

#GetOverYourSelfie: Generosity Over Selfishness

Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God — truly righteous and holy. Ephesians 4:21-24 NLT

How do I get over myself and experience God's best?

1. Focus on Jesus.
2. Get rid of the old.
3. Put on the new (God's righteousness).

Icebreaker

Some of the most generous people I know are our friends from our ministry partnership in Uganda. They have far fewer material resources than we do in Canada, yet many times they have given us gifts, a handwritten card or other expressions of love. Their generosity of time, talents, and treasure is something God has used to bond us together as His people. How have you been impacted by the generosity of another person? Maybe it was someone who gave you their time when you needed it, or someone who lent you their expertise or skill on a project. How has their generosity impacted you?

Video

Watch this week's video – Generosity Over Selfishness

<https://www.lifegroupleaders.ca/studies/getoveryourselfie/>

Study

Attitude and acts of generosity is one of the greatest ways to be blessed and to live like God. Generosity is a great way to live. It is freeing. It is a blessing to others. It is powerful for what it can do in us and through us to impact others. God wants us to commit to living a life of generosity—a life of joy that comes from giving to others.

Selfishness — What it is and how to get over it

“No one is a natural-born giver. We are all born takers. We enter this world with a fallen sin nature, at the heart of that nature is a tendency toward selfishness.” from *The Blessed Life*, by Robert Morris

To be selfish is to think about our own needs and prioritize our own needs above the needs of others.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4 NIV

In this verse, Paul compares selfishness to vain conceit, a posture of being arrogant or having an overly high opinion of oneself. To be selfish is to be narcissistic. How might we know if we are being motivated by selfish ambition? As a group, see if you can come up with three or four examples.

Read Galatians 5:19-21.

Selfishness is often expressed by building oneself up while tearing someone else down. As you read through the acts of the sinful nature that Paul lists in these verses, how do you see selfishness reflected in the other acts? In what ways is selfishness at the root of our sin?

Traits of selfishness

As a group, look up the following Scriptures and describe the traits of selfishness you find.

- Galatians 5:20
- James 3:16
- Psalm 78:18
- Matthew 19:21-22
- Proverbs 18:1
- James 4:3
- James 3:13-15

What have these verses shown you about the nature of selfishness?

Getting over selfishness

What are some practical ways to get over selfishness? Think back to the verses you've just read and see if you can come up with five practical steps to take. For example:

- This week, read about the needs of others on Creekside’s missions page <https://www.creeksidechurch.ca/missions/>
- Sign up to sponsor a child with an organization like Compassion Canada.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Embracing generosity

God is a giver. The most widely known verse in the Bible tells us:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son John 3:16 NIV

Generosity is the quality of being kind and unselfish, especially as it pertains to sharing our time, talents and treasure with others.

And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words! 2 Corinthians 9:14-15 NLT

Our God is generous. He loves us so much that He has given us His Son. God longs for us to grow to have the same kind of generous heart He does. Besides the gift of Jesus, what are other ways that God has been generous to us?

Blessed are those who are generous, because they feed the poor. Proverbs 22:9 NLT

One of the Hebrew words for “blessed” in the Bible is *esher* which is translated as happiness. God is telling us that true happiness comes when we give ourselves to others. How might this happiness be different from the happiness we might experience on a vacation or in owning a new car?

There are many references in the Bible about being generous to the poor. How do you define “poor”? Where do you see opportunities to “feed the poor” locally or globally?

Give freely and become more wealthy; be stingy and lose everything. The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed. People curse those who hoard their grain, but they bless the one who sells in time of need. Proverbs 11:24-26

In this and other passages in Scripture, God promises that those who are generous to others will be rewarded by God. What are some ways that God might prosper or refresh those who are generous for Him?

There are many ways for us to be generous that do not involve money. We can be generous with our time with others. We can be generous with our talents. What are some ways that you have experienced this? How have you been refreshed by giving yourself to others?

So two good things will result from this ministry of giving – the needs of believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God. 2 Corinthians 9:12 NLT

Paul writes here that an outcome of generosity is that the receivers will “joyfully express their thanks to God.” One of the blessings of generosity is joy experienced by both the giver and the receiver. This joy ultimately comes from knowing God loves us and has provided for us. What are three or four ways we experience joy as a result of generosity? (For example, we might get to see the positive effect of our giving.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Takeaway

What is a practical step you can take this week to be generous? Write it down here and ask God to help you live it out!

Pray

Spend time tonight thanking God for his generosity to you. What are some specific gifts you can thank Him for? Ask God to show you how to grow a generous heart like His.