

SUMMER OF SIN: PRIDE

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other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax-collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income." ¹³But the tax-collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.'

Mark 7:21-23

For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.

Luke 18:9-14

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax-collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, "God, I thank you that I am not like

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. Jesus lists pride—among many other vices—as “evil intentions” that spring from within. One of the dangers of discussing “sin” is the temptation to focus on everyone else, and not look within—that is, at “the logs” in our own eyes (as Jesus puts it elsewhere). What methods, people, or practices help slow you down and look within at your own blindspots, misunderstandings, or subconscious habits? How do

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you get clear on what you need to work on, repent of, or seek repair for?

3. What is pride? How do you see its destructive or deadly forms?
 - a. How might the deadly sin of pride differ from expressing pride in a child, friend, or achievement? How might it differ from marginalized groups claiming pride in the face of dehumanization and oppression (like LGBTQ “Pride” or Black “Pride”)?
 - b. What words might describe the kind of pride that is positive? What words might capture destructive or damaging kinds of pride?
4. When Jesus speaks of pride in Mark 7, the Greek word is *hyperephanea* and means, literally, “to appear or shine above others.” It is associated with arrogance and superiority.
 - a. How does the sin of pride as “supremacy” show up in today’s world and everyday life?
 - b. Can you see this kind of pride operating in the story of the religious

person (Pharisee) from Luke’s gospel?

5. Pride as supremacy can be and often is used by people groups, religions and nation-states: like white supremacy, religious exclusivism, or national exceptionalism. Why is the logic of supremacy so corrosive to the spirit and society?
6. Jesus lifts up *humility* as the antidote to supremacy.
 - a. What is humility?
 - b. How does humility counteract supremacy?
 - c. How does Jesus model and teach humility?
7. Pope Leo, who honed and ordered the 7 deadly sins in the 7th century, named pride chief among them—it’s the deadly sin that every other sin springs from. Do you agree with that? Why or why not?

7 Deadly Sins: Pride, Gluttony, Envy, Wrath, Sloth, Lust, Greed

Note: Evagrius Ponticus, a 4th century monastic hermit, thought that *gluttony* was the chief cause of all the others because it blunted the mind and dulled the soul.

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