

Glorifying the Self

Introduction:

- A. Our world is consumed with the self.
 - 1. The me generation has become the most influential segment of society.
 - 2. Many of the present day problems (Crime, poverty, immorality, lack of business productivity, declining scores in education, etc.) are often blamed on low self-esteem imposed from outside sources.
 - 3. In some cases this is true (children and women who have been beaten down and abused, students bullied in school, young adults taken advantage of by rich corporate leaders who only think of money, older folks who are shoved aside because the god of youth is worshiped in 21st century America, etc.) due to the selfishness of others
 - 4. As a nation we have become obsessed with “rights” with no regard as to their effects on others. (pro-abortion advocates who demand the right to abortion, show no regard for the life of the child within them)
- B. Neither condition is new or peculiar to our time. Nor will they go away. There will always be the selfish and those who suffer from the product of selfishness
 - 1. From Eden to eternity a major cause of evil has been and will continue to be selfishness.
 - 2. We are prone to blame others, but we must look at self.
 - 3. The proper attitude towards the self manifests maturity
 - 4. A great definition of maturity: “When you arrive at and accept the realization that you are not the center of the universe.”
 - 5. We can be patient with selfishness in a child because he does not know any better, but immaturity and ignorance are never excuses for an adult to be selfish - Acts 17:30

I. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF SELFISH PEOPLE

- A. Cain - Only concerned for himself - Gen. 4:4-5, 9; Phil 2:3-4
- B. Ahab - Only concerned for things - 1Kings 21:2-4; Luke 12:16-21
- C. David - Only concerned with his own pleasures. His selfishness led to adultery, conspiracy, and murder that impacted the lives of 6 people immediately, and then David’s family and the whole nation in the long term
 - 1. 2Sam. 11
- D. James and John - Only concerned for their desire for power and prestige.
 - 1. “Why did you mention them? They are not like Cain or Ahab.”
 - 2. Did you think selfishness that hurts others is limited to the Cains and Ahabs of this world?
 - 3. They wanted places of honor for themselves - Matt. 20:20-28
- E. Older brother of the prodigal - Only concerned for his reward - Luke 15:29-30

II. IMPROPER ATTITUDES TOWARD THE SELF

- A. Self-centeredness - absorbed, wrapped up in one’s self
 - 1. No one enjoys a self-centered person. It is easy to see ill others. It is hard to recognize in self - Luke 10:30-32

2. They had neither pity nor compassion for others.
- B. Self-conceit - an exaggerated estimation of one's own ability or power.
 1. Prov. 16:18; James 4:6, 10; Luke 18:14; Rom. 12:3
- C. Self-willed - stubborn, set on having one's own way.
 1. Jonah before and after preaching to Nineveh
 2. The rich fool - Luke 12:16
 3. The Jews who stoned Stephen - Acts 7:51-53
 4. God does not want it in the leaders of His people - Titus 1:7
- D. Self-indulgence - giving free course to one's passions, desires, inclinations
 1. 2Tim. 4:10
- E. Self-righteousness - being righteous in one's own view; assuming the self to be fully justified and capable of defining justification for others
 1. Luke 18:9-14; Rom. 10:1-3; Matt. 9:10-12
- F. Self-satisfaction - being pleased or proud of who and what one is.
 1. The satisfied person has reached his goal and is content to do no more.
 2. Phil 3:13-14; 1Cor. 10:12; Rev. 3:1

III. SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF THE SELF

- A. Follow examples of selflessness in the Bible.
 1. Abraham gave Lot his choice of land - Gen. 13:9
 2. Joseph forgave and helped his brothers - Gen. 45:3-11
 3. Good Samaritan took the time to help a person in need - Luke 10:29-36
 4. Barnabas sold his land and gave the money for the poor - Acts 4:36-37
 5. Paul gave himself to the Lord - Gal. 2:20
- B. Put the "self" to death by:
 1. Self-denial - Luke 9:23
 2. Esteeming others more than the self - John 13:14-15
 3. Humbling yourself before God - 1Peter 5:6
 4. Exercising self-control - Prov. 16:32
 5. Self-sacrifice - 2Cor. 8:5; Rom. 12:1

Conclusion:

- A. The faith of Christ is one of service, surrender, and sacrifice.
- B. Someone has suggested that, for all practical purposes, the one great question in judgment will be "Did you win the battle over yourself?"
- C. Christians are to put on Christ, put off self; glorify God, humble the self