

SELFISHNESS

RED FLAGS

OVERCOMING THE THREATS TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS

PRECEPT

JAMES 3:16

Where there is selfishness, there is also disorder and every kind of evil.

2 TIMOTHY 1:9

He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because we deserved it, but because of His own purpose and grace.

PROMISE

Selfishness is dangerous. It destroys a person, and it will destroy relationships. It is usually devoted to or caring only for oneself, and is concerned primarily with one's own interest, benefits, welfare, etc., regardless of others. R. B. Kuiper, pastor and professor of systematic theology, said *"Selfishness is not only sin but lies at the root of all sins."* Often, our selfishness and sinful choices are made at the expense of others. Truthfully, it is our selfish nature that is leading us to sin and to destruction. In his discourse describing the last days to his disciple Timothy, Paul says, *"For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people"* (2 Timothy 3:2–5). C.S. Lewis once said, *"Selfishness has never been admired."* Life is much better and more satisfying when we stop living only for ourselves, and start following God's will for us to become selfless and loving people.

SEE GOD'S GRACE AND LOVE. IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM. (2 TIMOTHY 3:2-5)

The moment we think we are special, we are missing the mark. We are missing the point. It is all by grace, and we truly don't deserve God's love. We are nothing but dirt; from dirt we came, and dirt we will become. It is all by God's grace that we are here, alive and enjoying God's favour. It's not about us. It's all about Him. Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us, *"God saved you by His grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it."*

SEEK TO SERVE OTHERS, IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU.

(1 CORINTHIANS 10:24, 15:31, ROMANS 12:3)

1 Corinthians 10:24 commands us, *"Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others."* Let us serve in the ministry with the gifts God has given us. Join and be active in a Life Group. When we really understand God's mercy and kindness, our hearts begin to change. We will want to give others the same love God has given us, and serve others like Jesus has served us. Until we see God's holiness, we will not see our filthiness. Until we see God's grace, we will be full of ourselves. Through God's grace and love, we can kill our selfishness and pride. Remember that it's all about Him and not about us. Only and only by then can we serve others and experience true happiness in our lives and in our relationships. God calls us to abandon every display of selfishness, and instead have a greater concern for what matters to others. When we put God first, others next, and ourselves last, there will be less conflicts and less frustrations in our relationships, and more peace and satisfaction on it. We must avoid seeking our own pleasures, instead seeking the good of others and putting Christ first. Let us look out for people in our lives, and not just seek what we want. Be reminded of what Romans 12:3 says, *"For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned."*

PRACTICE

1. Characteristics. Describe someone who is selfish. What is the opposite of being selfish in a relationship?

2. Selfishness in You. How does selfishness manifest itself in your daily life? Cite some examples how you can focus on others more than yourself.

PRAYER

I. Lost

- Pray that we will be the source of God's light to those who are lost and in need of Him.

II. Healing

- Pray for comfort and healing for those who are battling physical and mental illnesses.

III. Provision

- Pray for physical and spiritual provision for those who are suffering from poverty.

IV. Justice

- Pray for justice and redemption for those who are oppressed and marginalized

V. World

- Pray for the world to know the Lord, for divine appointments all around the globe.

VI. Mental Health

- Pray for strength for those battling mental illnesses. May they know that they are loved and valued.

VII. Peace

- Pray that we will not grow tired and weary in leading and serving God's people.