

Proud Hearts – Broken Hearts

Even a casual glance at Church history will reveal the special spark that has ignited fires of revival in the hearts, homes and churches of God's people: *Gospel brokenness*. Christians are struck afresh with the sense that they are Big Sinners who have a Big Saviour. And this brokenness has invariably manifested itself in a certain way—in the personal confession of sin—privately to God, and publicly to others. But, where this spirit of humility has been lacking, the Gospel has devolved into an imaginary solution, for the imaginary problem of sin, for imaginary sinners—should there be any present. Take an honest look at your heart and ask yourself, "Am I proud, or broken?"

PROUD PEOPLE... ▼

GROWTH →

▼ BROKEN PEOPLE...

Psalm 138:6 *Though the LORD is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he knows from afar.*

1 Peter 5: 5 *Clothe yourselves with humility... for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*

Psalm 51:16, 17 *You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it... The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

feel like small sinners; are busy correcting the faults and failures of others

are self-righteous and have a critical, fault-finding spirit

look down on others

have an independent, self-sufficient spirit

have to prove they are right

claim their rights; have a demanding spirit

are self-protective of their time, their rights, and their reputations

want to be served; but will serve—to earn praise

want success for themselves

are self-promoting

want to be recognized and appreciated; are sad when others receive honours

feel that "This organisation/ministry should be thankful they have me."

are unteachable; confident they know everything

are self-conscious; are always wondering, "How do I look?"

keep others at a distance, are unapproachable and overconfident

are defensive when criticized, feel they're never at fault

are quick to blame others when things go wrong

1

feel like big sinners; are busy correcting their own faults and failures

2

are compassionate and forgiving because they know how much they are forgiven

3

esteem others better than themselves

4

lean on God and other believers

5

realize that they are often wrong

6

yield up their rights; have a meek spirit

7

are self-sacrificing; give their time, yield up their rights; don't need a reputation

8

want to serve others for the glory of God

9

want to make *others* successful

10

want to see others promoted

11

have a sense of their unworthiness; are happy when they see others honoured

12

are surprised that God is willing to use them in spite of their weaknesses

13

are humble and teachable; feel they have much to learn

14

are self-forgetful; consider others better than themselves

15

risk letting others get close to them, are tender hearted and vulnerable

16

are able to receive criticism with an open, humble spirit

17

can see when they are wrong and accept responsibility for it

PROUD PEOPLE... need to look respectable, must protect their image and reputation

find it difficult to tell others about their spiritual needs (self-protective)

cover up their sin; are fearful that someone might find out they're sinful or needy

can't say, "I was wrong"; are evasive and purposely vague when confessing their sins

focus on hurts they have received; think of themselves as victims who need sympathy

are concerned about the painful consequences of sin; are sorry when they get caught—not that they have hurt God and others

always wait for the other person to come and say "I'm sorry."

compare themselves with others; are sure they are worthy of special honour

are blind to their heart's true condition

can't think of anything they need to repent of; are self-satisfied

don't think they need renewal, but are quite sure everyone else does

18

BROKEN PEOPLE... die to their hunger for reputation to promote Christ's reputation

19

are willing and able to be open about their spiritual needs (self-disclosing)

20

are willing to be exposed. Christ is their righteousness; they have nothing to lose.

21

are able to acknowledge specific sins and are quick to seek forgiveness - Jas. 5:16

22

focus on their need for repentance; see themselves as sinners in need of a Saviour

23

are grieved that they have hurt God and others; are eager to repent of and forsake their sins

24

initiate reconciliation; are the first to say, "I'm sorry, please forgive me."

25

compare themselves with Jesus; are sure they need God's mercy

26

see their Jeremiah 17:9 hearts; walk in the Light

27

realize they need a heart attitude of repentance every day of their lives

28

sense their need for continual renewal, cleansing from sin and the filling of the Holy Spirit

NOTE: We are indebted to Nancy Leigh DeMoss of Campus Crusade for Christ International who presented the essence of this list in an address to their USA National Staff Training Institute in June 1995. Revised for *Grace4Life*.

A spiritual pride & brokenness sampler

Isaiah 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."

Luke 18:9-14 Jesus' parable to some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else: Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evil-doers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get." But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. *For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*

Romans 12:1,3,10 ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual act of worship... ³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment...¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Philippians 2:1-7 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.* Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but *made himself of no reputation*, and took the nature of a servant...

BREAKOUT GROUPS: 1. Tick three items you struggle with on the left side, and if you're willing, share one of them. 2. Discuss: If you lived more on the right column, how might that impact your relationships with: a. God, b. your family, c. your fellow church members, and d. your non-Christian friends?