

If thou wantest to have a madman in thy heart, embrace pride, for thou shalt ne'er find one more mad than he.

4. Then pride is a *Protean thing*. It changes its shape; it is all forms in the world. You may find it in any fashion you may choose. You may see it in the beggar's rags, as well as in the rich man's garment. It dwells with the rich and with the poor. The man without a shoe to his foot may be as proud as if he were riding in a chariot. Pride can be found in every rank of society; among all classes of men. Sometimes it is an Armenian, and talks about the power of the creature; then it turns Calvinist, and boasts of its fancied security—forgetful of the Maker, who alone can keep our faith alive.

Pride can profess any form of religion. It may be a Quaker, and wear no collar to its coat; it may be a Churchman, and worship God in splendid cathedrals; it may be a Dissenter, and go to the common meeting-house. It is one of the most catholic things in the world; it attends all kinds of chapels and churches. Go where you will, you will see pride. It cometh up with us to the house of God. It goeth with us to our houses. It is found on the mart and the exchange; in the streets and everywhere. Let me hint at one or two of the forms it assumes.

Sometimes pride takes the doctrinal shape. It teaches the doctrine of self-sufficiency. It tell us what man can do, and will not allow that we are lost, fallen, debased, and rained creatures, as we are. It hates divine sovereignty and rails at election. Then, if it is driven from that, it takes another form. It allows that the doctrine of free grace is true; but it does not feel it. It acknowledges that salvation is of the Lord alone; but still it prompts men to seek Heaven by their own works, even by the deeds of the law.

And when driven from that, it will

persuade me to join something with Christ in the matter of salvation; and when that is all rent up and the poor rag of our righteousness is all burned, pride will get into the Christian's heart, as well as the sinner's. It will flourish under the name of self-sufficiency, teaching the Christian that he is "rich and increased in goods, having need of nothing." It will tell him that he does not need daily grace, that past experience will do for to-morrow, that he knows enough, toils enough, prays enough.

It will make him forget that he has "not yet attained." It will not allow him to press forward to the things that are before, forgetting the things that are behind. It enters into his heart, and tempts the believer to set up an independent business for himself, and until the Lord brings about a spiritual bankruptcy pride will keep him from going to God.

Pride has ten thousand shapes. It is not always that stiff and starched gentleman that you picture it. It is a vile, creeping, insinuating thing, that will twist itself like a serpent into our hearts. It will take of humility, and prate about being dust and ashes. I have known men talk about their corruption, most marvellously pretending to be all humility, while at the same time they were the proudest wretches that could be found this side the gulf of separation.

Oh! my friends, ye cannot tell how many shapes pride will assume. Look sharp about you, or you will be deceived by it; and when you think you are entertaining angels you will find you have been receiving devils unawares.

II. Now I have to speak of the seat of pride—the heart. The true throne of pride everywhere, is the heart of man. If, my dear friends, we desire by God's grace, to put down pride, the only way is to begin with the heart. Now let me tell you a parable in the form of an Eastern story, which will set this truth in its proper light.