people living in Israel, that's probably twice the number of people living here in the valley. So to think that 1200 were killed, and not only that but there were Americans as well, they say that some are even hostage. Of course above everything else we know that this is about Israel. Netanyahu already said that Hamas has made a mistake of historic proportions and I have no doubt that what he's saying is absolutely true. So let's just remember them.

Tonight I have a message, the title is Discerning Pride. We're hearing a lot about pride lately. There are voices that are saying: if you say you have the truth, if you say that God gave you a revelation, or if you say that you have a high calling like an apostle, well then that's pride.

I will say this: depending on the attitude and depending on the heart, yes each one of those things could be an attribute of pride being manifest in a certain individual. But I will also say tonight: we can't just look at somebody and say: well they claim to have a revelation so they're lifted up with pride. Or they claim to be an apostle so they have pride.

The very Word of God contradicts that even though there are voices tonight that will tell you: stay away from anybody who says that. I have to say: if you take those words and apply them, then you're going to have to stay away from Paul and you're going to have to stay away from Peter.

Let's go to a real quick example in the book of Ephesians chapter 1 verse 1.

Here Paul is not very humble, well that's how some would say it.

Let's see what Paul says:

Ephesians 1:1

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ*

He doesn't even wait and later on tell you: maybe I might be an apostle. He just starts the book: *I, Paul, an apostle*. Well I guess Paul wasn't very humble then. Somebody needs to give Paul a lesson in humility.

Not only did he start this particular book this way - we call it a book but we know it was really a letter - but practically every epistle he wrote begins more or less the same way.

Ephesians 1:1

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:*

That's his initial salutation. Yet there are voices tonight saying: if somebody calls themselves an apostle, or even worse, if they say they're a chief apostle, stay away from that person, you can be sure God's not using them. That's what's being ministered these days.

Again, I'll say: if that's true, we have to cut off Paul, we have to cut off Peter, and while we're at it, really we have to cut off Brother Jackson as well.

Some say: well he did not say he was an apostle. Oh yes he did. He waited about forty years because he knew how the Branham movement would run, squawk, and basically throw the same accusation that we are hearing tonight. But as he neared the end of his life, I sat right there and heard him say it openly. Nobody can tell me he did not say it because he did and I heard it.

Maybe *they* didn't hear him say it but even without that, from the beginning he told the dream he had of the letter that came in the mail: how the paper looked like it was a very official document like a certificate and how it stated that he was *an apostle*. I'm not going to go into all the details of the dream right now but if he did not believe he was an apostle, then why was he telling the dream? Can we see that?

So even though he did not directly state it for about forty years, it was very clear that he knew what his ministry was. And he knew how those who followed his ministry viewed it. Praise the Lord.

Now let's go to the book of First Samuel in chapter 17.

This is when David had heard about Goliath and he goes down into the valley where they are having their battles. Let's start in verse 26 to get a little background. I know we all know the story.

1 Samuel 17:26

*And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?*

1 Samuel 17:27

*And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.*

Now in the next verse, David's brother is standing by. If somebody should have supported David, it should have been his brother. Amen. But let's read what it says.

1 Samuel 17:28

*And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David,*

Why would he get angry against David? I'll tell you one reason why he could be angry. He could actually believe David might end up doing the job and then how was *he* going to look?

He might've thought: I'm his elder brother. I'm a greater warrior. I know more about battle. I'm physically stronger and bigger. But in his heart he knew if somebody could do the job, David could do the job.

He's angry and let's see what he said.

1 Samuel 17:28

*and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?*

David, you should mind your own business! You've got your own church to watch. What have you done with them?

Well let's keep reading:

1 Samuel 17:28

*I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thy heart;*

*Or the evil of your heart, or - I'm trying to translate it best - the wrong thoughts of your heart.*

1 Samuel 17:28

*for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.*

Here as David is asking: *what will the man get who kills this giant?* [1Samuel 17:26] what is David really saying? He's saying: *I can do the job.* Amen.

And so here comes the accusation: *I know your pride. You're prideful.* [1Samuel 17:28]

We're hearing the same thing today. If somebody says that God has shown them something in His Word. They say: oh they're not humble enough.

I have to say: if everybody's going to fall under *that* definition of *humble*, then we won't be able to continue to walk in the Word of God because as soon as God shows somebody something, if we say it, we'll be seen as not humble.

My point in reading this verse is: I believe every one of us knows the Word of God says *David was a man after God's own heart.* [Acts 13:22] Amen. So if that's true, there's no way we can look at David as a man with pride. But he had, how can I say this? He had a *pure heart.* He even asked God: *created in me a pure heart.* [Psalm 51:10] If there is any wickedness or iniquity, purge it Lord. That was David's heart.

But here we see his very brother saying in front of everybody: *David, it's pride that's motivating you.* [1Samuel 17:28]

Let's go now to Jeremiah 13 and we're going to start in verse 8.

The title tonight is Discerning Pride.

Let's say I come into a situation where some people are working on a math problem and I see they are having trouble and I want to help them. Is it a manifestation of *pride* if I say: hey, I'm a math professor? I have to say: that's *not* the case at all. I'm just informing them.

Now if they're arguing about the answer and I just come into the argument and say: I think *this* and *that*. They will very likely think: well who is he? We already have enough trouble among ourselves, why does he need to make it worse?

But if I tell them: hey, I'm a math teacher, they would probably say: well let's hear what he has to say. And as long as it's not beyond my knowledge - because it doesn't matter how far you go in math, there's a place where other people have gone further - but as far as the great majority of math, I could come to that situation and say: look here and here, see? This is it. And they could see it and that would be a help to them.

So let's look at this:

Jeremiah 13:8

*Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

Who did the Word of the Lord come to? It was to Jeremiah, right?

Now for the most part, the Word of the Lord in the sense of *the written Word of prophecy* all happened in the Old Testament. There are parts in the New Testament as well, especially the Book of Revelation, but *today* how does the Word of the Lord come?

It's not that God needs more *written Word*, He already inspired men to write the Word. But now what He does is *He shines light on the Word* and whereas if a certain individual in the Old Testament may have been like Jeremiah, Daniel, or Isaiah, in our day they are more like Peter, James, and John.

It's not so much that God is giving new scripture but *He's revealing the scripture that has already been written*.

I will also say this: God *doesn't* just say: well I've taken my servant William Branham so all of *that* is not important anymore, I'm just going to come up with something new. And *that* was Brother Jackson's work, but Brother Jackson is gone now so any minister can just start with something new.

There are men today who are absolutely tearing down the work of Brother Branham and Brother Jackson. Yet they will turn right around and tell you: oh I know that Brother Branham was the prophet of God. He absolutely was the seventh church age messenger. But they'll take all these other things and completely turn them upside down and preach them with no shame before the people.

Brother Branham and Brother Jackson poured blood, sweat, and tears into it over decades. Yet these men turn around and say: oh don't look at it like *this*, don't look at it like *that*, don't worry about *this*, don't worry about *that*. That's what they're doing today.

Now I know we've come further but it's still *the same road* we're walking down.

Paul said: *comparing spiritual with spiritual*. [1Corinthians 2:13] He said: *we move from faith to faith*. [Romans 1:17] Amen.

He *didn't* say: we take the spiritual, put it aside and come up with a new spiritual. Or we have faith, we forget about that faith and form a new faith. But we continue down *the same road of faith*. Praise the Lord.

*The just shall live by faith*. [Romans 1:17] What is that *faith*? Is it: oh I think God can heal me? Is it: oh I need a job, God can give me a job? Well that's a manifestation that we have faith but that's not *the faith* that this is talking about. Faith is: God gives you His Word and you believe it.

God told Abel: you need to offer an animal sacrifice. I can see Abel thinking: I'm supposed to kill? It may have been hard for him when he first felt that *inspiration*. But he prayed about it and he remembered how his parents told him that God Himself slew a lamb to cover their sin. Then he could say: oh I think I can see where this is going. Yes, this is God's Word, I'm going to obey it. That's *faith*. Praise the Lord.

Now I say all of that because the Word of the Lord comes *today* as well.

Yes every religious individual can say: I've got the Word of the Lord, I believe this Book. But when it comes down to the Holy Ghost *shining light* and that is presented to them, they say: well I've never heard that before. I want to be careful. I don't want to make a mistake.

Well nobody wants to make a mistake. But we have to understand: if God is going to reveal His Word, we're going to hear things we haven't heard before. And the way we can check it is with the same Word: does *faith build upon faith*? [Romans 1:17]

There are characters now coming down the road saying: oh you heard Brother Branham say *this*, well it's not really like *that*. And Brother Jackson spent forty years saying *this*, but I'm telling you: it's *this* way. They are really putting themselves in front of those men.

You want to hear something that sounds like *pride* to me? I didn't get to that point yet but that sounds like *pride* to me.

Let's keep reading.

Jeremiah 13:9

*Thus saith the LORD, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah,*

So He said: *Judah, you have been found with pride. I am going to make it rot.* In other words, *you're going to lose it.*

Jeremiah 13:9

*and the great pride of Jerusalem.*

So Judah and Jerusalem had been lifted up in their heart.

Jeremiah 13:10

*This evil people,*

Now what does He say? Does He say: oh they call themselves prophets? Is that His accusation? Let's see.

He says:

Jeremiah 13:10  
*which refuse to hear my words,*

Amen.

They *ignore* the Word of God. Their attitude is: oh I know something better. I don't have to listen to that prophet.

Jeremiah 13:10  
*which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing.*

Jeremiah 13:11

*For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.*

They close their ears to the Word of God.

We hear today: oh if you hear somebody say that they have a revelation, run away from that man. What are they saying? They're saying: do not hear the Word.

You may say: well Brother, don't you think somebody can have a wrong and erroneous doctrine? Absolutely. That's why we have the Word of God. But if somebody who has been a faithful servant for years and decades says: praise God, I've seen something in the Word! We don't just look at them and say: oh that must be pride.

I have to say: we can *judge* the content *by the Word*. Praise the Lord.

I'm going to jump ahead a little bit. There's more I want to read here but time is not on my side. Let's go to Revelation 2 verse 2.

This is to the angel of the church of Ephesus, which means *the messenger*.

Revelation 2:2

*I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not,*

In other words, these men who are *not apostles* have come among the Ephesians and they said: we're apostles. Well Paul and Peter said the same thing. But what's different about the Ephesians? They did *not* say: oh you claim to be an apostle, your heart is lifted up with pride. I'm not going to have anything to do with you.

It says:

Revelation 2:2  
*thou hath tried them*

They tried them. They checked: does their *ministry*, does their *teaching* line up with the Word of God? Does it make the picture *clearer*? Or does it just make it one big *well I don't know what to believe now*?

That's where a lot of people are tonight. And it's because of *who* they are listening to. That's the truth. They change *this*. They change *that*. They say: oh don't look at it like *this*. Don't look at it like *that*.

If I heard something for the past *thirty years* and I thought I saw it *in the Word*, and now somebody I think I have respect for comes along and they're saying: don't look at it like *that*, you know what that reminds me of? I don't want to say it but it keeps coming back to my mind. That reminds me when Eve said: *the Lord said that if we partake of this tree, we're going to die* [Genesis 3:3] and the serpent stood right before her with no shame: *thou shalt not surely die*. [Genesis 3:4] *Hey, look at it, it's a nice tree!* Yes that's what it reminds me.

But it says here *they tried them*, right?

We hear: well you know, some are even saying they're chief apostles!

Well let's go to Second Corinthians chapter 12. By the way, this isn't the only place but first of all I want to read verse 11.

Paul says:

2 Corinthians 12:11  
*I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.*

What is Paul saying here? He's saying *I'm not even a little bit behind Peter, James, and John*, right? They were the *chief apostles*. He's saying *I'm not behind any of them*. So at the very least, that makes Paul a very chief apostle.

Who's the one saying it? It's *Paul*, right?

But let's go back to verse 6.

I'll close with this tonight. It's not everything that I wanted to look at, I didn't even finish in Jeremiah, but let's keep going here in verse 6.

Paul says:

2 Corinthians 12:6

*For though I would desire to glory,*

In other words, *if I did desire to* - the word we have today is - *if I did desire to brag*.

He said:

2 Corinthians 12:6

*I shall not be a fool;*

In other words, *what I would say would not be foolish*.

2 Corinthians 12:6

*for I will say the truth:*

In other words, *I would be telling you the truth*. In Spanish that's exactly what it says: *I would be telling you the truth*.

In other words, *if I were to really tell you what my office is, which some would look at as glorying*, he says: *it would not be foolish because basically it would be true*.

2 Corinthians 12:6

*but now I forbear,*

Well in verse 6 *he forbears*, right? But in verse 11, he tells us. Because of the attitude of the people, he says: *you forced me*.

Did he want to come out and say: *by the way, I'm not behind any of the chief apostles?* [2Corinthians 12:11] That was *not* his desire.

The people should have been able to see and to receive the Word that God was giving through him but because of what some of these characters were saying, Paul had to just come out and say: *okay, I'm going to go ahead and say it but you forced me to.* [2Corinthians 12:11]

He says here:

2 Corinthians 12:6  
*but now I forbear,*

So *I'm not going to actually tell you*. And I'll say: even in verse 11 he didn't tell us all. He said what was necessary.

But he says here:

2 Corinthians 12:6  
*lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.*

In other words, *they should be convinced of their own observation of my ministry. I don't want to just say 'I'm this' and then they would think: well he must be 'that'*. Right?

Again when we get down to verse 11, he said: *I am not even a bit behind the chiefest apostles.* [2Corinthians 12:11] And by the way, he said this back in chapter 11 too. [2Corinthians 11:5]

But today we hear: oh if somebody says they're an *apostle*, especially if they dare say they are a *chief apostle*, well then you need to run away from that man.

I have to say: let's do something different. Let's take what's being brought and *compare it to the Word.* [1Corinthians 2:13] Maybe they have to say certain things because of the attitude taken by those who are in opposition. We can test according to this Book.

I'll close tonight: if God brings revelation and we close our heart to it with the attitude: I don't need to receive *that*. If there's anything that's pride, *that's pride*.

So it's not what a man says: oh if somebody says *this* or says *that*. It's *what's in the heart*. When somebody shuts out the Word of God, closes their ears to His Word, and even worse: tells others to do the same, if there's something that's pride, *that's pride*.

I'm going to go ahead and close tonight. Let's pray.