



## Conquering Our Pride

**Read:** Matthew 10:35-45

When I was young my friends and I built a skateboard ramp in my neighbour's backyard. We used to compete with each other to see who could complete the most outlandish and daring stunts. Chalk it up to youthful exuberance, but as I reflect back, these crazy tricks were nothing more than my pride getting the better of me.

Pride is something we all deal with. No one likes to admit his or her weaknesses, back down from a challenge, relinquish control or be proven wrong. We see this in the gospel. Because of their pride, James and John demand that Jesus give them a place of honour in the Kingdom. Sound familiar? Jesus replies, "can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?" In other words, "can you do a double ollie with a reverse butter flip while blindfolded?" "Sure!" came the response from the disciples. "Sure!" I said, moments before nearly killing myself on a plank with wheels. But Jesus cautions them, that even if they succeed, they won't be satisfied. The same is true for us. We are always left wanting more. So what do we do?

Jesus offers us two solutions when it comes to conquering our pride. First, we must humble ourselves. Humility frees us from becoming self-centered, which is the root of pride. It moves us beyond ourselves so that we are free to serve others with love rather than serve our own empty desires. Humility opens the door to freedom and thus peace. As the Bible says, "when pride comes, disgrace follows, but with humility comes wisdom" (Proverbs 11:2). Humility is the key to overcoming pride. It allows us to wisely discern our actions and avoid conflict.

Second, Jesus says that we need to know our limits. So often our pride motives us to bite off more than we can chew. This normally gets us into trouble and we end up being unhappy. Therefore, we need to recognize our limitations and wisely discern whether or not our endeavours are good ideas or just prideful fancies.

Jesus knows that we all struggle with pride. His example shows us the way to overcome our pride and free ourselves from the follies that often arise when we yield to our own ambition. For in the eyes of Christ the greatest among us is not the one puffed up with pride, but rather the one who is the humble "servant of all."

**Reflection:** In what areas of my life do I struggle with pride? What steps can I take to overcome my pride?