

Ancient Wisdom for a Postmodern World

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[0 : 00] I just did something that I was told not to do when I was just a boy. And I was told not to do this by someone I greatly admired.

It was someone who was a few years older than me, but someone who I knew really knew God. And they said to me, Daniel, never ever pray for humility. Because if you ask God for humility, he delights to answer that, and you won't like his answer.

And they weren't joking either. They were sincere. Don't pray for that. And I think a lot of us would not ever tell us, or tell someone else not to pray for something, but I think a lot of us actually walk around with that unspoken suspicion that if we actually ask God for humility, we're not going to like the answer.

Because a lot of us are afraid of what that would actually look like if we truly were to become a humble people. We're spending the summer at Church of Messiah going through the book of Proverbs, looking at the various themes that Proverbs speak to.

Proverbs, as you know, is a book that was written with all these incredible pearls of wisdom from God. And so rather than what we normally do at Church of Messiah, going through a passage of Scripture and unpacking it, we're kind of putting a thread through these various pearls of wisdom from the book of Proverbs around different themes.

[1 : 13] And so this summer we've looked at the need to fear God and what that really looks like from the book of Proverbs. We've seen the harm sexual impurity causes and the healing found in the gospel.

We've seen the need to take good advice, to listen to people, to truly be listeners. We've looked at these and other things, the responsibility to care for the vulnerable and the marginalized.

Various ones of these themes, I'm guessing, have hit various ones in various ways. Some of these things have probably gripped various ones of our hearts. And there's certain weeks where it really hit home for us and the person beside you just didn't really hit home for them.

And other ones, unlike the certain weeks that convict you a lot, other weeks it's really your sweet spot. There's some of us in the room and you heard about protection for the vulnerable. That's your jam.

That's your thing. And so you hear about that and you're really tracking with it. Not so much from a conviction standpoint, but just to be inspired to continue doing what you're doing. But it is this week, specifically it is this week, that I'm praying will hit home for every single one of us because this is the week we're looking at pride and humility.

[2 : 21] And while various ones of us have various strengths and weaknesses, I do believe that the struggle with pride, being a people with pride, is something that every single human being struggles with.

C.S. Lewis in his famous chapter on Pride and Mere Christianity wrote, It is pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began. Other vices may sometimes bring people together.

You may find good fellowship and jokes and friendliness among drunken people or even unchaste people, but pride always means enmity. It is enmity, and not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God.

By this he is saying that whereas other sins, other things that are contrary to God's way, there is the sense of fellowship in these wicked things, pride is unique in the way that it always puts you in opposition to others, in the way that it always makes you an enemy of those around you.

It's by nature competitive. It is by nature opposed to those around you, threatened by other success. And in that respect, it brings disunity and breaking of friendship between people and breaking of friendship between people and God.

[3 : 31] Now, I'm not here just to unpack C.S. Lewis' words, but rather to unpack what the Bible says about this. So, Proverbs 16, verse 5 says, Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the Lord.

Be assured he will not go unpunished. I believe you have the words on the screen, I'm hoping, but I'll read it again. If they're not on the screen, I'll read it again for you slowly. Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the Lord.

Be assured he will not go unpunished. There we are. The next verse we'll look at is Proverbs 6, 16-19. There are six things that the Lord hates.

This is strong language. There are six things that the Lord hates. Seven that are an abomination to him. Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.

A heart that devises wicked plans. Feet that make haste to run to evil. A false witness who breathes out lies. A one who sows discord among brothers. So in this list of six and seven things that God hates, the very first is haughty eyes.

[4 : 35] And it's not meaning like eyes that are hot. It's not saying that like that. You have very attractive eyes. It's not saying that God hates that. It's saying that God hates the eyes of those who are arrogant. He hates arrogance.

This is strong language. And I think sometimes we find ourselves, sometimes we find ourselves reading the Bible as if there's two different gods. It's a God of the Old Testament who hates things and pours out wrath on things.

And then a kind and loving, nice, tame God of the New Testament. But just to burst that bubble, in 1 Peter 5.5 and James 5.6, so those are two different authors in the New Testament, it says, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

So whereas in Proverbs, it speaks of God hating pride, and we can think of it as God is hating this pride element, but liking all this other stuff about us. In the New Testament, it speaks of God opposing the proud.

So if we're a proud person, it means that God is opposing us. Now how can this be if we know that for God so loved the world that He gave His only Son? How can it be that that this God who we know is so loving, that He created each person to know Him, that He would actually oppose the very people He created?

[5 : 44] How can this be? Well, this is because pride, by its very nature, as Jesus was spoken of, pride by its very nature is putting ourselves in enmity with people and with God. And that pride is, in essence, a desire to kind of tower over people, to be looking down on people, to be looking down on all things.

And when you're looking down, you cannot see what is above you. And so the person that is proud is, in a sense, not going to see the beautiful sunset above or anything above them, including God Himself.

The person who is proud is threatened by the success, the well-being, by the thriving of someone else. And so God who is perfect, God who is always going to be more powerful, who is always going to be more, more everything good than us, is by very nature a threat to us.

And so it puts us in opposition to God. And so God, in His love for us, and His desire for us to be people who are people who have more than money, people who have more than friends, people who have more than wealth, people who have Him, people who have come alive and that they know the living God.

And God's desire for us to truly come alive and to know Him, to be people that aren't bent over like this, but people who are fully, who are upright and able to live and to see the beauty that He made us for.

[7 : 01] In God's desire for our good, our thriving, He must necessarily be opposed to our pride, for our pride is truly a bending us out of shape. In his book, *The Blessedness of Self-Forgetfulness*, Tim Keller talks about how we only notice those parts of our body that are hurting.

We don't often stop and think like, oh, what a wonderful small toe I have. But if you're like me and you've ever stubbed your small toe, all of a sudden you realize that every step you take and every moment you're awake depends on that small baby toe of yours.

And the same can be true if you pull a random muscle in your lower back. You don't even realize that muscle existed, but all of a sudden you know that muscle. In fact, all you can think about is that muscle.

Some time ago, after reading this, maybe a year and a half ago, one of my roommates and I were walking home from the church office and we were just discussing the reality of this. So we thought, you know what, let's just stop as we walk home and let's start thanking God for all our healthy body parts that you'd never think of.

We're just like, God, thank you for my esophagus, that it's swallowing food properly and it's not hurting right now. We just thought this would be the one moment of our lives where we actually are thinking about the body parts that are healthy.

[8 : 09] And you chuckle because it's funny. We don't do that. We don't think about our body parts that are healthy. We think about the body parts that are broken. And so for all the various body parts with its various weaknesses that we have, some of us have lower back issues and other ones of us have really bad eyes and whatever it is, whatever is unhealthy in us, the thing that is most unhealthy, that is always drawing attention to itself, is a part of us that isn't actually physical, but is our ego, our perception of ourselves.

We can define the ego as our self-perception, our idea of our identity. And that part of our being, of who we are, is always drawing attention to itself.

I might be much worse at this than many of you, but I believe all of you can relate to, just this past Tuesday, I was at a worship service. And I'm not someone, you'll notice I'm ever on the worship team, I'm drumming, I'm not singing, because I don't have one of those voices others want to listen to.

I don't, my voice doesn't help people enter into thinking of God's goodness. It more speaks of the fallen nature of man. And so I'm at this worship service, and I'm singing, and all of a sudden I hear that, I'm hitting the notes.

And it was this beautiful worship time, it was just such talented musicians, and they were so God-centered, and those songs we're singing were all about the glory of God, and I was in the zone, and I'm worshipping God, I felt so alive, and then I hear my voice, and I'm like, oh, this is beautiful.

[9 : 33] And all of a sudden, instantly, my attention goes from being about God to, like, my voice is awesome. And I go from, like, this puffed up thing to all of a sudden this shame, like, oh, I'm such a proud person. And then I'm like, oh, not only am I proud, but like, man, I'm looking at myself again, like, how come I'm not, and then I turn to worshipping God.

And then I'm just, like, just lost in the worship of God, and all of a sudden, like, I started thinking about, like, how, like, I'm, I just, I kept going back and forth with this. We find that our ego is always drawing attention to itself, always trying to find worth and value in ourselves.

And, and it's broken, it's broken. And you'll find, like, throughout the day, like, just pay attention, just take a day, pay attention to how often you find yourself kind of defending yourself.

I, I, a lot of people, like, I'm not someone that, like, looks for offending people. Like, I, I like getting along with everyone. And so I tend to be, like, a nice, polite person. If I'm at the dinner table and a sibling will say something about me that I just feel is not fair, and, like, right away, I'm just defending myself.

Like, that's not true. Like, I just, when it comes to, when someone is threatening our, the way people see us and our perception of ourselves, I know that you and I, I might be worse than you, but that you and I both struggle with always the need to defend ourselves because we feel like our, our perception of who we are and our value is, is under threat over and over and over.

[10 : 53] And so, even as these words are heavy before us today, on Proverbs, speaking of God's hatred for pride, we actually are going to find as we go through the book of Proverbs on pride and humility that these, these words actually speak to us about how we find our healing and our freedom from our broken ego.

So, so what we see, the first point I want us to just pause on today is that pride positions us, positions, you need to learn to speak English, pride positions each one of us as an enemy of God.

I'm strong with that, but it's up on the screen. You can see it. Pride positions, positions each one of us as enemies of God in that the way that it, it bends us out of shape as we seek to tower over people, as we seek to, to find this, this, our value in, in the, in being in something awesome is something in this way.

It, it turns our attention away from God and in doing that it puts us at opposition to God. But not only that, as several of the verses Nora read, I'll read again right now. Proverbs 11 verse 2, when pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 16 verse 18 through 19, pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. Now this is one of those things a lot of us have learned when we're pretty young. We're told pride goes before the fall.

[12 : 13] And I think a lot of us treat this truth that Proverbs speaks of as if it's karma. Like, oh, I don't want to be proud because then something bad will happen. You know, if I'm a proud person, then I'll get what I deserve.

And so we don't want to be proud as if it's a formula. But it's not a formula. In fact, if we stop and think about the people we know and the people who are most proud, or if you look at the Bible and look at who are proud, the proudful people, you'll see that very often it seems like this truth is not true at all.

That very often, like for example, not to name names, but that you'll find someone who is exceedingly, exceedingly in love with themselves, the most proud person that is on the airwaves today, and you find that unlike what these words are saying, that they'll have destruction, instead they're a multi-billionaire, one of the richest men in America, and that when they throw their hat into running for being the Republican nominee, they find themselves pulling at the top.

You know what I'm saying? It just doesn't seem fair. You look at these words, pride brings destruction, and then you see a man who is exceedingly arrogant, and he seems, not just, he is so successful financially, politically, business-wise, in all these different ways.

It's phenomenal. So what do we do with this truth and that? Well, there's actually, these words, I think, are telling us, not simply that the proud will one day meet their judgment, their maker, one day.

[13 : 31] We know that's true. But that there's this misery that is found in pride. There's a misery, not glory, that's found in pride. And that is something we saw this past week at Church on Wednesday.

We just happened in a very different passage. We're going through different kings of the Bible. But it just so happened this week, I was scheduled to speak on pride and humility. And at Church on Wednesday, we were looking at Nebuchadnezzar, and that happens to be on pride and humility.

And we see that Nebuchadnezzar was the richest of all kings that had ever lived before him. It was the richest of any of his contemporaries. Not only does the Bible speak of his wealth, but historians also know that Nebuchadnezzar was this ferocious, wealthy, luxurious, just king of kings.

He was known as the king of kings, even though that's a title that's supposed to apply to God alone. And Daniel chapter 4 opens with him, on the one hand, being so successful, and on the other hand, he's filled with anxiety.

He's having these scary dreams, and he's so afraid. And as you meet people, and you actually get to know people who have so much success, you'll often find that they're actually people who don't have any enjoyment in their success.

[14 : 37] I don't often quote from her. In fact, I never before this week quote from her, but to illuminate the scriptures. But as someone who actually has a lot of insight on this issue, is a woman who's been so successful as a musician, as a pop star.

She has so much more money than any of us in this room have. Probably more money than all of us combined. She has a lot more friends and popularity and just all the various things that you and I tend to find ourselves pursuing to find happiness.

She's got them in spades. And her name is Madonna, and she wrote this in Vogue magazine, which I read quoted by someone else. I didn't actually read Vogue. Just saying. She says this, My drive in life comes from a fear of being mediocre.

That is always pushing me. I push past one spell of it and discover myself as a special human being. But then I feel I am still mediocre and uninteresting unless I do something else. Because even though I have become somebody, I still have to prove that I am somebody.

My struggle has never ended. And I guess it never will. Madonna's words should devastate our pursuit of the American dream, of pursuing whatever it is that you and I pursue to find a sense of value and worth.

[15 : 46] Whether that's money, or whether that's material stuff, whether that's popularity and friends, or even some of us have forsaken all of that and instead we're pursuing this seemingly humble life of service. We may even find ourselves living among the poor and maybe even being hippies and fighting the system and raging against the machine and all that stuff.

We're not pursuing the American dream. But what instead we're pursuing is a sense of worth found in our doing, wonderful Mother Teresa-like stuff. And what Madonna is saying, it doesn't matter how much you pursue, whatever you choose to pursue, as you achieve that thing, you find that this thing you thought would give you significance is failing that.

There's a poverty, there's a destruction that is greater than not having any food. And that is having a lot of food and yet finding it doesn't fill you. There's an emptiness that is greater than having no friends and that is being surrounded by tons of friends and feeling so very alone.

King Nebuchadnezzar found that, the king of Babylon in Daniel chapter 4, that he has everything a man or woman could ever dream of and so much more than he can ever have. And yet even in the midst of it, he's so afraid he's going to lose it.

There's no enjoyment in it. C.S. Lewis speaks how pride does this to us. He writes, pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next person.

[17:05] We say that people are proud of being rich or clever or good looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer or cleverer or better looking than others. If everyone else became equally rich or clever or good looking, there would be nothing to be proud about.

He writes about how pride is the most perverted of all sins and it robs us more than anything else in that we looked a few weeks ago about how sexual impurity, how lust will lead us to do things that are harming ourselves and others in such horrific ways.

And yet C.S. Lewis talks about how as perverted as sexual impurity is, that lust brings a man to sleep with a woman or a woman to sleep with a man because he desires her, albeit in a selfish way.

But pride leads someone to sleep with someone else in an impure way, something to prove that they can. That the proud person is not actually desiring the things they're pursuing, they're desiring a sense of significance from it.

And so it actually robs them, empties them. It takes from them the ability for them to enjoy those very things, even those sinful things. In a sense, pride robs people of even being able to enjoy sin.

[18:10] It's a very, very destructive thing. And if it robs us of the ability to enjoy sin, how much more it robs us of the ability to enjoy what we're really made for. Pride is a horrible, horrible thing.

And in that respect, even though you may see billionaires who are very arrogant, you'll find that their destruction, they're already living in their destruction. So often, the proud are actually miserable.

And that not only applies to the billionaires, it also applies to you and me as we continue to search for significance. So we see that not only does God, not only does pride put us in a position of being an enemy of God, we read it in that about how God hates pride.

We see that pride harms each one of us. It causes destruction, it causes misery and disgrace. That's the second point if we can pull it up. Pride harms each one of us.

We read about how pride brings destruction. It harms us. It is the opposite of what we're made for and it robs us of our ability to enjoy life. Now, the scriptures illuminate part of why this is.

[19:17] It says in Proverbs 29, verse 25, if we can bring it up on the screen, Proverbs 29, verse 25, the fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.

The fear of man is a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe. The fear of man is a snare, is speaking to the very nature of what pride is. See, pride is this search for a verdict of who we are.

Every single one of us is born with this. Again, we have this ego, this perception of self, when we're looking for a verdict, who am I and what is my value? And the fear of man is saying that.

It's not that simply that we're afraid that every man is actually the boogeyman. No, the fear of man means that we're looking for a verdict of our value. Our ego is calling out to us for its sense of identity from the value that others give us, from the verdict, the judgment of others.

Now, today, if you speak with a lot of popular counselors and all that, or even just your average guy on the street, they'll tell you, don't care what others think of you. All that matters is what you think of you. I was at camp a few weeks ago and I was about to, I was going to be leading for all the kids a fitness exercise, like dance class thing.

[20 : 28] I'm not a dancer, but I was going to lead it. And so, we were trying to figure out whether or not the clothes that they were thinking of me wearing for this was clothes from workout videos of the 1980s or girls' clothes.

I don't know if you're familiar with the 80s, but there's some overlap right there. So, we're trying to discern, is this cross-dressing or is this funny? You know? And I mean, you can, because cross-dressing in the Bible actually speaks against the funny from the 80s would be okay.

So, we're trying to figure this out and kind of looking at the Bible, trying to see what it says about this. And this guy, this Christian, he's one of the leaders of this camp, just blurs out to me, like, judge not lest you be judged. He was saying, like, don't try to make a judgment about this, just do whatever feels right to you, go for it, thinking that that's what the Bible calls us to.

In a sense, he's doing what a lot of people do today, which is, okay, don't fear man, just fear yourself. Just find your verdict, your value, your sense of ego from yourself. That's what determines your verdict of who you are.

But, these words about fearing man, them being a trap, is a trap for us, whether it's that we're fearing the opinion of others, we're looking to others for value, or we're looking to ourselves for value. Either way, it's a trap.

[21 : 37] And it's a trap because there's such promise in that. If you've ever tasted praise from people, if you've ever received praise from someone, others or from a sense from yourself, it feels so good for a moment.

And so we continue to pursue that, pursue people thinking highly of us, or pursuing ourselves thinking highly of us. But what we find and what Madonna found to be true is that it's a trap, that it never satisfies, that it's never enough.

And we have this relentless, never-ending pursuit of significance, pursuit of a verdict, a good verdict, that never lasts, that never ever lasts. So if pride and looking to others for the verdict ever solves is a trap, how do we become free of it?

Benjamin Franklin, in his effort to become humble, found this. These are his words. There is perhaps no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as pride.

Beat it down, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive. Even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility. And I think that you and I can relate to that, that we sometimes find ourselves living and thinking in a humble way and instantly we're like, yes, I am the humble man, like I am, this is awesome and then you find that you're proud again.

[22 : 50] Another way that we deal with it is not simply being proud of our humility and that's perverted but is that we so often, especially in the church, we try to become humble people by thinking really, really bad stuff about ourselves.

We often want to just dwell and think about our wretchedness thinking that this will make our humility possible. But what we find is that that ego that is always drawing attention to itself and in a sense longs to be puffed up that the reverse of that that a very much deflated ego, a very low view of yourself is actually still this self-obsession.

And so we find that whether we are those who think that we're awesome, super, super awesome, or we're those who think that we're super, super trash, that either way it's this broken ego that's always drawing attention to itself.

in a pursuit of trying to become a humble person as a teenager, I used to always be saying under my breath about myself and I thought this was good spirituality. I thought this was walking with God.

I'm a wretch. I'm a wretch. I used to always be saying that something would happen. I'm like, I'm a wretch. I'm broke. I'm a wretch. I'd always be saying these things and some of the things I was saying some of it is bordering on biblical but it was always about me.

[23 : 57] I was not someone who was a worshiper of God. I was someone who was self-obsessed of my wretchedness. It was still my ego calling attention to itself. So how do we become free of this?

Well, Proverbs 11.2 says what we already read, when pride comes then comes disgrace but with the humble is wisdom. Proverbs 22.4 says the reward for humility and the fear of the Lord is riches and honor of life.

We see that humility is in a sense synonymous with wisdom. We see that humility is synonymous with the fear of the Lord. Why is that? Because each of us is searching for this verdict and so many of us our ego is broken and it's always relentlessly trying to find that verdict for ourselves to illustrate what it means to be fearing God.

And Paul, the Apostle Paul is an amazing example of someone who is truly a humble person. In 1 Corinthians 4.3 he says he's rebuking the Corinthians for competing with each other for their verdict of their significance.

And he says but with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. So he's saying I don't actually look for my verdict and value from any one of you from any one of you nor am I trying to find the verdict from what I think of myself.

[25 : 15] No, it doesn't matter. Instead he says but I'm not thereby acquitted by the fact that he doesn't judge himself. He says no, it is the Lord who judges me. He's saying I'm looking for my verdict of who I am from God.

Now, that might sound really freeing at first but if you think about it God knows each one of us and the depravity of ourselves so much more than any one of us. God knows the wickedness of our hearts even more than you and I can ever imagine.

And so when he turns his attention to a verdict from God that might sound good at first but then you think oh no, God actually knows. When everyone else is fooled by my politeness and when I seem like I'm caring for people but I'm actually doing it for the desire of praise God sees that.

So in a sense God being our judge should actually fill us with more fear and more insecurity in a sense than if it was us fearing man. Except that Paul knows reality and he knows that the good news isn't just an idea it's the reality that Jesus has actually achieved the perfect verdict that he lived the perfect life and that Jesus made the verdict that he received God said over Jesus this is my son whom I love and whom I am well pleased.

And by Jesus dying on the cross we all know the story we celebrate every Easter and every communion service that Jesus died on the cross Jesus did that in order that we might receive that verdict from that Jesus deserves.

[26 : 38] That the verdict over Jesus that God says this is my son with who I am well pleased that you and I can actually receive that verdict that value of who we are is the value that Jesus has that we receive that as we turn from our own self-obsession and turn from our own sin way and we look to God as we pray to him for forgiveness and look to him for life and trust in him we receive what Jesus has made possible.

And as Paul does that that's becoming a Christian Paul has become a follower of Jesus and receives Jesus' verdict he no longer has this broken ego that's always calling attention to itself.

2 Timothy is Paul's final letter before he dies and I know that when he's chained to a wall in that letter and it's incredible how that letter which is where Paul has so much to be in a sense unthankful for he's going through such hard times instead the letter bursts with Paul's love for the Lord and his concern for Timothy's well-being.

How do you be someone that when you're going through your worst day ever you're actually concerned about someone else you're not just there to just pour out all your lament? It's because Paul's ego was healed. Paul had a healed self a healed understanding of who he was that it wasn't bent out of shape always trying to call attention to itself instead because he had become someone who was actually humble whose view was on God his life was on God whose attention was on him his fear was of him he was able to therefore be someone genuinely interested in other people.

C.S. Lewis writes in that famous chapter on pride and humility how if you ever meet a truly humble person you probably didn't realize you're a humble person. He writes how it's not the person who is always speaking of their wretchedness that is a humble person but that person again is actually quite self obsessed with their wretchedness.

[28 : 25] Rather you wouldn't notice it because the humble person would be someone who's actually genuinely interested in you. He's genuinely interested in other people. Lewis writes that a humble person is not someone who thinks less of themselves it's someone who thinks of themselves less.

That a humble person isn't someone who thinks less of themselves it's someone who thinks of themselves less. that as our ego becomes healed as we receive a verdict from what God thinks of us we become people who are actually able to turn our attention away from ourselves.

We're actually able to find freedom. And as our attention turns away from always trying to get that verdict from other people we're actually you're able to when we thank God for a meal we're actually there saying I'm not trying to have this meal so to have more of a meal than someone else.

I'm actually able to enjoy my meal. that you have friends not for the sake of having more friends than others but you're having friends not to find value in your friends but you found your value in God and therefore you're free to actually enjoy the friendships you have.

And in that respect the person who might have much less than the rich is living a life of so much more joy and meaning and even enjoyment and pleasure than the person who is so very proudful.

[29 : 36] And so just finally a few takeaways of how we can become these people who instead of fearing what others think or fearing what we think of ourselves or living a life that is thinking of ourselves less. How do we become free of that cycle that Benjamin Franklin spoke of as we try to become more humble we just get more pride about our humility or be free of just trying to be obsessed with our wretchedness.

How do we become truly humble people? Well, as so many other issues we need God's help. And so this is a prayer I want to invite you to pray even if you use other words to consistently pray this in your life.

Dear God, grow in me a humble trust and confidence in your saving work in my life through the gospel. That we'd be people who consistently pray Dear God, grow in me a humble trust and confidence in your saving work in my life through the gospel.

The next thing to pray another way to pray this would be to pray a prayer like this. Dear God, grow in me a fear of you an awe of you and a love for you that captivates my heart holds my attention and transforms the way I see everything.

In preparation for the sermons this week I went onto Twitter and I just typed in the hashtag Grand Canyon. I wanted to see what do people tweet when they go to the Grand Canyon. And I saw that although if you look up almost anything else you'll see selfies of someone in front of whatever monument a famous monument or place when you look at tweets of the Grand Canyon what you see is the Grand Canyon and you end up reading these tweets about I never felt so alive freedom all this kind of stuff about freedom and being alive and being awake and about the beauty of the Grand Canyon.

[31 : 15] You don't see much selfies almost none. Why is that? It's because no one goes to the Grand Canyon this majestic thing in nature to glory themselves. They go to feel so small and so alive as they turn their attention finally from themselves for a moment to the majesty of the Grand Canyon.

I'm trying to become healthy so I've been trying to go to the gym and I was at the gym the other day there was a guy whose muscles were I think 18.6 times bigger than mine like he was huge and I noticed that like every time he passed any mirror in the gym like he just kind of stopped he just like he caught his own eye and he just looked and he just like looked so lovingly at himself and I just picture like what would this guy look like if he went to the Grand Canyon like would he actually be standing at the Grand Canyon just like looking at his biceps like his biceps might be big but compared to the Grand Canyon they're very small and it's something so freeing people chop the Grand Canyon as if it's like quite often because it's something where they finally get a piece a moment of what it feels like to turn your attention from yourself the Grand Canyon as awesome as it is can hold your attention perhaps for an afternoon or maybe if you camp there for a week but there's only one thing in all of the universe that can hold our attention for all of eternity and for all of our lives and that is God the one who breathed the universe into existence this freedom we find as we look to God and so that's why we pray dear God grow in me a fear of you and an awe of you and a love for you that captivates my heart that helps you turn my heart and my attention away from my muscles or my voice or my how caring I am all those kind of things

Lord turn my attention from that would you hold my attention and transform the way I see everything so those are two different prayers to pray just that God will grow in us humility and the third thing is that we'd be worshippers of God one of the best ways to combat pride in our lives is just as we worship God that's the final point just worship God that's why some of why we sing songs is that it's turning our attention from ourselves and turning our attention to the bigness of God I mentioned King Nebuchadnezzar before and how he was the richest of kings living in such fear eventually in God's mercy God drives him into the wilderness and makes him like an animal for seven long years and Nebuchadnezzar's healing and restoration of sanity is found as he turns after seven years turns his eyes toward heaven and worships God and as he worships God his self-obsession his arrogance is taken away and he becomes someone who's fully alive and the joy that jumps out of the page of Nebuchadnezzar's prayers and worship is a beautiful thing we become alive as we turn our attention away from ourselves and turn our attention to God so the final point that we have is that humility restores our sanity our friendships our joy and our life that humility restores our sanity our friendships our joy and our life this is contrary to the input

I received as a young boy this is something to pray for this is something to ask God for and to look to God for that he would make us a humble people so let us look to him right now in prayer Heavenly Father I would venture a guess that every single one of us in this room knows what it's like to try to be humble and to find that even in our pursuit of humility we're so proud God it seems that we lack the ability as human beings to be really truly humble apart from you and God we don't want to be apart from you Lord we want to be so close to you and so Father I ask that you would help each one of us in this room to overcome this sin that every man and woman knows the sin of pride that you would bring us freedom from trying to find a verdict in the value and opinion others give us or that ourselves give us that instead we would look to you that like Nebuchadnezzar you would heal us God from our self-obsession that you would restore to us the joy and the meaning and the purpose and the lives that we were made for that each one of us would truly be lovers and worshippers of you

God that you would grow in us a humble trust and confidence in the finished work of Jesus and the verdict we receive from you through him and that you would captivate our hearts that you would hold our attention and you would transform the way we see everything that we might be people fully alive in you for your glory and for the good of this world in Jesus name Amen