

“HUMILITY, NOT ARROGANCE”

Pastor Mike Corwin

TEXT: 2 KINGS 5:1-14

GOD’S WORD: PSALM 30

I – ARROGANCE:

They say that confession is good for the soul, so I need to make one to you this morning. I know you will find this hard to believe but...I have an ego! Yes, it’s true, and now it’s out there. I’m not really apologizing for it, just stating it as fact. Matter of fact I don’t think you raise to the level of Chief of Police unless you have a little bit of an ego.

I would say though that if we are all truthful we would all have to make this confession. Everyone has an ego. It is a Latin word which means “I”. We have come to understand that it means a person’s sense of self-esteem or self-worth. We can also translate it as a person’s Pride. Everyone has an ego, some of them are suffering and need help, and others are over inflated and need to be toned down. Ego is a good thing, the key is to keep it in check.

Mine sometimes gets out of hand and I need to bring it back down to earth. I don’t want to be a legend in my own mind so I have to temper mine with a good dose of humility from time to time. An example of this is to tell you that when I was Chief of Police I was confident in my abilities to think things through and come up with the correct answer or plan, but I was humble enough to know that I may not be right. That another trusted source may see something I didn’t. I had a trusted friend who was also a leader in a Law Enforcement agency and I would call him when I was uncertain and run it by him to get another opinion. I put my Ego in check for the good of the department and the people I led there.

II – ARROGANCE AND GOD:

One place I always try to keep it in check is when I am relating to God. Whether I am praying, reading, meditating, teaching, preaching, or otherwise representing God I, and everyone, need to remember he is God and we’re not. There are numerous passages in the Bible about how God responds to human arrogance. None of them are favorable to us. If we respond to arrogance from people in a negative fashion, imagine how God feels about it.

Yet I am constantly seeing this in action. I am constantly seeing where people put everyone and everything above God. God is not a priority anymore but more of an afterthought. I’ll get around

to God when my own thoughts and desires are satisfied. I'll stop and worship the Creator of the universe when I get my own stuff done. Can't go to do it today because there's that large shopping sale and I can't miss it. Need to go to the lake and do some fishing this weekend, God can wait. O, that party last night went into the wee hours of the night and I got wasted. The organ will send my hangover into the next day. Tithes! Why would I do that? God can print his own money – He's God isn't he? And those 10 rules were only suggestions weren't they? They weren't really commandments. Jesus gave a pretty good speech in that Sermon on the Mount but he couldn't really expect us to live by it. Who's really going to love their enemies, or turn the other cheek? I think I'm much more capable of deciding how I live.

Besides. This is the 4th of July weekend! I'm an American. I'll sing the patriotic songs and wave the stars and stripes and because I do that no one is going to tell me how to live. We've fought wars so I can decide that myself. The government will tell me how to live, I don't need God to do it in an old outdated book. I'm the captain of my own ship. I'll tell God what I need when I need him. Until then I'm OK on my own.

How's your ego feeling now? See yourself here?

III – TEXT:

There's a story in the Old Testament that I think helps us see this issue of arrogance and humility plainly. Let's look at it this morning...

2 Kings 5:1-14 (NLT)

¹ The king of Aram had great admiration for Naaman, the commander of his army, because through him the LORD had given Aram great victories. But though Naaman was a mighty warrior, he suffered from leprosy. ² At this time Aramean raiders had invaded the land of Israel, and among their captives was a young girl who had been given to Naaman's wife as a maid. ³ One day the girl said to her mistress, "I wish my master would go to see the prophet in Samaria. He would heal him of his leprosy." ⁴ So Naaman told the king what the young girl from Israel had said. ⁵ "Go and visit the prophet," the king of Aram told him. "I will send a letter of introduction for you to take to the king of Israel." So Naaman started out, carrying as gifts 750 pounds of silver, 150 pounds of gold, and ten sets of clothing. ⁶ The letter to the king of Israel said: "With this letter I present my servant Naaman. I want you to heal him of his leprosy." ⁷ When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes in dismay and said, "Am I God, that I can give life and take it away? Why is this man asking me to heal someone with leprosy? I can see that he's just trying to pick a fight with me." ⁸ But when Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes in dismay, he sent this message to him: "Why are you so upset? Send

Naaman to me, and he will learn that there is a true prophet here in Israel.”⁹ So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and waited at the door of Elisha’s house.¹⁰ But Elisha sent a messenger out to him with this message: “Go and wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River. Then your skin will be restored, and you will be healed of your leprosy.”¹¹ But Naaman became angry and stalked away. “I thought he would certainly come out to meet me!” he said. “I expected him to wave his hand over the leprosy and call on the name of the LORD his God and heal me!¹² Aren’t the rivers of Damascus, the Abana and the Pharpar, better than any of the rivers of Israel? Why shouldn’t I wash in them and be healed?” So Naaman turned and went away in a rage.¹³ But his officers tried to reason with him and said, “Sir, if the prophet had told you to do something very difficult, wouldn’t you have done it? So you should certainly obey him when he says simply, ‘Go and wash and be cured!’”¹⁴ So Naaman went down to the Jordan River and dipped himself seven times, as the man of God had instructed him. And his skin became as healthy as the skin of a young child, and he was healed!

So, this Naaman was a special man. He was the commander of the Syrian army. He had led many a raid and waged a good number of wars and succeeded in them. He gave his king great victories which resulted in territory and wealth. But he had one flaw. He had leprosy. A disease that was eating away at his skin and his nerve endings. He probably couldn’t be too close to other people, or have intimate contact with his wife. If he had children he most likely couldn’t hold them or cuddle them as a father might. He was hurting and disgusted at his lot in life.

One of his raids had been into Israel and some of the loot was a young girl he brought home and gave to his wife as a maid/slave to do her bidding. This girl told her mistress to send her husband to the prophet Elisha who would heal him of his disease. Naaman would try anything at this point and followed up on the tip. He went to his king and got a letter to the king of Israel to please make his healing happen and sent him on his way with a small army of horses, chariots, and gifts in tow. He arrived in Israel and gave the letter to the king who went into a panic attack. Surely he couldn’t do this. He was smart enough and humble enough to know he did not have God’s power and because of that Naaman would surely make war with him. But while he was panicking, the prophet Elisha told the king to send Naaman to him and he would handle it. So Naaman sent off with his entourage to see Elisha.

When they arrived at the house they were amazed that Elisha did not come out and pay respect and homage to this great man, to the proven warrior. Not only didn’t he go out and bow down or show him honor, he sent his messenger out instead. Naaman had to understand that Elisha served a greater King than his or anyone else’s. And the orders for healing were to go down to the Jordan River and dunk yourself 7 times.

Well Naaman didn't take kindly to this. He had expected this man to come out and do his thing. To shout, do incantations, wave his hands in the air and call on his God to heal Naaman and he had done none of that. Instead he said go for a swim! How dare he. He ought to go in and drag the man out of the house and take him for a swim instead...weighted down by some large river rocks! In his arrogance he starts to leave. He had rivers of his own in Syria he could wash in. But his officers reasoned with him. They got him to come down off his high horse, to humble himself and do as Elisha had said. And he was healed!

IV- ARROGANCE OR HUMILITY?:

The question for today is pretty easy...are you arrogant or are you humble? When it comes to your relationship to God, the Creator of the Universe, The Savior of humankind, The Sustainer of life, the Great Physician, The Good Shepherd, are you humbled in his presence? Do you remember what he's already done for you in his sacrifice for our sins? Do you remember that he's all knowing...all present...all powerful?

When you approach him do you put yourself on the same level as him? Do you pray to him with humility and realize he's the one you're asking to answer? Do you worship him with the same humility and become submissive in his presence so he can work with you and through you? Is God the #1 priority in your life? If he isn't, then you still have arrogance that you need to deal with.

V – GOD IS GOD:

Let me help you humble yourself with God:

- No matter how big you think you are...God is bigger.
- You may be a "g"od but you're not "G"od.
- You may be "I" but he's "I AM."

Jesus said: **Matthew 23:12**

But those who exalt themselves will be **humbled**, and those who **humble** themselves will be exalted.

Get over yourself and be with God.

Amen