



MESSAGE:

SELFLESSNESS IN A SELFIE WORLD

PASSAGE: Philippians 2:3-4 ESV

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

MESSAGE GOAL:

The sermon's goal is to encourage and challenge the recipients to embrace selflessness, humility, and a focus on the well-being of others in a world that emphasizes selfishness and individualism. ‘

INTRODUCTION

In the intricate design of our lives, God did not envision isolation or the pursuit of individualism. Rather, God lovingly wove the fabric of community into our existence, manifesting through the core elements of family, church, and relationships. Families were crafted to be the sanctuary of nurturing and support, where individuals can immerse themselves in the profound experience

of love, connection, and a sense of belonging. The Church, as a gathering of believers, stands as a sacred space that reflects God's intent for communal worship, mutual encouragement, shared spiritual growth, and a deep sense of belonging. Relationships, whether they manifest as friendships or beyond, are too, threads, woven into the fabric of community, demonstrating our interconnectedness as people, as children of God. In a world that emphasizes selfishness and individualism, we are to be reminded of God's greater purpose for us – to thrive within the embrace of community. Isolation may be tempting at times, and solitude at times is necessary, our focus must remain on these divine designs of family, church, and relationships. By doing so, we align ourselves with God's plan for togetherness. It's within these communities that we find support, share in our joys and sorrow, be and become, and ultimately strengthen our faith together. Let's explore a theory that shed light on an issue many churches, families, and relationships face—disharmony within the community, family, church, and relationship. It's the



idea that when people within a family, church, or relationship become more self-focused rather than community-minded, it creates conflicts and disrupts the unity that the Spirit of God works to create and maintain. When personal interests take precedence over collective well-being and shared values, it can lead to disharmony and a departure from the unity that the Spirit of God works to create and maintain. Now, let's lean in and discern how we can strengthen our sense of togetherness and shared purpose in our church, in our families, and in our relationships.

SERMON POINTS

1. *DO NOTHING FROM SELFISH AMBITION.*

In this context, selfish ambition refers to pursuing personal gain or status without regard for the well-being and needs of those who are in your family, community, relationship, and others. Personal gain becomes a troubling matter when it's pursued without empathy or a regard for the well-being of others, and it takes a more disturbing turn when it involves the exploitation or harm of others in the process. Let's explore selfish ambition in the context of the experiences of life.

In the context of work and business, selfish ambition can be the following:

- Lying or manipulation others to achieve personal gain.
- Working to maximize profits through exploitative practices.

In the context of relationships, selfish ambition can be the following:

- Prioritizing one's own desire and needs in personal relationship without consideration for the feelings and well-being of others.
- Supporting policies or actions that benefit self or a particular group that you are categorized in at the expense of others or society as a whole.
- Turning a blind eye to social issues, while simultaneously benefits from the status quo.
- Pursuing a lavish lifestyle and luxury *at the expense* of financial stability and well-being, fueled by societal pressure.
- Trolling or engaging in harmful online behavior that can emotionally or psychologically harm others.
- An insatiable desire for wealth, power, or success that overshadows ethical considerations and concern for others.



In the context of family, selfish ambition can be the following:

- Showing favoritism towards one child or family member or another.
- Making major family decisions without consulting or considering the input and feelings of others.
- Prioritizing personal financial gain over the family's financial stability or well-being.
- Exploiting family resources for personal benefit without concern for the impact of others.
- Undermining the achievements of family members to make oneself look better.
- Overemphasizing material possessions or social status.

In the context of Church, selfish ambition can be the following:

- Insisting on outdated and irrelevant values or practices without acknowledging the needs and perspectives of other generations.
- Engaging in doctrinal disputes within the church without considering the impact on unity.
- Seeking leadership or influential roles in the church primarily for personal status or recognition rather than to serve.

- Forming exclusive groups or cliques that exclude or isolate certain members.
- Using one's position within the church to exert undue influence over others.
- Misusing funds or resources for personal gain.
- Withholding important information or making decisions that primarily benefit a select few.
- Engaging in gossip, spreading rumors, or causing division within the church for personal gain, influence, or entertainment.
- Demonstrating religious arrogance or superiority over fellow church members.
- Refusing to compromise or adapt.

Selfish ambition is the nature of those who cannot lift their gaze to higher things! Do nothing from selfish ambition.

2. DO NOTHING FROM CONCEIT.

In this context, conceit literally means "empty glory." It might better be translated as "empty self-glorification." Those who operate from a place of conceit can be likened to self-promoters. They often exhibit vanity, inflating their own accomplishments, and ceaselessly boasting to enhance their reputation. Strangely, this self-promotion arises from an underlying insecurity



concerning their personal importance and honor. This behavior is all about keeping up appearances to receive praise and admiration from others. Let's explore conceit in the context of the experience of life.

In the context of our lives, conceit can be the following:

- Chasing personal acclaim, status, or ambition that lacks depth or purpose, forsaking the well-being of others and failing to align with a higher moral standard.
- Chasing recognition or success for the sake of the ego, rather than striving for personal growth, the growth of those around you, and the betterment of society.
- It's all about you, you, and you rather than you, your kids, and your family; Rather than you, your spouse, and your children; Rather than you and the person you're with; Rather than you and your commitment to your faith community; rather than you and others.

Conceit can lead to a shallow, emotionally detached existence because it lacks a sense of purpose and deeper meaning. This pursuit of empty glory and empty self-glorification, without substance and genuine significance, ultimately leaves an individual feeling empty and unfulfilled. Beloved, external

validation cannot provide lasting contentment or true fulfillment.

3. IN HUMILITY, COUNT OTHERS MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN YOURSELVES.

Humility is laying down your life for your brother, your sister, your children, your husband, your wife, your family, and it is only when you lay down your life for someone else that you will truly live. Humility, then, is laying down your life so that you can finally understand the meaning of life.

Furthermore, humility can be the following:

- Looking out for others just as you look out for yourself!
- Treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- Listening actively and attentively when someone speaks.
- Receptivity to constructive feedback and criticism because it is an opportunity to grow and improve.
- Prioritizing serving and supporting others rather than seeking power and prestige.
- Empathizing with others, understanding their emotions, and demonstrating compassion when others are going through challenges.



- Setting aside personal pride and committing to work toward mutually beneficial solutions.
- Readily admitting when you are wrong or have made mistakes and taking responsibility for their actions.
- Giving thanks in all circumstances because this is the will of God concerning you!
- Prioritizing the well-being of others!

But What about self? Friend, prioritizing the well-being of self is an unarguable commitment. Nevertheless, take note that a person in a family, church, or relationship that prioritizes care for self over care for others will suffer shallow relationships, a misunderstanding of sanctification, and complacency in evangelism. To truly embrace the unity and harmony that God's Spirit encourages, we must reject all forms of selfish ambition and conceit. Instead, let us humbly prioritize one another, embodying the principle of 'I've got your back, and you've got mine.' This is love in action, where I desire for you what I desire for myself. Get this: Life's purpose transcends personal interests; and it only finds fulfillment when we understand it as a collective journey, designed for the community's well-being.

4. *THE BALANCE BETWEEN SELF-CARE AND CARE FOR OTHERS*

Self-care is an unarguable commitment, for how can you truly pour out to others if there is no life in your own cup? Self-care involves nurturing your mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, which is to be done in both solitude with God and community with others but get this: There is a difference between filling yourself up and being full of yourself! Self-care is not synonymous with self-absorption, but there must be a balance between self-care and care for others. The balance between self-care and caring for others involves replenishing yourself and then emptying yourself for your children, spouse, family, faith community, relationship, and others, following the example of Christ who emptied himself for us! It's crucial to understand and let me confirm for you that relationships are meant to be demanding – it's part of the design! If your relationships don't drain you, then you are not truly invested. Being part of a community is intentionally draining, sacrificial, and humbling. It's natural to feel weary after attending to your children, spouse, family, faith community, relationship, and others. Exhaustion and a sense of emptiness after dedicating yourself to others is a design of community, but so is being filled back up! Community is the only space where you can be emptied



and replenished! To replenish yourself with the right things is a fundamental aspect of self-care, and to empty yourself out for others is a genuine aspect of humility!

Therefore, 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 emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born 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. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Friend, this means breaking free from the desire to seek approval from others over God. It means releasing the need to chase personal gain or status without considering the well-being of others, especially those in your family, your church, and your relationships. Walk in the footsteps of our savior and embrace the path of humility, embrace the path of selflessness in a selfie world. As I draw

this writing to a close, let me share how the story ends for those who embrace humility: Those who exalt themselves will be humbled, but those who humble themselves will be exalted. Ladies and Gentlemen, God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble! Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, so that in due time He may exalt you.

QUOTES BY STEPHEN HERROD

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