

you had before the time of your birth. But anything after that, indeed the birth itself, is a gift from God. You may claim only those virtues in you that are there independently of your mind, for your mind was bestowed on you by God. And you may claim only those victories you achieved independently of the body, for the body too is not yours but a work of God.

When the demon of pride gets a foothold for himself among his own servants, he appears to them, in sleep or awake, and he looks like a holy angel or martyr and he hints at mysteries to be revealed or spiritual gifts to be granted, that the wretches may be deceived and driven utterly out of their minds.

Pride makes us forget our sins, for the remembrance of them leads to humility.

Pride is utter poverty of soul disguised as riches, imaginary light where in fact there is darkness. This abominable vice not only stops our progress but even tosses us down from the heights we have reached.

The proud man is a pomegranate, rotten within, while outwardly radiant.

A proud Christian needs no demon. He has turned into one, an enemy to himself.

LOOKING AHEAD

Tuesday, March 24	6:30pm Vigil
Wednesday, March 25:	9:30am Liturgy
Friday, March 27:	9:00am 9th Hour and Liturgy of PG
Saturday, March 28:	9:30am Liturgy 6:30pm Vespers
Sunday, March 29:	9:30am Liturgy 5pm Vespers at St. Paul (Brier)

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ST. SPIRIDON ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

400 Yale Ave., Seattle, WA 98109



WEEKLY PUBLICATION

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Tone 8. St. John Climacus (of *The Ladder*). Hieromartyr Basil of Ancyra (362-363). Martyr Drosida, daughter of Emperor Trajan (1st-2nd c.). Ven. Isaac, Founder of the Dalmatian Monastery at Constantinople (4th c.). Monk Martyr Euthymius of Prodromou (Mt. Athos—1814).

ON PRIDE (STEP 23)

Pride is a denial of God, an invention of the devil, contempt for men. It is the mother of condemnation, the offspring of praise, a sign of barrenness. It is a flight from God's help, the precursor of madness, the cause of downfall. It is the cause of satanic possession, the source of anger, the gateway of hypocrisy. It is the fortress of demons, the guardian of sins, the source of hardheartedness. It is the denial of compassion, a bitter Pharisee, a cruel judge. It is the foe of God. It is the root of blasphemy.

Pride begins where vainglory leaves off. Its midpoint comes with the humiliation of our neighbor, the shameless parading of our achievements, complacency, and unwillingness to be found out. It ends with the



spurning of God's help, the exalting of one's own efforts and a devilish disposition.

Pride takes up residence wherever we have lapsed, for a

lapse is in fact an indication of pride. And an admirable man said once to me, "Think of a dozen shameful passions. Love one of them, I mean pride, and it will take up the space of all the other eleven."

A proud Christian argues bitterly with others. The humble Christian is loath to contradict them.

The cypress tree does not bend to the ground to walk, nor does the haughty Christian bend down in order to gain obedience.

The proud man wants to be in charge of things. He would feel lost otherwise.

For the proud correction is a fall, a thorn (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7) is a devil, and abandonment by God is madness. Whereas in the first two instances there are human cures available, this last cannot be healed by man.

To reject criticism is to show pride, while to accept it is to show oneself free of this fetter.

Pride and nothing else caused an angel to fall from heaven. And so one may reasonably ask whether one may reach heaven

by humility alone without the help of any other virtue.

Pride loses the profits of all hard work and sweat. They cried out, but there was none to save them, because they cried out with pride. They cried out to God, but He paid no heed since they were not really trying to root out the faults against which they were praying.

An elder, very experienced in these matters, once spiritually admonished a proud brother who said in his blindness, "Forgive me, father, but I am not proud." "My son," said the wise old man, "what better proof of your pride could you have given than to claim that you were not proud?"

A help to the proud is submissiveness, a tougher and humbler way of life, and the reading of the supernatural feats of the Fathers. Even then there will perhaps be little hope of salvation for those who suffer from this disease.

While it is disgraceful to be puffed up over the adornments of others, it is sheer lunacy to imagine that one has deserved the gifts of God. You may be proud only of the achievements

Tone 8 Troparion *(Resurrection)*

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One!
Thou didst accept the three day burial
to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to thee!

Tone 1 Troparion *(for St John Climacus)*

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body,
thou wast a wonderworker, O our God-bearing
Father John.
Thou didst receive heavenly gifts through fasting,
vigil, and prayer,
healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to thee
by faith.
Glory to Him Who gave thee strength!
Glory to Him Who granted you a ^crown!//
Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

Tone 4 Kontakion *(for St John Climacus)*

The Lord truly set thee on the heights of abstinence,
to be a guiding star, showing the way to the
universe,//
O our father and teacher John.