Published on *FCA Resources* (https://fcaresources.com)

Ego Trip

Ready:

“So the last will be first, and the first last.” - Matthew 20:16

Set

Our sports culture does not teach us humility. Social media alone provides a variety of ways for us to boast about our accomplishments, share all we are doing and express all we are thinking. Not to say we can’t share good news or great ways in which God is working in our lives and sports, but there’s a difference between giving God glory and giving it to ourselves.

Considering our world’s self-glorification, let’s take a look at a few ways in which our egos can keep us from God’s best.

1. Egos push people away. Think back to the last time you encountered an athlete who was full of themselves. You probably didn’t want to be in their presence for very long, right? In Proverbs 27:2 we are instructed to "let another praise you, and not your own mouth—a stranger, and not your own lips." Boasting about our accomplishments won’t draw others to Christ or to us. We need to be secure in our identity in Him and know we are valuable to God with or without our achievements. If anything needs to be said, others can say it.

2. Egos hurt people. As Christians, we want people to be drawn to us so that we can share God’s love with them, but a giant ego gets in the way. Sometimes successful people think they are better than others and, as a result, they start to speak and act in ways that reflect that belief. They carry a judgmental attitude, use sarcastic comments and act selfishly, which damages their relationships and inflicts pain. Romans 12:3 (NIV) says, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.” As Christians, we need to remember that the gift we have been given is salvation, not perfection.

3. Egos discourage others. When people only hear about our victories they may mistakenly think they lack what it takes to be successful because they aren’t you. But 2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV) says, “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” As Christians we can share the struggles, limitations and obstacles we’ve had to overcome and let it reassure others that they can overcome as well.

4. Egos make people unteachable. There is nothing wrong with being knowledgeable about something, but when we think we know it all we refuse to listen to others. Proverbs 4:5-7 (NIV) says, “Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them…The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding." As

Christians we should be cautious about thinking that someone is unable to teach us because of social status, age, education, position, etc. There is always more to learn in life, and God can use anyone to teach us.

5. Egos want the spotlight. Sometimes when we see people doing what we do or aspire to we critique them. Matthew 5:16 (NIV) says, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” As Christians we need to recognize the light in others and encourage others to shine as God created them to.

6. Egos take the focus off of God. People often believe they are in control of their wealth, jobs, relationships, goals, etc. First Corinthians 1:31 (NIV) states, “Therefore, as it is written: ‘Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.’” As Christians, we are to recognize and point others to the fact that God alone deserves the glory. Apart from Him, we can do nothing (John 15:5).

If you are battling an ego, be encouraged. This means you recognize how important humility is in your walk with the Lord. The more we work with the Holy Spirit, the more humility will become part of our character. We can make progress! Prayer, meditation on God's Word, speaking Scripture out loud and worship are effective keys to victory, and you can also release your faith by encouraging others, offering genuine compliments, expressing gratitude, recognizing God's role in your success and having a grateful attitude. Do this and people will be drawn to you. Not because of your success but because of who you are in the midst of it.

Go

1. How would you honestly say that you manage your achievements?
2. Which of these areas of ego trouble do you struggle with most?
3. What would it look like for you to make Christ the Lord over that area?
4. Name three people you can thank and encourage today, and then do it.

Workout

2 Chronicles 7:14, Romans 12:16

Bible Reference:
Matthew 20:16
2 Chronicles 7:14
Romans 12:3
2 Corinthians 12:9
Proverbs 4:5
Matthew 5:16
John 15:5

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