

"The Mother of All Sins"

(The "GRINCH" Within)

(Selected Scriptures)

12/24/06

Introduction: The world is filled with basically self-centered people. Everyone is basically self-centered.

***Manifestations of Selfishness:**

We want what we want . . .



1. **Even when it flies in the face of <u>God's Will</u>**
   (Selfish people want their will to be done on earth)



2. **<u>Now</u> (rather than later)**
   (Selfish people can't wait for God's timing)

3. **And if we don't get it, we <u>pout</u> and <u>throw fits</u>**
   (Selfish people have no joy and contentment – not satisfied with God's will)



4. **And <u>More</u> or <u>Different</u> than what we have**
   (Selfish people are not content or satisfied with what God gives)



5. **At the Expense of <u>Others</u>**
   (Selfish people don't worry about who they hurt)

6. **Regardless of long-term <u>consequences</u> (effects/costs)**
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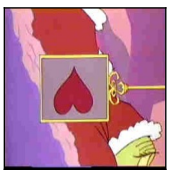
7. **And we want <u>everyone to know</u> we have it**
   (Selfish people are always talking about themselves)

Conclusion: Lord deliver me from self-idolatry.





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Introduction: 2 Corinthians 5:15

The world is filled with basically self-centered people. Everyone is basically self-centered.

ILLUS: The child throwing a fit demanding to open his Christmas gifts immediately.

Name a sin; Any Sin. See it's roots in Selfishness.

The ESSENTIAL NATURE of Sin

The word "essence" simply refers to the most fundamental and basic nature of something.

From what does man's sin stem? What is the common denominator for all sin? What is sin at its most basic, ultimate core?

The essence of sin is selfishness in the heart!

All forms of sin have their root in selfishness (cp. Strong, p. 569). Selfishness is the underlying factor behind all sin.

There is selfish motivation behind every sin!

We must UNMASK selfishness

(to see what it really is)

…Because selfishness is the underlying factor behind all sin
…Because it is an internal motivation which cannot be seen (although its fruits can
be seen)
…And because "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9), selfishness often goes overlooked. It hides from our view. It conceals its identity.

Why is selfishness sin?

Basically: It is a violation of the greatest of God's commands

(Mt. 22:36-40).

a. Selfishness places self ahead of God.

1) Selfishness says: "Me first," not "Thee first"
(SEE: Luke 9:57-62)
It is actually idolatry! (Col. 3:5)
(the worship and service of self)

2) Selfishness says: "My will be done," not "Thy will be done" (Mt. 6:10).
We are selfish when our interests come before God's interests
(the will of man is put ahead of the will of God).

Selfishness motivates people to rebel against God's will.
Note the following sins and their connection to selfishness:

--Fornication ("I want it now" rather than after marriage)
--Abortion ("I can't have a child to interfere with my pursuits")
--Divorce ("I want my freedom")
--Theft ("What's mine is mine, and what's yours is mine")

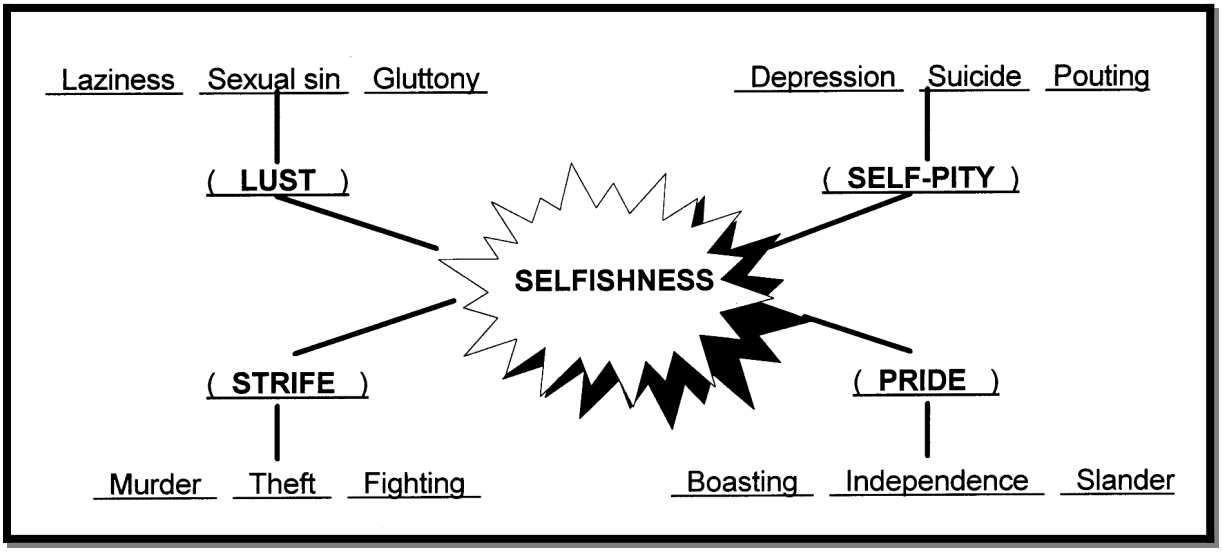
b. Selfishness places self ahead of others.

"For all men seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's" (Phil. 3:21).
"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (I Cor. 10:24).
Note: The context - We should make it our goal to avoid being a stumbling block. Be conscious of someone else's conscience (cp. Rom. 14; 15:1-6).

Selfishness basically expresses (manifests) itself in four ways:

(1) Lust (covetousness) ["I want it"]
(2) Self-Pity (feeling sorry for self) ["I deserve it"]
(3) Strife (selfish ambition) ["I will get it"]
(4) Pride (boastful arrogance) ["I have it!"]

Diagram of the 4 fold manifestation of SELFISHNESS



1) **Lust** - The drive of selfishness

Simply defined: "Lust" is a desire to have that which is not yours to have. The word basically describes an appetite or desire. These things are not wrong in themselves. They become sin when satisfied outside of God's will.
SEE: James 1:14-15
The source of temptation is not God (nor Satan) but man's own selfish lust.
Example: David - II Samuel 11:1-5
Ahab - I Kings 21

2) **Self-pity** - The justification of selfishness
Example: Elijah - I Kings 19
What is self-pity? Selfishness in disguise. Self-pity is feeling sorry for yourself; putting yourself down; a "woe is me" attitude

Words that come out of the mouth of the self - pitied:

(1) "I can't take it any longer!" (I Kings 19:4a)
(2) "I'm worthless!" (v.4b)
"I'm the black sheep of the family...the runt of the litter"
(3) "Nothing ever turns out right for me" (v.10)
(I do what is right and look what happens)
(4) "I'm the only one who does what is right" (v.10b;18)
(5) "No one ever does anything for me!"
(6) "Everyone else gets the breaks in life" (Implying: "I never do!")
(7) "I always end up with he bad end of the deal."

Note: God often has to replace the self-pitied (As He did to Elijah). He cannot use them in this condition. Why? Because they are selfish.

3) **Strife** - The Action of Selfishness

In the New Testament, the word often translated "strife" means "selfish ambition." There is nothing wrong with ambition as long as it is not motivated by selfish motives.

To strive is not wrong if it is for the glory of God and the well-being of others.

a. Strife is sin because it seeks to out-do others (Phil. 1:15, 16).
[Note the connection between "strife" and "envy"]
Beware of doing "good things" with bad (selfish) motives.
Beware of the desire to see others fall so as to lift up yourself.

b. Strife is sin because it seeks to elevate self
(Phil. 2:3)
[Note the connection between "strife" and "vain glory" (pride)]

c. Strife is sin because it results in devilish behavior (James 3:14-16).

4) **Pride** - The display of selfishness (Dan. 4:30ff)

How does pride differ from selfishness?
--It stems from selfishness
(the middle letter in pride is "I")
--It is selfishness manifested or shown off

*The proud person has a wrong view of God.
(When you really see God as He is, then you will see yourself as you really are)
*The proud person has a wrong view of self.
(Remember, all that we are and have has come from God - I Cor. 4:7)
If you want to boast, boast in this: Jeremiah 9:23-24.

d. Illustrations of the essence and nature of sin:

1) Satan's most basic temptation: A promise of selfish independence
("You shall be as God" - Gen. 3:5)

2) The "Man of Sin" - "opposing and exalting himself against all that is called God" (II Th. 2:3-4).

When it comes to Parenting:

Remember:

Each child is prone toward sin.

> "A child need not be taught how to lie, to be selfish, or to do wrong; these things come naturally. Every sweet, innocent, cuddly baby possesses within his flesh the constant temptation to fulfill the strong desire of sin." (Richard Fugate, What the Bible Says about Child Training p. 49)

Each child is basically self-centered.

> "He wants what he wants when he wants it. A child wants to be fed what and when he wishes, to have the total attention of others, to play always, and generally to have his every desire fulfilled without regard for anyone else. . . Even when a child conducts himself with acceptable behavior, he may be acting out of self-interest to gain attention or future reward. . . The nature of sin will motivate a child to do

whatever bad, or even good, that he thinks will cause benefit to himself. When parents recognize that the natural, normal tendency of their child is to satisfy his own sinful nature, they are ready to become successful parents" (Fugate, p. 50).

A Mark of the Last Days:

2 Timothy 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy
2 Peter 3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

Practical Areas in which children need self-control:

1. Restricting eating to meal times
   (gluttony starts when children's eating behavior goes unrestrained when they are young - Prov. 23:2)

2. Waiting for the family to pray and thank God for the food before eating (I Tim. 4:4)

3. Allowing visitors or guests to be served first
   (this teaches respect and honor for company - Heb. 13:2)

4. Not fooling around or playing at the dinner table
   (they need to know there is a time and place for playing)

5. Picking up their toys and putting them away after playing with them

6. Submitting to the parent's discretion as to what the children watch on TV or listen to on the radio, and when (Ps. 119:37)

7. Not interrupting someone else's conversation
   (either while communicating with someone in person or on the telephone)

8. Learning to put others (EX: siblings and peers) ahead of themselves (Phil. 2:4)

***Manifestations of Selfishness:**

We want what we want . . .

1. Even when it flies in the face of <u>God's Will</u>
(Selfish people want their will to be done on earth)

Matthew 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Philippians 2:21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

2. <u>Now</u> (rather than later)
(Selfish people can't wait for God's timing)

Psalms 145:15 The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

(Illustration: The old Willie Wonka movie, where the girl sings, "Give it to me now!!")

3. And if we don't get it, we <u>pout</u> and <u>throw fits</u>
(Selfish people have no joy and contentment – not satisfied with God's will)

Philippians 2:3 - Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4. And <u>More</u> or <u>Different</u> than what we have
(Selfish people are not content or satisfied with what God gives)

Proverbs 15:27 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

5. At the Expense of <u>Others</u>
(Selfish people don't worry about who they hurt)

1 Corinthians 13:5 Charity (Love)…Doth not behave itself unseemly, <u>seeketh not her own</u>, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6. Regardless of long-term <u>consequences</u> (effects/costs)
(Selfish people don't consider the future)

7. And we want <u>everyone to know</u> we have it
(Selfish people are always talking about themselves)

Proverbs 20:6 Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

Conclusion: Lord deliver me from self-idolatry.

Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

*Victory over selfishness is <u>salvation</u>!

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

2 Corinthians 5:15 And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

What is my Purpose on Earth?

We were made for God:

- *Proverbs 16:4 - The LORD hath made <u>all things for himself</u>*
- *Isaiah 43:21 - This people have I formed <u>for myself</u>; they shall shew forth my praise.*
- *Colossians 1:16 … all things were created by him, <u>and</u> <u>for</u> <u>him</u>:*
  <u>You</u> were created <u>by</u> Jesus and <u>for</u> Jesus.

a. We are created and redeemed that we might <u>KNOW</u> God

- *1John 5:20 "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that <u>we may know him that is true,</u> and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."*
- *Philippians 3:10 "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection…"*

b. We are created and redeemed that we might <u>PLEASE</u> God

- *Revelation 4:11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and <u>for thy pleasure</u>* [for Thy desire] *they are and were created."*

c. We are created and redeemed that we might <u>GLORIFY</u> God

- *1Cor. 10:31 "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"*

How to be an UNSELFISH Christian

II Corinthians 5:14-21

***You were not saved to live for yourself, but for God (v. 15)**

How can we live unselfishly?

1) To be an unselfish Christian. . .
You must be <u>motivated by the unselfish LOVE OF CHRIST FOR YOU</u>
(v. 14a, 21) (He died for us)

A. "The love of Christ constraineth us" (v. 14a)

B. "He hath made Him to be sin <u>for us</u>" (v. 21)

2) To be an unselfish Christian. . .
You must <u>have a FUNERAL for your own selfish desires, plans, & interests</u>
(v. 14b) (We died to self)

3) To be an unselfish Christian. . .
We must <u>be OTHERS-CENTERED</u>
(We now live for God by living for others)

We have obtained:

A. A new <u>unselfish perspective</u> of people (v. 16)

B. A new <u>unselfish nature</u> (on the inside) (v. 17)

C. A new <u>unselfish ministry</u> (of telling others how they can be right with God) (v. 18-20)