God's Answer to Pride

What do Elon Musk, Deshaun Watson, and Harvey Weinstein have in common? Warning: It is something dangerous that you do not want. What do you think would be God's answer to their problem? Well, the answer is coming, including Jesus' strongest answer just hours before he died, near the pinnacle of the Passion Week.

INTRO

What is in common with these 3 men? Well, let's just do a super short review of what has happened with each of them.

Elon Musk: Known for leading Tesla, SpaceX, and X, Musk was used to being in control. But when he acted as though he were more powerful or influential than the President, his departure followed quickly. Did his view of himself become too elevated?

Deshaun Watson: A gifted NFL player, Watson's career was overshadowed by multiple allegations of misconduct, leading to the NFL suspending him for multiple games and imposing very heavy fines. Did he believe his success placed him above accountability?

Harvey Weinstein: A powerful Hollywood producer, Weinstein used his influence and power to exploit others for years before being exposed and convicted. Did he think his power made him untouchable?

So, what do these 3 men have in common? A highly elevated self-image. An attitude that they were above everyone else. This feeling that "you can't control me". In simplest terms, they were more than selfish, more than arrogant; they were filled with Pride.

God warns all people, for their own sake, about pride. He told us, Proverbs 16:18 *Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling*." Then he said, "Proverbs 29:23 *A man's pride will bring him low*, …" And he wasn't finished. Isaiah 2:17 *The pride of man will be humbled And the loftiness of men will be abased; And the LORD alone will be exalted in that day*,"

Satan intended to use a temptation against Jesus. He tried to get Jesus to show off who he was, how powerful he was. Satan failed to get Jesus to think or act in a prideful way. (Matt 4)

Jesus told us in Mark 7 that pride is one of the ugly defilements that come from the human heart.

But what is God's answer to Pride.

Jesus worked with his 12 disciples to not be victims of pride.

In Mark 9, Jesus and his crew came to Capernaum. He had noted that the disciples were in a discussion while they were traveling. He asked them What were you talking about (9;33). The disciples didn't want to tell Jesus. They tried to keep quiet, as if they were all quiet, Jesus would not find out. Jesus already knew. They had been talking about which one of them was the greatest of the 12. This is the foundation of pride, that attitude of being better than everyone else.

Jesus told them how to get the highest position, to be first. The way up to the top is by "being last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35). Jesus' message was for them to get busy serving and being last in line.

Unfortunately, they didn't listen, or meditate, or ponder his words. How do we know? Because of what happened in Mark chapter 10.

As they were on their way to Jerusalem for the last time (Mark 10:17-31), Jesus encountered a rich young man and challenged him to be perfect by selling all he had, giving it to the poor, and then following Jesus. He went away sad. They kept traveling toward Jerusalem. (Mark 10.32-34). Jesus tells them again about the upcoming events when he gets to Jerusalem.

And then the pride thing showed up again.

James and John came to Jesus and asked to have the 2 most important positions in Jesus' kingdom. They thought Jesus was about to overthrow the Romans and set up a new earthly kingdom. So they wanted the highest positions. Jesus reminded them that such a position was not his to give (10.40).

But this self-elevation by James and John caused quite a stir among the 12. They were indignant toward the 2 brothers. (10.41). Jesus told all the disciples that exercising "Lordship" was not to be among them. He further explained. Mark 10:43-45 "*But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; (44) and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. (45) "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

Again, Jesus is telling them the near-opposite of what human thinking is. The "upside-down" kingdom of Jesus often works in the opposite direction of common thinking. Jesus says that if you to go up, work to go down. Be the servant, like he was. He came to serve. He came to give.

But did they get it? Did they do it? NO. How do we know they didn't get it? Because of what happened just a few hours before Jesus was arrested. It is found in John 13.

Jesus and the 12 disciples were in an upper room participating in the Passover feast. Some of them had worked much of the day to prepare this meal. They entered as guests into the upper room. There were no servants to give them the common hospitality rituals when they gathered. It was just them.

Jesus is about to demonstrate for them, and for you, God's answer to Pride.

Jesus stopped eating and socializing. He took off his outer garment, like we would take off a jacket or hoodie. Then he took a towel and tied it around his waist. He found a basin and water. Then he started showing them the lesson they had not learned yet. Not one of the 12 had served the others with that common hospitable duty – the duty reserved for slaves. So Jesus began going from one disciple to the next, doing the work of a slave. He washed their feet. Peter tried to resist, but was put back in his place rather quickly. He washed the feet of James and John, who had wanted that palace of honor. He washed the feet of Simon the Zealot, the hater of everything Roman. He washed Matthew's feet, even if he had been a tax collector for Rome. And Judas? Yes, he washed Judas' feet too, even though Jesus knew he was about to leave and start the betrayal events.

What did Jesus ask when he finished? John 13:12 *When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you*?

What answer would you have given Jesus if he had just washed your feet? I don't know what I would have answered, either.

But he continued. *John 13:13-16 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. (14) If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (15) For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. (16) Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him*.

Jesus was demonstrating God's answer to Pride. It is by being so humble that you serve everyone else like a slave.

What Paul wrote about Jesus in Philippians 2 summarizes what Jesus taught and what he demonstrated. How he was humble. It says, Philippians 2:5-11 *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, (10) so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, (11) and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*.

We asked, What is God's answer to Pride? He answered during the Passion Week. And he is still telling and showing you and me that humility – that serving of everyone else and thinking they are more important than you are, is the best answer for Pride.

Conquering pride is never easy, and many people are destroyed by it. You have to do what's unconventional. You have to THINK like Jesus. But when you do, life gets re-shaped. It becomes a matter of relationships, not individualism. It is a matter of serving, and not a matter of being served.

I genuinely hope you will work hard to destroy your own pride by following Jesus, the perfect example of everything.

If we can help you in your struggle against Pride, we would be glad to help. There are several ways. Let's start by telling you that you can call this number and leave a voice message, or better yet, send us a text to this number. Tell us what your issue is, and we will serve you with information that can change your life for the better. We have so many videos here on a variety of subjects on TimelessTalks.Net. Use the search bar on your phone or computer to find lots of videos, transcripts, and booklets. All free. If you need a good church home, we will help you find one.

Thanks for taking a few minutes with us. We look forward to visiting with you again, say, tomorrow? Until then, goodbye for now.