

Pride

It's time once again for another "please stop teaching and using this if you don't know the LDS theology on it" paper! Much like with my "Faith, Hope, Charity" and "The Light of Christ, Holy Ghost, Second Comforter" papers I am troubled to the point of exhaustion listening to members throwing out doctrinal terminology like they are confetti, when in reality it is like watching children running around in the yard shooting off guns into the air- someone is going to get hurt, "you'll shoot your eye out with that thing!".

"First seek to obtain my word..." many members are excited to share the gospel for all the right reasons, but they have failed the first step, seeking first to know the word before sharing the word- if you don't know the subject or haven't studied it, don't teach it. Period. Many others are invested in their priestcraft and setting themselves up for a light, so they cannot or will not listen to reason, the Holy Ghost, because to do so would lessen themselves in their own eyes and the eyes of those they have set themselves up as a light over.

We will be judged based on how we lived to the light that was available to us, not just that which we knew. This light is available to all, it's found in scripture after scripture, talk after talk, and also now in this paper. If we continue to not learn the doctrine that is available at our fingertips, if we fail to take a gun safety course, and then we go off in the yard shooting live rounds and get someone or ourselves killed, God will hold us accountable. I know full well the implications of saying that as I write, teaching the doctrine, and I am fully ready to stand before the Lord and say "thine will was done, thine doctrine was taught, not my own", this is why scriptures, the words of living and dead oracles, LOGOS, has to be the backbone, the foundation, or else we will fall.

PRIDE:

World's view: To be confident. To view your work, intellect, children, etc. as superior, noteworthy, special, etc.

Oxford defines it thus:

noun

1. a feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements, the achievements of those with whom one is closely associated, or from qualities or possessions that are widely admired.
2. consciousness of one's own dignity.

Similar: self-esteem, dignity, honor, self-respect, ego, self-worth, self-image, self-identity, self-regard, pride in oneself, pride in one's abilities, belief in one's worth, faith in oneself, pleasure, joy, delight, gratification, fulfillment, satisfaction, sense of achievement, comfort, content, contentment

Opposite: shame

verb

1. be especially proud of (a particular quality or skill).

Sectarian notion: To think highly of yourself. Basically everything listed above in “similar” but in a “negative” light. If you believe you have done anything noteworthy, praiseworthy, or of good report, etc. you are a “prideful” individual. If you believe “you are right and others are wrong”. If you believe that your faith is correct and all others incorrect, ie. “two churches”.

God’s definition: President Benson in his talk “Beware of Pride” taught:

“Therefore, no matter how the world uses the term, we must understand how God uses the term so we can understand the language of holy writ and profit thereby (see 2 Nephi 4:15; Mosiah 1:3–7; Alma 5:61).”

Where the world and the sectarian dogmas focus on the amount, ie. “over-confident” and the deeds, ie “the car someone drives” the Lord focuses on the where and the whom. Is to have confidence a sin? Is to own a charter bus a sin? Not in themselves. Members not knowing the doctrine will point to a man in a charter bus and scream “PRIDE GOETH BEFORE THE CRASH!” or listen to a man preach the gospel light with confidence and passion and shriek “PRIDE PRIDE PRIDE!” and they could be right, but they also just as likely could be wrong. President Benson in his talk “Beware of Pride” went on:

“Most of us think of pride as self-centeredness, conceit, boastfulness, arrogance, or haughtiness. All of these are elements of the sin, but the heart, or core, is still missing.”

A circle is an oval but an oval is not a circle. If one is “prideful” or “proud”, chances are they are all those things listed above, if however one has elements of all those things listed above they might not in fact be “proud” or a “prideful person”. President Benson continues...

“The central feature of pride is enmity—enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellowmen. Enmity means “hatred toward, hostility to, or a state of opposition.” It is the power by which Satan wishes to reign over us... Pride is essentially competitive in nature. We pit our will against God’s. When we direct our pride toward God, it is in the spirit of “my will and not thine be done.” As Paul said, they “seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s” (Philippians 2:21). Our will in competition to God’s will allows desires, appetites, and passions to go unbridled (see Alma 38:12; 3 Nephi 12:30).”

Once again, the world and sectarians focus on the deed when they should be focused on the whom. Imagine if we judged Nephi (for example) with the same standards- he lied, stole, and killed a man in the same night! He must have been a very evil and prideful person! He just had to have those gold plates,

fancy clothes, and expensive sword! According to the world and sectarian viewpoint they would have a point, but when you focus on the whom, ie. “who’s will was Nephi following?” the deeds, ie. the lying, stealing, and killing are no longer relevant. Pride is following your own will, your own understanding, etc. over that of the Lord’s. That man who owned the charter bus I listed above, could have been using it to shuttle new converts to the temple for example. Can one be “proud” or “prideful” if their will is swallowed up in the will of the Father? Did not the Savior say “send me”? Did not the Savior say “I will do”? His will was however not his own, the glory was however for the Father. Satan also said “send me”, Satan also said “I will get it done”, but it was Satan’s will and Satan wanted the glory for himself. In this lies the key to understanding “pride” as seen by the Father. “For when ye are under the spirit ye are not under the law”. Are we following the Lord’s will or are we following our own will, our own understanding, etc.? But how do we understand or know the will of the Father? President Benson continued:

“The proud cannot accept the authority of God giving direction to their lives (see Helaman 12:6). They pit their perceptions of truth against God’s great knowledge, their abilities versus God’s priesthood power, their accomplishments against His mighty works. Our enmity toward God takes on many labels, such as rebellion, hard-heartedness, stiff-neckedness, unrepentant, puffed up, easily offended, and sign seekers. The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren’t interested in changing their opinions to agree with God’s.”

The “authority of God” are the keys of God on Earth. If the keys told me to jump, would I? If the keys told me to get a year supply of food and water would I? If the keys told me to homeschool, would I? If the keys told me to avoid debt like a plague, would I? Elder Benson:

“Pride is a very misunderstood sin, and many are sinning in ignorance (see Mosiah 3:11; 3 Nephi 6:18).”

Many have piled the debt high, ignored the counsel to get a year supply of food and water, etc. etc. and then they turn around and point the finger at someone else “talking boldly!” or “with confidence!” and accuse them of pride, why? Because “pride is a very misunderstood sin, even in the church, and many are sinning in ignorance” because they don’t understand what it is. We prove every day, in the choices we make to follow the keys’ direction or not, whether or not we are “prideful” or “proud”. Is “calling the wicked to repentance” the Lord’s will or man’s? It is the Lord’s. Therefore? Those doing it, are not proud while those who are not doing it are. Teaching the pure doctrine of Christ and, in the words of Joseph Smith, “dragging the Christian world kicking and screaming” into light and truth? Will of the Lord. Not pride. “Opening your mouth and declaring boldly faith on the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to His commandments else ye will be cut off”? Lord’s will. Not pride. Many people are doing what they believe to be “right” or “nice” despite the Lord telling us to be, live, and do another way- that is pride. Period.

An example of these that I have given in the past are the story of Saul (“Obedience is greater than sacrifice”) and that of the Jews told to kill everyone in a wicked city, including the women and children, and the children of Israel decided to only kill the men. Those are examples of pride and they in both cases caused “falls”, despite what many might think to be “mercy”, when the Lord’s will is made known and you choose another path, for whatever reason (I think showing mercy to mothers and children is better! You get more likes and subs and people listening!) that is pride. But what about the amount vs the what? President Benson:

“If we love God, do His will, and fear His judgment more than men’s, we will have self-esteem.”

The sons of Mosiah made the mistake, judging Ammon for “pride” simply because of the amount of confidence Ammon displayed, not on the where Ammon was placing his confidence or the where of where Ammons was getting his confidence from. Ammon retorts with the doctrine of Christ Alma 26:

“But Ammon said unto him: I do not boast in my own strength, nor in my own wisdom; but behold, my joy is full, yea, my heart is brim with joy, and I will rejoice in my God. Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever... Therefore, let us glory, yea, we will glory in the Lord; yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full; yea, we will praise our God forever. Behold, who can glory too much in the Lord? Yea, who can say too much of his great power, and of his mercy, and of his long-suffering towards the children of men? Behold, I say unto you, I cannot say the smallest part which I feel... Now have we not reason to rejoice? Yea, I say unto you, there never were men that had so great reason to rejoice as we, since the world began; yea, and my joy is carried away, even unto boasting in my God; for he has all power, all wisdom, and all understanding; he comprehendeth all things, and he is a merciful Being, even unto salvation, to those who will repent and believe on his name. Now if this is boasting, even so will I boast; for this is my life and my light, my joy and my salvation, and my redemption from everlasting wo. Yea, blessed is the name of my God, who has been mindful of this people, who are a branch of the tree of Israel, and has been lost from its body in a strange land; yea, I say, blessed be the name of my God, who has been mindful of us, wanderers in a strange land.”

A lot of members would mistake even Ammon’s retort as pride, once again, because the sin of pride is a sin readily misused and misunderstood. Ammon’s retort was spot on. If your confidence, the where, is grounded and centered in the Lord’s ability to expand your capabilities to accomplish whatever task the Lord sets you up against, it will not ever be pride.

But what about “pride between men”, cannot that exist? Sure it can, but it is under the same umbrella, “are you following the will of the Lord or your own will?” , it is not under another umbrella of “pride” or a “second application of it”, no, it is still under that same first umbrella, “not my will be done, but thine.” The Lord’s will is to “treat your neighbor as yourself”. Are you treating others the same way you would like to be treated? If you are bold, honest, grounded in sound doctrine, straightforward, etc. would you want or desire others to treat you the same way? If the answer is “yes”, guess what, it’s not pride. You are treating others exactly how you would want to be treated. If however you are two faced, passive aggressive, opinion based, gossipy, backbiting, secretive, etc. etc. and you don’t want others to treat you that way, you are a proud individual. If you get upset over it, you are also a hypocrite. More words of President Benson:

“The scriptures testify that the proud are easily offended and hold grudges (see 1 Nephi 16:1–3). They withhold forgiveness to keep another in their debt and to justify their injured feelings. The proud do not receive counsel or correction easily (see Proverbs 15:10; Amos 5:10). Defensiveness is used by them to justify and rationalize their frailties and failures (see Matthew 3:9; John 6:30–59). The proud depend upon the world to tell them whether they have value or not. Their self-esteem is determined by where they are judged to be on the ladders of worldly success.

They feel worthwhile as individuals if the numbers beneath them in achievement, talent, beauty, or intellect are large enough. Pride is ugly. It says, "If you succeed, I am a failure." "

Is it about likes, subscriptions, praise of your fellow man in the comments, etc.? Is that where you get your support, comfort, motivation, etc? Do you take chastisement well? Do you listen, take notes, and strive to improve? Or do you get defensive, backbite, murmur, start secret gossipy tribunals, etc. and use that defensiveness as a shield to justify and rationalize your frailties and failures, including but not limited to priestcraft, fearing man more than God, etc. etc.? Priestcraft is not of God, period. Fearing man more than God is not of God, period. To justify and rationalize away your fear of men as somehow a positive, as "acceptance" or "getting the more", etc. is to justify and rationalize your pride directly into priestcraft.

Before I conclude, I want to tie in a post that I read online, in which they butchered "pride" just last week... The individual pointed to Alma chapter one and said that "the staunchest defenders of the church were actually the first to fall away from the church... it was their pride in defending the church that lead to anger which lead to them leaving the church." Understanding the real definition of pride would have in fact made this story much clearer, as the picture this individual was painting was unfortunately far from the truth. The scriptures he presented were as thus:

"...Nevertheless, there were many among them who began to be proud, and began to contend warmly with their adversaries, even unto blows; yea, they would smite one another with their fists. Now this was in the second year of the reign of Alma, and it was a cause of much affliction to the church; yea, it was the cause of much trial with the church. For the hearts of many were hardened, and their names were blotted out, that they were remembered no more among the people of God. And also many withdrew themselves from among them."

The conclusion he painted was "staunchly/boldly defending the church and it's doctrine → pride/hardening hearts → fist fights → leaving the church"

The problem with this is the omission of the verses before it:

"But it came to pass that whosoever did not belong to the church of God began to persecute those that did belong to the church of God, and had taken upon them the name of Christ. Yea, they did persecute them, and afflict them with all manner of words, and this because of their humility; because they were not proud in their own eyes, and because they did impart the word of God, one with another, without money and without price. Now there was a strict law among the people of the church, that there should not any man, belonging to the church, arise and persecute those that did not belong to the church, and that there should be no persecution among themselves."

If your belief is that the "staunchest defending of the faith" were the ones who went out and disobeyed the keys counsel, you don't understand "pride". The law of the church was expressly laid out by the keys before the fights broke out. Ie.

The keys said to not fight → the staunchest defenders of the church went out proclaiming BOLDLY, TO NOT FIST FIGHT → the church was prideful, and when presented with the direction from the keys they then hardened their hearts → they acted out their prideful desires, doing their own will vs the will of the keys → fist fights broke out → people left the church

The first people to leave the church were not the staunchest, boldest defenders of it. Period. The first people to leave were those with pride who thought they knew better than the direction provided from the keys. The staunchest defenders of the faith are always the first to stand up and defend the counsel of the keys, alive or dead. This is not a sign of pride, it is literally the antidote for pride- doing and following the will of the Father and those with keys over thine own will, understanding, etc. This does not mean however that one cannot point out when something done by someone holding keys was wrong, that doesn't justify you not listening to direction from the keys however (see my papers Arm of Flesh, The Prepared Need Not Fear, etc.)

Once again, knowing the definition of pride allows us to not misunderstand key insights that scriptures have to offer.

Let us brothers and sisters not be prideful, let us do what the Lord has commanded us to do. Let us go forth and open our mouth boldly declaring salvation on Christ Jesus by obedience to His laws, ordinances, and commandments. Let us go forth boldly and call all to repent daily, including ourselves, and to come unto Christ and follow His will, His commandments, His law etc. Let us put away the fear of men, let us fear God and work out our salvation with fear and trembling before him, lest we give way to pride, rationalize and justify that fear of men and go full speed into priestcraft and be cut off from the Lord. The teacher is no better than the learner, as we are all subservient to the same Christ, if we let our will be swallowed up in His will and treat our neighbor as ourselves we will be rid of pride. It is my prayer that we as saints will first learn, and after we have learned we grow and improve and overcome pride, real pride, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen!