

Esther Part 4: Posture Matters

Ignite Talk (summary)... Luke 18:9-14... when we come before God, we need to come with humility and with the realization that our good works or goodness is not where our righteousness comes from. Our righteousness comes from God alone. The tax collector received forgiveness because of his humility and correct self-assessment. The Pharisee was not heard by God because of his pride and incorrect self-assessment. "God gives grace to the humble, but opposes the proud."

Discussion Theme: Pride

Purpose of Discussion: To recognize our own pride and to guard our hearts from prideful thinking (thinking that I am better than others)

1. Theme Question for Discussion...

- ☆ What is the difference between arrogance and being proud of someone or something?

2. Read Esther 5:9-14

3. Discussing the text

**** Focus on how irrational it was for Haman to get obsessed with Mordecai and what would cause this to happen.*

- ☆ What was Haman so proud of?
- ☆ What made Haman so angry? Why would this make him angry?
- ☆ How did Haman's family and friends help feed his arrogance?

- ☆ Haman was at the height of his career. Why was he so consumed with Mordecai?

4. Redirection

Do not be ashamed to serve others because of your love for Jesus Christ, or to appear poor in the world's eyes.

Do not count on your own strength; trust God. Do what you can, and God will supply the difference...

Take glory neither in money, if you have some, nor influential friends, but in God who gives you everything and above all wants to give you himself.

Avoid boasting about the size or the beauty of your body, which a little illness can disfigure or destroy.

Have no pride in your native wit or talents; that would displease God who gave you every good thing that you naturally possess.

Reject the thought that you are better than anyone else. If you think such haughty thoughts, God (who knows what is in you) will consider you worse than they.

Pride about our good deeds is pointless. God has his own ideas regarding what is good and he does not always agree with us. If there is anything good about you, believe better things of others. This will keep you humble.

It will not hurt you at all to consider yourself less righteous than others, but it will be disastrous for you to consider yourself better than even one person.

The humble are always at peace; the proud are often envious and angry.

- Thomas a' Kempis

5. Digging Deeper

*****Key thought:** *Try and expose some of the prideful ways of thinking you might have and don't know you have. Be prepared to share first how pride has been subtle sin in your own life.*

- ☆ Haman's pride was obvious. How can pride be a subtle (go unnoticed) sin?

- ☆ Is it possible to stay humble when one has much success in life? How?

- ☆ When another person boasts about their accomplishments, how do you react?

- ☆ Think about your recent attitudes and actions. What evidence of pride do you see?

- ☆ How can you work on eliminating pride from your heart?