

# Covert Arrogance

*Hiding Out In Plain Sight*

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## Introduction

Why write a book on a topic that many have never even identified with? What *is* covert arrogance?

*Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.*

— **Ephesians 5:11-12**

My heart is with Christ's heart. As a shepherd, an under-shepherd to be precise, it is my duty to His flock to expose darkness, despite the fleshly desire in man to hide from it.

*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.*

— **John 3:16-21**

The simple fact is that people know when they're being arrogant. However, in all fairness to them, they may not understand the Biblical definition of arrogance, so some may go a lifetime never knowing exactly how arrogant they truly are. God has a way of showing us the darkness that looms like a shadow over mankind, even dominating the unregenerate.

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.*

*Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. **Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.** For this reason it says,*

*“Awake, sleeper,  
And arise from the dead,  
And Christ will shine on you.”*

*Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

**— Ephesians 5:1-21**

## CHAPTER ONE:

### ARROGANCE DEFINED

*Some wicked men do in certain respects desire that a work of humiliation may be wrought in them, and yet are utterly opposed to humiliation. They do many things that they may be humbled, and pray that they may be brought off from their own righteousness, and yet would by no means let it go, but are indeed building up their own righteousness all the time.*

*They seem in some respects to wish that they might submit to the justice and sovereignty of God in their condemnation, but yet are utterly averse to any such thing as owning God's justice. They are averse to this submission, as appears from their showing such a spirit of strife with God. They do not believe that God is just and sovereign, and how therefore is it possible that they should desire really to submit to God's justice and sovereignty? They cannot heartily and fervently desire to submit to God as just and sovereign, when they do not believe that he possesses those attributes, but think him unjust and tyrannical.*

— *The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards* by **Jonathan Edwards**

As Jonathan Edwards so aptly conveyed above, wickedness is the struggle against humility. Humility begins with a certain obedience to God's will. This thought is often overshadowed by the resulting issues of salvation and sanctification, but it ought never be so. Humility is the key to the spiritual life, as it pertains to both salvation and that which God performs in His children afterwards, as promised, "*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus*" (**Philippians 1:6**). Arrogance, for the sake of keeping it simple in this book, is the opposite of humility. Humility has fruit. "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law*" (**Galatians 5:22-23**). Arrogance also has fruit. Its baseline is a fundamental disrespect for true godliness.

*All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles. If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.*

— 1 Timothy 6:1-6

If arrogance is the motivation, then sin is the act.

**Arrogance [Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary]:**

*noun*

*The act or habit of arrogating, or making undue claims in an overbearing manner; that species of pride which consists in exorbitant claims of rank, dignity, estimation, or power, or which exalts the worth or importance of the person to an undue degree; proud contempt of others; lordliness; haughtiness; self-assumption; presumption.*

Arrogance, by definition, is a “species” of pride, making it a derivative.

**Pride [Baker’s Dictionary of Theology]:**

*noun*

*Pride may be defined as “inordinate and unreasonable self-esteem, attended with insolence and rude treatment of others.” [It] is an attempt to appear in a superior light [to] what we are, with “anxiety to gain*

*applause, and distress and rage when slighted.” Pride is “the high opinion that a poor, little, contracted soul entertains of itself” ...*

*Pride is universal among all nations, being variously attributed in the Bible to Israel, Judah, Moab, Edom, Assyria, Jordan, and the Philistines. It is connected with the sin of Sodom (Ezekiel 16:49). Indeed, the ambitious pride of Satan was part of the original sin of the universe (Ezekiel 28:17, with 1 Timothy 3:6). It may well have been the first sin to enter God’s universe, and no doubt will be one of the last to be conquered.*

*The Bible teaches that pride deceives the heart (Jeremiah 49:16), hardens the mind (Daniel 5:20), brings contention (Proverbs 13:10), compasses about like a chain (Psalms 73:6), and brings men to destruction (Proverbs 16:18). A proud heart stirs up strife (Proverbs 28:25), and is an abomination unto the Lord (Proverbs 16:5). A proud look God hates (Proverbs 6:17), and those who engage therein shall stumble and fall (Jeremiah 50:32).*

*Pride is the parent of discontent, ingratitude, presumption, passion, extravagance, and bigotry. There is hardly an evil committed without pride being connected in some sense. Augustine and Aquinas held that pride was the very essence of sin. Since God resists the proud (James 4:6), the believer must learn to hate pride and to clothe himself with humility.*

— Gerald B. Stanton

Again, if arrogance is the motivation, then sin is the act.

**Sin [Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary]:**

*noun (only including the applicable entry)*

*2. Transgression of the law of God; disobedience of the divine command; any violation of God’s will, either in purpose or conduct; moral deficiency in the character; iniquity; as, sins of omission and sins of commission.*



Sin implies the presence of law, *“for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law”* (**Romans 5:13**), and the law is given by God, so it must be perfect, *“The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple”* (**Psalms 19:7**). Therefore, the proverbial bar has been set. It is set by the Holy God of the Universe, of all things material and immaterial, and of all things spiritual, *“For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin”* (**Romans 7:14**).

We are all sinners for the simple reason that His law is perfect and we are not, *“For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all”* (**James 2:10**). It is this basic concept that irritates, agitates, incites, and causes arrogance to rear its antagonistic head. To personify arrogance, simply put, it desires to be the “boss”. The idea that it must bow down to a sovereign that it has not chosen for itself is too much for it to handle. So, it will devise schemes and create devices to assert itself in the face of God’s law. This is futility at its best. We ought not be surprised, either. Just look at Satan, he is *still* at it after all this time...such is the tenacity of the truly arrogant. In the most resourceful cases, creatures will actually *choose* eternal separation from God rather than admit their pride and be healed by the merciful hand of the Lord.

This book will not be addressing every facet of sin. That’s what the Bible is for, to be frank. Besides, there are infinite shades and variations on the subject that even a slightly insightful, reflective individual might articulate as a result of their own self-examination. This book deals with a very specific vein of thought, an oft undefined and therefore overlooked aspect of arrogance. It is haunting once brought to light, as you’ll see in the following pages. I call it “Covert Arrogance”, but it doesn’t matter what you call it (Satan would prefer you don’t call it out at all), as long as you realize the pervasiveness of it in your life and in the lives of those around you. It is insidious in a variety of ways.

God cannot be the author of arrogance. *“Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone”* (**James 1:13**). The Bible includes references to many such examples of His creatures acting through arrogance, resulting in sin. There exists in Satan, his demons, Adam, Cain, church-age believers and

unbelievers, all the way to the prophecies regarding the Great White Throne judgement at the end of human history as we know it, an undeniable thread of arrogance woven throughout our existence that is worthy of being highlighted; hence, this book.

Although the topic is not always uplifting at face value, the truth is that God's Word reveals it, and if there's something God has deemed worthy to inspire in the canon of Holy Scriptures, then it is worthy of our time to study it. *"Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth"* (**John 17:17**). In the end, He promises that since, *"Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above"* (**James 1:17**), that whatever we discover will be good for as long as we see it in the Light. *"But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light"* (**Ephesians 5:13**).

Discovering the full truth about arrogance is "light". God wills it so, *"who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth"* (**1 Timothy 2:4**).

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

— **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

## The Fall and the Curses

Satan, the first known creature to sin, specifically used the base operations of covert arrogance to tempt Adam and Eve in the Garden.

Eve knew better, even though she was deceived, as her arrogance blinded her. Although not explicitly described in scripture, it is assumed that Adam would have explained to her the commands that he had received from God about the tree with the forbidden fruit on it. She would have also known that Adam was her earthly master, as her husband, and that breaking a God-given command that Adam was responsible for upholding, being his wife, was to break from God's will, albeit indirectly (before her husband) as well as directly (before God). By definition, arrogance is independence from God, or any of His delegated authorities, such as a husband.

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"*

*The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;*

*but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"*

*The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!*

*"For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

*When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.*

*Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.*

— Genesis 3:1-7

When Eve decided to eat the forbidden fruit, she essentially allowed arrogance to spawn the “seed” that has been with mankind ever since. That seed is what is planted and cultivated in the “soil” of every unbeliever and has been consistently responsible for bearing bad fruit. *“For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit” (Luke 6:43-44a)*. The only way man has ever been able to produce good fruit since then is to gain access to the Tree of Life again, by means of salvation.

Because of the fall, God has issued curses on mankind, as we see in the Garden account:

*They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*

*Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”*

*He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”*

*And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”*

— **Genesis 3:8-11**

Does Adam, in his fallen nature, do the humble thing? Nope. He blames the wife and indirectly apportions a bit of blame to God! This is arrogance trying to slip a punch, namely God’s judgement. This is what arrogance does - it seeks ways to avoid being held to the divine standard. It would rather throw another person under the bus than take responsibility for not measuring up. It’d rather trample relationships with others (consider the fact that at this time Eve was Adam’s *only* friend) than submit to authority. Adam’s not alone, as the account reveals both of their fleshesses passing the buck.

*The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”*

*Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"  
And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

— **Genesis 3:12-13**

As a result of the fall, God dispenses His righteous judgement through the administration of curses:

*The LORD God said to the serpent,  
"Because you have done this,  
Cursed are you more than all cattle,  
And more than every beast of the field;  
On your belly you will go,  
And dust you will eat  
All the days of your life;  
And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her seed;  
He shall bruise you on the head,  
And you shall bruise him on the heel."*

— **Genesis 3:14-15**

God demotes Satan in rank, which would have agitated him to his very core. He had already been demoted as a result of his own fall, as the previously titled, "*anointed cherub*" (**Ezekiel 28:14**) to the "*god of this world*" (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). As a result of his "*trade*" (**Ezekiel 28:16**) with humanity, God has cursed Satan even further, placing him even further from his base desire to "*be like the Most High*" (**Isaiah 14:14b**).

The woman (not so named Eve until **v20**) also receives just recompense for her unrighteous deed:

*To the woman He said,  
"I will greatly multiply  
Your pain in childbirth,  
In pain you will bring forth children;*

*Yet your desire [teshuqa (Hebrew)- same as sin, to master] will be  
for your husband,  
And he will rule over you."*

— **Genesis 3:16**

What's noteworthy regarding the administration of each of the three curses doled out at the Fall is that each is tailored such that subsequent temptations exploit these curses as weak spots. In other words, the seed of arrogance in all women as a result of the fall is centered around the curse in **Genesis 3:16**. There are few things more rotten than the fruit of an unchecked woman (she is a type of the Bride of Christ, remember). She is the curse for man that isn't listed here. *"It is better to live in a corner of a roof than in a house shared with a contentious woman"* (**Proverbs 21:19**).

Finally, God speaks directly to the federal head of the human race, Adam:

*Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';*

*Cursed is the ground because of you;*

*In toil you will eat of it*

*All the days of your life.*

*Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you;*

*And you will eat the plants of the field;*

*By the sweat of your face*

*You will eat bread,*

*Till you return to the ground,*

*Because from it you were taken;*

*For you are dust,*

*And to dust you shall return."*

— **Genesis 3:17-19**

Like the woman, Adam's curse resonates throughout human history. The epicenter of masculine failure involves his labor as head of the

household. The curse is that persistence for men requires hard work. This is the reason why so many men have failed in their duties as caretakers - they are arrogant. Furthermore, many of those who claim success have cheated on their taxes and found ways to make their job a little easier. Words of wisdom are amply supplied regarding crookedness in fulfilling one's duties as a man. *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap"* (**Galatians 6:7**). The arrogant man believes he has foiled God's curse by finding loopholes. Could there be a greater folly?

The wonderful thing about our God is that He is gracious, as seen with the first type of salvation in **v21**:

*Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.*

*The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. [God is gracious]*

*Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" —*

*Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.*

*So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.*

— **Genesis 3:20-24**

## **Two Kinds of Seed**

In agricultural terminology, trees propagate naturally by spreading their own seeds, as God designed it from the beginning.

*Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after*

*their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good.*

— **Genesis 1:11-12**

In the Garden, there were two very well known trees, namely, the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. One bore spiritual fruit of light, the other of darkness, respectively. These fruits and their derivatives are apparent throughout human history. Both kinds have persisted, and by prophecy, shall remain until the Lord seals up the lake of fire and all unrighteous fruit production halts. *“Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”* (**Revelation 20:14-15**).

As the analogy goes, the righteous deeds of a godly person may be said to be fruit of the Tree of Life. Likewise, the unrighteous deeds of the ungodly person may be said to be fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. As the Lord sows His seed in the lives of believers, so Satan sows his in the lives of unbelievers, such that a person is known by their fruit. *“So then, you will know them by their fruits”* (**Matthew 7:20**). This tree-seed analogy carries through the Bible such that even the writers in the New Testament use it.

*Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because **His seed abides in him**; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should*



*love one another; not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

— **1 John 3:4-15**

“His seed” in **1 John 3:9** refers to the acquisition of a seed, namely that which the Tree of Life bears. This is the seed of humility.

*So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits.*

— **Matthew 7:17-20**

The seed that falls into the hearts of believers from the Tree of Life bears the greatest fruit of all - love.

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

— **John 13:34-35**

The Tree of Life bears fruit with the seed of humility in it. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil bears fruit with the seed of arrogance in it. The fruit of arrogance comes in all different kinds.

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it*

*evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.*

*Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*

*And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.*

— **Romans 1:18-32**

Arrogance breeds arrogance by sowing its seed in this world, even among God's crops. Its fruit is often indistinguishable to the naked eye, but God sees the heart (see *Covert Operations* in Chapter Two).

## We Are All Born Arrogant

We are all born arrogant. That's a fact. Deal with it. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (**Romans 6:23**). Scripture states that man is born spiritually dead. Adam sinned, and when he did, the sin nature was created in him and in his progeny thereafter. *"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned"* (**Romans 5:12**). Some call the presence of sin in the human body the "old sin nature"; however, that phrase never appears in the Bible. The Biblical connotation is "the flesh":

*For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.*

— **Romans 7:14-21**

The other Biblical connotation for the old sin nature is the "old self":

*But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

Throughout this book, I will be using the three terms interchangeably: “old sin nature”, “the flesh”, and “the old self”.

Because we’re born with a corrupt flesh, we are born arrogant, prideful. The flesh fundamentally desires to “master” (*teshuqa*) us because it is the very nature of sin. Such was the warning that the Lord God gave Cain right before he murdered his own brother. *“If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire [teshuqa (Hebrew) = desire to master, to rule over, to lord over] is for you, but you must master it.” Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him” (Genesis 4:7-8).*

In Chapter Three (*Arrogance Hates Being Judged*), we’ll get into the baseline issue with arrogance, but for now I present you with a brief, practical, working definition:

**Arrogance is a sentient creature’s base desire to be independent from God. It wants to be master, nothing less. It will bite and scratch anything or anyone (including God) that stands opposed to this fundamental, motivating desire. The primal issue that spawns its activities is its fear of being judged. Arrogance will judge itself, but is uncomfortable with being judged by God.**

The bar is set. It is God’s perfect law. Arrogance despises it.

## **The Judaizers' Arrogance**

The Judaizers, as most theologians and practicing pastors refer to them, are those Jews throughout history, especially noteworthy during the early church in the Bible, who made it their life’s work to put arrogance on full display (though most never realize it). These folks swore up and down that they upheld the Law, even preached a salvation by works to their disciples, based on said Law. However, they missed the greatest law of all, the law of

love. Why? Arrogance displaces love for God (and others) with love for self.

*Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.*

— **Matthew 7:21-23**

The apostle Paul fought many battles on this front with the Judaizers who, persistently and with increasing vigor, made an issue out of works rather than grace. Deeds that were supposed to be glorifying God were used to glorify man, such as circumcision:

*Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply so that they will not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised so that they may boast in your flesh. But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

— **Galatians 6:12-14**

The flesh doesn't always need a substantial object, just one that can be manipulated and subsequently leveraged as a means of establishing superiority over its peers. Circumcision, laws, rituals, you name it; the religious Jews during Paul's time were expert at exploiting them all for personal gain.

You might be saying to yourself, "What's all this got to do with me...like two thousand years later?" The point is that these patterns still exist in the churches. The accounts recorded in the Bible were neither novel concepts then, nor are they now. We all have a little "Judaizer" in us because we all have an arrogant flesh. Go to the average Christian church

nowadays and look around...there they sit in proper little rows in their "Sunday best" clothing, looking at their watches. It is all a show. For whom? The flesh, of course! They are the contemporary religious folk...same issue, different era is all.

It is easy to point out the terrible actors. They are the ones who we see outside of church talking and acting like your average unbeliever. When it comes to identifying the overtly arrogant, they are low hanging fruit. They are like the Pharisees that Jesus advised, "*So then, you will know them by their fruits*" (**Matthew 7:20**). They are not the subjects of this book. It is the "other" crowd in the crosshairs here - same source (the flesh), but a different brand of arrogance. And because it is shady, it is often the most difficult to identify, even in ourselves. This group comprises the covertly arrogant. I will expound upon them in a later chapter.

God sees the heart, "*for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart*"(**1 Samuel 16:7b**). Always remember that, for your own sake.

So, when it comes to arrogance, the Judaizers stand out as an outstanding visual aid for us all. Jesus saw right through their facade, "*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness*" (**Matthew 23:27-28**). And what did Jesus see? He saw a group of self-righteous individuals rejecting the spirit of God's law in favor of their own religiosity. In effect, they revealed to Jesus that their hearts were filled with arrogance, regardless of their show of so-called good fruit. Instead of submitting to God's sovereign right to judge His creatures against His perfect law, they created their own and made themselves judges (they invented a new bar suitable for their flesh). As judges, they proceeded to judge themselves righteous and others unrighteous. "*They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger*" (**Matthew 23:4**).

Pride elevates self by pushing others down.

That's the thing with overt arrogance - it is all show and no heart. 'Tis why the quickest way to rouse up an overtly arrogant person is to show

them up! Make the overtly arrogant jealous, then sit back, and observe the chest-beating exhibition. Arrogance is predictable.

The Judaizers, the Pharisees, the Scribes, the Sadducees, etc. are all found in the Bible to be good examples of overt arrogance. Of course, they possessed their fair share of covert arrogance as well, but they are historically most notably of the overt camp. So much has been written about them, particularly in the New Testament, that an effort to rightly divide truth demands that their arrogance be addressed.

## King David's Humility

The opposite of arrogance is humility.

The previous section titled, *The Judaizers' Arrogance*, explained the more obvious aspects of arrogance, namely the overt ones. Since most people tend to think of and relate to arrogance overtly, we will utilize it as our point of comparison.

Humility is the key to the spiritual life, both at salvation and throughout the Spirit's progressive sanctification of us in time as believers. Humility views God's standards (His "bar" in Chapter One, *Arrogance Defined*) as refreshing and reassuring. A truly humble person not only obeys but also actually *seeks* to obey His commands. It is scripturally warranted to say that a truly humble person's joy rests in God's commandments.

*Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.*

— 1 John 5:1-3

The idea of obedience to any commandment from any source other than one chosen by or invented by itself gives arrogance fits. Arrogant people make terrible followers because they are constantly challenging those in authority (by the way, terrible followers make even worse leaders, but I

will leave that for another book). Why are they constantly bucking authority? Because being judged by someone other than themselves, especially on matters that they deem important, makes them insecure. Note that this is the exact opposite emotion drummed up in the soul of a humble person. *“But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, ‘GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.’ Submit therefore to God” (James 4:6-7a)*. A humble person is a grace-oriented person, by God’s own hand; therefore, their focus is on gratitude.

*Rejoice always;*

*Pray without ceasing;*

*In everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.*

— **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

King David, who God describes as, *“A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will” (Acts 13:22)*, was, if nothing else, humble. He preferred to be judged by God rather than man. The arrogant person reading this just said, *“See, that’s ME! I will listen to God, but not to man...that’s why I buck authority!”* That same person needs to remember, *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17)*.

I wonder how many criminals appealing their death sentence share David’s sentiments. My guess is not many. See, an arrogant person desires to judge themselves under their own system of justice and against their own standards. Therein lies the deeply rooted, all-telling difference between arrogance and humility. **Arrogance defies God’s judgment, humility pursues it.** David’s a wonderful example of humility seeking God’s judgement over man’s.

*Now David’s heart troubled him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, please take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have acted very foolishly.” When David arose in the morning, the word of the*



*LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, "Go and speak to David, 'Thus the LORD says, "I am offering you three things; choose for yourself one of them, which I will do to you."'" So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider and see what answer I shall return to Him who sent me." Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Let us now fall into the hand of the LORD for His mercies are great, but do not let me fall into the hand of man."*

— **2 Samuel 24:10-14**

Whatever else is written in this book on arrogance, the one surefire way towards deliverance from it is humility. God gives mercy (grace in action) to the humble (**James 4:6**). So much of this book will be rendered useless and fruitless to a heart that remains arrogant. Where arrogance boldly calls upon human strength, ingenuity, and speculation to solve human problems, humility calls directly upon the grace of God.

*For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

— **Hebrews 4:15-16**

God sees the humble heart and blesses it. Mary's Magnificat speaks volumes as to why the Almighty God chose her to raise His Son. Mary, Jesus' mother, was, if nothing else, humble.

*And Mary said:*

*"My soul exalts the Lord,*

*And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*

*For He has had regard for the humble state of His bonds slave;*

*For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.*

*For the Mighty One has done great things for me;*

*And holy is His name.*  
AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION  
TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM.  
*He has done mighty deeds with His arm;*  
*He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart.*  
*He has brought down rulers from their thrones,*  
*And has exalted those who were humble.*  
HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS;  
*And sent away the rich empty-handed.*  
*He has given help to Israel His servant,*  
*In remembrance of His mercy,*  
*As He spoke to our fathers,*  
*To Abraham and his descendants forever.”*

— Luke 1:46-55

## CHAPTER TWO:

### NOT ALL ARROGANCE IS THE SAME

The world will have us believe that arrogance is defined solely by a person's propensity for chest-beating bravado. Is this accurate? Is this view Biblically supported? It is not. Is chest-beating bravado a possible outcome? Of course, but this is only our first category of arrogance, namely, "Overt Arrogance" (overt means done or shown openly, not secret or hidden). There exists another category, though hardly identifiable to the naked eye, aptly called "Covert Arrogance", after which this book is titled. The Holy Scriptures give us many examples of this latter type of arrogance in life itself. Once a person's eyes are open to the existence of it, they are able to see it slithering through the history of mankind like a serpent.

The simple fact is that most people, even most professing Christians, have no idea what true arrogance actually is, at least not the Biblical definition of it. It is upon this sad reality that covert arrogance builds its unholy shrine. It is able to grow deep roots in the souls of the unsuspecting, going undetected for years or even a lifetime, riddling its possessors with anxiety, pain, and self-inflicted suffering. The damage is immeasurable, yet so few ever identify the source.

All arrogance is weak in God's eyes. However, while overt arrogance appears to man as strong, covert arrogance appears weak. Even the flesh will contend with something that seems wrongly forceful, but it will hardly pick a fight with something seen as pathetic. What man fails to realize is that the stronger of the two types of arrogance is actually the covert class. Much of its strength is attributed to it being invisible to most people. It's difficult, if not impossible, to contend with something you can't see.

*"The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist."* This is the famous quote popularized in the 1995 movie *The Usual Suspects* by the character Keyser Soze. There is a certain truth to this that highlights the very power of covert arrogance. Satan is the most arrogant creature ever created, at least apparently so by scriptural revelation. Consider how grotesque it was for Satan to propose that the God-man,

Jesus Christ, subject Himself to one of His own creatures! Yet, that is exactly what he did.

*Again, the devil \*took Him to a very high mountain and \*showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus \*said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"*

— **Matthew 4:8-10**

From that same depraved heart came the essence of covert arrogance. Throughout the Bible, Satan is seen slinking around undetected by man, wreaking havoc in the lives of those he has pursued. Consider Job, who was viciously attacked by Satan. And for what cause? So that he might be proven a phony. And to what end? That Satan might denounce the justice he is under. May we find encouragement in Job's example, who never denounced his Lord as Satan proposed he would, given intense enough pressure. True faith always overcomes arrogance.

*Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

— **1 John 5:1-5**

## Overt Operations

What is “overt arrogance”? How does it operate?

Consider Goliath, the epitome of overt arrogance, and those he represented. Given the fact that arrogance was not only present in the Philistines in those days, but in the hearts of the Israelites as well, scripture reveals that although arrogance will fight tooth and nail with its opponents, it lacks true faith, making it weak before God. Faith is given by grace to the humble (**James 4:6**) making the humble, like David, a force to be reckoned with. Hence, the reason why arrogant people despise the truly humble - they know they are weak by comparison.

*Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; and they were gathered at Socoh which belongs to Judah, and they camped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. Saul and the men of Israel were gathered and camped in the valley of Elah, and drew up in battle array to encounter the Philistines. The Philistines stood on the mountain on one side while Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with the valley between them.*

*Then a champion came out from the armies of the Philistines named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he was clothed with scale-armor which weighed five thousand shekels of bronze. He also had bronze greaves on his legs and a bronze javelin slung between his shoulders. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and the head of his spear weighed six hundred shekels of iron; his shield-carrier also walked before him (Goliath stood and spoke as a massive show of overt arrogance).*

*He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel and said to them, “Why do you come out to draw up in battle array? Am I not the Philistine and you servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will become your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall become our servants and serve us.” Again the Philistine said, “I defy the ranks of Israel this day; give me a man that we may fight together.”*

*When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid (Saul's lack of faith in God revealed his own arrogance before God).*

*Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. And Jesse was old in the days of Saul, advanced in years among men. The three older sons of Jesse had gone after Saul to the battle. And the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and the second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. David was the youngest. Now the three oldest followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's flock at Bethlehem.*

*The Philistine came forward morning and evening for forty days and took his stand. Then Jesse said to David his son, "Take now for your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves and run to the camp to your brothers. Bring also these ten cuts of cheese to the commander of their thousand, and look into the welfare of your brothers, and bring back news of them. For Saul and they and all the men of Israel are in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines."*

*So David arose early in the morning and left the flock with a keeper and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him. And he came to the circle of the camp while the army was going out in battle array shouting the war cry. Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army. Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers. As he was talking with them, behold, the champion, the Philistine from Gath named Goliath, was coming up from the army of the Philistines, and he spoke these same words; and David heard them.*

*When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were greatly afraid. The men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who is coming up? Surely he is coming up to defy Israel. And it will be that the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel."*

*Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he*

*should taunt the armies of the living God?" The people answered him in accord with this word, saying, "Thus it will be done for the man who kills him." Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle." But David said, "What have I done now? Was it not just a question?"*

*Then he turned away from him to another and said the same thing; and the people answered the same thing as before. When the words which David spoke were heard, they told them to Saul, and he sent for him. David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." Then Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God." And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and may the LORD be with you (David stood as the prime example of true humility, exuding both strength and confidence)."*

*Then Saul clothed David with his garments and put a bronze helmet on his head, and he clothed him with armor. David girded his sword over his armor and tried to walk, for he had not tested them. So David said to Saul, "I cannot go with these, for I have not tested them." And David took them off. He took his stick in his hand and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his pouch, and his sling was in his hand; and he approached the Philistine.*

*Then the Philistine came on and approached David, with the shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, with a handsome*

*appearance. The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine also said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field (what Goliath did not understand was that he was pitting overt arrogance against godly humility, which is always a losing battle)."*

*Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands (humility accepts God's will, regardless)."*

*Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground. Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him; but there was no sword in David's hand. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled (that is what arrogance does once it is exposed, it flees [James 4:7]).*

— 1 Samuel 17:1-51

This magnificent account in the Bible of David and Goliath speaks volumes on the topic of arrogance. On the one hand, Goliath is an icon of overt arrogance - pure brute force, yet deadly weak compared to David, who possessed the humility to wield his true weapon (the sling was not responsible for slaying Goliath and David knew it).



In military terms, overt operations are those that are carried out in full view. Disclosure is only limited by exposure. There's no intentional hiding taking place. Goliath is an icon of overt operations. It's not difficult to identify the "Goliaths" in the world.

## Covert Operations

“Covert arrogance” refers to the hidden or secret aspects of arrogance. This category of arrogance is actually borrowed from well-known military vernacular.

*According to the U.S. Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, a covert operation (also as CoveOps or covert ops) is “an operation that is so planned and executed as to conceal the identity of or permit plausible denial by the sponsor.” It is intended to create a political effect which can have implications in the military, intelligence or law enforcement arenas. Covert operations aim to fulfill their mission objectives without any parties knowing who sponsored or carried out the operation.*

...

*Covert operations and clandestine operations are distinct. The Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (Joint Publication JP1-02), defines “covert operation” as “an operation that is so planned and executed as to conceal the identity of or permit plausible denial by the sponsor. A covert operation differs from a clandestine operation in that emphasis is placed on concealment of identity of sponsor rather than on concealment of the operation.” The United States Department of Defense definition has been used by the United States and NATO since World War II.*

*In a covert operation, the identity of the sponsor is concealed, while in a clandestine operation the operation itself is concealed. Put differently, clandestine means “hidden,” while covert means “deniable.” The term stealth refers both to a broad set of tactics aimed at providing and preserving the element of surprise and reducing enemy resistance and to a set of technologies (stealth technology) to aid in those tactics. While secrecy and stealthiness are often desired in clandestine and covert operations, the terms secret and stealthy are not used to formally describe types of missions.*

*Covert operations are employed in situations where openly operating against a target would be disadvantageous. These operations are generally illegal in the target state and are frequently in violation of the laws of the sponsoring country. Operations may be directed at or conducted with allies*

*and friends to secure their support for controversial components of foreign policy throughout the world. Covert operations may include sabotage, assassinations, support for coups d'état, or support for subversion. Tactics include the use of a false flag or front group.*

— “Covert Operation” - Wikipedia.com

The interesting thing about covert arrogance is that it is often mistaken by the world as humility. Maybe “mistaken” is not the right word... “accepted” or “adopted” seem more appropriate. As we will observe in scripture, that mistakenness constitutes a good portion of its power. And anything with power is capable of increasing momentum over time, thus amplifying the original error. Covert arrogance (false humility) is like a snowball that increases in size as it rolls down a hill. This is one of the primary reasons for this book’s existence - so that *you* might identify those areas of false humility (hidden, covert arrogance) in your own life and address them with scripture, with the help of the Holy Spirit, *before* they become something *really* difficult to stop.

The world’s definition of humility is really a place where arrogance breeds. The world protects it with ideologies like “political correctness”, “charitable causes” and the list goes on.

On the flip side, the Word of God exposes false humility and provides us with a clear definition for true humility. For us citizens of heaven (**Philippians 3:20**), there exists a less generally acceptable reality (by the world’s standards) that we must abide in. The good news is that the power that is given to us by grace is more than sufficient to overcome any challenges we might face in doing so, “*And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me*” (**2 Corinthians 12:9**).

To call out false humility in today’s society is social suicide. How dare we suggest sweet little Suzy-Q is a wolf behind those bashful “awe-shucks” eyes. How dare we cast such aspersions in Satan’s world! We will pay for our social transgressions. So be it.

*And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

— **Romans 5:3-5**

It seems that most people suffering from covert arrogance are unaware of its existence, or minimally uninterested in discovering such a thing, it seems. They say, “I’m not arrogant...aw shucks...just look at me and my modesty.” Unfortunately, most will pat such a person on the back in agreement. Snowball.

Leaving covert arrogance unchecked for too long results in the worst kind of monster, a self-righteous one. How do you convince someone who thinks they are right that they are wrong? How do you even begin a fruitful dialogue with them when they fail to see the actual problem? They’ll assume it’s *your* problem (or God’s, even).

*The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays.*

— **Luke 11:34-36**

Therein lies the challenge. The longer covert arrogance goes unchecked, the greater the damage and the more difficult it is to extract from a person, or visa versa. It is certainly not impossible, for if God can rid a possessed child of a demon, He can certainly extricate a bit of arrogance from the soul of one of His own children.

*They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. And He asked his father, “How long has*

*this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" And Jesus said to him, "If You can?' **All things are possible to him who believes.**" Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."*

— **Mark 9:20-24**

Covert arrogance, though as stubborn as any form of arrogance man has ever known, is not impenetrable. To God, it is merely an issue of whether one of His own turns to Him in humility. For as long as a person refuses, choosing rather to boast in false humility, they remain stuck. Arrogance retards the flow of God's grace (**James 4:6**). Eventually, God's patience runs out and the arrogant person suffers His wrath. Often times, since the battle is so deeply wrought out of plain sight, the misery associated with divine discipline is unidentifiable or even worse, mistaken as the result of something more superficially awry. Remember, by definition, "CoveOps" describes *"an operation that is so planned and executed as to conceal the identity of or permit plausible denial by the sponsor."* In that sense, not only is covert arrogance difficult to define, it is arguably even more difficult to assess in a person, given the fact that it is often tucked away in the shadows of a person's soul.

Deep, persistent, and often painful self-examination is the only way out of this particular pit.

*For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.*

— **2 Timothy 1:7**

## CHAPTER THREE:

### THE FUNDAMENTAL CHALLENGE

Overt arrogance is much easier to deal with than covert arrogance because the world's definition is similar to the Biblical one. Chest beating, boasting, and in-your-face type behavior is easier to identify and often easier to defeat since the enemy is front and center by means of its own will. However, covert arrogance is difficult to even identify in the first place because it is, by nature, hidden. It thrives in the shadows with a certain tenacity towards remaining undetectable, being melded with, and is often responsible for its host's aberrant personality. Its livelihood, for all intents and purposes, wholly depends upon remaining secret; therefore, it tends to spend a good portion of its energy on self-preservation. This is why, in many ways, contending with a covertly arrogant person is *much* more painful and exhausting than with an overtly arrogant person.

Covert arrogance has tendrils woven all the way into the root system of a person's self-esteem. To go digging after it is to disturb the very foundation of a person's station in life. The prospect of this is so visceral that it is uncompromisingly unwelcome in most cases. To endeavor to do it without wisdom from the Word of God or help from the Holy Spirit is folly. It is best approached through prayer.

For pastors, the challenge is exceptional because Satan has socially instituted the notion that to "knock down" someone who is already perceived as "down and out" is to be cruel; but therein lies the great deception. If "knocking down" means to bring to one's knees, then that is a very good thing. The covertly arrogant may already be on their knees, but they are worshipping a different god (their secret idols, usually themselves). These are the very people who *need* to be confronted by truth. *"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction" (2 Timothy 4:1-2).* Often, the pastors with the most integrity to their Great Shepherd are the least liked. *"I will most gladly spend*

*and be expended for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less” (2 Corinthians 12:15)?*

Even with the building up of the Body of Christ through the exercising of spiritual gifts (**Ephesians 4:11-12**), deliverance from covert arrogance is not the work of mere human beings. We are merely encouraging representatives, *“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20)*. Scripture teaches that the real strength in convicting the arrogant lies in the omnipotent Word. Not a soul can hide from Him, even those who are able to fool others.

*For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*

— **Hebrews 4:12-13**

## Arrogance Hates Being Judged

**Arrogant people hate being judged.**

Why? Because their greatest fear is that they will fail to measure up. Sounds silly if you understand and have faith in the most fundamental aspects of scripture. “[For] we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, ‘THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE’” (**Romans 3:9b-10**). If man were able to be righteous on his own, then Jesus Christ died needlessly! “I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly” (**Galatians 2:21**). Fallen man is never *meant* to measure up, otherwise, Christ died in vain.

*Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.*

— **1 John 4:15-18**

The Bible says there are none righteous, not even one; that our fleshly deeds are like filthy menstrual rags (**Isaiah 64:6**). Graphic? Yes, but accurate.

All arrogance is either overtly or covertly scheming to avoid judgment. It doesn't have an issue judging others; on the contrary, but this secondary condition is not always necessary or present for arrogance to rage on. Since death is the one thing that cannot be conceivably overcome by man, in his arrogance, he has devised innumerable schemes (though none successful) in order to avoid being judged on the subject of death, be it spiritual or physical. In order to overcome death (minus God's help), arrogance attempts to control it. It does this by devising empty philosophies about life and death. “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty



*deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).*

“The best defense is a powerful offense!” So says the hordes of overtly arrogant. They spend their time beating their chests, making all kinds of noise, and trying to intimidate others as part of their coercion. They send the public message that no one ought attempt to tangle with them, or else! That is merely a facade, a rain dance (only God’s not sending any rain). Typically, the bigger the show, the weaker the person is on the inside. Why would a Christian ever act like this? Easy, they lack faith. It is even possible they lack true, saving faith in Christ, being still *“in the flesh”*:

*For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

— **Romans 8:3-8**

Ever notice how unbelievers try to act “bigger” than believers? Now you know why - it is a cover up.

Unfortunately (I speak as from the flesh), people tend to have less of an issue with “dethroning” the overtly arrogant. I suppose it has something to do with their being inherently obnoxious, often overbearing, and forever impressive in their own eyes. *“Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation” (Romans 12:16).*

Covertly arrogant people are arguably more “stuck” in the sense that they are protected by the so-called “nice police” or “politically correct” in our society, a group comprised of both unbelievers and believers. As noted

earlier in this chapter, it is uncomely to challenge someone who is already crying “uncle, uncle!” What they are really crying is “don’t judge me, don’t judge me!” The world says, “OK, we will let you be since you are acting pathetic.” This is conveyed in the name of love and compassion, but it is venomous. If either party were seeking truth, God would never sting them.

*For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?*

— **Luke 11:10-13**

This issue has become epidemic in the churches - arrogance has become tolerance and tolerance an expression of love (see Chapter Five, *Another Name for Arrogance*). The Word *never* advocates any of it. “Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong” (**1 Corinthians 16:13**). “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might” (**Ephesians 6:10**). Those who preach love and compassion, minus divine judgement, are also preaching a different gospel. “For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully” (**2 Corinthians 11:4**). A gospel without judgment is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some theologians go so far as to say that Jesus, Himself, was a “judgment preacher”. He taught His disciples to defend the Gospel with the same rigor, as evidenced with Paul’s famous line, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel” (**Romans 1:16**), and Peter’s discourse in the second epistle after his name. Why shouldn’t we?

*For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;*

*and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter; and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority.*

— 2 Peter 2:4-10

I cannot tell you how many times I have stood behind my pulpit with a guest or two in the audience, and by their body language alone, I was confident that they would never return. How did I know? I could tell that the unadulterated Word being blasted into their faces was too much for their arrogance to handle. They couldn't handle the "heat in the kitchen", so they got out. I've never been "soft" from the pulpit. Well, that is probably not a fair thing to say. Maybe it is better to say that I have never artificially softened the blow of a difficult lesson. I am neither the bar nor the bar-setter, God is. Venomous stares, crossed arms, and sometimes even backbiting emails and texts are to be expected when a shepherd is doing his job faithfully.

*I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.*

— 2 Timothy 4:1-4

I have learned the truth, that man does not reject the messenger, they reject God. *“For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you”* (1 Thessalonians 4:7-8).

Regardless of one’s personal brand, arrogance hates to be judged and is at the ready to devise any scheme necessary to reassure itself that it will not stand judgement (except to its own tailor made standards). Death, or even its shadow, is what scares arrogance the most. The fear of termination is as unsettling to an arrogant person as anything else. I guess this is why the quickest way to boil an arrogant person’s blood is to ignore them (to consider their words and actions dead to you).

## Partiality

*Men are very apt to bring their principles to their practices, and not their practices to their principles, as they ought to do. They, in their practice, comply not with their consciences; but all their strife is to bring their consciences to comply with their practice.*

— *The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards* by Jonathan Edwards

Arrogance prefers partiality as its base of operations.

*If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.*

— 1 Peter 1:17-19

Since arrogance strives in partiality, using it as the backbone of its self-righteous judgments, it is immediately and persistently at odds with God,

since God judges impartially. We find a perfect example of this strife in the Book of Jonah.

Jonah was an Israelite prophet. Prophets back then were very highly esteemed by their countrymen. Jonah was a man of deep affection for Israel with an apparent weakness in regards to mercy, particularly towards his archenemies, the Ninevites. Nineveh was a wicked, worldly city worthy of destruction. God sent Jonah to preach to the Ninevites of God's impending intention to destroy them, so they repented and were spared. Due to Jonah's personal distaste for his enemies, he openly protests against God. God turns to Jonah, in mercy, to teach him a lesson akin to the lesson the Lord Jesus taught in His beatitudes, "*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy*" (**Matthew 5:7**). God's reasoning provided to Jonah was that the Ninevites were ignorant of the difference between right and wrong ("*who do not know the difference between their right and left hand*" - **Jonah 4:11**). Mercy was the righteous perspective, but Jonah's arrogance got the best of him.

Jonah was horribly partial because of his subjective feelings towards his enemies. Subjectivity is partiality. Partiality is arrogance. Arrogance desires that personal enemies be treated on a harsher scale than friends. However, "*there is no partiality with God*" (**Romans 2:11**).

*When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it. But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity. Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life." The LORD said, "Do you have good reason to be angry?"*

*Then Jonah went out from the city and sat east of it. There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city. So the LORD God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort.*

*And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant. But God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day and it attacked the plant and it withered. When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, "Death is better to me than life."*

*Then God said to Jonah, "Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "I have good reason to be angry, even to death." Then the LORD said, "You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. "Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?"*

— **Jonah 3:10-4:11**

Partiality is a close relative of covert arrogance. It is an extension of one's personal distaste for being judged to those that they love. Since the root cause, as already discussed in this book, is quite difficult to identify and deal with, any such enlargement of the perversity can only add to the complexity of the situation.

## **The Acquitted Murderer**

How does a person murder someone in cold blood and then be declared not guilty in court? We know it happens, probably more often than we desire to concede. Now, whether or not you believe in the death penalty, the Bible states that the death penalty was to be metered out in civil courts, by judges. In other words, God believes man ought to abstain from partiality; rather judging rightly on terms of fair penalty for crimes committed. Even so, Jesus made sure that His disciples understood that what was meant for the courtroom was not meant for personal retaliation.

*You have heard that it was said, "AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH." But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If*

*anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy." But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

— **Matthew 5:38-48**

We are to leave judgments up to the civil courts. Unfortunately, we see some who "slip through the cracks" and pay little or no penalty for their crime(s). So the question remains - how does this happen? Easy, defense lawyers convince juries that their clients ought not stand up to the same law as everyone else.

To the contrary, the godly pattern is impartiality in the courts:

*Then I charged your judges at that time, saying, "Hear the cases between your fellow countrymen, and judge righteously between a man and his fellow countryman, or the alien who is with him. You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it."*

— **Deuteronomy 1:16-17**

Some will try to justify personal retribution by citing failures in the civil courts. However, God endorses those in civil leadership positions, as He is the one who has ordained them.

*Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*

— **Romans 13:1-2**

God sees everything and is not mocked, *“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap”* (**Galatians 6:7**).

Believers must depend upon their faith for deliverance from any known issues with civil courts, for God never judges wrongly. *“For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality”* (**Colossians 3:25**).

The question remains, how does one “get away with murder”? Again, defense lawyers convince juries that their clients ought not stand up to the same law as everyone else. A guilty person’s ability to retain a lawyer capable of frustrating the civil court is often a financial issue. Money has a way of “buying” an acquittal, or at least a reduced charge and/or sentence. Sad, but true, it seems. What the clients may not realize is *what* their serpentine attorneys are proposing to the courts. They are proposing partiality is justifiable. They use a variety of schemes to do so, like describing how their clients were abused as children. They suggest that since their murderous clients were once victims, they must also be treated as victims in their own trial - that “justice” ought to “subtract” that sentence from the one they currently stand up against. In other words, they propose that the full penalty for murder somehow doesn’t apply to their clients because of their pasts. It is a game that succeeds in civil courts; however, will never succeed before the throne in Heaven.

Similar events play out every day in the souls of believers. Arrogance proposes that God’s laws are to be observed with partiality based on an individual’s personal history. For example, a promiscuous woman will often point to her “daddy issues” as the cause of her lifestyle (I am not passing any personal judgement here - in fact, I can sympathize with her). However, if she runs off and destroys a marriage by seducing another woman’s husband through sex and other means of manipulation, she is



wrong. God sees it as wrong, therefore, if she is honest before God, and if she ever wishes to find deliverance in her situation, she must confess her sins. The arrogant adulteress refuses to confess. *“This is the way of an adulterous woman: she eats and wipes her mouth, and says, ‘I have done no wrong’”* (**Proverbs 30:20**).

If something is wrong in God’s eyes, then it is wrong, no matter how much human evidence a person can produce in their defense. God does not hear cases the way man does. His courtroom is never corrupt or partial.

The covertly arrogant will argue that the divine standard should not apply to them, based on their so-called “evidence” before the court. Some will say, “You can’t judge me because I was abused as a child...it’s not my fault that I choose not to follow authority.” While the “why” may be understandable, the sin remains. A humble person will confess, knowing that the blood of Christ covers them, *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (**1 John 1:9**). The Greek word for confession (*homologeō*) means to *“say the same thing; to agree with (God)”*. Arrogance disagrees with God’s measure of justice. Remember, arrogance hates to be judged!

Is it justifiable for a person to go unpenalized when they beat their children unmercifully just because they were abused similarly as a child? No. Is it justifiable for a person to kill an unborn child just because they never intended on getting pregnant? No. Is it justifiable for a person to ever shout, “You can’t judge me!” in God’s direction? No.

The covertly arrogant posture that God’s laws do not apply to them, at least not fully. They are masters at manipulating the technicalities of the law in order to sidestep the spirit of it. They are accomplished attorneys in their own right, even though that is the farthest thing from a compliment. They are so steeply involved in and conditioned by their own arrogance that they are literally offended at the thought of being judged by anyone else, including God. They prefer to pull heartstrings instead of scripture, knowing the expediency of the latter. They prey on human fallibility and emotionalism in their defenses. They do not seek a true judgment; only humility can do that. They prefer to inform the authorities of what they believe the “righteous” judgment is in their case, given all the details.

These are just some of the ways in which the covertly arrogant propose they rightly remain as such.

## Mercy Demands

Mercy belongs to God.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.*

— **2 Corinthians 1:3**

*We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.*

— **James 5:11**

Mercy is intrinsically good, which means that it is also something sourced from God - a gift, in other words, *"Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow"* (**James 1:17**). The pattern for mercy implies that it is something that a willing party has the right to give, but it shouldn't be the result of coercion or under compulsion from without. *"Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver"* (**2 Corinthians 9:7**). If judgement is an appropriate response, then mercy is its temperer.

God's mercy is inexhaustible, *"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us"* (**Ephesians 2:4**), such that a sinner may cry out to God for mercy in time of need, *"But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'"* (**Luke 18:13**); however, His mercy is not blind or emotionally guided. Our sovereign God has the right to remove His mercy to make way for judgement, but only He knows the right time and circumstance to do so.

Regarding Israel:

*They refused to listen, and did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them; so they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But You are a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; and You did not forsake them.*

— **Nehemiah 9:17**

Ultimately, the ungodliness of Israel was met with judgement and a withdrawal of God's mercy.

*The Lord has become like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel; He has swallowed up all its palaces, He has destroyed its strongholds and multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and moaning.*

— **Lamentations 2:5**

Is it true that Israel repeatedly sought for mercy during their times of judgment? Of course. However, God's mercy was suspended, each time, while His wrath performed with perfect integrity. When the staff of our Great Shepherd doesn't work, He employs the rod. Regardless of the expression, it is always God's perfect love that motivates grace, be it mercy or judgment.

Man does not decide matters of God's grace; he can only be an instrument, often unknowingly. *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap"* (**Galatians 6:7**). Believers are encouraged to show mercy, giving it as an indication of our abiding fear of the Lord God, the righteous Judge.

*And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."*

*And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE." But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*

*Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."*

— Luke 10:25-37

Notice how Jesus depicts mercy as the rightful decision of the giver.

**Receivers of mercy have no inherent right to demand it, for if they did, it would no longer be defined as mercy, but rather as something that is due to them. This is arrogance, most often covert.**

Mercy is an issue of faith, something received rightly by the humble, and always with gratitude, as something undeserved. Arrogance lacks faith and therefore seeks to make demands on mercy as if to enslave it, presuming, "If there's such a thing as mercy, then God must give it to me!" By definition, this type of "mercy" is not mercy at all, it is coercion. Mercy is not a whip. Those lacking faith will use it as such and crack it over the backs of others, demanding submission to it. Mercy is not a weapon for the unrighteous; it's not ugly like that.

Mercy is charitable. It cannot be demanded of by its receivers, lest it become something else entirely. Covert arrogance is like the prosecuting attorney who rests his case on a precedent called the "mercy of God", only

God, Himself, rightly throws the case out of court based on the spirit of the whole law, which includes the righteous judgment of sin. Because arrogance hates to be judged, it demands the misappropriation of mercy in order to lower the bar. God will not stand for it, and neither should the merciful.

Some might say that this strips human beings of any hope of being shown mercy. But that is merely a show of a lack of faith, not just in others, but also in God's ability to express Himself through others faithfully (cp **Romans 6:13**). It is true that the merciful will fail, but that failure is an issue between them and God, not between them and those they have failed. Potential receivers do not have the right to judge even those who have failed to show mercy in God's eyes. If anything, given the strength to do so, they ought to pray for them.

Covert arrogance sees mercy as a tool, as something that can be exploited. It abuses the merciful with it by staking an ungodly claim to it, as if it were something due them. But it is not. If arrogance had its way, we would all be enslaved to "mercy" as it cracked the whip every time the very thought of judgment arose.

A perfect example of this is within the ministry. The world has redefined ministers as "mercy and grace preachers" but hardly "judgment preachers", yet Jesus Christ was a devout judgment preacher (as well as a mercy and grace preacher, of course). Read the Gospels and you will see a balanced preacher in Jesus.

The world would prefer that men of God be characterized by this perversion of mercy, that they be whipped into submission to the will of arrogance, with its ungodly agenda to avoid being judged, all while it slides its toe across the sand, hands coyly behind its back, saying, "aw, shucks." That is not humility, that is manipulation.

As a pastor, I have had to judge my sheep harshly on many occasions. Until such events, it is often difficult to discern the humble from the arrogant. But trust me when I say it, once the judgement comes, it is quite apparent which bucket the sheep fall into. It does not matter that I am but a mere messenger, the venomous stares from the audience and the scathing emails inevitably come once certain thresholds are crossed (they vary by maturity). I watch closely as God blesses the humble and sows misery in

the arrogant, just like He promises, “*You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE*” (1 Peter 5:5).

Mercy is an unmerited gift. For it to be genuine, it must be given freely and without compulsion. Arrogance demands it, even though it has no right to do so.

## Running to Win!

*Holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*

— **Philippians 2:16**

My oldest son decided to play intramural soccer in his elementary school years. His team did fine but they certainly weren't league champions...yet at the end of the season, *everyone* received a “participation trophy”. What's that for, anyways?

The subtle reality is that people are too afraid to be judged rightly against just about any standard anymore. And sadly, we are teaching our children this perverse system of thinking. How does a child construct a scale of values if there's no differentiation regarding achievement? How might that erroneous thinking be applied to the spiritual life, then? Is it possible that it could undermine the manner in which we are to judge ourselves rightly against the divine standard revealed in the Word of God? Most definitely.

If the objective of playing a game is to win, then go for it! That's what sport is, after all - well, that's what it was intended to be!

*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;*

— 1 Corinthians 9:24-26

If it's your turn to celebrate, then enjoy the moment. For some, it's the affirmation that hard work and training pay off. That's an important lesson, in and of itself. The problem nowadays is that the lessons that used to be gleaned from athletic competition are now being stripped away. Why? People are too afraid of being judged (or having their offspring openly judged, as if it were an indictment on them)!

This same thing happens in the spiritual life. The Bible describes it as a race with prizes, crowns to be specific.

*Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.*

— 2 John 1:8

It's not about competing against others; rather it's about setting your own personal records! Running is an individual sport, but many runners are part of a team, whether it's a high school squad, an after-work team, or maybe even a church team, like *Team Freedom* at North Christian Church, the church I pastor at the time of this writing.

Running is a great analogy, which is why Paul uses it multiple times. It isolates the work ethic of the individual and the good deeds that result, yet includes the greater team as the Body of Christ (*"And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it"* 1 Corinthians 12:26). If we see a member of the team slacking off and therefore falling behind, we are encouraged to approach them as a fellow team member in a spirit of gentleness. *"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother"* (Matthew 18:15).

Nowhere in scripture does it say that we are to *lie* to our team members about a terrible performance; rather, we are to approach them with an air of humility. *"Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted"* (Galatians 6:1). It's not judging if we use

the inspired Word of God to call a sin a sin. To sweep such things under the rug is to sugar coat life, allowing arrogance to bear its awful fruit, something that precludes us from the sanctifying work of the Spirit in us. *“Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret” (Ephesians 5:11-12).*

*Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.*

— **2 Timothy 2:5**



## Obedience

Paul used the phrase “*obedience of faith*” twice in his book to the Romans: “*through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name’s sake*” (**Romans 1:5**) and, “*but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith*” (**Romans 16:26**).

Obedience is fundamental, not optional. Although it is not an interchangeable term with faith, it cannot be separated from it. For starters, obedience is intrinsic to saving faith, not just at the moment of salvation, but forevermore afterwards. In other words, if a person is truly faithful (saved), obedience is an absolute reality in their life, no exceptions. The new creature is predisposed to obedience - God made it so. Arrogance hates the very thought of obedience because it would imply submission to a set of standards that it hasn’t designed to suit itself. Such is the overarching theme of arrogance, as discussed in the section *Arrogance Hates Being Judged*. It only submits to law that is amenable to its own self-righteousness. When juxtaposed to God’s perfect law, arrogance is unreasonable in every way. James alluded to the reasonableness of the obedient soul:

*But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.*

— **James 3:17**

The word “*reasonable*” stands out here in v17. It bears a military connotation with a strong connection to obedience. The original Greek term described a teachable, compliant, humble person willing to submit to authority, be they upholding military, moral, or legal standards. Applied to the spiritual life, a faithful person is a reasonable person. The unfaithful (arrogant) are unreasonable because they are insubordinate to God. They are unteachable and noncompliant.

A practical example is something we see daily in our society. The Bible states, “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right*” (**Ephesians**

**6:1).** Teenagers often deem themselves exempt from the law of the household as they reach the crescendo of their adolescence. Disobedience ensues. We have a term for these individuals in the spiritual realm - *sophomores* (*sophos* = wise + *moros* = moron), aka “wise morons”. “*Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men*” (**1 Corinthians 1:25**).

Obedience supports the authenticity of one’s salvation. Only believers are rightly motivated to obey the Lord’s commands. The new creature is inherently humble and willing to submit to the will of God. The flesh rejects the will of the new creature, hence the discord every believer struggles with daily.

*For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.*

— **Romans 7:18-20**

Spiritual maturity is a function of faith. Faith is the cause for obedience. These things are given by grace. Grace is given to the humble. Arrogance compromises the whole chain of spiritual growth. Believers must choose daily between the will of the new creature and the will of the flesh.

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

*Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light*

*in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.*

*Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says,*

*“Awake, sleeper,  
And arise from the dead,  
And Christ will shine on you.”*

*Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

— **Ephesians 5:1-17**

## **Jealousy**

Covertly arrogant people tend to be riddled with jealousy. They may not always verbalize it, so it goes unnoticed. As it is, arrogant folks hate to be judged. This condition is exacerbated when they are standing side-by-side with someone else whom they perceive as “measuring up” to some standard. There exists a comedy of errors in this type of thinking (there usually is with covert arrogance), starting with the absence of the most basic premise of righteousness, which is, “*But by the grace of God I am what I am*” (**1 Corinthians 15:10**). Jealousy is a function of arrogance, which refuses Christ-righteousness in favor of self-righteousness.

An arrogant person is doomed to jealousy - it is inevitable. The covertly arrogant are especially jealous because they are awfully self-righteous, but few will ever point it out for fear of being called a “judger”. Unchecked arrogance tends to snowball as a result.

Cain became jealous when his self-righteous sacrifice failed to measure up to Abel’s righteous sacrifice. God had revealed the divine standard and only Abel’s sacrifice appealed to God, being a blood sacrifice.

*Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you [teshuqa (Hebrew) - 'wants to lord over'], but you must master it." Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*

— **Genesis 4:2-8**

Jealousy is a sin. *"For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing" (James 3:16).* Being a sin, its "desire" (**Genesis 4:7**) is to trounce the object of its jealousy. In Cain's case, as in most cases of jealousy, that object was another person. Arrogant people hate it when another person surpasses them, even if that other person functions under a more righteous scale of values. Jealousy is a lonely road. Case in point, Abel was simply minding his own business. It is possible that he understood his brother's lament, maybe even spoke to him about it privately, we do not know. But it was Cain's countenance that had sunken because of arrogance. Abel, because of his humility, was not in turmoil.

Truly humble people respond to the successes of others by experiencing real joy in their souls. There's no fear of being outmatched. *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love" (1 John 4:18).* Arrogance is afraid of being bested, so its love is laced with jealousy, making it intrinsically hypocritical.

*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in*

*honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.*

— **Romans 12:9-15**

The religious Jews were famously arrogant, covertly so, as well. They trumped up their false humility by ensuring that others saw their so-called good deeds. When Jesus, their Messiah, came along, instead of rejoicing, they were jealous of Him. Jesus chastised these folks because He despised what He saw in them.

*Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.*

— **Matthew 6:1-6**

As Jesus' legacy carried on after His death and ascension, so did all of their jealousy.

*The next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord. But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. Paul*

*and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles."*

— Acts 13:44-46

Except for the extreme times when jealousy becomes overtly manifest, the greatest damage is guaranteed to the owner of it. It is like the unforgiving heart in this way. The unforgiving heart is in perpetual bondage. Deliverance is an issue of knowledge and trust. Once the sufficiency of God's grace becomes a reality in a person's life, feelings of inadequacy begin to disappear. Self-esteem's foundation then transitions from self-righteousness to Christ-righteousness. Measuring up is no longer a cause for insecurity when it is based upon the merits of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

*Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

— Philippians 2:1-4

## **Self-Loathing**

Self-loathing is a compound symptom, meaning it is the result of a medley of traits belonging to covert arrogance. It is the child of previously mentioned sins. As examined previously in this chapter, one of the reasons covert arrogance goes undetected is because it is woven into the very fabric of a person's personality. It is a bit like a tree in the sense that you cannot see its roots. You won't realize the tree bears rotten fruit by simply looking at it, for covertly arrogant people often possess an appealing facade. It isn't until you get a taste of the fruit that you realize it is poisonous. This is one

of the primary reasons why potential newlyweds ought to wait as long as possible before getting married. Minus the sexual connotations, of course, it is wise to taste *all* of the fruit on a “tree” before marrying it; otherwise, a person might be stuck dealing with rotten fruit. There’s simply too much work that God needs to do in the soul of a self-loather before they even consider saddling another person for life with that burden.

It is awfully selfish to marry someone knowing that you are self-loathing. It seems some marry with the hope that their self-loathing will subside, as if to burden their spouse with rescuing them somehow; but that is not God’s way of delivering a person, it only complicates things even further. And oh, how the tendrils of misery spread with the addition of children to such a family.

God needs to first convince such a person that no matter what, they are loved, *“We love, because He first loved us”* (1 John 4:19). A believer is meant to receive their self-esteem from God, not by personal achievement and certainly not by the hand of the world (can you imagine if our self-esteem rested solely upon the whims of others? You know, the fickle ones whose flesh wants nothing more than to dominate you).

A self-loathing person struggles with loving themselves. If a person fails to love themselves, there will certainly be complications when it comes to loving others.

Not trusting in God is a form of arrogance in the strictest sense, since trust in Him is a grace gift and God, *“gives grace to the humble”* (James 4:6b). No person other than Jesus has ever held a perfect record in this area, so nobody ought to feel guilty reading this. Arrogance places its trust in self. In many ways, it’s what is most natural. Because self is weak, love for self is fleeting (it’s hard to trust something that is weak). The world certainly encourages false hope in a self-reliant person. That’s because arrogance tends to beget arrogance. *“When you see a thief, you are pleased with him, and you associate with adulterers”* (Psalms 50:18). There is a cascading effect as insecurities are compounded among the arrogant. Self-loathing is a natural byproduct.

It may seem insensitive to write about self-loathing this way, but it is the only way a sufferer will ever be delivered from such a personal plague. So much has been internalized, and for so long, that the only effective way to

break through will be a way foreign to world counsel. *“There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12)*. The afflicted must realize that self-loathing is a symptom of arrogance, namely covert arrogance. To avoid such a confrontation in one’s soul would *actually* be insensitive to the real need of the situation. It is better to hear the cold, hard truth, frankly. *“So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth” (Galatians 4:16)*? The only thing capable of loosing the grip of self-loathing on an individual is the power of the Word of God.

*For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

— **Hebrews 4:12**

Self-loathing can be traced all the way back to the fall in the Garden. Before the fall, Adam and Eve had perfect contentment before God - certainly no self-loathing - just the opposite, actually. They were so enamored with everything, including themselves, that there was no place for anything as disruptive to their happiness as malcontent with self. Furthermore, they were secure being judged. To the righteous, righteous judgment is a source of great joy.

However, after the fall, their corrupted natures judged themselves and each other. God only knows the degree of discontent they experienced in that moment, but suffice to say that it was present enough that they arrogantly tried to *hide* behind fig leaves. This is a wonderful illustration of how antagonistic self-loathing is to God’s original plan for man. It is also utterly inconsistent with God’s desires for reconciliation and glory, *“[God] desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4)*. Consider the work in which God accomplishes in electing a believer into His family. *“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified” (Romans*



8:29-30). Self-loathing is antagonistic to God's will for man because, in the strictest sense, it is arrogance.

Self-loathing also tends to be unmerciful towards self. Adam and Eve hid instead of seeking God's security and grace provision, a true indicator of covert arrogance (see Chapter Five, *Hiding Out In Full View*).

*When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."*

— **Genesis 3:6-10**

Left to his own devices, man is utterly cruel and unforgiving. He is self-consuming and double-minded, unstable (**James 1:8**). In one breath he utters a denouncement of divine judgment, and in the next, he condemns himself as he spirals into greater and greater depths of depravity. At the extreme end of this are the unbelievers, who, by nature, devour one another as a function of self-preservation. Failing believers may also exhibit such awfulness, *"But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh"* (**Galatians 5:15-16**).

The only cure for self-loathing is in understanding the whole truth about ourselves.

*We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we*

*have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.*

— 1 John 3:19-22

## **Constructive Criticism**

*Constructive criticism is the process of offering valid and well-reasoned opinions about the work of others, usually involving both positive and negative comments, in a friendly manner rather than an oppositional one. The purpose of constructive criticism is to improve the outcome.*

— Wikipedia

Leaders are saddled with the responsibility of assessing their subordinates. Managers must do it in the workplace, elders must do it in the churches, and parents must do it in the homes. It is challenging to lead a covertly arrogant person because they are often predisposed to receiving *any* criticism as negative (e.g.: a personal attack) rather than constructive. The additional challenge for the leader is to not become discouraged, realizing the issue is not in their approach, but rather in whom they are approaching. Nonetheless, a leader who has been placed by God in their position must exercise integrity to their office, regardless of the arrogance that exists in others.

*I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.*

— 2 Timothy 4:1-2

The root cause for mutiny is arrogance. The conflict arises between the fact that leaders are delegated the authority to judge, within the boundaries of their God-given commission, and the issue that arrogance hates to be judged by others. If not combative, arrogance is minimally dismissive,

despite what the Word of God has to say. *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).*

Job had a wonderfully submissive heart; however, under extreme pressure from Satan, himself, he showed many signs of cracking. In the end, after God speaks to him for what accounts for four chapters, Job resumes in his humility, having received constructive criticism directly from God.

*Then Job answered the LORD and said,  
“I know that You can do all things,  
And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.  
‘Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?’  
“Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand,  
Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.”  
‘Hear, now, and I will speak;  
I will ask You, and You instruct me.’  
“I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear;  
But now my eye sees You;  
Therefore I retract,  
And I repent in dust and ashes.”*

— Job 42:1-6

In an effort to divorce themselves from subordination, the arrogant will sometimes posture, “I can submit to God, but I cannot submit to another. Man is flawed, so I cannot be expected to follow his directives.” This is to their own demise, as scripture clearly states.

*Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*

— Romans 13:1-2

If these same arrogant individuals are concerned about poor leadership going unnoticed or even unpunished, they ought to be encouraged by scripture given to those in authority. *“Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven” (Colossians 4:1)*. If anything, God holds those in authority to a higher degree of responsibility, implying also a higher degree of scrutiny and discipline. *“And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more” (Luke 12:47-48)*.

Constructive criticism is a blessing. Arrogance will struggle with *any* form of criticism, relegating something divinely good as impotent. It’s like watching a perfectly good fruit rot before one’s eyes. Arrogance spoils anything good.

*All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles.*

— 1 Timothy 6:1-2

## Commitment Issues

Arrogance, by definition, is self-centered and self-preserving. It is, if nothing else, committed to self. It is, therefore, impossible for arrogance to truly commit to anything which breeches the fundamental tenets of its existence. To travel beyond these sacred walls is to move away from arrogance and towards humility. Even the prospect of doing this, due to arrogance's prejudice for self-preservation, is met with extreme resistance.

Covert arrogance simply hides these exercises behind the curtain of false humility. False humility is famous for committing to lots of people and then slowly fading away. Contrarily, scripture says, *"let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth"* (1 John 3:18). There tends to be bursts of emotionalism followed by long periods of dragging feet, often bemoaning situations that were voluntarily committed to. Eventually, people learn to dismiss the covertly arrogant, if for no other reason, than to avoid the certain drama that false humility carries with it. It is one of the indirect reasons why covert arrogance is able to stick around for any length of time - it is regularly ignored.

It is often easier to blast the overtly arrogant with a "Shut up, you're being arrogant!" than sit down ad nauseam with the covertly arrogant, attempting to unspool layers of drama. David simply killed Goliath, a model of overt arrogance. Battle lines with overt arrogance tend to be clearer and the interactions themselves tend to be swifter and more deciding. However, with covert arrogance, the resolution process is typically much more drawn out and involved.

We all have a bit of covert arrogance in us. Consider the apostles following the institution of the Lord's Supper in the upper room. While doing that, also consider both the magnitude and the immanency of the Cross. The scene includes the twelve apostles of Jesus, those closest to Him and His impending destiny. In that moment, they are concerned with who is the greatest. Seriously, whom are they committed to?

*And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called*

*'Benefactors.' But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant. For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves."*

— **Luke 22:24-27**

True humility isn't preoccupied with who is the greatest because it isn't preoccupied with self. When a person is free from self-servanthood, they are free to serve others. Covert arrogance often serves others in an effort to actually serve self (e.g.: approbation lust). That's a commitment to self right there.

Commitment implies subservience to another. An agreement of terms is implied between parties. While a humble person will weigh the costs of commitment for the sake of integrity to *both* parties, an arrogant person weighs the costs against their *own* interests only, without consideration of the long-term ramifications for others entering into the agreement. Arrogance is terribly flawed with myopia, you see. The very thought of commitment scares covert arrogance because there is a known "bar" set between two people, one that implies measuring and judgment, which arrogance hates (see this chapter's *Arrogance Hates Being Judged*).

In many ways the commitments of the overtly arrogant are more trustworthy. After the initial clash of wills with an overtly arrogant person, the dust settles, and the terms of commitment tend to be easily defined, since by then all objections and artifacts have been laid out in battle. However, with the covertly arrogant, one never really knows what they are dealing with because many things are hidden from sight. Therefore, trust issues naturally plague relationships involving the covertly arrogant.

Consider the Gospel presented to two individuals, one overtly arrogant, the other covertly arrogant. The overtly arrogant person will readily reject it, never really pursuing it any further until maybe, in the future, they have a change of heart. In Jesus' *Parable of the Soils* (**Matthew 13**), this person would most readily fit into category one. Overt arrogance tends to produce black and white responses to outside stimuli. On the other hand, the

covertly arrogant person may, in false humility, under environmental pressures (e.g.: family, peers, etc.) agree to pursue religion outwardly, even though their heart hasn't changed. This person fits into category two (possibly three) of the aforementioned parable. Both are unsaved in this example, but only one, the overtly arrogant, is immediately identifiable. As a matter of fact, the covertly arrogant ("*tares*") may continue to grow up beside true believers ("*wheat*"), often indistinguishable from them. We see this latter explanation from Jesus in His *Parable of Wheat and Tares* (**Matthew 13**). Emotional commitments are not evidence of saving faith; rather they are spurious without a true change of heart. Only a humble heart can truly commit to Christ.

*"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."*

*Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves \*said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' But he \*said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to*

*the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"*

— **Matthew 13:18-30**

Covert arrogance manifests into what the Lord calls "lukewarm" relationships, where a person's indecisiveness keeps others "on the hook" but won't truly commit to them. When the Lord sees this in the Laodicean church during the apostle John's time, He expresses the desire to vomit the church out of His mouth (figuratively speaking, of course). His response is unpleasant to say the least. It is obvious that the Lord despises covert arrogance and its fruit, having no tolerance for it when He sees it (see Chapter Five, *Another Name for Arrogance*).

*To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.*

*"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

— **Revelation 3:14-22**

When it comes to commitment issues, there are few things more illustrative than adultery. The Bible uses the marriage analogy profusely. For example, Israel is called the Lord's unfaithful wife. Israel's infidelity is



legendary. In reality, she remained committed for as long as God's desires aligned with her own, but hardly ever longer than that (sounds like far too many secular marriages today, doesn't it?).

*"For your husband is your Maker,  
Whose name is the LORD of hosts;  
And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel,  
Who is called the God of all the earth.  
"For the LORD has called you,  
Like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit,  
Even like a wife of one's youth when she is rejected,"  
Says your God.  
"For a brief moment I forsook you,  
But with great compassion I will gather you.  
"In an outburst of anger  
I hid My face from you for a moment,  
But with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you,"  
Says the LORD your Redeemer.*

— **Isaiah 54:5-8**

God knew of Israel's infidelities even before He chose her. Yet, He did choose her. This is depicted with the prophet Hosea. *"When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, 'Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking the LORD'" (Hosea 1:2).*

In the New Testament, the marriage analogy continues. Believers in this dispensation, namely the Church Age, are members of the Bride of Christ. *"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7).* There are many apparent ways in which the Holy Scriptures adhere to this analogy for the sake of teaching the Lord's disciples the deeper truths of the Gospel.

*Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself*

*being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body.*

— **Ephesians 5:22-30**

The Church organism is a spiritual one whose members are often seduced by their enemies (see Chapter Four, *Antagonism*). Arrogance breeds infidelity. Believers are called to be holy, “*because it is written, ‘YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY’*” (1 Peter 1:16). God’s intention for His children is that they be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be holy, to be sanctified, to be set apart for God’s purposes. “*For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification*” (1 Thessalonians 4:7).

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*

— **Ephesians 1:3-6**

How heinous, then, is it when the Bride of the Lord cheats on him? How wretched is it when the perfect Husband must stand back and watch His Bride fornicate? Every time a believer sins, they commit adultery. That may come off as harsh, but it is so very true and worthy of our constant

consideration. Being chosen as His Bride is like a blameless king choosing a filthy whore for his wife. It makes no sense, but that is what He has done for every Church Age believer (echoes of His choosing of Israel as depicted with **Hosea 1:2**). In fact, the discrepancy is much greater, given He is God. It's amazing that we can even contemplate betraying Him the way we do, but we do it all the time. We often point to the more obvious infidelities, our overt transgressions, but sin comes in a variety of formats, arguably most often in the realm of thought. Since God sees the heart (**1 Samuel 16:7**), He's privy to all of our thoughts, many of which are simply awful. Here is a perfect example: *"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart"* (**Matthew 5:27-28**).

The question of commitment arises when one ponders *why* a person sins. There may be multiple reasons (there is never just one), but certainly one culprit is a believer's lack of commitment to their Husband. Any sin is an act of adultery in the spiritual realm. Wives are to submit to their husbands, for that is the universal order of things. It is right to do so. *"Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin"* (**James 4:17**). This means that if we know our Husband would be displeased with our thoughts and/or actions, we ought to honor our commitment to Him and dispel of the temptation, whatever it may be. If we miss that mark, may we commit to honesty *after* sinning. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (**1 John 1:9**). Honesty and commitment are hallmarks of any good relationship, starting with our marriage to Jesus Christ.

There's a reason why the Bible suggests that we learn to love God before jumping into secular marriages, which really are institutions wholly dependent upon commitment. *"We love, because He first loved us"* (**1 John 4:19**). If a person has difficulty committing to the perfect spouse, Jesus Christ, how well equipped will they be to commit to an imperfect human? Arguably, not very, although the covertly arrogant may argue otherwise, all the way to the altar. This is a primary concern for someone who *is* already committed to Him. It is precisely why Paul argues *"Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and*

*lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever” (2 Corinthians 6:14-15)? Why would a believer desire to be married to another person who cannot commit to the Lord, unless, of course, they are misguided by emotions?*

*A woman’s heart should be so hidden in Christ that a man should have to seek Him first to find her.*

— **Maya Angelou**

Jesus said, *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Luke 12:34)*. If a person’s heart treasures self more than others, it will be committed to self in contradiction to Christ’s own heart, *“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:3-5)*. Humility is committed to others for the sake of others. Arrogance is committed to self for the sake of self.

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### ANTAGONISM

Most theologians will cite three main enemies in the Bible: Satan, the world system, and the flesh. These are the chief antagonists to both believers and unbelievers alike. Each of them exploits the utility of covert arrogance to meet its objectives. For example, Satan is far too wise to attack a person straight on, overtly.

*Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the LORD.*

— **Job 1:6-12**

As the story goes, Satan does as he is allowed. What is important to note is not necessarily *how* he puts Job to the test, but rather *why*. His suggestion to God is that Job is secretly arrogant, covertly so. He challenges God's proffering of Job as a witness before the accuser, himself. Satan figures that since he is himself arrogant in every way, that Job, being a "lower" creature (**Hebrews 2:7**), must also be. Some call this "transference arrogance", when someone projects their own arrogance on another, judging them in the

process. Satan was wrong about Job. Even after losing everything he owned and his children, Job did not sin, proving that he was not secretly arrogant, as Satan had accused him of being.

*Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped.*

*He said,*

*“Naked I came from my mother’s womb,*

*And naked I shall return there.*

*The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away.*

*Blessed be the name of the LORD.”*

*Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God. Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.”*

*The LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.” Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face.” So the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.” Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.*

*And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!” But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.*

**— Job 1:20-2:10**

Satan lost his bet with God. Job, as the book reveals, struggled, murmured, and got testy, but never failed to meet God's demands of him. He remained obedient and humble, which is the very opposite of arrogance. Even under excruciating pressure, no hidden form of pride or arrogance was squeezed out of him. His enemy's accusation of covert arrogance was proven wrong.

However, how many of us would pass the test? Can you say this day that if you lost even a fraction of what Job lost that you'd maintain Job's posture, his dignity, his humility? Our enemies' strategies will always pluck at our arrogance. That's what temptation is, after all, based on the definitions of arrogance and sin in **Chapter 1**.

## Satan

Satan is the “*prince of the power of the air*” (**Ephesians 2:2**) and the “*father*” (**John 8:44**) of those doing his bidding.

*You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

— **John 8:44**

*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.*

— **Ephesians 2:1-3**

Satan is also a prolific schemer, deftly redefining darkness as light and light as darkness.

*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;  
Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness;  
Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!*

— **Isaiah 5:20**

Satan is the manifestation of darkness, yet he disguises himself as a messenger (angel) of light.

*For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.*



— 2 Corinthians 11:4

Satan is allowed to continue along like this to this day for one reason alone - God has allowed it. God has afforded Satan the space to move about the earth, even make his way back to Heaven (not as his abode, though, "*And He said to them, 'I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning'*" [Luke 10:18]), in order to accuse us all before God.

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night."*

— Revelation 12:10

In his persistent arrogance, Satan, the "*god of this world*" (2 Corinthians 4:4), is attempting to mimic his Creator's sovereignty:

*But you said in your heart,  
"I will ascend to heaven;  
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,  
And I will sit on the mount of assembly  
In the recesses of the north.  
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;  
I will make myself like the Most High."*

— Isaiah 14:13-14

Our Lord is the "*God of peace*" (Romans 15:33) and has given this peace to His own (John 14:27). In order to be "*like the Most High*", Satan must counterfeit a sense of "*unity*" (a "*form of godliness*" [2 Timothy 3:5]) in the world that he has temporarily been made god over. In his accusations, he means to prove God a phony, nothing more than someone equal in ability to himself. If he can manage this, then he logically no longer needs God as sovereign. So all of this gyrating is nothing more than his fundamental

desire to *not* be subject to God. Arrogance doesn't like to be judged by others; Satan is the poster child.

Arrogance publicly pitches benevolence but, as a wolf in sheep's clothing (**Matthew 7:15**), it is incredibly malignant. So goes the patterned hearts of all the "*sons of disobedience*" (**Ephesians 2:2**).

Unity in the faith is a grace gift from God that cannot be manufactured by a creature, only counterfeited.

*...being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

— **Ephesians 4:3-6**

The "*author and perfecter of our faith*" (**Hebrews 12:2**), the God of true peace will soon crush the god of this world. "*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you*" (**Romans 16:20**).

## The Kingdom of Darkness

When we speak of kingdoms, we are really speaking of domains or rulerships. Such constructs imply a ruler, a master, a sovereign, and/or a lord. When these concepts apply to deity, we use the word “god”.

There are two kingdoms referred to in the Bible: the “kingdom of God” (or “heaven” in the Gospel of Matthew) and the “domain of darkness” (aka Satan’s kingdom). When a person is saved, their abode transfers from the domain of darkness (in which all are born into subjection) to the domain of God (in which all believers abide).

*For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

— **Colossians 1:13-14**

We know from scripture that all three of our enemies abide in the domain of darkness, including our very own flesh. As slaves of darkness, we are, by our very nature, antagonistic to the Spirit of God. By definition, a slave must obey their master. Since unregenerate persons, “*those who are according to the flesh*”, are enslaved to satanic directives, they stand opposed to the commands of God, which persist by means of His Spirit.

*For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.*

— **Romans 8:5-9**

All unbelievers function under the sovereignty of sin, which is tantamount to staying in the domain of darkness. This makes them slaves to unrighteousness (**Romans 6:16**), even though many of them will contest such a characterization (I speak from divine viewpoint). All human beings are either under the sovereignty of sin or the sovereignty of God. Regardless of how a person kicks against the goads, this is a fact. To carry out the ox-goad analogy, the more a person kicks, the more painful it is. All need to accept this basic reality - we are all slaves. However, this is only distasteful to the arrogant.

*Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

— **Romans 6:16-18**

*“We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19), Satan and this world are in cahoots. They are antagonistic to God and His children. As Sun Tzu, the war strategist, would say, “If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”*

## The Flesh

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.*

— Galatians 5:16-17

All humans are born with a flesh. We keep it until it goes into the grave and our soul and spirit go to either Heaven or Hell. Unbelievers remain “*in the flesh*” (**Romans 7:5**) and therefore under its control, which has allegiance to the satanic kingdom of darkness (see previous section, “*The Kingdom of Darkness*”). However, believers abide “*in Christ*” and therefore, in the kingdom of God, “*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death*” (**Romans 8:2**). While the believer is free from the domain of sin, the unbeliever is not. Still, believers can, and frequently do, succumb to the myriad temptations the flesh manufacturers as an enemy. Paul describes this ongoing battle throughout the New Testament, but arguably the most complete presentation is in **Romans 7**.

*Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.*

*For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of*

*the letter. What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET." But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.*

*I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.*

*For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.*

*I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.*

**— Romans 7**

The flesh is our most personal enemy and therefore, arguably, our most persistent. There's never a time that the flesh is not ready to pounce. It is analogous to a disease. As a matter of fact, when Paul utters, "*Who will set me free from the body of this death?*" he's using imagery that alluded to an ancient Tarsus tradition where the corpse of a murder victim was tied to the murderer. The effect was as grotesque and effective as you might imagine. As the corpse would rot, it would infect the living person with disease, carrying out the sentence of death, only very slowly and agonizingly.

Yes, that is indeed how grotesque the flesh is (technically, even more so, given the eternal nature of Paul's argument). It functions as a death-spreader in our lives. In the spiritual realm, death implies separation from God, the antithesis of sanctification, which, by definition means to be set apart for God's purposes. In this way, the flesh is naturally antagonistic to a believer's sanctification after salvation.

## Arrogance Is Organized

We believers are engaged in a war. Our enemies are organized under Satan, “*the god of this world*” (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). Motivated by pride and arrogance, Satan, the great genius, has organized his followers in nothing short of a true military organization.

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

— **Ephesians 6:10-17**

If you have ever been by a major United States seaport, say like the one in Newark, NJ, you cannot help but marvel at the sheer number of containers being moved through such a place. These ports operate around the clock with hundreds, if not thousands, of people carrying on their own brand of ballet. Only they do not wear tutus and their music is the sound of diesel engines and crane cables. It is magnificent to watch, but even more so to ponder the logistics of planning and the synchronicity that plays out so seamlessly. These are the great trade ports. Without their expertise, *trade* would be anything but *abundant*. This kind of trade requires exceptional organization. Satan knows this and has been in the business of trafficking



since his own fall, *“By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries”* (**Ezekiel 28:18a**).

Satanic agencies, aka *“now working in the sons of disobedience”* (**Ephesians 2:1-3**), are matured in the doctrines of demons, in a faith from a different gospel and a different spirit (**2 Corinthians 11:4; Galatians 1:6**). They peddle it, often in the name of Christ, blasphemously (**2 Corinthians 2:17**) leading many astray, even believers in some ways (**2 Corinthians 11:3**), though a true believer of the faith can never be lost (**John 18:9**). In order to do this, said agencies have infiltrated, often covertly in keeping with the theme of this book, every institution this world has ever known.

Make no mistake about it, the higher the intellect, the more likely the presence of arrogance. Satan is arguably the most intelligent creature ever created, and he’s also the most arrogant. Jesus said, *“it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God”* (**Matthew 19:24**). Intelligence is able to make quick work of any economy, finding the most efficient and fruitful means of capitalization. This requires a deep understanding of and an equally adept exploitation of the inner workings of said economy. Organization is a prerequisite for success in any such endeavor. Consider the intellect behind the world stock exchanges and those who find great success in it. You will find organizational intellect at every turn...often misguided, but nonetheless, undoubtedly intelligent. Therefore, worldly riches and intellect tend to come in pairs wrapped in organizational prowess. Arrogance is the fuel for getting these things done.

*A ruler questioned Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments, ‘DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.’” And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” When Jesus heard this, He said to him, “One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. And Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!*

*For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*

— **Luke 18:18-25**

Although the Bible reveals to us the correlation between intellect and arrogance, it's not to be assumed as absolute, for Jesus was obviously supremely intelligent and Paul was also very intelligent, as mere men go. What made them different from their contemporaries was humility. They used their intelligence for good, for serving others, for organizing ministries. That's very different than the goals of arrogance.

## CHAPTER FIVE:

### HIDING OUT IN PLAIN SIGHT

If covert arrogance is masterful at anything, it's certainly at the art of maintaining invisibility. It's rather easy for it to evade being identified by unbelievers, since they are unable to distinguish between light and darkness, which means that the things they see as "light" (aka goodness) are actually darkness to the believer who is standing "in the Light":

*This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

— 1 John 1:5-7

Our goal as believers is to receive wisdom from the Light, the Word, Christ, Himself, in humility and accept what is revealed to us, especially when that revelation concerns our person.

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of*

*Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.*

*For this reason it says,  
“Awake, sleeper,  
And arise from the dead,  
And Christ will shine on you.”*

*Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.*

— **Ephesians 5:1-16**

I have often taught the phrase “seeing it all as truth” from my pulpit regarding this passage, specifically **verse 13**, “*But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.*” What Paul was explaining to the Ephesians is a baseline principle concerning the discernment that a true believer is given at salvation. That discernment, of course, increases over time as a believer matures; however, it is still fundamentally evidenced in a less mature believer. The beauty of “*walking in the Light*” (**1 John 5:7**) is that we not only see the so-called good things, but rather, we are equipped to see it all...the good, the bad, and the ugly.

However, for the unbeliever, their discernment is dead regarding truth. “*But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised*” (**1 Corinthians 2:14**). A natural, unregenerate, man walks in the dark (**1 John 5:6**). This means things are flip-flopped regarding what God would deem righteous discernment. This is part of their curse.

*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;  
Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness;  
Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!*

This world is filled with spiritually blind unbelievers. It is the proverbial “ship of fools”, “*He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm*” (**Proverbs 13:20**). In this way, arrogance is able to “hide out” amongst its friends since it is never identified as such, rather it is rallied behind, even encouraged, as righteousness! Paul deals directly with the most extreme, arguably the “ugliest” writ of condemnation in the entire Bible.

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

*Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

*For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*

*And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder,*

*strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.*

— **Romans 1:18-32**

The paradox in this passage is that arrogance has consummated in a direct stance against all things godly. Yet, the sins are so blatant, they are in full sight for all to see. But, since the world accepts sins as righteousness, “*whatever is not from faith is sin*” (**Romans 14:23b**), the sinner’s unrighteousness is able to hide out in full view!

Covert arrogance gets its name from its ability to hide out in plain sight. Nonetheless, this doesn’t imply that it’s always easy to see. Discernment requires the presence of the divine standard, the very Word of God, in the soul of a believer in order to function. It also requires that a believer be “*filled with the Spirit*” (**Ephesians 5:18**) and “*[walking] by the Spirit*” (**Galatians 5:16**).

## The Professing Unbeliever

Arguably, the ugliest person on the planet is the one who uses Christ's good name for personal gain. Ungodly preachers are a perfect example of this. *"For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain"* (**Titus 1:10-11**). The issue is much broader than just pulpits as it is manifest in many professing Christians who are motivated by arrogance. Since many of these people attend churches on Sunday mornings, they not only go undetected, but are often heralded by others for their religiosity. They are the covertly arrogant who presume that godliness is pursuable for self-righteous, personal gain.

*If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.*

— **1 Timothy 6:3-7**

The professing unbeliever rejects grace. Their ugliness is infectious in myriad ways. In the apostle John's day there were multitudes of phonies who made a habit of disturbing the churches by standing behind pulpits. They tended to move on once they had made their run in a certain location, leaving John and other pastors to clean up their mess. Even today, professing unbelievers can be seen church hopping, looking to sap whatever they can from a local assembly and then leaving, often with an excuse and a wake of disturbances. This is precisely why shepherds are called to be on the alert always, for the protection of God's flock.

*Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.*

— **1 John 2:18-19**

It's one thing to flat out denounce Jesus as Lord; however, it's quite another thing to claim Him as Lord and Savior and yet harbor animosity towards Him. God sees the heart (**1 Samuel 16:7**). Only arrogance would even attempt such a thing in light of the presence of God the Holy Spirit.

*He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters. Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit.*

— **Matthew 12:30-33**

God is never mocked. Even the most devoutly religious, yet unbelieving, people will be sent to Hell if they still abide in their arrogance.

*Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So*



*then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS."*

— **Matthew 7:13-23**

Another example of arrogance is with the rich young ruler, whose public display of humility proved merely a facade for covert arrogance.

*A ruler questioned Him, saying, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments, 'DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'" And he said, "All these things I have kept from my youth." When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when he had heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. And Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*

— **Luke 18:18-25**

The issue with the professing unbeliever is that even though they may legitimately desire a Savior, they really aren't interested in a Lord. What they don't realize is that they are *always* a slave, regardless of whether or not they believe they are the captain of their own destiny. "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness" (**Romans 6:16**)?

## Why Is It So Hard to Evangelize the Covertly Arrogant?

Arrogance is no good at accepting help from others. It prefers self-reliance and perceives charity (aka grace) as something for the weak only. On matters of life and death, this issue is exacerbated to the maximum. Therefore, to present the Gospel to an arrogant person is to face off with something visceral. Given the fact that the standard first step in evangelism is ensuring that a person realizes that God is holy and man is inherently not, it is implied that a person realizes that they need a savior in order to be saved. This fact alone breeches arrogance's distaste for accepting help from others. Arrogance spurns God.

*Why do You stand afar off, O LORD?  
Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?  
In pride the wicked hotly pursue the afflicted;  
Let them be caught in the plots which they have devised.  
For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire,  
And the greedy man curses and spurns the LORD.  
The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him.  
All his thoughts are, "There is no God."  
His ways prosper at all times;  
Your judgments are on high, out of his sight;  
As for all his adversaries, he snorts at them.  
He says to himself, "I will not be moved;  
Throughout all generations I will not be in adversity."  
His mouth is full of curses and deceit and oppression;  
Under his tongue is mischief and wickedness.  
He sits in the lurking places of the villages;  
In the hiding places he kills the innocent;  
His eyes stealthily watch for the unfortunate.  
He lurks in a hiding place as a lion in his lair;  
He lurks to catch the afflicted;  
He catches the afflicted when he draws him into his net.  
He crouches, he bows down,*

*And the unfortunate fall by his mighty ones.  
 He says to himself, "God has forgotten;  
 He has hidden His face; He will never see it."  
 Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up Your hand.  
 Do not forget the afflicted.  
 Why has the wicked spurned God?  
 He has said to himself, "You will not require it."  
 You have seen it, for You have beheld mischief and vexation to take it into  
 Your hand.  
 The unfortunate commits himself to You;  
 You have been the helper of the orphan.  
 Break the arm of the wicked and the evildoer,  
 Seek out his wickedness until You find none.  
 The LORD is King forever and ever;  
 Nations have perished from His land.  
 O LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble;  
 You will strengthen their heart, You will incline Your ear  
 To vindicate the orphan and the oppressed,  
 So that man who is of the earth will no longer cause terror.*

— Psalms 10

In order to accept a savior, one must accept judgment against the divine standard (a judgment that can only result in condemnation). Since they hate to be judged (see Chapter Three), the arrogant unbeliever is offended by the Gospel. Furthermore, if an evangelist chooses to pursue a forensic course of sharing, namely the facts regarding salvation by grace (e.g.: **Ephesians 2**), an unbeliever has to accept the presupposition that death has power over them, being spiritually dead in their sins. *"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins"* (**John 8:24**).

Specifically regarding *covertly* arrogant unbelievers, there exist additional complications to evangelism. For starters, if a person already believes that they are as "low" as they can be and an evangelist comes along and says, "No, my friend, you are much lower than that...you are

depraved!", well, that person may shrink away. Cowering in the presence of the Almighty is something man ought do whenever he considers His sovereign power. That is respect, often translated "fear" in the Bible. *"The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person"* (**Ecclesiastes 12:13**). There is a consistent, God-given fear imparted to believers at salvation that unbelievers do not possess, at least not to the degree that they are willing to surrender to the Lord as Savior.

Furthermore, covertly arrogant unbelievers are encouraged to remain in their current, fallen state by the world. As research and education flourishes in the age of advanced communications technologies, more and more reasons to focus on self are being put to print and/or posted on the Internet. The world is inundated with self-help books. There's no room for God in a book that extols the virtues of self-reliance through self-examination. The Bible speaks profoundly about such activities being made visible "in the Light".

*This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.*

— **John 3:19-21**

The reason it's so difficult to evangelize the covertly arrogant is that the prescription they are seeking is expected to be something that raises them up from their self-proclaimed lowliness, not a remedy that originates from an even lower place. They fear loss of self more than loss of God. *"God is love"* (**1 John 4:8b**) and *"there is no fear in love"* (**1 John 4:18a**); therefore, any unhealthy fear cannot be attributed to God, only fear of self, which is tantamount to arrogance. They'd rather put their trust in their own abilities as 'savior' than surrender to a Lord that saves on the premise that one first realizes the depths of their depravity.

## Judas, the Arch-Apostate

Judas. My home thesaurus has his name listed as a synonym for “traitor”. The very name inspires contempt amongst most people, not just Christians. While there is substantial evidence against him to this end, being the man thought of by many as the ultimate betrayer, we can learn a lot from his example, as putrid as it may be. Judas is known as the “arch-apostate”. He is the manifestation of apostasy, which may be briefly defined as, “a turning away from the Gospel, having once known it” (e.g., **Hebrews 2:3-4; 3:12-19; 6:1-8; 10:26-31**).

What do we know about Judas? We know that he spent a LOT of time with Jesus and His disciples and that he was actually chosen by Jesus as one of the twelve original apostles. Some may struggle with the fact that Jesus, Himself, chose Judas, but only if they lose sight of the fact that the Cross was ordained by God in fulfillment of much prophecy, and Judas unknowingly had to play his part. Jesus knew this.

*Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.*

— **Matthew 10:2-4**

Judas was also given the responsibility over the treasury during Jesus’ public ministry.

*Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, \*said,*

*“Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?” Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.*

— **John 12:1-6**

Reasons beyond the divine order of things move into the realm of speculation regarding why Jesus would elect Judas as an apostle. One must consider the fact that he was counted among the others, privy to the inner workings of Jesus’ ministry and the outworking of the Gospel, of which Jesus was intent on spreading. *“I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32)*. As the writer of Hebrews describes an apostate, Judas tasted the Gospel and was enlightened by it, but in the end chose the broad road that *“leads to destruction” (Matthew 7:13)*.

*For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.*

— **Hebrews 6:4-8**

This passage is a good description of the apostate who gains the appropriate knowledge of the Gospel and rejects it in their heart. God sees the heart and therefore will only grant salvation to the individual whose heart is humble enough to receive it. *“Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted” (Matthew 23:12)*. It is with the heart that a person believes.

*But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."*

— **Romans 10:8-11**

Judas' heart was not humble. It was arrogant - so arrogant that he betrayed Jesus, his Messiah, to the Jews for a mere thirty pieces of silver.

*Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?" And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus.*

— **Matthew 26:14-16**

If only Judas was humble enough to understand Jesus' heart, he would've had wealth infinitely beyond anything the religious Jews could've given him. *"I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see" (Revelation 3:18).* Arrogance always stifles grace. What a shame.

The imagery in the Bible regarding the manner in which Judas revealed his arrogance is repulsive. The "kiss of Judas" is symbolic of the professing Christian who runs right up to Jesus, kisses Him, and then betrays Him with their covert, evil heart. This is the person who "*crucifies*" Him again (**Hebrews 6:6**).

*While He was still speaking, behold, a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was preceding them; and he approached Jesus to*

*kiss Him. But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"*

— **Luke 22:47-48**

One of the telltale signs of covert arrogance is that it'll do just about *anything* to preserve its self interests, including betraying those closest to them. The world is filled with arrogance hiding behind a mask, ready to denounce anyone or anything that stands in its way. This is why so many marriages and families have been destroyed (see Chapter Three, *Commitment Issues*) - it's because arrogance has no sense of loyalty to anyone else, only self. When push comes to shove, many are surprised by the covertly arrogant's lack of commitment in relationships, but they ought not be at all...for even Judas betrayed the God-man with a kiss.

Commitment is a swear word to the arrogant. The only commitment that arrogance can legitimately make is to itself. Beware of the Judases in your life.



## How the Covertly Arrogant Hide Their Disobedience

Covert arrogance is insidious.

Jesus said:

*And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem. And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" And He said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets'; and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.' In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out. And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last."*

— **Luke 13:22-30**

There are lots of religious folks in this world who are just like the Pharisees during Jesus' time. Their performance is often exemplary by man's standards, but they are like "whitewashed tombs":

*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and*

*of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

— **Matthew 23:23-28**

Granted, the above passage conveys the extreme case of unbelief. However, it is a fair indication of man's fleshly inclination to profess something dark as light, evil as good. "*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter*" (**Isaiah 5:20**)! Darkness does one thing very well - it precludes people from seeing. In the spiritual realm this translates as an inability to see things through the lens of Christ. Oddly, though not surprisingly, covert arrogance actually prefers darkness so that its deeds are not exposed.

*This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.*

— **John 3:19-20**

Covert operations are often conducted at night, under the cover of darkness (see Chapter Two, *Covert Operations*) for the sake of remaining undetected. Covert arrogance likewise survives under the guise of spiritual darkness, which most often has a facade that appears as light to others (e.g.: religiosity). In many cases, people are standing in full view of others and only God knows of their arrogance. Rather than revealing themselves and their true motivations to others, the arrogant are encouraged to perpetuate the lie. It takes a certain level of discernment to protect oneself from the schemes of arrogance. That's not to say that we are to suppose God's perfect discernment on the motivation of others; however, there are

certain Biblical measures given to us, such as the doctrine of separation within the church, that are meant to protect us.

*Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you; not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example.*

*For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good.*

*If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.*

— 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

Eventually, when the true Light shines upon a situation, those abiding in darkness are exposed. Covert arrogance hates the Light because it is wholly dependent on hiding out, so it will manifest in fits of agitation. The more a believer understands scripture, the greater their ability to see such things. Also, the more aware a person is of the existence of this arrogance in others, the more defensive the arrogant will become, often to the point where they choose to separate from those standing in the Light. It's a defensive mechanism that comes off as an offensive one (see Chapter Three, *Arrogance Hates Being Judged*). The person standing in the Light may see arrogance but not judge a soul, for that would be unrighteous. However, they are often accused of being judgmental simply by discerning

this arrogance, calling a spade a spade. This is something those in the light must learn to adjust to.

*Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.*

— Ephesians 4:25-27

## Discovering Arrogance Through Ministry

Being a pastor in an active ministry puts a person in the “hot seat” more often than most might expect. A good pastor takes the time and makes the effort to get to know his sheep. The inevitable outcome of such relationships forming is that the pastor begins receiving reports from the sheep about themselves and others. Depending on the depth of the relationship and the arrogance of the sheep, said reports may turn sour. The practical reality is that a pastor is much more likely to lend an ear to a person who is mercy-oriented than to one who is judgmental. In other words, the character and integrity of the person sharing details about the lives of others is actually the primary variable in the equation. This is why a godly pastor will surround himself with people he can trust to be honest and objective about the goings-on in the ministry. Most arrogant people do not understand this before they go shooting off at the mouth. Arrogance seeks impact over plain truth, which is all a godly leader desires to receive.

*Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.*

— Luke 6:36-38

A pastor is trained to sit and listen to his sheep. A good one encourages them to share to an appropriate degree, if not for anything else, so there might be some encouragement in the endeavor, *“That is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other’s faith, both yours and mine”* (**Romans 1:12**).

When faced with arrogance, especially the covert brand, the pastor must both accept the current posture of the sheep with due respect *and* respond in a way that might suggest the sheep take a long look in the mirror. Arrogance in full bloom will spew venom all over those around it and never spill a drop on itself.

*Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, “Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,” when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother’s eye.*

— **Luke 6:41-42**

By the end of some conversations, it is apparent that it shouldn’t have transpired in the first place. The last thing a pastor desires to do is encourage arrogance to continue in someone they love. The shepherds that are willing to *“fight the good fight”* (**1 Timothy 1:18**) are the ones who will risk upsetting the sheep in that moment by pointing out the *“log”* in their eye. *“So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth”* (**Galatians 4:16**)? As an example to the flock, a pastor must show a certain aptitude for gentleness by showing poise in a difficult situation that *he* isn’t the cause of.

*Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.*

— Galatians 6:1-3

Humility is always the remedy to arrogance (see Chapter Six, *The Solution*). Therefore, a pastor must exemplify grace and mercy, through his example, to the sheep in his congregation. *“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith” (Hebrews 13:7)*. The ripest opportunities to teach sheep about the deeper things regarding the faith are often byproducts of the most uncomfortable conversations. Being led by the Spirit means that God is able to work something evil into something good. That is the intent of any good pastor who opens up his heart to God’s flock. *“Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (Colossians 4:6)*.

Ministries exist because arrogance is so ugly and pervasive. Those that comprise ministries have been enlisted into Christ’s army because there’s an invisible war being waged in the souls of man. *“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:3)*. Fortunately for these warriors, humility always trumps arrogance.

*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

— John 13:34-35

## Another Name for Arrogance

Technically speaking there are innumerable manifestations of arrogance. Yes, man is *that* creative! Just consider his natural course when arrogance dominates him completely, unbridled by the restraining faculties given to believers.

*For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations [inventions], and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

*For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.*

*And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.*

— Romans 1:21-32

Arrogance is *really* good at creating evil and then exploiting it, creating a web that ensnares many in its vicinity. This is why in **Romans 1:21-32** it is evident that unchecked arrogance eventually results in the loss of spiritual life forever (**verse 32** is loaded with implications, too). Arrogance is not inclined to keep to itself; rather, it is intent on spreading like a disease to others. It does this primarily by encouraging darkness in others by simply *calling* it light.

*No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.*

— **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**

**It has gotten so bad nowadays that arrogance goes by a new name - "tolerance".**

Tolerance is a favorite lever for the covertly arrogant. It is subtly packed away, undisturbed and protected by layers of darkness posing as light. A perfect example is with something we just noted in **Romans 1:26-27**, namely homosexuality. The Bible is very clear that homosexual acts are sins, "*You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination*" (**Leviticus 18:22**). Yet, if we publicly express God's viewpoint on homosexuality, we are skewered as "intolerant" conservatives. The world will have us define tolerance as acceptance; however, the Bible precludes such a thing. That is not to say that believers are to become politically motivated and run for public office for the sake of enforcing Biblical viewpoint (God has always chosen to work on individual hearts, resulting in change from within). In reality, we are to tolerate the *existence* of homosexuality as we would with any other sin. We accept that it *exists*, but we are never to accept it as something righteous. The Lord is the final judge.

The covert part of tolerance is very subtle. It is critically important to identify if, in humility, a person seeks deliverance from it. The process of identification might best be broached by analyzing how it comes to be in the first place. Firstly, in order to tolerate sin, one must either modify or



ignore the divine standard. Arrogance has no problem doing this, but humility will, hence the aforementioned prerequisite conviction and desire for deliverance (ungodly forms of tolerance must be dealt with head on in the soul). Secondly, in the absence of the divine standard, one must manufacture a bar that is low enough not to offend the sinner. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three, arrogance hates to be judged and therefore will consistently adjust “the bar” in order to meet its own objectives. Tolerance by today’s worldly standards is nothing more than another identifiable fruit of arrogance.

Suggesting something is good, when the Word of God clearly states that it is bad, requires a usurping of God’s unique authority to judge. Tolerance, then, is blasphemy. It’s even a type of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit since it runs contrary to His convicting ministry, especially in the souls of believers.

“Tolerance” has matured to the point that its very essence is being put to print. For example, “COEXIST” bumper stickers are sold by large retailers now. The message of the bumper sticker is that all religions ought to accept each other and live with respect for one another. As far as respecting the free will of others, this is fine; however, the campaign is also laced with the proposition that all religions share a single god. Jesus Christ would have to be a liar for this campaign to have real merit, *“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me’”* (**John 14:6**).

If we stand for nothing, we risk falling for anything.

## **My Almost Dirt Bike**

I worked in the high tech industry for a couple of decades before transitioning to full-time ministry, which took a little while. However, looking back, as the final severances were made in my life and He patiently plucked my own flesh from its grip on the world, He continued to teach me lessons that would motivate me for the rest of my life. One such instance involved my intended purchase of a dirt bike from a co-worker. Mind you, I had a very good, respectful relationship with this individual, although

prior to my meeting up with him outside of the workplace, I had no idea about his spiritual condition.

We met at his house, spent about thirty minutes or so on small talk, something men seem to ritually do before they begin chest- and browbeating their negotiating opponent (yes, it's like a sport to many of us). After all of that, we somehow got on the subject of God. I'm not even sure how it happened, but I do very much remember the immediate change in the tone of the conversation when I said, "Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven." At that point, there formed a deep ridge between his brows, as if I had just said something really rude.

He asked me about his neighbor, who he went on to describe as "the kindest, most generous man he ever knew." This man had died not long before this conversation took place. My friend asked, "Are you telling me that you believe that if my neighbor didn't believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior that he's in Hell right now?" His look was both daring and jabbing. I said, "Yes." He didn't take the news so well, denied it vehemently, posturing my viewpoint as "intolerant" and what I can best describe as evil (in his eyes).

I didn't end up buying the bike as it magically became "unavailable". Go figure, right? Our relationship was never the same after that, either, even though we both remained consummately professional towards one another. He "tolerated" me, I guess.

The lesson for me was simple, though unnerving. I, standing up for the God's-honest truth about Jesus Christ, was the one who walked away with the label, "intolerant", nay, "intolerant jerk".

The moral of the story is simple. My would-be friend wanted to be judge over salvation. I told him that judgement is the Lord's sovereign right.

He refused God's truth, in arrogance, suggesting that for as long as I held fast to what Jesus, Himself, said, "*I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me*" (**John 14:6**), that I was the "intolerant" one.

Lesson? Today's "tolerance" is really arrogance. People, like Satan ("*I will make myself like the Most High*" - **Isaiah 14:14b**), want to sit in the judgment seat, though it is reserved for Jesus Christ alone.

*For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.*

— **John 5:22-23**

## The Giving Experiment

Arrogance doesn't understand grace. Therefore, the concept of giving, to an arrogant person, is always laced with the need for some form of payback. It's ruinous. Whether they are the giver or the receiver in a transaction, there's always implied debt. Sadly, it is a manufactured, unnecessary concern. God's grace, which is always free, is foreign to them - alien, even.

Want to see if someone's arrogant? Give them something substantial and observe their response. Is it, "Why thank you so very much," and that's the end of it? Or is it, "Thank you, I owe you one"? The overtly arrogant will often articulate the latter statement; however, the covertly arrogant may never say a word - the machinations will simply begin spinning in their soul. In some ways, the arrogant will go so far as to be *put off* by someone else's giving because, under their own anti-grace system of thinking, the giver has placed the burden of repayment on them (oftentimes unawares, since the giver may actually be grace-oriented). Have you ever gotten the sense that someone was upset with you when you gave them something, and you couldn't explain why? This is a very likely reason - covert arrogance is a destructive force in interpersonal relationships, especially when one of the parties is actually grace-oriented, preferring to give frequently. "*It is more blessed to give than to receive*" (**Acts 20:35b**).

Arrogance sours the greatest things in the spiritual life, beginning with salvation, the greatest debt-free gift of all.

*But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

— **2 Thessalonians 2:13-14**

As discussed in the section *Why Is It So Hard To Evangelize the Covertly Arrogant?*, in the chapter *Hiding Out In Full View*, the reason so many covertly arrogant people remain unsaved is because they refuse grace. Arrogance is much more comfortable on a payment plan and would rather work for salvation than receive it as a grace gift from God. *“Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness” (Romans 4:4-5).*

This same arrogance extends itself into the lives of believers, even, through the flesh, the agent of arrogance. This is why covertly arrogant believers react the way they do when someone gives them something, even if that person explicitly says, “No strings attached!” Being self-absorbed, arrogant people fail to understand that the giver is blessed by doing so (assuming they are giving with godly intentions). The last thing a virtuous giver desires to realize is that the person they are trying to make happy is actually stumbling. Ultimately, said giving may halt as a result.

What a shame - that the very basis of grace, giving, is trampled by arrogance, especially when well-intentioned believers are motivated to give it all.

*This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

— **John 13:12-13**

## CHAPTER SIX:

### THE SOLUTION

*“If you’re not part of the solution, then you’re part of the problem.”*

— Eldridge Cleaver

Mr. Cleaver was onto something, though his social activism tactics were questionable given verbal plenary scripture. The point is that it’s never sufficient to simply throw stones, point out inadequacies, and then walk away as if you’ve accomplished something great. Greatness, under the Lord’s guidance, is reserved for those with solutions to real problems that we face as human beings. Man’s biggest problem, as this book alludes to throughout its pages, is arrogance. Its seed has been sown in every “soil”, less Jesus’. As a result, its fruit is born daily in the lives of the unrighteous, reaffirming the problem statement. All of this started with the Fall in the Garden of Eden. The rest, as they say, is history.

So, the greatest problem to ever face man has been his own depravity. The fact that every man needs a savior, *the Savior*, Jesus Christ, is by far the most solemn issue of all. It is good to be a part of God’s solution.

*And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

— Matthew 28:18-20

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the solution to every problem. It saves, it sanctifies. To the humble, these are the guarantees given by the sovereign God of the universe. Jesus, Himself, prayed upon this truth as it is recorded for us in the Bible:

*Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

*"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You; for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.*

*"I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.*

*"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.*

*"As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.*

*“The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”*

— **John 17**

Jesus Christ is the solution to the problem...nay, to ALL of our problems. If only man in his arrogance would let his guard down long enough to see it, not just at salvation, but long after, while the vestiges of sin still haunt him. If only man would step out of his prison cell, for Christ died to set him free!

*It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.*

— **Galatians 5:1**

Arrogance is blinding. It is this particular attribute that gives arrogance its staying power. Screaming “Watch out!” to a blind person just before they are struck by a moving vehicle is ineffective for the mere reason that they cannot see the danger in their current path.

*The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!*

— **Matthew 6:22-23**



To evangelize a person is to introduce them to a better path - one that leads to life eternal. We do so by relating to one another at the most primitive human levels. This is why the watered down “gospel” that characterizes today’s Christianity is emaciated, lacking terribly. People are too preoccupied with their own lives to lay it down for others, regardless of our Lord’s own words, “*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends*” (**John 15:13**). Today’s distracted believer would rather flip an unbeliever a coin with a rendition of Jesus on the front and **John 3:16** printed on the back than spend any real time with a person, relating. That’s a hack solution at best - most likely a cop out from yet another branch of arrogance. Sounds more like a separate issue if one’s truly honest.

If the word “evangelist” comes from the Greek word meaning “the messenger of good news”, and if the good news of Jesus Christ is something to behold throughout our lifetimes, then why would any good evangelist ever stop sharing the Gospel (aka the good news concerning Jesus Christ), regardless of the salvation status of another? If anything, the evangelist ought to be living the Gospel the way Paul did, “*For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified*” (**1 Corinthians 2:2**). We might rightly call this “living the Gospel reality”.

To teach a believer afterwards is to sanctify them in truth. So goes the solution for those already saved. The best any believer can do is share the Gospel, share the Light. Man cannot impart spiritual vision to another, but God can. He does this through vessels of mercy.

*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

— **Matthew 5:14-16**

The problem is that arrogance loves darkness, prefers it, lest its deeds be revealed.

*He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.*

— **John 3:18-21**

The solution to the problem is simple. It's light, *the Light!* The only thing able to cut through the darkness of arrogance is light. And as it goes in the natural realm, darkness has no defense against light. Light always overcomes darkness. In fact, it is accurate to say that darkness is simply the absence of light.

*Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.*

— **Ephesians 5:11-13**

## Humility Means Strength

*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

— **Philippians 4:13**

There's a notion that seems popular today, somehow a weak man is a humble man and an "awe shucks" kind of guy is the picture of humility. That's a lie from the kingdom of darkness! In all reality, this is false humility, which is really just another name for arrogance. No man has ever been more humble than Jesus.

*The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business." His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."*

— **John 2:13-17**

It's fair to say that Jesus, though impeccably humble, was not mumbling "awe shucks" under His breath on that day in the Temple. To the contrary, He was aggressively seeking a remedy to a situation that was clearly out of hand. This ought to be every believer's goal, to address issues head on, without reservation and without apology. Humility will flex its muscles from time to time when it is exercised. When it does, it is supremely powerful - not because of the inherent will of the possessor, but rather what God can do through a vessel laid bare to service. *"Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work" (2 Timothy 2:21).* In truth, a humble person *expects* to be used in the exertion of God's strength in this world. *"For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily*

*works within me” (Colossians 1:29). We are ambassadors for Christ, Who is omnipotent, after all (2 Corinthians 5:20).*

*Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY. BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.*

— **Hebrews 10:35-39**

Ultimate strength through humility is a paradox to the arrogant. To them, human weaknesses relegate a person to failure, while strength catapults a person to success. In other words, the source of strength is seen as human, something that certainly makes rational sense. Yet, for the humble, strength is found in weakness.

*And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

— **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

There’s an old adage that says, “If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans.” The Biblical analog is, “*Many plans are in a man’s heart, but the counsel of the LORD will stand*” (**Proverbs 19:21**). Arrogant man assumes control over his own destiny, but this is folly. It is best for man to find his strength in God.

*In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge;  
Let me never be ashamed.*

*In Your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;  
Incline Your ear to me and save me.  
Be to me a rock of habitation to which I may continually come;  
You have given commandment to save me,  
For You are my rock and my fortress.  
Rescue me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked,  
Out of the grasp of the wrongdoer and ruthless man,  
For You are my hope;  
O Lord GOD, You are my confidence from my youth.  
By You I have been sustained from my birth;  
You are He who took me from my mother's womb;  
My praise is continually of You.  
I have become a marvel to many,  
For You are my strong refuge.  
My mouth is filled with Your praise  
And with Your glory all day long.*

— **Psalms 71:1-8**

## The Solution: Humility

It's easy to throw stones at others when they fail. For some, it's even easier to cast aspersions at oneself. That has not been the impetus of this book, not at all. While integrity demands an honest analysis of the facts, often creating a stir of anguish in a person's soul, the intent of this book is to righteously expose arrogance for what it is. Addressing any issue in one's soul requires the first step of confronting truth, which is often the most difficult; however, it's absolutely critical.

Before the existence of anesthesia, a surgeon's use of a sharp instrument to cut into and then extract a cancerous growth was excruciating. Yet, given the goodness of the long-term result, most understood the initial suffering was worth the healing outcome. This is the necessary perspective a humble person will adopt when reading this book. Frankly, it's the perspective that all reading this book ought to take. Unfortunately, some of the arrogant will undoubtedly dismiss its contents, possibly never even getting this far in the book. Oddly, as is often the case in ministry, the ones who need the Word the most are often the ones who reject it. This is the worst kind of tragedy.

The tenderest love is often the most difficult pill to swallow. Knowing this, it took over two years of waiting and praying for the right time to put the contents of this book to print. God is not in the business of rushing things, and since this book isn't to be sold, there's been no artificial urgency motivated by ungodly profit. The only profit this book is meant to precipitate is in the souls of its readers. It's proven a wearisome journey.

*For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain.*

— Titus 1:7-11

This book may indeed spawn some turmoil, but believers are encouraged to keep it contained within the confines of their own souls. The contents of this book are far too personally scoped to contemplate rigorously with others, at least not with the expectation of arriving at meaningful conclusions. The deepest portions of this book are meant to engender prayerful conversations between God and one of His own. The particular examples used are just that, examples. They aren't meant to isolate any one facet of arrogance, or owner of it, as much as they are meant to elicit deep self-examination. This is the aforementioned surgical nature of this book. While painful, its existence may prove a magnificent vehicle for spiritual growth.

Wisdom is granted to the humble, for God gives grace to the humble (**James 4:6**). God's desire is to give us wisdom that sets us free.

*Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being,  
And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.*

— Psalms 51:6

As much as a person needs to recognize arrogance within them, they must also understand the remedy, that is, humility. Humility is rather interesting, in and of itself, in the sense that it exists in the absence of arrogance. Or maybe better stated, **arrogance exists in the absence of humility the same way that darkness exists in the absence of light**. If a person desires to shed their arrogance, it's a better strategy to reach for the Light than to wrestle with darkness, for true power exists in the former whereas futility in the latter.

*For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;*

*persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.*

— **2 Corinthians 4:6-11**

As God sanctifies His children, His will becomes manifest, especially to the humble. However, arrogance is blind. *“But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes” (1 John 2:11).* Because arrogance cannot see, it remains ignorant.

*In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

— **John 1:4-5**

**The solution, then, is very simple. Humility.**

*To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.*

— **1 Peter 3:8-9**

It is the intention of this fine work that those who read it ultimately find rest. Covert arrogance is a formidable opponent, no doubt. However, it's just a different strand of the same old issue that arose first in the Garden of Eden. Jesus Christ has already conquered its fruit, that is death. Soon and very soon, believers will witness the consummation of His Father's plan when His enemies, our enemies, are made a footstool for His feet.



*But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.*

— **Hebrews 10:12-13**

For now, He invites us to fellowship with Him, our Lord and Savior, as freedmen from the bonds of arrogance.

The most difficult battles are the ones that produce the greatest growth in the humble believer. *“For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary” (Galatians 6:8-9).* It’s a very good thing to address one’s arrogance openly like this. While doing so, we may attribute any turmoil to normal growing pains. And remember always - you’re not alone - you’re never alone.

*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*

— **Matthew 11:28-30**