

## Lust and Pride of this World

Written by David Wise  
Friday, 02 August 2019 07:18 -

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*“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” 1 John 2:16*

The Apostle John is clearly instructing his readers to pursue the commandments and will of God over this world. If we have no desire to follow God’s commands then we have no reasonable basis to attest that we love the Lord. However, the actions that characterize the world are much different and totally contrary to the things of the kingdom and the Father. We must forsake those enticing sins of lust and pride of this world and fully submit to the will and word of God.

Lust describes an “inordinate and excessive desire”. Inordinate portrays a desire to go beyond God’s prescribed bounds of proper action – or to break his commandments. God has placed a “safety fence” for the protection of his children, and the bounds of that fence are given us in God’s word and commands. However, as is so often the case with sheep, lust tells us the grass is always greener on the other side of the Lord’s fence. Notice also, this is an “excessive desire”. There is nothing wrong with money, love, or sexual attraction. They are proper and good in the correct context and setting. However, when those good things become an “excessive desire” to engage in those actions that goes beyond God’s prescribed bounds – that’s when we have arrived at sin.

Pride is a desire to improperly exalt ourselves, at the expense of others and the demotion of God. There is a place for proper self-esteem and positive motivation. While it’s a true doctrinal point that we are wretched, depraved sinners in our nature, that doesn’t mean we need to be sad all the time. Instead, we need to now see our status and worth based on the imputed righteousness of Christ; to have our self-esteem tied up in how great Christ is, not in how great we falsely perceive ourselves to be. Pride will lead us to indulge our own sinful desires instead of submitting to the authority of God. If we have a prideful mindset, we will only want to do

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things that satisfy ourselves and our lust (“whose god is their belly”) even to the detriment of others around us. Humility instead places the needs of others above yourself and chooses to voluntarily sacrifice my benefit for others.

These three identifying characteristics of the world – the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life – are totally contrary to God; they are not of the Father but of the world. Why are lust and pride both so detestable in God’s sight? Because when we engage in the sins of lust and pride, we exalt man above God. The lust of the flesh and of the eyes desires to go beyond God’s prescribed bounds of what is good and proper for us in our lives. When we engage in lust, we choose to place the indulgence of our fleshly desires above a submission to God’s prescribed bounds and commandments. Actions of lust display our mindset that our way is better than God’s way, exalting our desire to please ourselves over our desire to please God.

The pride of life seeks to glorify and exalt man instead of God. Pride seeks to glorify myself instead of properly fulfilling our divinely-appointed purpose to glorify God. That is why pride is so repulsive in God’s eyes. A “proud look” is the very first thing listed that the Lord hates (Prov. 6:16-17). Why? Because the pride of man steals the glory that God justly deserves and instead chooses to glorify ourselves who do not deserve to be praised. God is ferociously jealous over his glory, and therefore God will not suffer or tolerate man’s pride that steals God’s glory and gives it to unworthy man. Furthermore, pride bears false witness because we are not worthy to be praised. God is worthy but we are not worthy. Therefore, we must mortify our nature that desires to exalt man and seek instead to glorify God alone.

This world and the lust and pride of this world seek to indulge and exalt man instead of God. That is perfectly characteristic of a world that is antagonistic towards God, that we seek to emphasize and exalt man to God’s place. That is why friendship with this world is an enmity with God (James 4:4). If we are too friendly with this world, it will inevitably rub off on us and quench our profitability in the kingdom. Instead, for those of the Father and not of the world, we

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are called to submit to God's will and seek God's glory. "Let him that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:31). We forsake this world; come out from among them and be ye separate. We seek to glorify God instead of ourselves and mortify our flesh and forsake this world that attempts to steal God's glory; for us to worship only God.