

CITY OF THE LIVING GOD

A CALL TO SERVE

35

SERIES

In dedication to all the soul-winners that need a Bible study on the purpose of the believer in allowing the Spirit of God to shine through us as servants.

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But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

Reading this passage of scripture quickly brings us to remembrance of the times that we live in. Obviously, we see the characteristics of this society people being so centered upon itself. It uses terms such as boasters, proud, unthankful, unloving, unforgiving, without self-control, despisers of good, traitors, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. All of these characteristics fall under one theme that we can depict our society: It is selfishness and self-centeredness. It’s all about their selves. To them, nothing matters unless it affects themselves.

It is a picture of our society today. How do we respond to that passage of Scripture? In response to our selfish society, what should we be doing as the people of God? What should we be doing in the raising of our children? How should we live our lives?

A SELFISH SOCIETY

There are so many scriptures that depict mankind as a people that live in selfishness.

Philippians 2:21

“For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.”

Romans 2:8

“But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath.”

Notice that the Apostle Paul states in his letter to the Corinthians that true love “does not seek its own.” It’s not interested in the recognition of self. It’s not a glory-seeker. It’s not envious of others and what they have and you do not have.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil.”

James warns us against selfish gain and its consequences.

James 3:16

“For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.”

A CALL TO SERVICE

Just as Jesus came to serve mankind by humbling himself as he became man and gave of himself on the cross, God calls for us to that same selfless sacrifice of serving others.

Romans 12:1

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”

John 15:13

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.”

If the Great Almighty God is not too proud to serve man, then who are we to think that we deserve to be treated as the central focus of all? He served man to show us the importance of not being selfish and giving to others.

Philippians 2:3-4

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

1 Corinthians 10:24

“Let no one seek his own, but each one the other’s well-being.”

Jesus warns us how in the last days there will be selfish people trying to only preserve their own life without caring for others. Instead because of their selfishness, they will end shipwrecked.

Luke 17:33

“Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.”

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

When the New Testament believer receives the Holy Spirit, there begins a change within the heart. No longer do you want to do the things of the

past that negatively affect you or your loved ones. You begin to make changes that are very attractive and impacting to others. You begin to develop what the Bible calls the Fruit of the Spirit. It is interesting how the Apostle Paul compares the works of the flesh namely “jealousies, selfish ambitions, and envy” with the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:19-21

“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Galatians 5:22

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

Notice that the fruit of the Spirit brings about a change away from selfishness. Love is not selfish; it is giving of oneself. Selfishness produces strife and division, but the Spirit produces “peace” and “kindness.” The root of selfishness is evil and covetous, but the Spirit produces “goodness” and “gentleness.”

What are ways we can express selflessness in our society?

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