

When Pride Gets in the Way

Antonio Salieri, an ambitious, albeit mediocre 18th-century composer, offers this prayer in the popular film on Mozart's life, *Amadeus*:

Lord, make me a great composer. Let me celebrate Your glory through music. And be celebrated myself. Make me famous through the world, dear God, make me immortal. After I die, let people speak my name forever with love for what I wrote. In return I will give You my chastity, my industry, my deep humility, my life.



Salieri (1750 – 1825) was a pivotal figure in the development of late 18th-century opera. He wrote operas in three languages, and helped to develop and shape many of the features of operatic compositional vocabulary. His music was a powerful influence on contemporary composers.

It is said that when it became obvious to the superficially pious Salieri that he would never be as gifted as the roguish Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, he became insanely jealous of Mozart and plotted to destroy him. Others claim that such assertions were only rumors and that Salieri and Mozart were, in reality, at least respectful peers.

Salieri also turned from God. As far as Salieri was concerned, God had betrayed him. He had failed to answer his prayer. In a very powerful scene in the movie, he takes a crucifix from the wall of his room and places it in the fire.

Even when a person seems to be successful in doing great things for God, he may find that he feels unfulfilled. When that happens, pride – the foolishly and irrationally corrupt sense of one's personal value, status or accomplishments – is generally at work.

The person desires God to use him in a special way, for his own glory, without realizing that true fulfillment lies in allowing God to use us in any way He desires for His glory.

Most of the shadows of this life are caused by standing in one's own sunshine.

A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor (Proverbs 29:23 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter