

Selfless or Selfish?

Matthew 20:17-28

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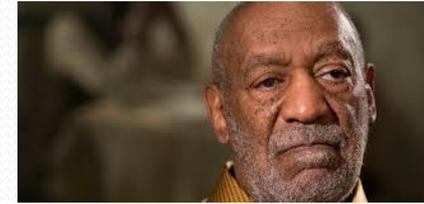
Look At This Scenario!

- Jesus had just finished telling His disciples about the cruel and horrible things that would soon happen to Him before He set up His eternal kingdom
- Then, James and John funneled their request for V.I.P. status in His kingdom to Jesus through their mother
- The other disciples became indignant (a mixture of anger, jealousy, and pride) most likely guilty of the same intentions though they hadn't verbalized it
- So, in the same setting James and John say to Jesus essentially, “yeah, yeah, yeah you will be beaten, mocked and finally crucified, but what about us?”

This is Our Sinful Nature In Action!

- We long for the “Lazy Boy Recliner” much more than the Cross
- We Long for the power, popularity, and money to be kings of our own empire
- The mother of James and John wanted for her boys what every mother wants for their boys: success, power, and to be kings and rulers
- Satan’s pursuits are always held out to us as the answer for our happiness and satisfaction
“You should get out of life what you deserve” because that’s what will make you happy

But This Is What We Are Not Thinking About!



- On the way to getting what we want, what's going to happen?

- What will it cost us to get what we want?

Shame

Embarrassment

The suffering others will endure

- We are only thinking about how wonderful it will be when we get what we are after



At The Heart Of All Selfishness Is Pride

- Jesus had to teach them that their motives were self-centered, selfish, and unspiritual

In Order To Follow Jesus, We Must Be Different!

- He explains in Matthew 20:25-27 that those who don't know the path to true greatness lord themselves over others (push their weight around or fight for positions without going through the process)
- Our supervisor (Jesus) went through the process first - Hebrews 4:15
- He basically says that "I'm King of the Universe, but you don't see me treating you with no respect or like you're unimportant!"

I'm Serving You!

Philippians 2:1-11

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being in one spirit and of one mind.....”

Philippians 2:1-11

“...Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Philippians 2:1-11

*... “Who, being in the very nature God
Did not consider equality with God something to be
used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very
nature of a servant, being made in human
likeness.*

*And being found in appearance as a man, he
humbled himself by becoming obedient to death---
- even death on a cross!*

Philippians 2:1-11

... “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Summarizing Paul's Rhetorical Questions

- “If you have received any benefits from Jesus’ selflessness-----*go and practice the same things*
Encouragement -- from being united with Christ
Comfort---from His love
Common sharing--- in the Spirit
Tenderness---from His special relationship with you
Compassion---from his bowels of mercies

If Jesus Had Been Selfish

- He would have never come
- He would have come and demanded service
- Instead of devoting so much time to teaching, preaching, and healing, He would have done so only when it was convenient (office hours)
- Instead of being patient, he would have been demanding and insensitive
- Instead of loving unconditionally, he would have shown love **only if** he was loved **first**

But God “Highly Exalted Him”

- **Because Jesus was sacrificial, we receive the benefits**
- **The irony is that we think that if we are selfless, we will receive less, get “stepped on” and be deprived (or that’s how others will perceive us)**

But God “Highly Exalted Him”

Paul Says That God Exalted Christ Because He Humbled Himself

- The key to having a successful marriage is becoming less for it
- The key to successful kids is becoming less for them
- The key to having quality relationships is becoming less for them
- The key to building a great church is to become less for it

James 4:6

“God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble.”

God Highly Exalted Christ Because
He Wasn't Selfish When He Came
To Earth

OUR SELFLESSNESS
GIVES GOD
LEVERAGE TO LIFT
US UP!

The Plan Of Salvation

Hear the Gospel Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins Acts 17:30

Confess Christ Acts 8:37

Be Baptized Acts 8:38