

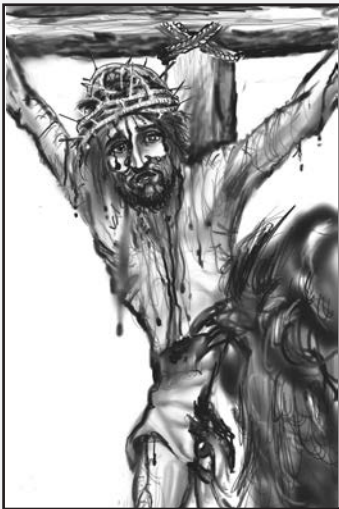
## The Problem With Pride



### SABBATH—APRIL 11

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** 1 John 2:15–17; Luke 18:9–14; Hebrews 11:24–26; Luke 22:24–27; Philippians 2:3–8.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “ ‘Whoever makes himself look more important than he is will find out [learn; discover] how little he is worth. Whoever does not try to honor himself will be made important’ ” (Luke 14:11, NLV).



**We should know that our lives already have value because God made us, and Jesus died for us.**

**WE ALL KNOW** people who think they are **always** right. Maybe you also know someone who always must be in control. This same person may not want to accept any advice. Or maybe you know someone who is always fighting with other people or saying mean and nasty things about them. We may think of a lot of people who are guilty of this bad behavior. But the real question is: “What about me?” When we’re busy blaming other people for the pride in their hearts, we may not see the pride in our own hearts.

We’ve all fought against a heart filled with pride. We’ve all wanted to look, act, or talk better than the people around us. We believed that we were better than they are, at least in some way. Someone said that pride comes from the wish in our hearts to show other people that our lives have value. But we should know that our lives already have value because God made us, and Jesus died for us.

This week, we will look at the problem with pride. How does pride hurt our relationships with God and other people? What does the Bible teach us about having a heart with no pride?

## THE DANGERS OF PRIDE (1 John 2:15–17)

Pride. What picture do you make in your mind when you think about this word? Do you see a government leader? A rich or famous person? A peacock? When you feel pride in your heart, you feel more important or better than other people. For sure, pride is a feeling we shouldn't trust.

Pride first started with Lucifer. God announces to Lucifer, “‘You were one of the chosen Cherubs [angels] who spread your wings over my throne’ ” (Ezekiel 28:14, ERV). Lucifer worked close to God in heaven. We don't know when or how selfish thoughts entered Lucifer's heart. But we do know that these selfish thoughts caused war in heaven. This war is named the war between good and evil. Lucifer became Satan, God's enemy. Satan is fully different from God. (Compare Isaiah 14:12–14 and Philippians 2:5–11.) Satan caused Adam and Eve to doubt God and to love and trust self. Since that time, we've fought against sin on this earth.

**Read 1 John 2:15–17. What three important Bible truths do these verses teach you about pride and loving this life?**

Can pride or feeling proud be a good thing? Maybe, if we use the word to talk about something that someone else did well. Then we may say, “I'm so proud of you!” God gave each person skills, talents, and gifts. When we use or develop these skills, that doesn't mean we are filled with pride. The Bible talks about self-love that is good. (Think about Jesus' command in Mark 12:31. In this verse, Jesus tells us to love other people as we love ourselves. But the love that Jesus is talking about is **never** selfish.) People are also not filled with pride when God is in their hearts. They live for Him (read 1 Timothy 3:1). But people are filled with pride when they don't honor or praise God for what He does for them.

We must remember that our belongings, skills, and our work doesn't give us worth or value in God's eyes. Our value and worth must come from God. All that we own comes from Him anyway. We must always remember this important Bible truth (read 1 Chronicles 29:14).

**Ask yourself: How much pride do I have in my heart? How is personal pride hurting my relationship with God and other people?**



Satan caused Adam and Eve to doubt God and to love and trust self.

## KNOW YOURSELF (Luke 18:9–14)

Two men go to church to pray. One man is a church leader. Everyone respects him. The leader stands at the front before church starts. Everyone can watch him pray. The church leader thanks God for making him so good. The other man is homeless. He stands at the back of the church. His eyes fill with tears. He falls to his knees and whispers, “Lord, please show me mercy. I am a sinner!”

**Read Luke 18:9–14. What do you think of the two men that Jesus talks about in these verses? What did Jesus think? What important lesson do these verses teach us?**

We can praise ourselves all too easily. Some people love talking about all the wonderful things they do. But these things are not important in God’s eyes. Jesus tells us, “ ‘Whoever makes himself look more important than he is will find out [learn] how little he is worth. Whoever does not try to honor himself will be made important’ ” (Luke 18:14, NLV). Jesus also tells us not to take the most important chair for ourselves at a meal. We should sit in the chair that no one thinks is important. Let the host of the meal invite you to sit in a more important seat, if he wants (Luke 14:8–10). Jesus’ teaching may not be what we expect. “Jesus can’t save you until you know you are a sinner.”—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 158, adapted.

When we know we are sinners, we can come to Jesus with hope. “If we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins. We can trust God. He does what is right. He will make us clean from all the wrongs we have done” (1 John 1:9, ICB).

The closer we come to Jesus, the more we understand “who we are. We must look to Jesus and know Him. Or we will be filled with pride and self.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 159, adapted. What does God think of people filled with pride? 1 Peter 5:5 says, “God works against those [people] who have pride. He gives His loving-favor to those who do not try to honor themselves [their self]” (NLV).

**When did you last accept God’s love and forgiveness? (We need God’s love and forgiveness every day.) We also should show God’s love and forgiveness to other people. Spend some time in prayer right now. Ask God to remove the pride from your heart. Do not honor yourself. Let God honor you at a time when He chooses.**



**Let the host of the meal invite you to sit in a more important seat, if he wants.**

## MOSES: A MAN WITH NO PRIDE IN HIS HEART (Hebrews 11:24–26)

The Egyptian palace where Moses lived was filled with riches, pleasure, and comforts. The Bible says, “Moses had teachers who taught him all the wise things that the Egyptians knew. He learned how to speak well. He could also do powerful things” (Acts 7:22, EASY). Moses was offered a life of power, riches, and fame. But he chose something different. “Moses was a history expert, poet, thinker, army general, and government leader. He was excellent in everything he did. But Moses had the strength to refuse the money and fame. ‘Moses chose to join with God’s people. He chose to receive [accept a life filled with] trouble and pain together with them. He did not want to live in the king’s house and do wrong things. He would only be happy for a short time there.’ [Hebrews 11:25, EASY].” —Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 246, adapted.

**What does Hebrews 11:24–26 tell us about Moses? Why did he choose to empty his heart of all pride to serve God?**

Moses’ choice is amazing. He was a very powerful man who came from the most powerful country on earth at the time. But Moses killed an Egyptian (Exodus 2:12). Then he lost his faith in his own wisdom and strength. With his heart now empty of all pride, Moses was ready to learn. For 40 years, God taught Moses everything he needed to know to lead God’s people from slavery into the Promised Land. The things Moses left in Egypt couldn’t be compared with God’s promise of heaven and everlasting life.

Numbers 12:3 tells us: “Now Moses was a man with no pride, more so than any man on the earth” (NLV). Moses was one of the most important leaders of God’s people in the Bible. What would have happened if Moses had pride in his heart? How would the stories of his life be different? The burning bush? The ten troubles of Egypt? Crossing the Red Sea? Bread falling from heaven? The Ten Commandments?

**Think about your life. Do you think people would say you had no pride in your heart? Yes or no? Explain. We need Jesus to empty our hearts of all pride. Read or sing the hymn, “I’d Rather Have Jesus” (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 327). How does Moses’ life show the message of this song? How much does your own life show it?**



**With his heart now empty of all pride, Moses was ready to learn.**

## THE WORST SIN (Luke 22:24–27)

Imagine in your mind that you are one of Jesus' 12 followers. You travel with Jesus. You eat with Him. You sleep near Him. You learn from Him. You watch Him change many lives, including yours. People want to be with Jesus. You feel special because He chose you to be one of the 12 followers who are closest to Him. Then you start to wonder: Who really is the most important of all Jesus' followers?

**In Luke 22:24–27, read Jesus' answer to His followers who fight about what being important means. What is Jesus saying in this message?**

The followers have spent so much time with Jesus. You'd think after their being so close to Him, they wouldn't fight about this topic. But they do.

The 12 followers weren't satisfied with being Jesus' followers. Pride filled their hearts. Each man felt he was better than the other followers. We can let pride fill our thoughts all too easily. But we are told, "God hates pride more than anything else. He also is upset with people who think they don't need God and can live without Him. These ideas and feelings put people in terrible danger. Pride is the worst sin because it is the hardest sin to destroy."—Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 154, adapted.

Wow! Our pride upsets God more than "anything else." We have a hard time letting go of pride because we often don't see it in our hearts. When we depend on self and not on the Lord, we choose not to look into our hearts too closely. So, we don't see ourselves for who we really are. We make pride the same as king. It controls our heart, the same as a king controls his country. We need to stop and really look at ourselves. We must ask God to open our eyes and show us our sins. Pride may be the number one reason that keeps us from having a close relationship with God today.

**Do you believe that only God can remove the pride and selfishness from your heart? Stop and pray this prayer right now: "Lord, take my heart. I cannot give it. My heart is your property. Keep my heart clean, because I can't. I am weak. So, please save me. I want to be the same as Jesus. Make me clean and fill me with your love."—Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 159, adapted.**



**You start to wonder:  
Who really is the most  
important of all  
Jesus' followers?**

**LOOK AT JESUS (Luke 22:27)**

**Read Luke 22:27 again. What is the most important message for all of Jesus' followers in this verse?**

Compare Jesus with His 12 followers who wanted to be first and the most important in God's kingdom. Jesus was the most perfect example of someone whose heart was empty of all pride. Jesus said, " 'Which man [or who] is greater [more important], the man who sits at the table or the man who helps him? Is it not the man who sits at the table? But I am like [the same as] the man who helps you' " (Luke 22:27, WE). Every day, Jesus helped people in need around Him. Jesus was filled with love and mercy for the people. They were the same as sheep without a shepherd. Jesus knew that people needed Him more than anything else in life. To help people understand His love and mercy, Jesus left heaven to die for sinners. He hoped we would accept His invitation to be in a relationship with Him.

**Jesus died for us on the cross. So, how should we live? What does Philippians 2:3–8 tell us is the answer?**

Jesus did everything for us. He accepted our sins and our punishment. When we look at Jesus, we see that our hearts are filled with sin. Our hearts are dirty and not clean at all. When we think about what Jesus did for us, we can't help seeing that we need Him so very much today.

When we look at Jesus, everything else becomes less important. Who Jesus is, what He did for us, and His love for us become the most important things in life. Self will lose its control over us when we look at Jesus. Jesus! His name is beautiful and mighty. Jesus is the best example of everything we should be. Jesus has no pride in His heart. When we open our hearts to Jesus, we will learn more about Him. Then we will understand and allow His words of life to fill our minds. We will see that we are really filled with so much pride and sin. We will see we are miserable and unhappy without Jesus. We can grow in our relationship with Jesus when we empty our hearts of all pride.

**Spend time with Jesus right now. Take your Bible, a pen, and a notebook. Sit somewhere quiet, maybe outside. Invite God to talk to your heart. Write out Psalm 138. As you write, what words have special meaning to you?**



**Self will lose its control over us when we look at Jesus.**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** “When we come close to Jesus, we will clearly see His love. His love is holy. We also will see that sin is very evil. Then we won’t want to praise ourselves. God shows His favor to people who don’t show off or brag about their good behavior. The people with no pride in their hearts are holy in God’s eyes.”—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 160, adapted.

“If you want to be honored, you must first empty your heart of all pride. God will choose workers who are the same as John the Baptist. John had no pride in his heart. He chose to be God’s servant. The best followers of Jesus are men and women who are innocent as children. These followers can do excellent work for God. Angels can work with people who are not bragging about self. These workers want to save other people for God’s kingdom. . . .

“Some people brag and praise their own good behavior. These people believe that God’s plan can’t succeed without them. The Lord will choose other people to work with Him. . . .

“Jesus taught His followers about what they needed to do to be part of His kingdom. More than that, they needed a change of heart. A new heart would help them to be in agreement with the important rules of God’s kingdom. . . . God loves little children because they don’t think about self. They love and trust Him. . . .

“Honest Christians who are sorry for their sins are precious in God’s eyes. God honors them. God doesn’t honor people for their wealth or fame or because they are popular. He doesn’t honor people because they are very smart. He honors the people who are the most like, or the same as, Jesus.”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pages 436, 437, adapted.



**“God loves little children because they don’t think about self. They love and trust Him.”**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1 Read Matthew 23:12; Psalm 25:9; Psalm 149:4; and James 4:6, 10. What do these verses teach us about pride and not having any in our hearts?
- 2 When was the last time you showed off or bragged about yourself? How did this change your relationship with God and other people?
- 3 What must you change in your life to improve your relationship with God? What thoughts and feelings of pride must you empty from your heart?

## “WE LIKE TO HELP”

A mother with three little girls walked up the road to Iolanda’s home. Iolanda lived in Belo Jaridin, a Brazilian city with 80,000 people.

Iolanda stood at the door of her home. She saw the mother and her little girls coming. Iolanda’s house was on a busy street. People often came to her door to ask for help. As the mother and children walked up the road, Iolanda gave rice and beans to a stranger. The man came to her house for some food. Iolanda was sure the woman and her daughters also needed her help. So, Iolanda waited at the door after the stranger left.

When the mother and girls came to the door, Iolanda looked at the children’s feet.

Iolanda asked, “Why are your children barefoot?”

The woman explained that her 8-year-old daughter’s shoes broke. So, the mother asked her 4- and 6-year-old daughters to remove their shoes so their older sister wouldn’t feel ashamed.

Iolanda said, “I’ll get a pair of shoes and some snacks.”

Iolanda went into the house. Soon she came back with shoes and food. She served her guests crackers, cookies, and water.

The girls smiled with joy. One of the girls asked, “May we call you Grandma?”

The mother was surprised at Iolanda’s care for her and her daughters. The mother asked, “Why are you helping us?”

Iolanda said, “I’m a Christian from the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We like to help people. I sew clothes for children. Church members bring me many gifts. So, I have lots of shoes and clothes.”

The mother said, “I want to be part of your church. I want to study the Bible with you, too.”

A year later, the mother was baptized and joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Iolanda Xavier is an 86-year-old great-grandmother. Iolanda believes that we should obey Jesus’ command, “ ‘So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have told you to do. You can be sure that I will be with you always. I will continue with you until the end of time’ ” (Matthew 28:19, 20, ERV).

Iolanda says, “Serving God and doing His work are very important. God gives us new life to work for Him.”

Part of last quarter’s 13th Sabbath Offering went to start a church at Pernambuco Adventist school. The school is near the house where Iolanda lives in the state of Pernambuco in Brazil. Thank you for your offering this quarter. Watch a YouTube show about Iolanda at: [bit.ly/iolanda-IS](http://bit.ly/iolanda-IS).

## INSIDE Story



“We like to help people.”



Iolanda Xavier