

The Last Days – (Selfishness)

Purpose: to help believers to recognise the destructive nature of selfishness and to encourage us to put it to death through the power of the Holy Spirit.

No one likes a selfish person, and no one wants to be considered a selfish person. Yet we read in the bible that selfishness will be one of the increasing characteristics of many people in the last days:

2 Timothy 3:1,2

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be **lovers of themselves**, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy...

This is the first thing that Paul mentioned, and all of the other characteristics that he mentions are based on this one thing.

But what does it actually mean to be selfish?

Definition: concerned excessively or exclusively with oneself: seeking or concentrating on one's own advantage, pleasure, or well-being without regard for others

Here is how selfishness is described in the New Testament:

Selfish ambition (vainglory)

Php 2:3 - Let nothing be done through **selfish ambition** or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Self-willed

Tit 1:7 - For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not **self-willed**, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money...

2Pe 2:9 - then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,

2Pe 2:10 - and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, **self-willed**. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries...

Self-indulgence

Mat 23:25 - "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and **self-indulgence**."

Self-imposed religion

Col 2:23 - These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in **self-imposed religion**, false humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Where does selfishness come from?

Jas 3:13 - Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.

Jas 3:14 - But if you have bitter envy and **self-seeking** in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

Jas 3:15 - This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.

Jas 3:16 - For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

But wait, aren't we being told that we must love ourselves before we can love others? On a website called "Womanitely" they published an article called "7 reasons why it is so important to love yourself". Here are their arguments and a response from God's word:

Argument #1 - *When you love who you are, you accept who you are* – wrong!

When you accept that God has made you for a purpose, you accept who you are!

Rom 12:3 - For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

Argument #2 – *When you love yourself, it gives you confidence and approval* – wrong!

When you love yourself, it leads to self-confidence and arrogance.

Luk 18:10 - "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

Luk 18:11 - The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

Luk 18:12 - I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'

Luk 18:13 - And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'

Luk 18:14 - I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Argument # 3 – *When you love yourself, you will avoid self-reproach* (disapproval) – wrong!

You will become confused.

Jam 3:16 - For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

Argument # 4 – *When you love yourself, you will look better* – wrong

Not to God!

Pro 6:16 - These six things the LORD hates,
Yes, seven are an abomination to Him:

Pro 6:17 - A proud look,

A lying tongue,
Hands that shed innocent blood,

Isa 2:11 - The lofty looks of man shall be humbled,
The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down,
And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

Argument # 5 – If you love yourself, you are more likely to have a better family life – wrong
When you give yourself for your family, you are more likely to have a better family.

Eph 5:25 - Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Eph 5:26 - that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

Eph 5:27 - that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Eph 5:28 - So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Eph 5:29 - For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

Argument # 6 – *If you love yourself, you will have happier children* – wrong!
When you fear the LORD, you will be happy and your children will follow you!

Psa 128:2 - Blessed is every one who fears the LORD,
Who walks in His ways.

Ps 128:3 - When you eat the labor of your hands,
You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.

Ps 128:4 - Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
In the very heart of your house,
Your children like olive plants
All around your table.

Ps 128:5 - Behold, thus shall the man be blessed
Who fears the LORD.

Argument # 7 – When you love yourself, the world around you changes – True!
Our world is changing as more people are loving themselves, but not for good!

2Ti 3:1 - But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

2Ti 3:2 - For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

The bible teaches that we already love ourselves:

Mat 22:35 - Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying,

Mat 22:36 - "Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?"

Mat 22:37 - Jesus said to him, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'

Mat 22:38 - This is *the* first and great commandment.

Mat 22:39 - And *the* second *is* like it: 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

Eph 5:28 - So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Eph 5:29 - For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church.

The world teaches self-seeking
Jesus teaches self-denial

Mat 16:24 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

Mat 16:25 - For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Conclusion:

- Selfishness is huge, and is destroying our entire society.
- It is an agenda of the evil one
- It is a natural desire of our sinful nature
- Don't be surprised when you see it in the world
- Don't allow it to consume you! Ask God to search your heart and remove it!