

The Great I am

Psalm 36:1-2

Today we are starting a new series called “The Great I am.”

- The Nature and Consequence of Pride.

Just to get greater clarity about us as a Group.

- Who of us knows someone that is really Proud? Be Honest.
- Who of us is the Person that the other people just Thought of?

The Hebrew and Greek words for pride can be defined as ...

- Majesty (You think you are Majestic.)
- Pomp
- Swelling (A swelling that takes place in the Heart.)
- Elation
- Surging
- Glory (you think you are glorious.)
- Conceit
- Height
- Eminence
- Boastful
- Pretention
- Arrogance
- Haughtiness

These are really all just forms of SELF DELUSION.

- All just forms of “The Great I AM!”

Dictionary Definition:

A high opinion of one’s own dignity, importance, merit, or superiority, (now listen to this carefully) whether cherished in the mind or as displayed in bearing or conduct.

So there are Two expressions of it.

1. Cherished in Mind
2. Displayed in Bearing or Conduct.

Psalm 36:1 ¹ I have a message from God in my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked ... (Ra-sha = The ungodly, the evil and guilty.)

Have you ever wondered about that?

- Why are evil people so evil?
- Why are the wicked so wicked?

And, when we talk about wicked, evil, ungodly people.

- We are obviously not talking about ourselves ...?

Why is it that people can be so incredibly self-consumed ...?

- Self-centered, self-indulgent and simply not care ...
- About the consequences of their actions on others?

WHY, WHY, WHY?

The Psalmist says that God gave him a message (or insight) as to why?

He says, because ... "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

- The wicked, (The Rasha) the ungodly, the evil ...
- The self-consumed, the self-centered, the self-indulgent ...
- Are the way that they are ... because they do not fear God.

Now we might ask, but how do you not fear the Alpha & Omega?

- Why do you not fear the one to whom we must all give account ...
- For every deed done and for every thought, thought.

Why? Why? Why?

- Again, he gives us the answer ...
- As to why the "wicked" do not fear God.

² For [this is the reason] in their own eyes they flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sin.

Why do we often not care about our thoughts, behavior or attitudes?

- Because we don't Fear God.

And why is it that we don't fear God?

- Because we do not Detect or Hate our own Sin.

We don't realize our own arrogance.

- And because we don't see our own arrogance, we don't hate it.

Why would we?

- What is there to hate?
- I don't have a problem?
- Sure, I am not perfect. But have you seen that guy ...?
- I am actually a good guy.
- As a matter of fact, I am, "The Great I AM!"

And it is within that, that the problem lies.

So how do we deal with it?

- How do we deal with 'The Great I AM?'

I think the answer is pretty clear from the scripture.

- You need to hate it!
- But, before you can hate it, you need to first detect it.
- You must be able to see it in our self.

So, today and next week we will unpack "Detect it" (oor hele screen asb)

- And then in week 3 we will tackle the "Hate it" part.

Detect? What does that mean?

There is no fear of God before their eyes. ² For in their own eyes they flatter themselves too much to detect or hate their sin.

The Dictionary defines detect as ...

1. To discover or identify the presence or existence of.

- So, I need to discover or identify the presence of pride in my life.
- Is there pride?

Another Definition

2. To discover or investigate a crime or its perpetrators.

- What is this thing called pride and do I possess it?
- And if I do, to what degree do I possess it?
- Or should I maybe say, to what degree does it possess me?

Lets look at some **SYMPTOMS**

- Symptoms or Evidence that there is pride in your life?

Symptoms ...

1. You don't think you are Prideful

How do you know that you are Proud?

- You don't think you are.

How do you know you are Proud?

- You are thinking of someone else right now.

As a matter of fact, as I started speaking about the subject matter.

- You started thinking about other people ...
- Your boss, your spouse, your kids, your parent, friends colleagues ...

And you are even thinking, "I hope they are listening."

- So, you start looking for them in the fellowship ...
- To see if they are listening.

But you don't see them.

- You realize, o no, they are in the Kids Zone.
- And you think, maybe I can get them the CD?
- Or maybe even DVD?

If any of those thoughts have remotely gone through your mind.

- It is most probably evidence that the Sin of Pride.
- Is alive and well in your Life.

The scary thing about arrogance is that ...

- Nearly everyone can see it in you, but you.

When people bring it up, you are wondering.

- Where do they come up with this stuff.

Why are we so Blind to this?

Jeremiah gives us the answer, Because "The heart is deceitful above all things (iow's there is nothing more deceitful than your heart) and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" **Jeremiah 17:9**

"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

Now, remember our “Dictionary definition ...” of pride.

A high opinion of one’s own dignity, importance, merit, or superiority, whether cherished in the mind or as displayed in bearing or conduct.

Both of these groups are deceived.

- The one displaying it in bearing and conduct.
- And the one who “only” cherishes it in mind.

The only difference between the two is that the one ...

- Displaying it in bearing and conduct is more likely to get help.

So, whether it is my tendency to display my arrogance ...

- Or cherish it in heart.

Can I trust my own Heart? NO!

- Do we trust our own Hearts? YES!
- Should we trust our own Hearts? By all means, NO!!!!

We say to ourselves, but I know I love God.

- I can Feel it in my Heart.
- Don’t tell me otherwise (whether verbally or in the mind.)

Our deceitful hearts tell us that we love God ...

- Even though we have no affection for him.
- He is not our greatest treasure, joy and delight.
- As clearly seen by our behavior.

Our deceitful heart tell us that ...

- I am not as Bad as others.
- I am Sincere.
- I mean well.

It wasn’t my Intention.

- Ever said that to your Spouse, to a friend, a child, a parent ...?

O, no, you misunderstood me.

- That is not what I meant.
- I am actually a good husband, a good friend, child, parent, boss ...

What you are describing is not me.

- In my Heart I know who I am!

Some of us say that out loud.

- Others just cherish it in their hearts.
- And smile and wave, while no one is the wiser.

It is all just Pride!

I have been guilty of this countless of times

- And I have seen so many others do the same

Have seen this so often in trying to help people become Christians.

- We look at some scriptures, the see it is not them.
- They know it is not them.
- They are not living that way, they have never lived that way.

But then they say...

- Don't tell me I am not a Christians.
- I love God! I know it in my Heart.
- Therefore, I am ok.

We look at our own hearts and our "own goodness"

- Instead of who we are before God.

Just A glimpse of God, should reveal to us our frailty and sinfulness.

- And humble us on the spot.

When the Apostle Peter realized who Jesus was, and who he was before Jesus he said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!' Luke 5:9

He didn't compare himself to the other Apostles.

- He looked at the Son of God and said...
- Lord, I am a Sinful Man.

A clear View of Jesus gave him a clear View of Himself.

Men like the Prophet Isaiah in the presence of God said, 'Woe to me! I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.' **Isaiah 6:5**

Seeing God almighty for all that he is ...

- Should cut us down to size.
- Make us fall on our knees and say, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

2. You are not a Relentless Leaner

Proverbs 15:22 ²² Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

...

relentless

Proverbs 12:15 ¹⁵ The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.

...

Proverbs 11:14 ¹⁴ For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers.

...

Proverbs 24:6 ⁶ Surely you need guidance to wage war, and victory is won through many advisers.

...

What do all these scriptures make clear.

- The wise man seeks advice.
- The wise man listens to advice.
- The victory is won through advice.
- Plans succeed because of advice.

What is another symptom of Pride?

- You don't take out the notepad on a regular basis ...
- And just ask a boatload of good questions.

How can I?

- Grow in my relationship with God?
- How can I see Jesus more clearly for all that he is?

- How can I develop my character?
- How can I overcome my negativity?
- How can I become more people orientated, more socially savvy?

Or, what do you think I need to develop?

- How do you experience me?
- ...

How can I get more out of my bible?

- How can I develop a richer prayer life?
- ...

How can I become more life giving?

- Where do you see the Charlie Brown or Penguin in me?
- And how can I overcome it?

Or, here is what I have been seeing.

- What do you think?
- ...

How can I help others grow in their walk with God or their character?

- How can I be a better mentor?

How can I lead better bible discussions?

Or ... Or ... Or ?????

The humble, those who desire to know Jesus and treasure him ...

- And be like him above all else.
- Ask a lot of questions.
- The Proud simply don't.

Why don't they ask?

- Because I am the Great I am.
- And the great I am does not ask questions.
- The Great I am, does not need help.
- The Great I am is good as is.
- The Great I am always knows what they are doing.
- They do what they do and they do it the way they do it.

How regularly do you ask questions?

- The humble has the notepad out, all the time.
- The great I am does not.

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If you don't develop this heart it will be the end of you.

If we don't develop this heart it will be the end of us.

Self-pity

3. Self-Pity

What is self-pity?

- Self-pity comes in different shapes and sizes.

Self-pity is often simply, our sinful selfish response to something ...

- Not going the way, we think it should go.
- Not being what we think it should be.
- Not landing where we think it should land.

And we feel incredibly justified when we feel sorry for ourselves.

- For I am The Great I am.
- And the Great I am should not be going through these kind of things.

The Great I am deserves for everything to work out perfectly.

- The Great I am should cruise through life with no pain or struggle.
- They should land excellent jobs.
- Date and get married to the most wonderful people
- And have 2.3 problem free, academically strong and sporty children.
- Who will become Christians, get married to Christians.
- And produce more Christian offspring.

And if everything doesn't work out the way I picture it.

- Self-pity says, I now deserve to indulge myself in whatever I want to.
- Whether that be gluttony, impurity, shopping, gossip or anger.
- I can do whatever I want to do, because I deserve better.
- And I deserve to be happy.
- Because I am, The Great I am.

Another form of self-pity is the **Desire for Recognition** ...

- For what you are going through.

Although boasting and self-pity look like they are ...

- On complete opposite sides of the fence ...
- They are actually very close friends.

Boasting is the response of pride to success.

- Self-pity is the response of pride to suffering.

Boasting says, "I deserve admiration because I have achieved so much."

Self-pity says, "I deserve admiration because I have suffered so much."

Boasting is the voice of pride in the heart of the strong.

Self-pity is the voice of pride in the heart of the weak.

Boasting is self-sufficient.

Self-pity is self-sacrificing.

The reason self-pity does not look like pride is that it appears to be so needy.

- And what we miss is that the neediness arises from a wounded ego.
- It doesn't come from a sense of unworthiness ...
- But rather from a sense of unrecognized worthiness.
- Self-pity it is the response of unapplauded pride.

Self-pity is a dangerous, deceitful and heart-hardening sin.

- It is a spiritual deadener, a faith choker, a hope drainer ...
- A joy killer, a love suffocater and a friendship ruiner ...
- And feeds our anger and robs us of the desire to serve.

4. Having no Room

We all know the story of Jesus birth.

- How Joseph and Mary went down to Nazareth.

Luke 2:6–7 ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Have ever thought about that?

- Jesus was born in a stable, because people didn't have room for him.

It could have been said of someone's house

- This is where Jesus was born.

Psalm 10:4 "In his pride the wicked man (the Ra-sha, the godless or ungodly man) does not seek him; in all his thoughts, there is no room for God."

Dictionary definition...

A high opinion of one's own dignity, importance, merit, or superiority, whether cherished in the mind or as displayed in bearing or conduct.

This "No Room for God" can be expressed in two ways.

1. Is inwardly and silently, and the other ...
2. Outwardly and blatantly.

There is a refusal to see him for all that he is.

- And a refusal to submit to his rule and reign.

Let me start with the outward and blatantly ...

- And then I will move to the inwardly and silently.

Outward

- Why is there "No room for God?"
- Because the Great I am does not make Room for others.
- The Great I am lives for them self.
- Their dreams, their desires, their pleasures, their comforts.

As it says in **Romans 1:25** "They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator ... for they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God ..."

"They exchanged the truth about God for a lie ..."

- The truth that joy and peace and belonging and purpose ...
- Can only be found in him.

And that in his presence there is fullness of Joy

- And at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.

What was the lie that they exchanged it for?

They ... **worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator ...**

- ...
- ...

Why?

... For they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God ...”

There was no room for God.

- Why?
- Because there is only place for the one and only Great I am.

There is no room for God for they themselves are God.

- And can do whatever they want to whenever they want to.
- And not give account!

This is a in your face, No Room for God!

Now the Inwardly

What does this “No Room for God” look like inwardly.

- Inwardly and silently is obviously a lot more subtle.
- And therefore in my mind, a lot more dangerous.

It could be ...

- When it is convenient I will send for you.
 - Not at this time in my life ...
 - I need to first ...
 - But when trouble comes, you better be there.
- It could be ignoring the word and the spirit.
 - Not opening yourself up to God every day.
 - And saying stuff like ... O would have loved to ...
 - Just to much school work, just ...
- It could be Genie in a Bottle. (I am your God.)

Closing

We all need Jesus.