



Scripture Nugget - Pride, our number 1 enemy

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For My yoke is easy, and My burden light.” (Matthew 11:28-30).

Selfish pride breeds weaknesses and undermines virtues. Pride is the attitude of the heart and mind, borne from placing self-love ahead of love of God and of others. Pride breeds insecurity and unholy fears. When Jesus came to earth, the scribes, the Pharisees, the Jewish religious leaders and elders could not recognize Him as the long-awaited Messiah, and instead plotted to kill Him out of jealousy and insecurity! When King Herod heard of the new-born King of the Jews, his fear and insecurity were so overwhelming that he decreed all babies of a certain age group be massacred! When Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor knew it was due to jealousy on the part of the Jewish religious leaders and elders that landed Christ in trouble. More than once, Pilate tried to do the right thing to release Him but when the crowds went against his opinion, his sense of self-preservation and unholy fears of the crowds undermined his courage to stand up for what was right. Pride and insecurity weaken sinful souls and make it difficult for them to pursue the path of righteousness.

Pride blinds us to our sins. *Sin directs the heart of the wicked man; his eyes are closed to the fear of God (Psalm 36:2).* The prideful soul has no holy fear of the Lord. Fear of the Lord translates into hatred of evil (cf. Proverbs 8:13). From the words of Christ “learn from Me...” (cf. Matthew 11:29), we can be sure that He dearly desires us cultivate the great virtue of humility which imparts authenticity, strength, and depth to all virtues. Thus, the depth of our faith and love depends much on our humility. A humble heart believes without asking for signs. After Jesus has wrought many miracles, some of the Scribes and Pharisees still asked Him for signs (cf. Matthew 12:38). Even the apostle, St Thomas asked for signs in order to believe that Christ has risen from the dead. The humble soul is open to correction, is not focused on his rights or himself, is able to forgive the faults of others, does not take offence readily, does not resist the graces of God, and through a patient acceptance of God’s will wins favour and blessings from God. Scripture tells us God favors the humble and resists the prideful (cf. Psalm 138:6). It is instructive to recall the reminder of St Paul: *Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but [also] everyone for those of others (Philippians 2:3-4).*

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, selfish pride and an air of superiority are driven by either a poor self-worth or a falsely inflated ego. Though I totally renounce my sins, and acknowledge my many weaknesses, I am not defined by them. Rather, my true worth stems from what You have done for me. Yes, I am worth more than my weight in gold for I am redeemed by Your own precious Blood! I am a precious child of the Most High. You stripped Yourself of all divine glory when You came to earth in flesh and You endured all the cruel mistreatment of You in true humility. Teach me to be humble like You so that I can be free of all useless pride and have true rest for my soul. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.