

The Bulwark

AUGUST 7, 2022

LOVERS OF SELF...



“For men will be lovers of themselves...” (2Timothy 3:2) There is no hesitation whatsoever in what Paul pens to the young preacher, Timothy. He succinctly punctuates the core issue with which many struggle. One of which was the Pharisee in the example Jesus sets forth as seen in Luke 18. He was clearly enraptured with himself, as evidenced in his prayer. *“God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gather. I fast twice a week; I pray tithes of all that I get.”* (vs 11-12) Impressive, well at least in his own eyes.

There is an interesting conundrum presented by one who is a “lover of self”. A secular psychological label of narcissist is readily placed upon one who manifests such tendencies. But that is where things get intriguing. A narcissist is for the most part hiding behind a wall of “self importance” and in reality is battling identity issues and deep seated animosity. For a child of God to display such traits is contrary to everything God would have us to embrace. Consider what Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20, as it deals with who we are in Christ. *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who*

live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.”

Couple the just noted passage with what is found in Philippians 2:3-5. Notice first, verse five, *“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.”* Was Christ all about self? The answer is obvious. Now consider verses three and four. *“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interest, but also for the interest of others.”*

The christian strives to emulate in attitude and action that of Christ. As such there is no place for “self import”. *“For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment...”* (Romans 12:3) *“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love: give preference to one another in honor.”* (Romans 12:10)

Once we come to a full appreciation of who we are as christians, there is a marked change in the compartment of life. *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”* (Ephesians 2:10) Clearly, for the child of God it is no longer all about “me”. Rather there is an awakening as to how to be of service in the kingdom of Christ and the importance of others. (wbe)

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- 7054 Winnetka Ave.
Winnetka, CA 91306
- 818-795-5566
- Bruce Evans,
Minister
- Website:
www.winnetkachurch.com