

The Arrogance of Man

“Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and self-ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and lie against the truth,” James 3:13-14.

Our world has more than enough “*bitter jealousy*” and “*selfish ambition*.” Examples are too numerous to require cataloging. But between the muscle of *selfish ambition* and the bone of *bitter jealousy* lies the connective tissue of *arrogance*. *Arrogance*, first and foremost for our purposes here at least, allows one to not only *believe* lies, but also *perpetrate* and *perpetuate* them. **Man’s arrogance:**

- **Leads him to conclude that the beautiful wonders of his own existence evolved by fortuitous accident.** The truth? *“For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God,” Heb.3:4.* The complex intricacies and brilliant splendors of the Universe and our place in it are the result of supremely intelligent design and the limitless supernatural power of God rather than a mere fortuitous accident. Only blind arrogance leads man to conclude anything else, cf. Rom.1:18-23 and Ps.19:1-6.
- **Allows him to believe that although previous generations were either ignorant or misguided, his own is neither of these things.** The truth? *“I know, O Lord, that a man’s way is not in himself; nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps,” Jer.10:23.* This is true of EVERY generation. The “consensus of science” once led the peoples of the world to believe it was flat, and now to believe that it resulted from the chaos of a cosmic explosion. “Peer-reviewed” medical papers once led doctors to horrific practices that tortured and killed rather than comforted and cured their patients. The arrogance of man leads him to conclude our present generation of scientists and medical professionals, advanced as they may be, incapable of such. (Lest we give undue offense, the same is likely true of other professions... but few plumbers think they know more than God, or seek to sit on His throne.)
- **Produces illusions of self-importance and self-righteousness.** The truth? No man should *“think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think with sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith,” Rom.12:3.* But arrogance, *intellectual* or otherwise, pushes man to *“think more highly of himself than he ought to think,”* and to eventually believe himself to be the arbiter of “truth,” and therefore the (self)“righteous” judge in the application of it. He is neither of these things as God *alone* is, Isa.45:21-22.
- **Compels him to believe himself persecuted when his spurious perceptions of “truth” and “reality” are challenged.** The truth? *“By no means! Rather, let God be true, though every one were a liar, as it is written, ‘That you may be justified in your words, and prevail you are judged,’” Rom.3:4 (ESV).* “Truth” and “reality” are neither *subjective* nor *personal*. They are “true” and “real” precisely because they are *objectively* so. No man has the prerogative or power to bend “truth” and “reality” to his own person. “Truth” is either *true* for him and everyone, or it ceases to be true. “Reality” is likewise either *real*, or it is a false pretense to escape the consequences of truth. Therefore, challenges to such virtual pretenses are not

“personal persecutions” as feigned, but virtuous efforts to find, illuminate, and maintain truth.

Though there are surely other conclusions and consequences derived from man’s arrogance, these are given for your careful contemplation. They are hopefully sufficient evidence to warrant *humility* over its archenemy *arrogance*...

“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”? But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.” Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you,” Jas.4:1-10.

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