

“Blinded and Bloated”

Deuteronomy 8:10-18; 2 Chronicles 26; Philippians 3:12-15; 3 John 9-10

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction:

- One who almost succumbed to the temptation of Pride
- Pride blinds us
 - To our Own Spiritual Needs
 - To our Own Vulnerability to Sin
 - To the Needs of Others around us.

“Blinded and Bloated”

A. PRIDE BLINDS US to the SOURCE of BLESSINGS

1. We take the credit for our successes rather than give the glory to God.
 - a. God promised rich blessing for Israel as they entered the promised land.
 - Deuteronomy 8:7-9 -- *“ a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of the valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper.”*
 - b. Moses warns of forgetting the source of blessing.
 - Deuteronomy 8:10-18-- *“When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land He has given you. Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, lest —when you have eaten and are full and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water to you out of the flinty rock; who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end —then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.’ And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.”*
 - c. Abraham Lincoln’s Proclamation of a Day of National Humiliation
 - *“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in number, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God; we have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and that of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.”*
2. Taking the credit for ourselves begins the downward spiral of idolatry and immorality.
 - Romans 1:21-24 -- *“Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man —and birds and*

four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts..."

3. Our adversary does not care who gets the credit, just so God doesn't.

B. PRIDE BLOATS US, that is, puffs us up.

1. Difference between "healthy pride" and "unhealthy pride"
 - a. Unhealthy pride
 - Galatians 6:3 -- *"If anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."*
 - b. Healthy pride
 - Galatians 6:4-- *"But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."*
2. **Three ways that PRIDE BLOATS**
 - a. **When we think we are somehow above God's laws.** Case of Uzziah
 - 2 Chronicles 26:16 -- *"But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the LORD his God by entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense."*
 - b. **When we think we have somehow arrived spiritually.**
 - 1) Some in the church of Philippi were bloated because of their spiritual pedigree.
 - 2) Paul had reason to boast in his spiritual pedigree but chooses not to do so. –
 - Philippians 3:4-- *"If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so."*
 - Philippians 3:7-11-- *"But the things that were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."*
 - 3) Paul views himself as having not arrived at spiritual maturity
 - Philippians 3:12-15 -- *"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not could myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you."*
 - c. **When we think we are ALL important to God's Work.**
 - 1) Paul counters this attitude in his teaching on the Spiritual gifts
 - 1 Corinthians 12:14-26 -- *"For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty, but our representable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another."*

And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it."

- a) Any spiritual giftedness comes from God's grace.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:9-10-- *"For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace towards me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."*
 - b) Every person is important and needed for the functioning of the body of Christ
- 2) Lie of Satan; You are the more important than others. Case Study: Diotrephes
- 3 John 9-10-- *"I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church."*

C. Antidote to PRIDE: Humble yourselves.

- James 4:6-- *"But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'"*
- Isaiah 23:9-- *"The LORD of host has purposed it, to bring to dishonor the pride of all glory, to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth."*
- Isaiah 23:9 (NIV)-- *"The Lord almighty planned it, to bring low the pride of all glory and to humble all who are renowned on the earth."*
- James 4:7-10-- *"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of God, and He will lift you up."*