

**\*\*\*You're So Vain**

**<Temptations Title>**

We are in our 3<sup>rd</sup> & final week of the Temptations series.

This world is a very ugly place... All this world has to offer is the LUST OF THE FLESH, LUST OF THE EYES, & the PRIDE OF LIFE.

These 3 Things, The lust of the flesh, lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life are temptations.... **<Tempted Sin Death>**

James 1:15 (NIV) Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

James 1:15 lets us know that Temptations gives birth to sin... and sin gives birth to death.

There is no Natural Solution for Sin... but Jesus is our Supernatural solution.

- o 2000 years ago... before you and I were born and committed the sin He had taken our sin and nailed it to His cross.

Lust of the Flesh – What you feel - Craving Physical Pleasure

Lust of the Eyes – What you see - Coveting – desiring material gain

**<Pride of Life>** – What you think...

How many know your thoughts can man mess you up.

Have you ever had trouble controlling your thoughts? Maybe while we were worshiping today...?

One moment you are thinking about God and the songs you are singing... the next you are thinking... We need to go to the store and buy milk...

It's difficult to control your thoughts...

Have you ever been listening to a family member... maybe your spouse... and you are listening, really trying to listen... but your mind...

Your Mind isn't your friend... It isn't God's friend...

Romans 8:7 (NIV) the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

The pride of Life is really tricky... You can learn how to deny Physical and Visual temptation... Perhaps go live in a cave with nothing but a Bible... SOLVED the visual and physical temptation... but there is your mind... thinking thoughts...

The mind is your enemy and God's enemy...

With Physical and Visual Temptation we can find some help in a 12 step program, with accountability, and with changing our environment... But our mind...?

God tells us simply... Isaiah 55:8 (NIV) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,"

Because of our fallen nature, our sin nature, our thoughts will NEVER be like His thoughts and our ways His ways.

That's why it's so important that we learn to...

Proverbs 3:5 (NIV) Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

Remember the <Me Mentality>?

It's impossible for your mind to think selflessly... It always thinks selfishly.

Many young Christians will ask how do I know if God told me to do something or if I thought of it.

Who gets the Glory? You know if it comes from your mind if it is filled with Me Mentality.

It's when we are met with thoughts on Grace, Love, Forgiveness, and self sacrifice... OH THAT WAS FROM GOD. His thoughts are not our thoughts... His ways are not our ways.

When our thoughts are riddled with the Me Mentality you can be sure that you will find Pride. <PRIDE OF LIFE>

Luke 18:9-14 (NIV) To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: 10"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' 13"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' 14"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

We've talked the previous 2 weeks about sins of the flesh and of the eyes... You may be a very mature Christian that has conquered those battles. You may not deal with lusting after sex or coveting. Praise the Lord. We are thankful for that. BUT BE CAREFUL...

**Pride is so subtle that if we aren't careful we'll be proud of our humility.** It's such a nasty trick.

### <Pride Looks Down>

The Pharisee was doing some good things. Things that were righteous. He fasted, he paid his tenth/tithe, he was praying, and as a Pharisee he was committed to the Word of God.

The Pharisee became proud... He exalted himself based on his actions...

**When you are exalted you can only look down on others. Pride looks down.**

Jesus said that the other man, the publican... Humbled Himself and left justified. The Pharisee left UNJUSTIFIED, UNFORGIVEN... Because He exalted himself.

The Pharisee didn't see the value of his brother, the publican. The Pharisee didn't see the love and mercy of God on this day. ..All because Pride Looks down.

Our pride turns our good works into bad works. Our virtues become vices. We can easily become like the Sunday School teacher who, having told the story of the Pharisee and the publican, said, 'Children, let's bow our heads and thank God we are not like the Pharisee!'

### <Don't Dare Compare>

The Publican and the Pharisee are the same.

They may come from different religious standings, economic and cultural status, but they are the same. They are both sinners in need of forgiveness.

It is pride that that keeps them from seeing they are the same.

We are the same.

2 Corinthians 10:12 (NIV) We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.

The Pharisee was comparing himself to the publican... He thought he would rank higher because of self-righteousness. He was wrong.

### <Don't Dare Compare>

We shouldn't compare ourselves. We shouldn't measure each other.

Last week we looked at 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV) No temptation has seized you except what is common to man.

Pride doesn't treat sin as common. It compares our sin with their sin... and because of the pride, because of the me-mentality... like the Pharisee we think we rank a little higher.

Sure I'm not perfect but at least I'm not like them with their sin. That is pride and it's the quickest way to leave God's presence unjustified. Sin is common and we are all sinners. If you want to classify... then we are all classified as Sinners.

We shouldn't boast... We shouldn't classify or compare.. 2 Corinthians 10:17 "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

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How do you think God feels when we compare ourselves to others and look down on them? Pride always seems to see what is wrong with others?

Wouldn't it be a shame to only see someone's disability? I want to share a story with you about a guy named Tim...

### \*\*\*VID - DOWN SYNDROME>

Tim is diagnosed with a disability named Down Syndrome. Wouldn't it be a shame to define Tim by his disability? We would miss out on all of his amazing ability.

When we view each other through pride we always see each other's faults, short comings and disabilities.

The truth is... we all have disabilities. There are things wrong with my thoughts, my actions, my heart... they just haven't been diagnosed by a doctor. Tim and I are the same... Just like the Pharisee and the Publican are the same... We are all the same... BROKEN AND MESSED UP PEOPLE WHO FALL SHORT OF GOD'S GLORY...

This last year in Connect Groups we had a series that really helped me a lot. It was called "Village People." It talked about the classifications we place on each other and how they keep us from true community and love... We designate some people smart, some people talented, some people wealthy, some people beautiful...

However... who here is wealthier than God? If we took all our bank accounts and combined them and multiplied by a million... it still wouldn't compare to His wealth... IT IS REALLY DUMB TO SERVE GOD AND COMPARE OURSELVES AGAINST EACH OTHER...

We are all poor compared to His wealth... All poor compared to his intelligence... his beauty... his ability...

In that Village People series I learned that we are all poor... if we compare ourselves we will see that some of us are just poorer than others, but compared to God... we are all poor.

Will I may be poorer than someone else in one area... maybe they are poorer than me in another area. Maybe I am poorer than them in the area of intelligence, but they are poorer than me in the area of mercy and love? Neither of us are wealthy in the context of God's wealth.

Given this view... why would any of us take pride in ourselves or look down on our brother or sister. Instead we should celebrate our Savior's wealth and love our brother and sister.

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America has a problem...

## <Pride denies Grace>

If I work hard enough and believe in myself I can do anything. Hard work pays off and if I just refuse to quit I will accomplish every goal. This more or less is the American dream.

America, the land of opportunity has a lot of pride. America, where the average person is in the top 10% of wealthiest individuals in the entire world. America, where we always have food on the table but feel like we are doing without if we don't have the latest smartphone, the better Cable TV Package, or a new car.

We work hard so we can earn... We earn everything... and we are proud of it.

### **Grace is unearned.**

You can punch your time card at the Local church and not earn it.

You can give millions to charity and not earn it.

You can fast and pray but you won't earn it.

You can repent, get baptized, speak in tongues, prophecy... but you won't earn it

You can be a pastor... but you won't earn it.

### **GRACE = UNEARNED**

Yes America, you can work really hard... But don't forget that there are somethings that we don't earn.

You can't earn the Sun.

You can't earn your life... your heartbeat... your next breath.

You can't earn the love of your family and friends... they give it.

You can't earn God's Love, Protection, Blessing...

God told Israel...

Deuteronomy 8:12-14 (NIV) when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, 13and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, 14then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

DON'T BE PROUD ABOUT YOUR POSSESSIONS! You didn't really earn them.

Don't be proud about your bank account, your two car family...

Pride thinks it earns everything so it never is thankful. Pride forgets that it was the Lord who brought us out of Egypt... out of bondage and slavery.

Pride wants to define our lives by our possessions... our abilities. Not by God's Love and Faithfulness!

**When was the last time you were truly humbled by what you have?**

**When was the last time you told God I didn't earn this... so whatever you want me to do with it... I'm willing?**

**Like Israel, have you forgotten the Lord?**

Pride Looks Down but **<Grace looks up>**

Colossians 3:1-4 (NIV) Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

**<Grace looks up>**

We are raised with Christ. We didn't earn that. It was by His grace.

Therefore we should look up. Our hearts should be set on things above. Our minds... the source of our pride temptation, should be set on things above.

3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

What pride should a dead man have?

4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Christ is now our life... Not your car or your job...

Not what we have done but what he has done.

Not what we have earned but what he has earned and freely given.

Look up and see Grace – See Christ.

Hebrews 4: 15 (NIV) For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. 16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

## <HIGH PRIEST>

The High Priest was the person who would take the sin offering into the Holy of Holies. This was an act only 1 person could do and it could only be done 1 time a year.

The High Priest would take the sacrificed lamb... The lamb didn't do anything wrong... The lamb hadn't committed the sins... But the lamb paid for the sins with its own life...

The High Priest would take that lamb beyond the Veil... There were these curtains that acted as doorways to the Holy of Holies. No one but the High Priest with the sin offering could pass through this veil.

The High Priest would pass through the veil and into the Holy of Holies. The Presence of God resided in the Holy of Holies. Everyone except the High Priest was outside the Presence of God. It was in this place that the High Priest presented the sin offering on behalf of everyone. The sin offering would cover all our sins, weaknesses, and temptations... for 1 year. 1 year later we would need to do this all over again.

- **MUSICIAN**

Grace looks up... Can we look up for a moment? Let's look up to what we could never earn.

Jesus is our High Priest. He is the Anointed ONE. As Hebrews 4 says... He sympathizes with our weakness.. he was tempted in every way just as we are yet without sin. He is sinless...

Jesus is also the sinless Lamb. He is the Sin offering. He died for a sin He did not commit.

Jesus is also the veil. Mark 15: 38 tells us that the veil that separated us from God's presence was torn in two as Jesus was crucified. As Jesus had his flesh ripped so too was the veil ripped.

Jesus is also the Presence inside the Holy of Holies. Jesus is God almighty. God was in Christ Reconciling the world... That's not figurative... That is literal.

He is the High Priest, the Lamb, the veil, and the Presence inside.

He is everything.

Grace looks up... Pride looks down...

Do you realize the only person that could ever look down on you refused to look down on you?

God almighty rather than look down upon us lowered himself to be a servant, to be nailed to a cross as a common thief...

Rather than look down upon us... He allowed others to look down on Him... We looked down on Him... and he looked up to us.

Look up to your High Priest. 2 Corinthians 10:17 "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

Remember that your sins were nailed to His cross. Today as you come... take all your foolish pride and arrogance... take all of your self righteousness... take all of your comparing yourself against other people... and nail it to His Cross.