

Human Pride and God's Rainbow

read

Genesis 6:3-8; Genesis 8:20-9:17

think

The story of the rainbow begins in Genesis 6, as God sees that the human beings he created are so enmeshed in pursuing sin and evil that he feels sorrow over creating humanity in the first place. This sin of God's people has its roots in pride, which was the original sin of Satan, the rebellious angel who was cast out of God's presence due to his desire to become self-sufficient, believing that he knew better than God. When Satan tempted our first parents,

Adam and Eve, in the Garden of Eden, he encouraged them to entertain and indulge their pride. He encouraged them to actually be like God.

Pride was the root and essence of the first sin, and it continues to mark the sinful and rebellious leanings of us all. When we cave into our pride, we believe that everyone can and should be able to choose to live as whoever and whatever they want to be. We believe that self rather than God is sovereign. Pride undid humanity, and it continues to undo us today. Humility and dependence on God are what the Christian is to pursue. As Jesus said, following him is only possible when we turn from pride and deny ourselves (Luke 9:23).

In the story of Noah, a righteous man who walked blamelessly with God, we see God's grief over humankind's sin. And while God chooses to cleanse the earth through a flood, he also chooses to make a covenant with humanity to never again destroy the earth through a flood. The mark of this gracious promise is the rainbow. As a sign of God's promise of grace, the rainbow should point us to exhibit a response of humble gratitude marked by obedience to God's will and way for our lives, rather than a pride-filled life where we follow our own will and way for our lives. In today's world, the image of the rainbow is used as a symbol of pride. Sadly, this steals the rainbow away from what it was originally established to symbolize. Whenever you see the rainbow. . . in the sky, on a flag, wherever. . . don't think of it as a sign of pride and human autonomy, but as a sign of humility and dependence on God who has offered up his own son to redeem us from our sin and pride.

apply

- What are some of the places and ways that you've seen pride promoted through the use of a rainbow?
- What beliefs do you hold regarding the rainbow and its meaning? Are your beliefs shaped more by the story of Noah and God's covenant sign of the rainbow, or by the culture's use of the rainbow? How have you come to your conclusions?
- What else does the Bible say about pride? Look at these verses: Proverbs 16:18; Psalm 10:4; James 4:6. Are there any Bible stories you can think of that show the consequences of human pride and autonomy?

pray

Almighty God, I humbly ask that you would keep me from falling into the sin of allowing pride to swell my heart and lead me away from following your will and your way for my life. Humble my heart before you. When I am tempted to think more highly of myself than I ought and to follow the voice of the wrecker of this world, help me to cling obediently to you. Keep me humble, living only to your glory and not my own. Amen.

by **Walt Mueller**

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