

**"7 DEADLY SINS: #1—PRIDE!"**

**7 DEADLY SINS SERIES #1, GGSDA, 9/26/15**

**INTRO. A.** I was shocked this week, driving by **Elder Penick's** house—he's out in his yard, on his hands and knees—eating grass! "Gerald, what are you doing?" Then I got home, turned on the news—There's **President Obama**, on the White House lawn—eating grass. Then **President Putin**, in Russia—eating grass. Then, really shocked—There was the **Pope**. Eating grass! And then I got home—and I found myself—in the back yard—eating grass.

B. The Bible is pretty clear—Nebuchadnezzar is all of us. Pride is in all of us. CS Lewis says, Pride is the worst sin, the first sin, it leads to all the others. It's the one everybody thinks everybody else has except us. And there won't be any pride in heaven. Pride is what started it all—God can never let even a sliver of pride into heaven again.

C. We're starting a new series on the **7 DEADLY SINS**—starting with #1—PRIDE. So God finds little ways to knock down our pride. Whenever preachers begin to think we're something special—little things happen. One lady came up to a pastor, said, Hope my husband leaving didn't bother you. He's been walking in his sleep since he was 12!" I was preaching in Chicago, mentioned **Dr. Jack Provonsha, famous Adventist doctor, Loma Linda**—lady came out my door—I knew Dr. Provonsha. You are no Dr. Provonsha! Got to La Sierra, first Sabbath, scared to death, 600-700 people there, judging you on one sermon. One lady came out with her husband—**Can you go back to Chicago?** Knife in my heart! Turns out—he was the new hospital president at Chicago, wanted me to go back! Remember the old joke, pastor's wife told husband had a hidden box, he looked for it, \$2000, 3 eggs, why you put 3 eggs in there? You're a good preacher, but once in awhile bad sermon, put an egg in there. 20 years, 3 eggs, ok—where the \$2000? Every time I had a dozen eggs, I sold 'em!" Did a big Easter sermon, on top of Mt. Rubidoux, told me there would be 2500 people there—pouring rain, I'm up there, preaching under umbrella, choir covered in sheets of plastic—and people just flocking out, finally about 100 of my own members. India, fly 12,000 miles for one sermon, dedicate 3000-member church we had built, big moment—middle of the sermon, power goes out, guy running the generator had gone out to get some tea—nobody could hear, people just began walking out, go eat. Pride—gone.

D. Collected a few stories on pride—old joke, Clinton and Hilary and Al Gore show up at heaven, God asks Clinton what's he done—tells him president, Foundation, fighting AIDS in Africa—OK, sit on right. Al Gore—VP, made movie about environment—OK, sit on left. Hilary—what have you done? "**I believe you're sitting in my chair!**" **JOE NAMATH** book—"**I Can't 'til Tomorrow 'Cause I get Better Looking Every Day.**" **Vince Lombardi**, won Super Bowl, middle of winter, out late at night celebrating, came home, tried to get into bed without waking up his wife—feet touched her, she says, "**God, your feet are cold!**" **He says, "Here in bed you can just call me Vince!"** **DON SHULA**, famous coach of Miami Dolphins, 17-0 games in a row—went into movie with his wife, just a few people there—everybody cheered. Said to wife, "Shocked they know me even here." Says to next guy—"Didn't think you would recognize me?" Man says—"Should I know you? They won't start the film until 10 people are here, you two made ten!" We are sick people!

E. Even when I'm doing my best stuff—a little radio announcer can get into my head—Vin **Sculley**—that was good. You're terrific. Somebody asked CS Lewis, maybe the most famous Christian writer in the world, how he dealt with that—"**One can't be too careful not to think about such things.**" **Lewis** wrote chapter on humility and pride, in Screwtape letters—as soon as you start to become humble, Satan sticks it into your head—By God, I'm becoming humble!" Then it's gone again! We're a mess!

**I. GOD'S WAR ON PRIDE. A. DANIEL 5:20 "Nebuchadnezzar's heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory." DANIEL 4:30 "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal palace, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" DANIEL 4:33 "Immediately what had been said was fulfilled. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. His body was drenched with the dew of heaven until his hair grew like the feathers of an eagle and his nails like the claws of a bird." DANIEL 4:34 "Then I praised the Most High, I honored and glorified him who lives forever."**

**B. Very quickly--#1—The Deadly Sins are Deadly.** What happened to Nebuchadnezzar will eventually happen to every single person—pride will eat away your soul. The problem with 7 deadly sins is not that will God will kill you if you do them. They kill you themselves. In Daniel—Daniel gives all the glory to God—king says, I hear you can interpret dreams—no, not me—God. Tells Nebuchadnezzar to honor God. Daniel prays to God 3 times. All the proud people die—Belshazzar, handwriting on the wall. **Deadly sins will kill you if you don't kill them.**

**C. This is in all of us.** Every time we tell a story and add a little—pride. Look in a mirror too long. Worry about how we look. Jealous of somebody. Hard to apologize. We tried to help one son many years ago—just say—“I was wr-wr-wrong.” Pride. Grades—What you get? Proud that you're tall, proud that your blonde, things we have no control over, proud that you're American, proud that you keep the right Day—can be OK—or can cross the line—Pride. Criticize somebody, think we know better. Too much jewelry, or your car, or clothes, or degrees after your name—can be pride. Any time you feel down on yourself—still pride—worrying about yourself. Pastors—can talk about how many baptisms, how many members, we can talk about what God is doing, but we're sneaking in a little pride for ourselves. For 14 years, got introduced, Pastor Dan, senior pastor, **LSUC**. Begin to think, that's who you are, knew, needed to break that. Every Friday night—fear, sermon's no good, nobody will listen, throw me out. Pride! **Hairpiece** for 20 years—worried what people would think. Pride. We're sick people!

**D. There will be no pride in heaven.** If just one person tries to sneak the slightest slice of pride into the New Earth, we would have to go through all this all over again. September 11's and bombs and anthrax and land mines and kids starving and cancer—all because of pride, one person's pride, thousands of years ago. That's why pride is such a big deal to God—so we never have to go through all this ever again.

E. In the book of Revelation God says If you want to be saved, you have to come out of Babylon. If Babylon stands for pride, and look at what I have done, and trying to be saved on your own—even 1% of salvation by your own works—one of God's last 3 last-day messages is, come out of Babylon—all pride has to go. There will be no pride in heaven. Will be all Jesus. Fear God and give glory to HIM! Everything comes from God. **ACTS 17:28 “In Him we live and move and have our being.”**

**II. PRIDE IS THE CHEAP KNOCKOFF OF THE PURE.** A. There is a totally legitimate pure joy and pride—when you do something well—for God. God gave you the talent, God gave you the mind—you win a game, you build a building, you fix someone's teeth, you sing a great song, you have a baby, you graduate and everybody cheers. The feeling of pride is something like that, but it is the cheap shadow of the real.

B. It is like going to see the **TAJ MAHAL**, but instead of seeing the Taj Mahal you stay in the gift shop and just look at the postcards of it. No, come outside and see the real thing. Go to the Eiffel Tower, buy cheap keychain, count that, rather than see the real thing. Don't be satisfied with the shadow, with the cheap knockoff—go for the Original.

**III. WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT PRIDE?** A. **#1--Just Start with admitting it.** CS Lewis it is the one deadly sin that we can see in everybody else but never in ourselves. **Famous pastor—spoke this summer—powerful, I have tapes of him from 30 years ago. 50 years old—made a terrible mistake. Said—At 29, I was.... At 39,.... At 49.... At 50--\* was a fool. I had to be broken down, to be built back up. Now, 73, pastoring again. Pride goeth before a fall.** Name it, claim it, own up to it, we have a little

**B. HUMILITY—Obviously the opposite of pride is humility.** Humility is not putting yourself down. Famous quote: **“Humility is not thinking less of yourself—it is thinking of yourself less.”** So: **#1--Ask Questions.** Turn the conversation around to other people, be curious, get them to talk about themselves instead of you talking about yourself. **#2--Compliment people—**tell them how terrific they are, how good they look, what they did was fantastic—gets you out of your skin. **#3--Set yourself free from worrying all the time what other people think.** What they will think about how you look, bad hair days. Do it for God.

C. **SERVE--Get involved somewhere.** One of the reasons to do mission trips. Mixing cement, dirty, painting—chipping away at pride—gets replaced with just this holy glow, doing something with God, for God. Did a wedding 2 weeks ago, yard, \$30 million house, already dark, no one cleaning up—Hilda and I

started putting chairs away—pretty soon, whole group noticed, began to help. Felt good, helped couple out. Few minutes—going to dedicate all the church officers. Do it for God. Don't do it for the people, for me, for the church—do it for God. Destroys pride.

D. **CROSS**—there is no pride at the Cross. The whole point of the Cross is—You couldn't do it yourself. Bible says, No, no one righteous. Failed. You need Jesus. You need Jesus for all of it. We bring 0%. It's only Jesus. The more we look at the Cross—Pride just slips away. **Michael Jordan and Chicago Bulls**—makes a shot, wins championship, whole team dancing, 8 million of us dancing, proud—did nothing. Jesus—did it all. All Jesus.

1. And can I just be clear—hundreds of years ago, the main theological idea came out, that the whole reason Jesus had to die was because our sins offended God, offended His honor. Came from the Feudal lord, if somebody said or did something against your lord, you had to go fight, defend the honor of your lord. So somebody had to die to defend the honor of God, but instead of you and me, Jesus did it, God's honor is satisfied. No, God is not worried about His honor. How could the whole purpose of the Cross be, to **destroy our pride, in order to satisfy God's pride?**

E. **LOVE—Fruit of the Spirit. GALATIANS 5:22 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.”**

Each week—match up one 7 deadly sin, with a Fruit of the Spirit. The opposite of pride, is humility. But the power is Love. Love kills all pride. Choose one fruit every week—**STRAWBERRIES! Strawberry Shortcake for all of you after church!**

F. **Get filled with the Glory of God.** The most powerful force against our pride—is not trying to cut it out—slap ourselves every time we see our pride, try to stuff it under the rug, destroy it somehow—but to focus on something bigger that it just goes away by itself. You think you're pretty smart, until you watch somebody on Jeopardy, who seems to know everything. You think you're a pretty good preacher, until you hear the best. I thought I had a pretty cool car—until I drove a Porsche—all my pride went away. **Basketball player, think pretty good, until see Michael Jordan.** Bible says We were made to live for the glory of God. Do your good works, so people will praise your Father in heaven. Fear God, and give glory to Him. **BACH--every song—for the glory of God.**

**1. In Chicago, we went to see the PHANTOM OF THE OPERA.** First opera I had ever been to. I literally had no idea. Music, incredible. Scenes, sets, drama, story, acting. I was totally mesmerized. Walked out of there—why does anyone listen to you, old bald man standing behind a pulpit—when they can go to that? You think you're a good preacher, big church, everybody tells you every week, great sermon pastor—then you find something that is just so much greater—pride just melts away. When you really get how incredible God is—glory—pride just slips away, gets swallowed up in the glory of God. Greatest answer to getting rid of Pride—Worship. Listen to music—worshipping God. Worship the glory of God. Why no pride in heaven—worship. “I Will Exalt Thee” in praise set. No pride when singing “I Will Exalt Thee”!

2. Think what heaven will be like—never have to deal with pride, never worry about anyone thinks, no prima donnas, only people thinking about others, worshiping God. Why not here?