

Reframing Emotions

Reframing Pride: A Guide for Going Deeper

Note for Users:

Reframing Pride: A Guide for Going Deeper is the fourth week in an 11-week guide that accompanies the podcast *More to It: Reframing Emotions*.¹ Each session is designed to help you and your community know, love, and praise God for His wonderful design for our emotions, even the ones we view as “negative.” The guide features an episode summary, definitions of relevant terms, Scripture reading, discussion questions, activities, prayers, and reflection prompts.

Each section in a session (for example, prayer and discussion) features a timestamp, but the timestamp is simply a suggestion for the amount of time to spend. At times, you and your community may want to linger with the discussion questions. Or maybe you need to spend more time engaging with a concept through a small group activity. You should prioritize what produces the most flourishing in your community, even if it means bending or breaking the time “rules.”

In the podcast, one of our counselors suggests emotions—even the negative ones—are echoes of Eden. If we listen to those echoes and follow them to their source, we might just end up back in the garden, not hiding from God, but experiencing the forevermore joy found in His presence. As you use this guide with your community, we pray that a spirit of unity, curiosity, and humility will be present, creating a space in which you can be vulnerable, drawing near to God and one another.

The Austin Stone Institute, The Austin Stone Counseling Center

¹ Subscribe to the podcast here: <https://pod.link/1626545281>.

Session 4: Pride

Episode Main Point

While pride strives to shore up and prove the sufficiency of self, confidence rests in and waits patiently for God.

Episode Summary

In the garden of Eden, Satan tempted Adam and Eve through fear and pride. “Are you sure you aren’t missing out on something?” he suggested. “Don’t you think *you* know what you need better than God does?” Satan’s ploy worked. It still does. He hasn’t had to devise any new schemes since the garden; the old ones work just fine.

Pride says we have everything under control. We are the masters of our destinies. It’s an appealing thought, but it proves devastating. It typically leads to self-loathing, self-criticism, and self-hatred. In other words, it ruins our relationship with ourselves, leading us to think either too highly or too lowly of ourselves. But pride doesn’t stop there. It separates us from God and one another. It ultimately isolates us from God’s good design, which was and is to live in dependence on Him and one another.

Confidence differs from pride. Humble confidence results from dependence on God. It gives us a category for navigating our imperfections, limitations, and inadequacies. It allows us to join Paul in acknowledging the gift of weakness, for weakness points out our need for a Savior. Weakness displays God’s goodness and glory all the more. It celebrates other people, recognizing how other people’s gifts complement ours.

The counselors warn, though, that pride sometimes is a mask for deep wounds. It’s not necessarily someone being rude and superior to be rude and superior. Pride could be a coping mechanism. It needs to be corrected, of course, but the best correction comes from a place of curiosity, empathy, and humility. That is, we need each other. In community we bear—and share—burdens. We encourage and correct, confess and repent, always looking to Jesus who shows us the better way, the way of humble confidence in God and His purposes.

Definitions

- **Pride:** Pride is a felt sense of self-sufficiency. It is confidence in one’s self, a sense of superiority and self-righteousness.
- **Confidence:** Confidence is a felt sense of secure dependence on God. It is living in Christ’s finished work (His life, death, and resurrection) and His righteousness.

Scripture

Genesis 3; 1 Corinthians 12; Philippians 2:1–11; 2 Corinthians 5:16; Matthew 4:1–11; 1 John 2:15–17; Proverbs 3:5–8; Hebrews 4:16; 2 Samuel 7; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 1:1–10; James 4:1–10; Judges 13–16; Daniel 4; Psalm 139; Job 1:20–21

Pray (5 min)

Before beginning the study, pray aloud, using either your own words or the words provided.

Heavenly Father, we confess it's easy to say we're prideful. It's much harder to let that truth sink in. Father, give us courage, curiosity, and humility to consider where pride is at work in our lives. Help us to see how confidence differs from pride so that we will come to Your throne at all times, including our times of need. Thank You for how You lead us away from pride and self-sufficiency and toward a steady confidence rooted in dependence on You. Amen.

Read (5–10 min)

Either read the following Bible verses aloud or invite a volunteer to read.

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴ But he answered, "It is written,

"Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶ and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

"He will command his angels concerning you,"

and

"On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone."

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the

world and their glory.⁹ And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him. (Matthew 4:1–11)

Discuss (15–20 min)

Answer the following questions.

- What similarities and differences do you find between Jesus’ temptation and Adam and Eve’s?
- In what ways does Jesus exhibit humble confidence?
- Andrew Dealy suggests we “get off track because, instead of leaning on the simple design God has made clear, we reason with Satan.” When have you tried to “reason with Satan”? What happened as a result?
- “Cultivating humble confidence is a communal effort,” says Brittany Beltran. Why do you think that is? What happens in a community that can’t happen by ourselves?

Engage (10 min)

In smaller groups of two and three, respond to the following questions.

- When has pride ruptured a relationship in your life?
- What would it look like to repair that relationship? If repair isn’t possible, what would you like to be different about your relationships going forward so that repair, and not rupture, is their distinguishing mark?

Pray (5 min)

Either read the following liturgy, a worshipful prayer, aloud or invite a volunteer to read.

A Liturgy for the Washing Away of Pride

In my pride
I rage and bellow inside, a beast
offended by each dismissal and opinion
not my own, every instruction and rebuke

until I am left bereft, isolated
atop a self-built pinnacle

collapsing
beneath my feet,
everyone

hesitant to speak—

then, O Lord, plunge me beneath the still waters
that there I may die and live again

and again, reason restored,

I fall
at Your feet.

I

confess: Jesus, have mercy
on me, a sinner. And You—Jesus,
Master and Friend—return me to the waters.
You cleanse me of my pride,
tell me to rise, go
in Your peace.

Reflect

Complete the following reflection on your own.

Read 2 Samuel 7 two times this week, working through the following prompts throughout your time in Scripture.

- Reflect on David's life. How does 2 Samuel 7 serve as an indicator of David's heart? How does God respond to David's desire to build a temple?
- Examine your life. Where do you exhibit pride or humble confidence? Evaluate your life with questions like these:
 - Do I talk with God about what's in front of me?
 - Do I ask, "Lord, what would You have me do?"
 - Do I pause and engage with God before making a decision, or do I race ahead?

- Is this thing, however good it is, meant for me to do?
 - Who receives praise when the thing is done?
- Respond in gratitude. David replies to God’s answer of “no” with praise. Write your own prayer of praise. Consider how gratitude might train you in humble confidence and lead you to cherish God’s design for living in dependence on Him and other people.



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