

180 Life (Pt 2) → A Pride-Ride on Jealousy Highway vs. a humble walk on Jesus' Way

We're in the **180 Life** series, which explores the way Jesus looked at life, the world and people, and how His approach vastly contrasts with worldly views. This week we were looking at pride & jealousy. **Pride** is: inordinate self-esteem, conceit, an excessive appreciation of one's own worth or virtue. Pride is thinking, "I'm great, I'm #1 & you're all beneath me!" **Jealousy** is envious hostility toward a rival or someone believed to enjoy an advantage. Jealousy is thinking, "You don't deserve that, I do! I wanna take it from you because I deserve it more than you do!" The smash computer animation film, *Toy Story*, has both of these issues operating among the main characters. At first, things were going great for Woody, the toy cowboy figure that was beloved by his owner, Andy. Life was ideal & so was the relationship between the boy & his toy cowboy. But things changed dramatically when Andy received a Buzz Lightyear action figure for his birthday. To Woody, Buzz was a usurper who stole Woody's rightful place as the 'favorite toy'. Pride, jealousy and even hatred took over Woody's mind and a feud soon developed between the two figures. As the two battled for top spot & tried to get rid of each other, Woody & Buzz got separated from Andy when his family moved. Eventually, they ended up in 'toy-hell' at Sid's house. Finally, Woody & Buzz had to bury the hatchet, get rid of their selfish **pride & jealousy** & work together to get back home to Andy.

Toy Story reminded has some stunning parallels with two biggest post-creation stories in the Bible: Just like Woody & Buzz let pride & jealousy get them separated from Andy "heavenly life" and sentence to Sid's toy-hell, Adam and Eve were convinced by the devil to be **prideful & jealous** of God. Their original sin got them kicked out of Paradise, brought sin & death into humanity and separated them from God. In essence, Andy try to murder Buzz, which is like the Bible's very next story. Adam & Eve's two sons, Cain & Abel brought sacrifices to God, but only Abel's was found to be acceptable. In a fit of extreme **pride & jealousy**, Cain murdered his brother & was banished by God to be a homeless nomad.

Pride & jealousy have been operating in humanity ever since. Think about how **jealousy** leads to stealing: someone has something, but somebody else thinks, "I want that, I deserve that more than they do... I'm gonna take it!" **Pride** says: "I'm better than you, you're less than me." Therefore, I can treat you any way I see fit." This is where slavery came into practice.

20th-century history is full of **pride & jealousy**- just look at Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia & Communist China. These evil governments convinced large segments of the population to be **prideful & jealous** of other people. The Nazi's jealousy about the Jews eventually led to the murder of **6 million Jews** in the Holocaust during WWII. Communist Russian & Chinese governments **pridefully** declared, "There is no God" & became their own 'gods'. Russia & China used **pride & jealousy** as means to political power and murdered **61,911,000 & 73,237,000 people** (respectively). **Pride & jealousy** can kill. Sadly, this kind of pride & jealousy mindset is still operating in the extreme with the "identity politics" of today.

What about your corner of the world today? Are **pride & jealousy** are hurting us & those around us, and leading them into all sorts of horrible experiences (like Sid's hellhouse)? We'd have to say a resounding 'yes'- sadly they are: gossip, "clique dynamics", social media humor & bullying, fights, "cheating" in romances, sexual assaults, abuse, even murder And the **pride** of many today lead them to say, "I don't need God!" God warns us that **pride & jealousy** lead to division, blame, bullying, anger, alienation, theft, slavery, sexual crimes, strife, violence, destruction, war, even death. God's Word says, "For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind." (James 3:15-16) & "Pride leads to destruction; a proud attitude brings ruin." (Prov 16:18).

Well, thank God that Jesus didn't suffer from **pride & jealousy**- He lived a **180 Life** of humility & love. Jesus could have been filled with pride. I mean He is God, He made all things & is all-powerful. But Jesus (The King of Heaven) put down His heavenly crown, left the comfort & pleasure of heaven, and came to earth to be a sacrifice for us (Phil 2:6-7). In His **180 Life**, Jesus came to serve not to be served & give His life as a ransom for many (Mt 20:28). Jesus' **180 Life** was 100% about love: loving God & loving people (Mt 22:37-40)- He said life hinges on love: love of God first, & love of people second. Jesus didn't run in some exclusionary clique. He invite all to be beside Him. Jesus worked with the poor workers (like Peter, James & John) and the rich (former tax collector, Matthew) alike. Jesus didn't look down on anyone; He had time for anyone & everyone: children, the disabled, the penniless, the sick, the lost, the rich, the powerful. He healed the poor, middle class & the rich alike, making no exceptions. In His **180 Life**, Jesus wasn't jealous either, even when offered the kingdoms of the world by Satan. Jesus wasn't jealous of people or their worldly wealth. He said **180 Life** stuff like, "Don't store up treasures on earth, store your treasures in Heaven. -You can't serve both God & money- ...love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven." (Mt 6:19-20; 6:24; 5:44-45a). Instead of pride & jealousy, Jesus lived a **180 life** of humility & love right up until the end. Even in His moments of His life, Jesus lived the **180 Life**. After being nail to the brutal Roman cross, Jesus still was humble, loving & forgiving (Lk 23:34- "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." & Lk 23:43- "I assure you, today you will be with Me in paradise.")

So I gotta ask you: Are you happy with how pride & jealousy are ruining people? Or do you want the **180 Life** of Jesus? So it all starts right here in the human brain & the human heart. Jesus' **180 Life** is summed up in James 3:13-14,17- *If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from God's wisdom ...the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.* Resolve to live the **180 Life** of Jesus: put God & people ahead of yourself. Don't let jealousy grow in your heart, but be thankful & satisfied with what God has given you. Do the same good that Jesus did by humbly loving & serving others. Live Jesus' Way of Life -the **180 Life** - you will never regret it and you'll see the blessings flow! (Phil 2:4-8)

BIBLE VERSES

James 3:15-16 For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind.

Prov 16:18 Pride leads to destruction; a proud attitude brings ruin.

Mt 20:28 [Jesus] The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

James 3:13-14,17- If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from God's wisdom [which is] pure, peace loving, gentle at all times, willing to yield to others [,] full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds [,] shows no favoritism and is always sincere.

Phil 2:4-8 Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do we have any *Toy Story* movie fans here tonight? If so, what your favorite character, scene or *Toy Story* movie?
2. Pride & jealousy consumed Woody when Buzz came. What are some areas of life where pride & jealousy affect young people?
3. Read James 3:15-16 & Prov 16:18. Pride & jealousy can have terrible results. Where can pride & jealousy lead in life today?
4. Read Mt 20:28. Jesus lived the **180 Life** that was free from pride & jealousy. How did He show perfect humility & love?
5. Jesus made many '**180 Life**' statements about issues that often involve pride & jealousy. Let's read them & discuss how following Jesus' **180 Life** helps us to overcome our own pride & jealousy issues. (Read/discuss the following statements of Jesus below)
 - a. "Love God with all you heart, soul, mind & strength, and love your neighbor as yourself." Mt 22:37-40
 - b. "Don't store up treasures on earth, store your treasures in Heaven. You can't serve both God & money." Mt 6:19-20; 24
 - c. "Don't take revenge on someone who wrongs you. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, let him slap your left cheek too." Mt 5:39
 - d. "Love your enemies & pray for those who persecute you! Then you'll be acting as true children of God." Mt 5:44-5
 - e. "Do not judge others & you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven." Lk 6:37

6. Read James 3:13-14; 17 & Phil 2:4-8. We all could be more humble & loving like Jesus. What areas in your life are affected by your own pride or jealousy? What needs to change in you so that you can live Jesus' **180 Life** more fully?

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear Jesus, You showed us the perfect way to live a life of humility & love free from the chains of pride & jealousy. Help us to recognize areas of pride or jealousy in our lives. Please take them away & replace them with Your love. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.