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| **The Song: "The Monster" -- Eminem featuring Rihanna****THE MONSTER WITHIN** |

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| The Gospel | MATTHEW 23:29-33 |

**Jesus said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life and what you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear. For life is more than food and the body more than clothing. Notice the ravens: they do not sow or reap; they have neither storehouse nor barn, yet God feeds them. How much more important are you than birds!"** |
| ***Gospelthink: My words to the Pharisee are spoken with real vigor because they should have been so much more than they were.*Am I really trying to do the best that I can in life?** |
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***"I wanted the fame, wanted to receive attention. Fame made me a balloon 'cause my ego inflated. I'm beginning to lose sleep, but I'm actually weirder than you think 'cause I'm friends with the monster that’s under my bed, get along with the voices of my head. You’re trying to save me, stop holding your breath; and you think I’m crazy. I need an interventionist to intervene between me and this monster and save me from myself and all this conflict 'cause the very thing that I love's killing me and I can't conquer it."***  |
| **When studied as a whole, Eminem and Rihanna's song "The Monster" is a statement of a person of some fame dealing with the pride that it has caused. He calls that pride "the monster," and since he has made friends with it, it seems that he will never be able to recognize the evil it causes--"I can't conquer it," the person sings. It is what he wants, and so he tells his friend to not even try to help him.The sin of the Pharisees as Jesus spoke to them in his time can probably be described as pretending to be what they were not. They were not the religious leaders that they should have been. Once they understood what Jesus was saying, their sin became a sin of pride--they would not think that they were wrong. Their pride arose from their refusal to study what they had become and how they hurt others in the process. They had achieved a certain amount of fame, and rather than suffer the embarrassment of losing it, they would not change.The person in the song knew that he was feeling too proud about what he had achieved. He had no doubt felt the criticism of his conscience speaking to him--he knew that he needed "intervention" as he called it, but he really did not want to let go of the fame. It felt too good, and so he had made friends with his sin, his monster.****The English word "monster" is a good word to describe the sin of pride. Without expressing it in words because it sounds too arrogant, proud people tend to act as though they are more than anyone else, just a little bit better than others, not having the same faults as someone else. They look down on others, and thank God that they are not like the rest of men and women who do not measure up to their superiority (see Luke 18:11).Christian people must face the possibility of the monster of pride in the way they conduct themselves. Facing that pride Is one of the secrets of living well.**   |
| ***PRAYER*****Good and gracious God, we have a tendency to be proud, thinking that we are better than others and acting that way. Your Son dealt with the pride of others during his lifetime. Give us the grace to learn from his words and actions. Be with us, we pray.**  |
| **+++++****GUIDE FOR CLASSROOM PRESENTATION AND PERSONAL ENRICHMENT** **Theme: It is very difficult to conquer the pride that has dominated our lives.****DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**1. In the Gospel, Jesus tells the religious leaders that they are just like their ancestors who murdered the prophets. In our day, what "prophets" have been murdered? Why?2. Realistically, if you had lived in Jesus' day and had the office of a religious leader, do you think that you would have behaved as the religious leaders did? Yes or no and why?3. In general, do you think that the religious leaders of our day--the priests and ministers--live up to their calling? Yes or no and why?4. Text analysis: "I get along with the voices of my head." What is the meaning of the sentence?5. Text analysis: "Save me from myself." What is the meaning of the phrase?6. Analysis: "The very thing I love's killing me." Besides "pride," give some other examples of those things.7. Analysis: The song seems to be a cry for help from the person in the song. How would one go about helping such a person?8. Study the video on You-Tube. What is most striking about the video? Why?9. Are there some vices in our lives that we cannot conquer? Yes or no and why?10. In your opinion, what characteristics should a religious leader possess in today's world?11. There is such a thing as "good pride." What is the meaning of the phrase?12. The song seems to say that the proud person knew he was proud. Do you think most proud people know that they are too proud? Yes or no and why?13. The meditation refers to Luke 18:11. Project: present the circumstances of that Scripture passage, and determine an appropriate resolution.14. What does the song "The Monster"  teach young people today? |
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