

for it hath nothing besides whereon to rest.

O man, learn to reject pride, seeing that thou hast no reason for it. Whatever thou art thou hast nothing to make thee proud. The more thou hast, the more thou art in debt to God; and thou shouldst not be proud of that which renders thee a debtor. Consider thine origin. Look back to the hole of the pit whence thou wast digged. Consider what thou wouldst have been even now, if it were not for Divine Grace. And consider that thou wilt yet be lost in hell if grace does not hold thee up. Consider that amongst the damned there are none that would have been more damned than thyself if grace had not kept thee from destruction. Let this consideration humble thee, that thou hast naught whereon to ground thy pride.

2 Again, it is a brainless thing, as well as a groundless thing; for it brings no profit with it. There is no wisdom in a self-exaltation. Other vices have some excuse; for men seem to gain by them. Avarice, pleasure, lust have some plea; but the man who is proud sells his soul cheaply. He opens wide the flood-gates of his heart, to let men see how deep is the flood within his soul. Then suddenly it floweth out, and all is gone. And all for nothing—for one puff of empty wind, one word of sweet applause—the soul is gone and not a drop is left.

In almost every other sin we gather up the ashes when the fire is gone. But here, what is left? The covetous man hath his shining gold; but what hath the proud man? He has less than he would have had without his pride and is no gainer whatever. O man, if thou wert as mighty as Gabriel, and had all his holiness, still thou wouldst be an arrant fool to be proud; for pride would sink thee from thine angel station to the rank of devils, and bring thee from the place where Lucifer son of the morning, once

dwelt, to take up thine abode with hideous fiends in perdition!

Pride exalts its head and seeks to honor itself; but it is of all things most despised. It sought to plant crowns upon its brow; and so it hath done. But its head was hot and it put an ice crown there, and it melted all away. Poor Pride has decked itself out finely sometimes. It hath put on its most gaudy apparel, and said to others: "How brilliant I appear!" But, ah! Pride, like a harlequin, dressed in thy gay colors, thou art all the more fool for that. Thou art but a gazing stock of fools less foolish than myself. Thou hast no crown as thou thinkest thou hast; nothing solid and real. All is empty and vain.

If thou, O man, desirest shame, be proud. A monarch has waded through slaughter to a throne and shut the gates of mercy on mankind to win a little glory; but when he has exalted himself and has been proud, worms have devoured him, like Herod, or have devoured his empire till it passed away, and with it his pride and glory. Pride wins no crowns. Men never honor it—not even the menial slaves of earth; for all men look down on the proud man and think him less than themselves.

3. Again, pride is the maddest thing that can exist. It feeds upon its own vitals; it will take away its own life, that with its blood it may make a purple for its shoulders; it sappeth and undermineth in its own house, that it may build its pinnacles a little higher, and then the whole structure tumbleth down. Nothing proves men so mad as pride.

For this they have given up rest, and ease, and repose, to find rank and power among men. For this they have dared to risk their hope of salvation, to leave the gentle yoke of Jesus, and go toiling wearily along the way of life, seeking to save themselves by their own works, and at last to stagger into the mire of fell despair. O man, hate pride, flee from it, abhor it, let it not dwell with thee.