



# THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

## PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

### ME, ME, ME

#### Selfishness Series – Part 1

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Selfishness is the excessive or exclusive concern for oneself. It is the focus on one's own welfare/advantage. Moreover, most of the troubles in the world is due to selfishness, the greatest curse of the human race. Hence, selfishness results in sin, discontent, impatience and greed.

#### A. Consequences of Selfishness

##### 1. Sin

Sin is an act of rebellion against God. The letter "i" in the middle of the word "sin" implies "love for self". Our selfishness may lead us to hurt others, as we ruthlessly strive to gratify ourselves, instead of pleasing God. For example, Adam & Eve sinned because of their desire to be like God. This is the essence of sin. Subsequently, disorder will result if there are envy and selfish ambitions (Jam. 3:16). Selfishness results in pride, lust, envy, jealousy and anger.

##### 2. Discontent

This means the lack of satisfaction with one's possessions, status, or situation. Despite everything that God did for the Israelites, they kept on grumbling and complaining (Exo. 16:2-12). For instance, God saved them from slavery in Egypt, but they lost confidence in God when faced with inconvenience. Indeed, selfish people are miserable complainers. On the other hand, contentment is godly. St. Paul tells us that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (Tim. 3:6). Therefore, let us count our blessings and be more grateful for what God has given to us.

##### 3. Impatience

This is a good indicator of selfishness. James and John knew that positions in Christ's kingdom could be influential and was a sign of authority (Mk. 10:35-42). So, they requested to sit at the right and left of Jesus in His kingdom. It was not entirely wrong for them to make such a request; however, the problem was that they made the request in a selfish manner. They

wanted Jesus to do what they desired to happen at their own time because they did not want to wait. "We too sometimes find ourselves in scenarios where we become impatient, such as falling in line, waiting to be served in restaurants, being caught in traffic, etc.

#### 4. Greed

It is the selfish and excessive desire for more (money or power) than what is needed. It is the desire for what we do not have. Jesus says, "Take care to guard against all greed, for though one may be rich, one's life does not consist of possessions" (Lk. 12:15). This is in contrary to what society says because our society promotes materialism and self-gratification. Greed stems from a "take and take" attitude. We are being deceived into thinking that we will be happier, more fulfilled and more comfortable if we can acquire more and more possessions, or if we can enhance our exterior looks.

#### CONCLUSION:

St. Paul tells us to "live by the Spirit and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). God wants us to put others above ourselves rather than being selfish. As Christians, we are being asked by the Lord to put others' interests above our own as Christ did for us (Phil. 2: 3-4).

#### REFLECTION:

1. Are you fully aware of the outcome of selfishness?
2. What have you done to amend/correct your selfish ways/desires?

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