

FULLY ALIVE | Small Group Guide

Week 2: Pride – The Glittering Image

Key idea: Pride is not always loud arrogance; it is the compulsion to project a curated self rather than live in honest dependence on God and others. The countermove is not mere humility (which can itself be performed) but fidelity: bringing the real self into the light.

Passages

Philippians 2:1-8 – the mind of Christ, emptied and secure

Luke 18:9-14 – the Pharisee and the tax collector

Psalms 131 – stilled and quieted soul

Discussion

1. Understanding pride

The sermon defined pride as placing yourself at the centre – everyone else a bit-part in your drama. It can look like arrogance, but also like insecurity or false humility. Where do you recognise yourself in that?

Think of a time you performed a version of yourself for an audience: a job interview, a first impression, a moment on social media. What were you protecting?

2. The glittering image

Charles Ashworth in *Glittering Images* was so invested in his public persona that he couldn't see his true self. What does your "glittering image" look like? What does it cost you?

3. Identity as the ground of freedom (Philippians 2:1-8)

Paul says: because you are already loved, you no longer need to defend yourself. How might a more settled sense of your worth in God change how you show up with people?

4. Spiritual pride (Luke 18:9-14)

"Repentant sinners need to repent even of some dimensions of their repentance – such as their pride in the humility that drove them to their knees." (Plantinga)

Are there ways your faith has been quietly recruited into the service of your image?

5. Fidelity and confession

The sermon named fidelity—not humility—as the deeper counter-virtue to pride: being true to God, to others, and to your own reality. Confession is that act made concrete.

Who in your life sees the real you? What would it take to let someone in a little further?

Reflection Question

Where might you still, even subtly, be clutching for self-worth, and what would it mean to lay it down?

Close in Prayer

Use the prayer from the sermon, or pray freely in response to what surfaced in discussion:

Healer, reveal the subtle ways pride lives in our thinking, even in the practice of our faith. Grant us the freedom of self-forgetfulness. Amen.