



Pride...

We all struggle with pride in life! The seeds of pride are planted very early in life. Who among us has never said, "That's mine!!"? We grow out of some of that childish possessiveness, but little threads of pride remain in each of us.

Isaac Watts has written a wonderful hymn that includes this verse:

*When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.*

We need to distinguish between pride, as referred to in the hymn, and positive self-image, which all parents and grandparents should encourage in their children. We want our children to feel good about themselves, because if they don't they will not step forward and accomplish all the things for which they are capable and gifted.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: "Self-trust is the essence of heroism." Long before Emerson, our creator said we were to love our neighbors as ourselves. This assumes, of course, that there will be love of self.

These are two concepts – the danger of pride and the need for positive self-image – are always in a state of tension. There needs to be balance. While we want self-love, self-confidence, and a positive self-image, yet, there is always the danger of going overboard in these areas, and the result is a kind of arrogance.

We have Peter as the perfect object lesson. He was certainly self-confident when he told his master, "*Lord I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.*" He thought he knew what he was talking about, after all he had been through a lot with the Lord.

But he overestimated his own strength and he underestimated the strength of the enemy, Satan.

We, on this side of the Resurrection, know the rest of the story. Jesus gives Peter the comfort he needed when his pride was broken and he had lost hope. That's us, as well. Jesus asks us, do you love me? And He charges us to live as we love Him, and, then, to feed his sheep.

I came across the following among my notes, that touched me and I think it will touch you:

"Ashamed of Jesus? Yes, I may, when I've no guilt to wash away. No tear to wipe, no good to crave. No fear to quell, no soul to save. Till then I boast a Savior slain. And oh, may this my glory be, that Christ is not ashamed of me!" (Author unknown)

Our Savior looks to us and reaches out to embrace us. He accepts us with our broken pride, with our tears of disappointment and discouragement. "For those tears I died," He says. Thank God, He is not ashamed of us! Amen.

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This essay was the Meditation in Stan Escott's [Watchword](#) for December 27, 2021. The content of Watchwords is written from inspiration born of Scripture, devotional readings and reflection. Each post is meant to encourage and give you a sense of peace in these troubled times. To explore Watchwords or sign up for the mailings, visit bosworth30.com/watchwords/.