

April 10, 2022 – Pride

**Romans 12:3**

**3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.**



# Laid At His Feet

## A Lenten Study

*Can we let go of the things that we love that hold us back?*

# Pride

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Lay Down My Pride

Jeremy Camp

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjnF4sC0eqA>

## **THE TREE OF PRIDE**

**How dark the bark**

**The tree of self-pride**

**Naked it stands**

**Nothing to hide**

**Roots run deep**

**Clinching the soul**

**Stifling the spirit**

**Disproportioned majesty**

**An illusion**

**Created by the mystery**

**Of shadow effects**

**And self-promotion.**

**It shines a light upon itself**

**From beneath its tangled limbs,**

**The resulting silhouette**

**Magnified beyond the hidden truth.**

**The pride of self**

**Feeds on its own flesh**

**Devouring its soul**

**Creating an unfillable hole**

**In the heart.**

**And once consumed**

**Pride dies a selfish death.**

**We have spent this season of Lent in self-reflection, talking about getting real with our core values. We are looking beyond the superficial elements of sacrifice that we usually associate with this time and digging into the segments of our heart that truly matter, that are truly life changing. Truly, what does God care if we give up chocolate and continue to let anger guide our hearts? Do we really think it matters to God if refuse to eat ice cream for a few weeks but also refuse to let go of our jealousy? How can we ever truly know the peace of leaning into Jesus if we allow judgment and prejudice affect the way we see people? Last week we talked about pessimism and how it filters the way we view the world and the people around us. We have to ask ourselves, when people are starving, hurting, dying of disease, sleeping on dirt with no clean water to drink, no shelter to cover them, do we really think of how noble we are when we give up sweets, alcohol, cigarettes, or bowling for Lent?**

**I'm not picking on anyone. Most Americans have developed callouses when it come to caring for the rest of humanity. It's not so much about hypocrisy as it is about how hard it is to watch and listen to the pains of a suffering world every hour of every day. It is what makes caregivers so very tired. It is what often makes them jaded to the needs of those they serve. It's not malicious. It's more of a survival instinct kicking in. Our human nature can only handle so much and folks, this entire community has taken a number of very hard hits lately. When we add the events occurring around the world, we start to become numb.**

**And the only real solution is not by giving more of ourselves but allowing ourselves to lean into Jesus all the more, to allow the spirit of God to work through us. Jesus gives us the light we need when we find ourselves surrounded by darkness. When we try to handle it on our own, that is called self-pride. When we decide we will handle it and not bother God because we know how busy God is, that is self-pride talking. God expects us to bring our core values and lay them at the foot of the cross and leave them there so that we can be the vessels that are needed to meet the needs of this weary world.**

**This is Palm Sunday. What an interesting sermon this is for Palm Sunday. What does pride have to do with Palm Sunday? We all know the story of what happened on this day. As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem, Jesus told two of his disciples to go ahead of them and that they would find an unriden donkey. They were to bring the donkey back for Jesus to ride. The disciples put their own cloaks on the donkeys back and then put Jesus on the donkey. As they made their way into Jerusalem, the people laid down palm leaves and cloaks for the donkey to walk on. The people were jubilant and shouting “Hosannah! Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” It was quite a magnificent display. When the Pharisees tell Jesus to make the people stop shouting and celebrating, Jesus says, “I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”**

**But let me ask you a few questions. Who was this celebration for? Jesus obviously knew it was going to happen which is why he sent the disciples to get the donkey. But who truly benefitted from this celebration? Let’s face it, when**

**Julius Caesar entered Rome, he knew that they were going to make him emperor even if false modesty had him turn down the crown three times before accepting it. Likewise, Jesus knew that when he entered Jerusalem, no one was going to offer him a crown at that moment. But he also knew that within the week, soldiers and religious leaders would be forcing a crown of thorns onto his head, mocking him, spitting on him, hitting him, beating him, tearing the flesh from his body, and making his blood run.**

**So again, I ask, who is this celebration for? You have to know that everyone is caught up in the moment. How many people were there because they were looking for any old excuse for a party? I don't want to downplay the joy of the moment, or the genuine feelings of hope and excitement of many that were there. Nor do I mean to insinuate that Jesus wasn't worthy of such pageantry. But when Caesar entered Rome, it was a moment filled with pride; pride for expanding the Roman Empire; pride for conquering civilizations; pride for outsmarting the Roman Senate; pride for bringing his army with him when he crossed the Rubicon headed for Rome which was something that strictly forbidden; pride demonstrated by his elegant chariot being drawn by four magnificent horses. He saw no consequences for his actions. He was Julius Caesar, an unstoppable force among men.**

**When Jesus heads down that road into Jerusalem, he is on the back of a donkey. He is sitting on cloaks, not a saddle. His presence on the road was an important time for the people. He knew that this moment was prophesied, although the people did not truly understand the prophecy. There is no pride on**

Jesus' part. Although the people are calling him "king," we need to remember that Jesus had been king before creation. His crown was not the crown of a conquering hero. His crown was the crown of peace, joy, love, and mercy for all of humanity.

Caesar's crown meant everything to him. It was the pinnacle of his accomplishments. His leadership had accomplished more than anyone thought possible. Any crown that humanity had to offer to Jesus meant nothing to him. He knew the source of who he was. And he knew that the true crown, the one that would make a difference for every man, woman, and child ever born, would be placed on his head on Easter morning when he defeated death, rose from the grave, and returned to the Creator. He also knew that the crown would be placed there by the Creator of all that is, his Father.

How does any of that help us with our own pride? After all, we aren't Jesus. And besides, we really like it when people applaud or give us awards. It is such a great feeling when people celebrate us for our achievements.

**For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.**

**Romans 12:3**

I'm going to say something pretty harsh here. It isn't meant to be inflammatory, but it should be thought provoking as we examine our core beliefs looking to lay them at Jesus' feet.

Somewhere in history, the church lost its way. It sacrificed what it was meant to be on an altar given to power and greed. We forgot that we are supposed to be servants first, above all else. We are the vessels of Christ to bring truth and love as we engage with others, shining the light not on ourselves, but on our savior. If people are looking at us and saying, “My what a good man he is. I want to try and be more like him,” or “She’s so loving and caring. I want to be like her,” then we have failed. I know that’s got to sting. But nowhere in the Bible does it teach us to be more like the people that we look up to. No. What it teaches us is that when people see us, they should be seeing Jesus, that they should want to be like Jesus, that they can see the light shining on Jesus.

We don’t work for Jesus. We are called to be like Jesus. Our triumphs are Jesus’ triumphs. Our good deeds are Jesus’ good deeds. When we feed the hungry, it is Jesus feeding the hungry. When we give a stranger our coat, it is Jesus giving a stranger our coat. When we hand out those gold blessing coins, it is Jesus handing out those gold blessing coins. Everything we do should point back to Jesus.

**This is what the LORD says:**

**“Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this:**

**that they have the understanding to know me,**

**that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness,**

**justice and righteousness on earth,**

**for in these I delight,” declares the Lord.**

**Jeremiah 9:23-24**



**Therefore, as it is written: "Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."**

**1 Corinthian 1:31**

**May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which I have been crucified to the world, and the world to me, and I to the world.**

**Galations 6:14**

**1.**

**When I survey the wond'rous Cross  
On which the Prince of Glory dy'd,  
My richest Gain I count but Loss,  
And pour Contempt on all my Pride.**

**2.**

**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the Death of Christ my God:  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his Blood.**

**3.**

**See from his Head, his Hands, his Feet,  
Sorrow and Love flow mingled down!  
Did ever such Love and Sorrow meet?  
Or Thorns compose so rich a Crown?**

**4.**

**His dying Crimson, like a Robe,  
Spreads o'er his Body on the Tree;  
Then am I dead to all the Globe,  
And all the Globe is dead to me.**

**5.**

**Were the whole Realm of Nature mine,  
That were a Present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my Soul, my Life, my All.**

**When I Survey the Wondrous Cross**

**Isaac Watts          1707**

**This week, I want us to look into our core and see if we find that ugly tree of self-pride creating a hole in our heart and keeping us from benefitting from the joy and wonder of the grace of our Lord. Can we lay our pride at the feet of Jesus and let Him use it to make His light shine even brighter?**

**God bless you all!**

**AMEN**