Taking Stock of the Pride in My Life, by Kim Winters

I developed the following test by putting the content found on pages 192-206 in The Christian Directory by Richard Baxter, (published by Soli Deo Gloria Publications in Morgan, PA 15064, (412) 221-1901, and used with permission of Dr. Don Kistler), into yes/no question form. The purpose of the test is to identify hidden pride in order to begin the process of putting pride to death in your life.

The Puritan author, Richard Baxter says…
“Pride, being reputed the great sin of the devil, by which he fell, is, in the name and general notion of it, infamous and odious with almost all; but the nature of it is so much unknown, and the sin so undiscerned by the most, that it is commonly cherished while it is commonly spoken against.”

This test is an attempt to rectify this great error.

About the test
The test is pretty simple, but if taken too quickly will fail to hit the mark. I recommend you only answer a few questions at a time, and when a certain question casts some light on pride in your heart, I recommend you stop right there, and write a bit beneath that particular question. You may want to have a blank journal or some blank sheets of paper handy as you ask and answer each question. For example…

How to Take Notes After Each Question
22. Do I enjoy being needed to the extent that I desire people to depend on me a great deal?
Yes (and since this question is in the “yes” section, which means a “yes” could be a sign of pride, get out your notebook paper and write two things: your initial response, and what you plan to do about what you see.) Your notes might look like what I’ve written below for this question…

My Response:
I don’t know why I do this, but I do find that I spend a lot of time running myself ragged trying to meet the needs of everyone. Even though I complain that no one can live without me, I can see that I am actually making this a reality by always “being there” or always “being the one” before seeking the Lord and making sure I am indeed called to meet certain needs, etc. I don’t know if I actually “enjoy” this or if I just feel that I don’t have any other choices now that I’ve set everyone’s expectations of me so high.

What I want to do differently:
Today I hope to go to the Lord and ask Him to show me whether or not I am finding self worth in the dependence of others. I want Him to help me to find my self worth in Him, not in being needed. I want to be careful to not be “god” in other people’s lives. I want to be okay with disappointing my friends and family if they are putting me on their “god shelf.” I don’t want to swing to the other extreme either and put myself first, but I think what I am doing now is not healthy for me or them.

About the Two Sections
The first section is called the “yes” section. That means that if you answer “yes” to those questions, there MIGHT be pride in that area of your life. Of course this is between you and the Lord to discern. The test acts only as a flashlight, you and Jesus must determine what you’ve found and what to do with it.

The second section is called the “no” section. That means if you answer “no” to those questions, there MIGHT be pride in that area of your life. Again, you might have good reasons for answering yes and no that have nothing to do with pride. Do your best to seek the Lord and His Word (not your pride!) for confirmation of Truth.
**What Do I Do With the Pride that I Find?**

My next article (Lord willing) is going to be a condensed version of Baxter’s directives against pride, but identifying your specific areas of pride is the first step. Once you’ve gone through the entire test, I would love to hear from you via e-mail as to whether or not this was helpful at all. You can email me at kimw@klink.net. Once I get enough emails I’ll know whether or not there is a need for the follow-up article. If you are really interested in doing this, keep your notes from this test so that you can use them in conjunction with the next article on Baxter’s Directives against pride. Please also e-mail me if you have need for clarification on any of the questions below. For those of you in high school & college, these are great questions to bring to the dining hall (or wherever!) and to discuss with friends. I think you’ll be surprised at how much pride you find out there as well as in your own life, but don’t be dismayed – the Lord can heal! Remember that any temptation to be overwhelmed and throw in the towel (i.e. well, I’m just so proud I can’t even finish this stupid test and so I’m going to give up!) is not coming from the Holy Spirit. When you start to feel as though you are drowning in pride, back off a bit. That’s why I suggest you take it only a few questions at a time. Each question is so packed, even one will give you plenty to think and pray about for a while.

**Final Suggestions before you start…**

Keep your sense of humor and your Bible close by, and remember that Jesus loves you. Don’t try to take the test without Him – you’ll be too tempted to run away at your first discovery! Let me know what you think and may the Lord bless you as you seek to better serve and glorify Him.

In Christ,
Miss Kim

**The “Yes” section – “Yes” answers MIGHT indicate pride.**

1. Do I have a will to be higher than God wants me to be?
2. Do I overvalue myself or esteem myself as better than I actually am?
3. Do I desire that others speak of me and think of me as greater than I actually am?
4. Do I restrain myself from boasting externally, but continue to boast internally?
5. Do I hold to doctrines that humble myself externally, but internally have not humbled myself?
6. Do I choose to dress in the most wealthy way possible for me?
7. Is pride the first sin I notice in another person?
8. Do I spend much time glorying in my supposed greatness?
9. If things are well with me, am I likely to feel as though everything in the world is well?
10. If things are poor with me, am I likely to feel as though everything in the world is poor?
11. Is it really important to me that people love me?
12. Do I rely on myself (in reality) more than I rely on God?
13. Do I return thanks to myself when things go well with me?
14. Do I secretly think I could do things more justly than God?
15. Do I secretly think I could have ordered things better for myself, my friends, my family, etc.?
16. Do I have a desire to “mend” God’s Word?
17. Do I sometimes think God is in some way wrong for sending so many people to hell?
18. Do I take the commands of God as light and ordinary things?
19. If I am in power, do I expect my will to be obeyed before the will of God is obeyed?
20. If I am in power, do I expect my subjects to displease God rather than displease me?
21. Am I more displeased with people who contradict my authority than I am with people who contradict God’s authority?
22. Do I enjoy being needed to the extent that I desire people to depend on me a great deal?
23. Do I want to be much feared?
24. Is it important to me to be thanked?
25. Do I feel more secure when people are beholden to me?
26. Do I secretly (or outwardly) think my reasoning ability is above all others (perhaps even God?)?
27. Do I take offense when a person goes to someone else for counsel when they could have come to me?
28. Do I love people better simply because they take my advice?
29. Is it more important to me that someone take my advice than that they take the time to search the Word?
30. When I know I am in error, do I stick to it to save face, even if it might trip others up?
31. Am I driven to do and say things (or not do and say things) because of the fear of what others will say about me?
32. Do I desire to know more than God has revealed in His Word? Do I think this is due me?
33. Do I desire God’s independency for myself, and to be independent of all others, perhaps even God?
34. Do I secretly believe that all this holiness and discipline is not really necessary?
35. Do I live in such a way that it is clear I do not think frequent and fervent prayer is a necessity?
36. Am I fearless of temptations and confident of my own ability to resist them?
37. Am I convinced of the goodness of my own heart?
38. Do I find myself murmuring and complaining?
39. Do I feel ashamed to serve the Lord at times and in places where it is not esteemed?
40. When choosing between my honor among people, and serving God, do I choose my honor?
41. Do I spend more time thinking about how I come across to others, than how I come across to God?
42. Do I secretly hate the most serious and judicious Christians?
43. Am I quick to take a public position or teaching position because I believe I am worthy of it?
44. Do I ask people for information on how other people think and/or speak about me?
45. When I pray or preach, am I fishing for the love of the people who hear me?
46. Do I feel the most hurt and angered by people who confront what they believe to be my sin?
47. Am I impatient with people who confront me and others?
48. Is it very difficult to specifically confess my sins to another person? Do I tend to generalize my sin when confessing to another?
49. If I am not given a dominion in the church, am I tempted to separate from it?
50. Do I sometimes aggravate the imperfections of other Christians in order to make myself look/feel better about my own walk?
51. Do I feel most comfortable practicing disciplines that prove my control over the flesh, and look down on others for not being able to practice such disciplines?
52. Am I quick to complain against those in authority over me?
53. Do I sometimes aggravate the imperfections of those in authority over me in order to justify my refusal to submit to their authority as God has ordered?
54. Do my thoughts center on myself for much of the day?
55. When I look at the work of my superiors, am I tempted to think first how I could have done it better?
56. Do I feel fit to contradict even the ablest teacher and/or preacher?
57. Do I deride people who have spent years studying God’s Word because I secretly don’t want to put the work in to do that?
58. Do I think of the sin of others before I lament my own sin(s)?
59. Am I more ready to teach my masters than to learn from them?
60. Is it hard to please me because I have very high expectations of what is due me from men and from God?
61. Am I drawn to people who openly flatter me?
62. When someone forgets to notice me, am I greatly offended?
63. Do I think much over every wrong done to me, and over every wrong said of me?
64. Is it hard for me to forget wrongs done to me, even if the person asks and is given forgiveness?
65. Am I troubled and hurt when the good that I have done is forgotten by others?
66. Do I keep a register of the good I do, whether it be great or small?
67. Do I imagine that I am as much at the center of other people’s thoughts as I am of my own?
68. Do I think much over what I said, how I looked, how something was received, etc.?
69. When I am given power, do I tend to domineer and look down upon those I rule?
70. When someone contradicts me in my speech, (whether they are right or wrong) does it make me extremely angry?
71. Am I turbulent (not at peace) when I clearly share my will, and then my will is not granted?
72. Have I been known to stir up strife among believers?
73. Am I an open or a secret boaster?
74. Is my biggest fear to be unknown? Would I rather be dead than be unknown?
75. Do I love honorable names and titles, and do I want them for myself?
76. If I do not think over highly of myself, do I think over lowly of myself?
77. When I must confront, do I do it in such a way as to be most concerned that the person I am confronting still likes me afterward, or am I more concerned about what God thinks?
78. Am I more desirous to speak than to hear?
79. Do I feel others have need of my instruction, and therefore feel it necessary to talk much?
80. Would I rather starve than ask for food from another Christian?
81. Am I nervous when another wants to help me for fear I will be beholden to him/her?
82. Do I feel a need to be as well dressed as my superiors?
83. Am I quick to feel ashamed if my apparel looks less worthy than others in my same station?
84. When I am wronged, do I look for great submission and sorrow before I forgive?
85. Am I prone to revenge?
86. Do I have a strong desire for there to be an honorable memorial of my name when I am dead?
87. Do I sometimes torment myself as I attempt to set my mind on the thoughts of other men as they pertain to me? (Am I tormented when I should be sleeping, at peace, etc.?)
88. Do I feel some duties are beneath me, or that there are some acts of service I just could never do?
89. Do I refuse to teach or speak in public for fear of not being received as brilliant?
90. Do I refuse to teach or speak in public for fear of embarrassing myself?
91. Do I utilize dysfunctional methods of controlling what others think of me and say about me?

The “No” section – “No” answers MIGHT indicate pride.

1. Does the glory of God cause me to be aware of my vileness?
2. Does God’s greatness cause me to want to glorify Him?
3. Do I value God beyond whether or not he makes me happy?
4. Do I prefer God’s desires before my own?
5. Do I love God more than I love myself?
6. Is God my chief end?
7. Do I care more that the Lord approve of and love me than that others approve of and love me?
8. Does it bother me when I believe someone loves me more than they love the Lord?
9. When I thank God, does it come from my heart? (have I ever cried giving thanks at meals?)
10. Am I aware of the narrowness and the darkness of my soul in it’s own ability to figure things out?
11. Do I consider myself unfit to censure God?
12. Have I ever trembled at God’s Word?
13. If I am in power, do I encourage my subjects to inquire of God before obeying my commands?
14. Do I delight in people who are more afraid of displeasing God than they are of displeasing me?
15. If I have been used of God to do something noteworthy, am I most concerned that onlookers praise God?
16. Do I make it a habit of being a secret giver each day? And in so doing, am I being careful to be secret?
17. When people ascribe to me that which I know is above and beyond my due, do I correct them?
18. Am I content that good is done, even when I have not had the doing of it?
19. Am I content with my degree or station in life, even if it be low?
20. Is it easy for me to see the greatness of my sin?
21. Do I really believe I deserved hell before I received Christ as Lord and Savior?
22. Do I really believe others (those without Christ), deserve hell as God says?
23. Do I have a constant sense of how close I came to hell, and how much I need a Savior?
24. Am I aware of the wickedness of my own heart?
25. Is prayer like breath to me?
26. When I receive an affliction, am I patient in it?
27. When the affliction is not removed, am I quiet in it?
28. Is my biggest concern whether or not God is pleased with me, no matter what the response of others is?
29. Do I spend any time in humble confession, lamentation for sin, and earnest prayer for grace and pardon?
30. When someone comes to confront me, is my first thought that this might be true?
31. When someone confronts me, is my first response to go humbly to the Lord and ask Him about what was said and whether or not it is true?
32. When I am not noticed in the church, or when I am not given any kind of dominion or leadership, even in areas I am gifted in, am I content to continue doing good there?
33. Do I believe it is easier to obey than to govern?
34. Do I willingly pay honor and tribute to those in authority over me because I pity them in all their busyness and inability to have much quiet moments with the Savior?
35. Do I think the best of someone until the worst is proven?
36. Am I likely to find something worth my time and energy in every person I meet each day?
37. Do I forget to think about myself because I am so consumed with thinking on the Lord and how I might better care for His children?
38. Am I well acquainted with how much I do not know?
39. Am I comfortable sharing my true weaknesses with anyone who will listen, because when I am weak, Christ is strong?
40. Am I comfortable admitting the limitations of my own brain?
41. Am I comfortable in admitting the many difficulties in every controversy?
42. Am I careful to let another man praise me, and not my own mouth?
43. Do I emotionally grieve over divisions among Christians?
44. Do I wait to confront men until I have evidence to prove it and a call to meddle with them?
45. Do I love a plain reprove, even if he/she also reproves me?
46. Am I more ready to believe that I am faulty than that I am innocent?
47. Am I heartily thankful for a just and necessary reproof?
48. Am I committed to loving every person in my life, even when they disappoint me and/or wrong me?
49. Am I willing to be thought a fool by every person in my life, if it be most to the glory of God?
50. Do I consider it a blessing to be rejected by others because of Jesus?
51. Do I truly grieve when others reject Christ in me?
52. Do I feel blessed when the Lord gives me the lowest task, or the meanest duty or the filthiest job?
53. Am I committed to loving and serving and following Christ, even if His plan for me includes me being totally embarrassed in front of a large group of people?
54. Will I still follow Christ if following Him means being rejected by those I esteem most?
55. Am I willing to be a disappointment in a person’s life who has depended on me more than they have depended on God?
I pray this test has been even a little helpful in better understanding your heart. Email me at kimw@klink.net