
Words of Truth

It's Not All About You

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Imagine for a moment that you are in heavy traffic needing to get somewhere really important. That heavy traffic has now come to a complete standstill. You hear sirens. You look ahead and notice that there have been multiple vehicles involved in what appears to be a horrible wreck. What is on your mind right as you imagine that?

For some people, they are upset that traffic will now be backed up for some time. Those people are thinking about how their day is messed up. What about the people in the wreck though? Why is it that many, if not most, are more concerned about themselves than those who might be hurt or have died in that crash? The answer is – SELFISHNESS!

Many are only concerned about their own interests (Proverbs 18:17). This is not a new problem by any means (Philippians 2:21). Yet, it should be something that we as Christians do not have in our own lives. We should know that we cannot be self-centered if we profess to be in Christ. In fact, that mindset was supposed to be surrendered before we obeyed the Gospel (Matthew 16:24-25). Our Lord expects us to put our own interests behind the needs of others.

It Is About Them

Will you do something for someone if that deed is not going to gain you anything at all (Luke 6:33 and Luke 14:12-14)? Would you rather be on the giving side of doing something for someone else or on the receiving side (Acts 20:35)? Would you help a person even if that person is a stranger and you may never see them again (Luke 10:25-37)?

We are supposed to be able to focus our attention on other people without thinking about our own interests. This was the mindset of Jesus and we are to take that same mindset upon ourselves. Notice: *"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me... Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"* (Romans 15:1-3 and Philippians 2:3-8).

Being focused on other people is obviously the right mindset (I Corinthians 10:24). I am sure most who read the Scriptures we have looked at would agree that we should be other people minded. Agreement is not what we need though. We need application. We need to put into action the truths that we are studying. We need to learn to be servants to others rather than seeking only what is beneficial to us.

Servants Of One Another

Notice this command: *"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"* (Galatians 5:13-14). Our Savior had the mindset of being a servant (Matthew 20:28 and Luke 22:27). He washed the feet of His followers just to teach the act of serving with a mindset of humility (John 13:1-17). The Apostle Paul was a servant (II Corinthians 4:5). The Apostle Paul understood, and put into action, that the interests of others needed to come before his own desires (I Corinthians 9:19-23).

The key to being a servant comes with the ability to love your neighbor as you love yourself. The Scriptures refer to loving your neighbor as yourself as the "royal law" (James 2:8). Jesus referred to this command second only to loving the Lord (Matthew 22:37-39). Notice what the inspired Apostle Paul wrote: *"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and **if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law"*** (Romans 13:9-10).

When you find that you cannot become other people centered, after reading what we have discovered thus far, you have to conclude that you have a love problem. You have to learn to love others as yourself. You will not be able to do things such as bear another's burdens (Galatians 6:2) if you do not love that person. You will not help a brother or sister in Christ if they have a need if you do not love that brother or sister (I John 3:16-18).

If you cannot find the way to love others as yourself and to serve them, you will not find the way to Heaven. For one, you will have violated every command we've studied in this article and you will be lost because of that (John 12:48). Secondly, notice this: *"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen"* (I John 4:20)?

Conclusion

The biggest obstacle between God and a person is often that person. That is why we have to get beyond ourselves before we can serve God (Mark 8:34). That same obstacle also stands between man and his fellow man. If we are always thinking only of ourselves we will find that we lack significant things in life such as compassion (I Peter 3:8). Think back to the accident scene we began our study thinking about. If I love my neighbor as myself and I want to be a servant, won't I forget about my needs for a moment and consider what has just happened in front of me concerning others? Become a great person by being a servant to others (Mark 10:43-45).