

Selfish or Selfless

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.”

I John 3:16-19

Introduction:

1. Having studied Romans 12:9-10 this morning, let us take a brief, practical consideration of our brotherly love.
2. I have committed to preaching on this subject at least quarterly under some form or topic for your perfection.
3. We are selfish by nature (Tit 3:3), and the world teaches us to look out for number one, so we need reminders.
4. “You don’t know my heart,” is the lying excuse you have a good heart, when it is action that proves any heart.
5. May you repeat these two words enough to make them instinctive criteria for you and your family’s decisions.

What Does the BIBLE SAY?

- A. The religion of Jesus is very simple – love of God and love of neighbor, especially church brethren.
- B. You will be judged by how you treated Christ’s little ones (Matt 25:31-46; I Tim 6:17-19; Heb 6:10).
- C. Love of others is the best evidence and measure of salvation (John 13:34-35; II Pet 1:5-11; Gal 5:6).
- E. The second command, loving others, is the royal law and bond of perfectness (Jas 2:8-9; Col 3:14).
- F. Loving others by the inspired definition is greater than being a gifted apostle (I Cor 12:31; 13:1-7).
- G. Loving others sums up the last five of the Ten Commandments (Rom 13:9-10). Grasp this concept!
- H. You are to love others as you already love yourself, at which point you move from selfish to selfless!
- I. The Bible lists self-love as the first symptom of perilous times (II Tim 3:1-5). Learn to hate the lie!
- J. The definition of love indicates that love does not seek its own (I Cor 13:5). Do you understand that?
- K. But even more than that, love treats others as more important than yourself (Phil 2:3-4; Rom 12:10).
- L. Paul taught love is a choice to enlarge your heart and take a straitjacket off feelings (II Cor 6:11-13).
- M. Paul set the virtuous standard for loving others without regard for their love in return (II Cor 12:15).
- N. Jesus taught that love is not shown to friends but rather to uglies that cannot repay (Luke 14:12-14).
- O. The greatest honour should be given to the uncomely that ordinarily cannot give back (I Cor 12:23), yet those uncomely members should be thinking only of giving to yet others, not about getting more.
- P. The greatest in Christ’s kingdom, by the King’s word, are the servants (Mat 20:25-28; Lu 22:24-27).
- Q. Paul quoted Jesus, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). Then emphasize giving!
- R. The way to find your life – maximize joy and fulfillment – is to lose it for Christ’s sake (Mat 16:25).
- S. Self-righteousness is one of the greatest sins – maybe incurable, for pride and self-love (Pr 26:12).
- T. The purpose of the church is to consider others and provide good for them (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25).
- U. Constantly think about who might be sad or who might glad and join in (Rom 12:15; I Cor 12:26).
- V. Recall that the full definition of love is to rebuke or warn about sin (Le 19:17; Pr 27:5; I Thes 5:14).
- W. Love will not assume its own liberty or press it in public on others’ (Ro 14:15; I Cor 8:1,13; 10:33).
- X. Love covers the faults and sins of others in order to protect their reputations (Proverbs 17:9; 10:12).
- Y. Since this is the admonition of the Lord, then it is something parents should teach children (Eph 6:4).
- Z. Never be content with the love you have for others, for it must ever increase (I Thess 3:12; 4:9-10).

What Is It to be SELFISH?

- A. Hearing this sermon and thinking about others treating you better is wickedly selfish and ignorant!
- B. Let unruly emotions, feelings, or moods affect conduct and speech that discourages or hurts others.
- C. Thinking you have the right to clam up and not speak to another person because you are troubled.
- D. Neglects full communication so that others depending on him or desiring him are left in the dark.

- E. Expect others to treat you a certain way and spend most time thinking of that rather than serving.
- F. Having the gall to think or even verbalize the fact that others are not giving you sufficient attention.
- G. Neglect training your children in spiritual and natural matters because you are too tired or frustrated.
- H. Avoids greeting guests at church because (1) others will do it and/or (2) not comfortable doing it.
- I. Expects others to inquire about him and his things but does precious little sincere pursuit of others.
- J. Lets others bear the burden of hospitality for visitors or activities of the church unless convenient.
- K. Loves to take charity, concern, help, service, and prayers but does not give much at all for others.
- L. Complains, whines, and is generally unthankful and critical of those who try to love and help him.
- M. Takes the easy way out by not reproving, rebuking, or warning those he can see in some or other sin.
- N. Wants prayer for his troubles but prays little for the troubles of others – watch for prayer requests.
- O. Expects and wants mercy from others but is critical, impatient, and intolerant of others' offences.
- P. Will stand and talk forever if talking or the center of attention, but will walk away when it switches.
- Q. Avoids the members that take more work and are difficult to approach and have a relationship with.
- R. Expects others' children to want to marry his children without making them or his family desirable.
- S. Giving charity, service, or time, a selfish man is more grudging and slow than generous and quick.
- T. Has a long memory for others' offences but a very short one for kindnesses. Amazing phenomenon!
- U. Unable to be spontaneous because it just might upset his little routine or schedule for his little life.
- V. Talking in conversations or on the phone too long by not thinking about the time demands on others.
- W. If I did what you teach, I would lose out, because others will take advantage of me and walk on me.
- X. Take friends out to eat and fellowship with them over and over while seldom entertaining the uglies.
- Y. I can't help it. It is the way God made me. I am just not a social person that empathizes with others.
- Z. Hanging around your own family or age or social group instead of embracing and including others.

What Is It to be SELFLESS?

- A. Create a mental scattergram and pursue the members most distant from you in the church (Ep 4:16).
- B. The ones you invest in are the least comely members of the church and/or the most distant from you.
- C. To do something everyday no matter what for someone else, rather than avoiding it to the final day.
- D. To do something for someone else that cannot be repaid in any way or by praise among the haves.
- E. To subordinate all your ambitions as mere means to serving Christ's kingdom and using them so!
- F. To do something once, and again, and then in perpetuity without ever getting a thank you from men.
- G. To volunteer for every opportunity that service is offered and volunteer anyway though not offered.
- H. To consider others and think of their needs and desires rather than wait for them or the pastor to ask.
- I. To never even think if anyone knows or cares about what you did in light of God only knowing it.
- J. To deny that you have done anything when good deeds are mentioned and to actually fully believe it.
- K. It means prayer and prayer requests for others are far more important than prayer or requests for you.
- L. It means to lose your life for Christ's kingdom and others, because you do not care about it directly.
- M. It means to follow the example of Jesus Christ Who was fully selfless saving you (I Peter 2:21-24).
- N. It means you will apologize without being asked, and you will not ask or expect others to apologize.
- O. It means you will risk your feelings, your money, your reputation, and your time for selfish others.
- P. It means to think of others as Christ's brethren, thus they deserve your best, for you are only a slave.
- Q. Loving to commend, exalt, praise and get excited about others and their things rather than your own.
- R. Loving the concept and performance of back-kissing while hating the wickedness of backbiting.
- S. To give little surprises anonymously to those who could use a little encouragement or token of good.
- T. Make a big deal about every little thing you can observe that is good in another or their children.
- U. When someone says on the phone, "I need to go," you thank them for telling you and hang up then!
- V. To never allow any church function to be a date (except a couples' retreat) in order to pursue others.
- W. To put the golden rule in second place and do unto others as they would prefer to have done to them.
- X. Agree cheerfully, fervently, and quickly with whatever any group decides and participate in it fully.

- Y. In conversation, always talk about others (do this by questions) rather than yourself and your things.
- Z. It means to be very attentive to end conversations, leave a home, or avoid presuming on others.

The SELFLESS Saviour of SELFISH Sinners

- A. Every sin that you have ever committed is a selfish choice against God and all those around you.
- B. Every person and devil in the lake of fire is there because of selfishness before Eden and ever since.
- C. Heaven does not have a selfish person or being, because even the angels always keep God's word.
- D. The chasm between the selfish persons in hell and the selfless ones in heaven is totally impassable.
- E. The evidence of eternal life is the degree to which you are not selfish but rather selfless for others.
- F. But the Lord Jesus Christ, the selfless Saviour has fully paid for all the selfish sins of serial sinners.
 - 1. In Christ's death you want to see a very literal legal transaction and also a perfect example set.
 - 2. He came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for others (Matt 20:25-28).
 - 3. He had the perfect mindset to save us and to give us an example of humble service (Phil 2:3-8).
 - 4. He did not please Himself, but rather God; we are not to please ourselves, but others (Ro 15:1-3).
 - 5. He was bruised for our sins; He saw His seed; He was cut off for others (Is 53:4-6,10; Dan 9:26).
 - 6. Jesus washed the apostles' feet, and He bore our sins Himself (John 13:1-5,12-17; I Pet 2:21-24).

Conclusion:

- 1. Paul did not care about convenience or comfort; if you loved Christ and His kingdom, you would not either.
- 2. The church is not what you join or where you attend to be served, but where you serve and then serve more.
- 3. The great means to build a church from the inside is to love and compact the members together (Ep 4:15-16).
- 4. "You don't know my heart," is the lying excuse you have a good heart, when it is action that proves any heart.
- 5. May you repeat these two words enough to make them instinctive criteria for you and your family's decisions.

For Further Study:

- 1. The sermon outline, "[Love Is the Greatest](#)," is a thorough study of love throughout the scriptures in all respects.
- 2. The sermon outline, "[One Another Duties](#)," emphasizes individual duties by the Spirit's unique pronoun combination.
- 3. The sermon outline, "[Brotherly Love](#)," is a simple review of the importance of loving and serving one another.
- 4. The sermon outline, "[The Definition of Love](#)," provides a careful explanation for each term in I Corinthians 13:4-7.
- 5. The sermon outline, "[Bowels of Compassion](#)," deals with the Bible view of bowels, compassion, and empathy.
- 6. The sermon outline, "[Why Wear Pretty Shoes?](#)" covers the Bible command to love the uncomely members in a church.
- 7. The sermon outline, "[The Lie of Self-Love](#)," condemns and refutes the modern narcissistic obsession with self-esteem.
- 8. The sermon outline, "[The Lie of Unconditional Love](#)," deals with the modern psycho-babble idea of baseless love.
- 9. The sermon outline, "[Am I My Brother's Keeper?](#)" covers the duty that Christians have toward other church members.
- 10. The sermon outline, "[Blood Is Thicker than Blood](#)," reminds that our relationship in Christ should trump natural bonds.
- 11. The sermon outline, "[What Is a Domestique?](#)" uses professional cycling to illustrate and provoke brotherly kindness.
- 12. The sermon outline, "[I Am Third](#)," uses a saying by Gale Sayers to provoke putting God and others ahead of self.
- 13. The sermon outline, "[Righteous Relationships](#)," identifies John's message preparing people for God to apply to us.
- 14. The sermon outline, "[Righteous Relationships – Chart](#)," show the many relationships for which you are responsible.