

CONNECTIONS



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DANGERS OF PRIDE

God is in the promotion business! He has blessings prepared just for you, Partner! There is a place and time of favor and increase with your name on it, and I believe your season for promotion has arrived.

Receiving the blessings of God requires three essential things from us: *faith, patience, and obedience*. When we do what we're supposed to do, God will do what He has promised to do.

Sometimes we rush things in our daily lives as well as in our church services. God is never early and never late, but people often try to hurry God into meeting their preconceived deadlines. **Let's stop hurrying the Holy Ghost!** He wants to direct you day-by-day. He usually speaks in a still, small voice, and it often takes some time to break free of our flesh to hear His direction.

God is not in a hurry. Whatever God has promised you is a done deal. Don't let the passing of time weaken your faith. If you're still here, there is still time for God's promises to manifest. I like to say, "*It ain't [sic] over!*" When men came from Jairus' house to tell him his daughter was already dead, Jesus told him, "*Be not afraid; only believe*" (Mark 5:36). Even when it looks like things aren't happening, we must choose to believe! You might ask, "*How long do I have to believe?*" The answer is, "*As long as it takes.*" Hebrews 6:12 tells us, "*That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*" Never give up, Partner!

Paul's words to the Galatians have encouraged me many times when the going got tough. When I was sowing seed and my harvest seemed distant, I held onto this verse: "*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*" (Galatians 6:9). You shall reap! Due season is coming! But your due season and your neighbor's due season may be weeks, months, or even years apart. Partner, I want to share some insight with you about a vital verse on how to keep your heart and attitude right while you anticipate your harvest.

1 Peter 5:6

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

I believe your due season is here, but God can't elevate us unless we humble ourselves. **It's up to us to obey God and resist pride.** The New Testament uses several different Greek words to describe *pride*, but to boil them all down, *pride describes an individual who has an inflated image of himself. A prideful person is conceited, high-minded, braggadocious, haughty, arrogant, and presumptuous.* A presumptuous person says, "*I think things should happen such-and-such a way on such-and-such a timeline. It must happen that way because that is how I see it!*" **Partner, if we think we know better than everyone else, including the Lord God, we are swelled up, pompous, and heading for a crash!**

Now, we are supposed to love ourselves. After all, Jesus told us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). However, if we begin to think too highly of ourselves, we will delay our due season of blessing! People can stop the power of God by having an inflated view of themselves as better, brighter, or more important than others! Notice what Paul told Timothy about the days in which we live.

2 Timothy 3:1-7

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Paul prophesied that in the last days men would have inflated views of themselves. They would be high-minded, arrogant, swelling, and presumptuous. Remember, that Paul was writing to the church! He warned us that within our own company, we could see the power of the Holy Ghost wane because of the pride of man!

Pride is extremely dangerous. Not only will it limit the power of God, but it can also ultimately lead an individual to be so confused that he thinks wrong is right and right is wrong. He completely lacks good judgment; Paul called that a reprobate mind.

Romans 1:28-32

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

If we allow pride to grow unchecked in our hearts, we can come to the place that we think we are right about everything, but we are going completely against God's Word. I never want to find myself in the place where the Holy Ghost cannot correct me, do you? If I'm wrong, I want the Lord to show me so I can fix it.

Why is pride so dangerous? It will keep you from operating successfully in your due season, and it is a tool that Satan skillfully wields! The psalmist told us that pride keeps people from seeking God.

Psalm 10:4

The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.

If you ever get to the place where you say, *"This is what I think about that issue. I don't need to seek God about it,"* you've gotten into pride. Honestly, we've all been there at one time or another. We presumptuously charged forward with plans and projects; a few steps down the road, we realize we made a big mistake!

Partner, I hope I'm not stepping on your toes too much with this letter, but if so, God will heal them! I love you too much to withhold the truth! *Proverbs 16:5* warns us, *"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished."* **Pride will keep you from being in good standing with God! God is love, but God hates some things too. One of them is pride.**

Proverbs 8:13

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the forward mouth, do I hate.

If we have any pride in us, we'd better deal with it! I don't want to be anything that God hates. God wants you to be ready to receive your harvest in due season, but pride will destroy the return on your giving; it can also ruin your family, your employment opportunities, and lead to ill health, lack of wealth, and complete failure.

Proverbs 16:18

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

It may appear that successful, experienced people are full of pride, but we shouldn't confuse pride with confidence. The Bible tells us that the novice is more susceptible to pride than the well-established individual. In describing the qualifications for a Bishop, Paul told Timothy, that the candidate must "*Not [be] a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil*" (1 Timothy 3:6). Can I be honest with you, Partner? I've been in the ministry over 45 years. I've been a Pastor for 40, and the older I get, the more understanding I have. When I was younger, I had a lot more pride than I do now. When I had some early success, the devil was telling me, "*You are something else!*" My outlook changed, however, after several decades of serving God. I look back now and realize that everything good that happened was God's doing. It wasn't my education or intelligence; it was the mercy of God! The grace of God will turn a mess into a blessing, but it won't work for the prideful!

Another reason that God hates pride is that it is a significant source of strife. "*He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat*" (Proverbs 28:25). **A straight line connects pride and strife because pride is a fight starter. When someone thinks he knows it all and is always right, he inevitably will get into an argument with someone who disagrees.**

Proverbs 13:10

Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.

Did you notice the word *only* in *Proverbs 13:10*? In other words, without pride, we wouldn't have contention, division, and strife in our families, neighborhoods, cities, nations, or in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ! Imagine that! Don't let pride separate you from the blessings of God. Pride keeps people from saying, "*I am sorry. I was wrong.*" Admitting that you are not always perfect is not weak; it is a source of power. *First Peter 5:5* tells us, "*God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*" *Grace is the supernatural empowerment of God!*

Pride makes us feel as though we need to defend ourselves and our reputation. True humility trusts God as our defense and shield! My spiritual father, *Reverend Kenneth E. Hagin*, never defended himself against people who spoke ill of him. He would simply continue

to follow God. As a young minister, I often wondered why he didn't speak up when others were maligning his ministry, but now I realize he was obeying God's Word.

Psalm 5:11

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

Faith, patience, and obedience will bring your due season to fruition. Obedience is doing what the Word says, and it is clear that we are to deny ourselves the natural inclination to boast or be prideful.

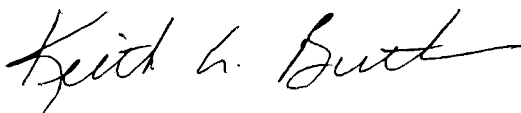
Now, let me end with a bit of balance about receiving your due season. Seeking excellence is not necessarily pride. Desiring to do your work well is admirable and scriptural.

Colossians 3:22-24

Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

The bottom line is this: what is your motivation for excelling? If it is to puff yourself up and show everyone how great you are, you are working from a foundation of pride. If, however, you want to excel in your work to glorify God, then you are working as unto the Lord, and He will bless you. **Keep your heart right.** Remember that without Jesus, we can't do anything well, but we "*can do all things through Christ, (the anointed One and His anointing), which strengtheneth us*" (Philippians 4:13)! Partner, as you keep your heart right before God, get ready to reap! Your due season of abundant harvest is here!

Thanking God for You Daily,



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