

## **Pride Bombs**

### **Ready:**

“Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.” – Proverbs 27:2

### **Set**

I did it again. I can't believe I haven't learned yet. I should know better, but it's so hard not to do it. Everyone does it. I guess it's considered just part of life, but I refuse to cave in and be like everyone else.

While I was talking on the phone the other day with one of my accountability partners, I got fired up because we were having an awesome conversation. For some strange reason, I felt the need to slip in a quick, small, innocent sentence. Or so I thought. We were discussing the response we received from a fellow FCA staff member, and I quickly inserted, “Yeah, and he is a GOOD friend of mine.”

I wanted to make sure my accountability partner knew of my significant relationship with this staff member. I wasn't letting him know that I was friends with him; I was implying that things worked out because of my tight relationship with him. I was making myself look good, bragging. I had dropped a Pride Bomb!

As soon as I said it, my accountability partner responded, “Why did you have to say that?” I didn't respond. He then said, “Dan, if you need encouragement, just let me know, and I will give it to you.” Ouch.

His accountability stung. But he was absolutely right! Not only was I praising myself, I was also fishing for praise. I wanted him to think better of me. My small, “innocent” comment screamed, “Look at me! I'm important! I'm significant!”

T.S. Elliot was right when he wrote, “Most of the trouble in the world is caused by people wanting to be important.”

Not only did my comment turn the spotlight on me, but it also removed God from the situation. I'd blown up a great, God-centered conversation with a Pride Bomb. Pride Bombs are unnecessary statements we make that puff ourselves up. Others can hear them go off a mile away, and they produce the most awful, selfish odor. They reek of self-glorification.

In the world of sports, unfortunately, they have become a natural part of the language. Athletes and coaches often aren't even aware that they do it, and, even if they are, they brag about it. Why do we have such a need to brag? Do we really want people to think we have a big head or are on an ego trip? Do we want to be tagged as cocky, full of self and puffed up?

Why is it so hard for us to recognize it in ourselves when others can spot it a mile away? Do we feel that we need to prove something to someone? Will others like us more if they know how important we are? Is there something missing in our lives that we desire others to fill?

Maybe the reason is answered by the Spanish proverb, "Tell me what you brag about, and I'll tell you what you lack." What's really crazy is that while we do this so that others will like us more, it only makes them want to avoid us. That is messed up. As Christians, God has called us to a higher standard. He does not want us to go with the flow. He wants us to be humble and to speak with words of grace and thankfulness. Our conversations should puff others up. We should look for opportunities to slip in encouragement.

I think it's safe to say that God wants us to drop Encouragement Bombs instead of Pride Bombs. The two bombs are much alike with the exception of one small distinction: the replacement of the word "I" with the word "you." Encouragement Bombs say, "You are great." Pride Bombs say, "I am great." It's that simple. Instead of letting our comments drip with self-exhortation, we should drench them in the edification and blessing of others. I can name several people in my life that I actively seek out because of the encouragement they offer. They are gifted to build others up with authentic, genuine Encouragement Bombs. When they go off, the effect is love, joy, compassion, blessing and motivation.

If we are truly walking in accordance with the will of God, we will drop Encouragement Bombs everywhere we go, and He will use them to bring healing and restoration. May we all be committed to bringing change to our teams, homes, schools or offices through priceless bombs of encouragement. I firmly believe that everyone is under-encouraged, so there is a lot of work to be done.

Today, will you create wreckage with a Pride Bomb or fill another up with an Encouragement Bomb? The choice is yours.

## **Go**

1. This past week, did you drop more Pride Bombs or Encouragement Bombs?
2. Reflect on these conversations and recount the times you dropped Pride Bombs. Ask the Lord to reveal why you felt the need to do it and ask for His forgiveness.
3. In your own circle, who drops the worst Pride Bombs?
4. On the flipside, who drops the best Encouragement Bombs? What makes this person different?
5. Ask the Lord to help you identify when you drop Pride Bombs, then pray to become the world-record holder of the most Encouragement Bombs dropped in a single day!

## **Workout**

- Proverbs 25:27
- 2 Corinthians 10:12, 18
- 2 Corinthians 12:11

## **Overtime**

“Lord God in Heaven, please forgive me for dropping Pride Bombs. They do not honor You or others. I know You want me to speak blessings, encouragement and love. Today, I have the opportunity to unleash favor upon others. Free up my tongue and unlock my heart, Lord. Let it flow so that others can be touched and impacted. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.”



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