

LBC- Narcissism- The High Price of Self-Love

The story of Narcissus- son of a god and a nymph, very handsome, but unloving and a heart-breaker. Echo, a wood-nymph fell in love with him, but he rejected her. In punishment, Nemesis led him to a stream where he beheld his own reflection, and stared at it until it became all he wanted in the world. When he realized he could not obtain the object of his desire, he died of sorrow.

Narcissism: extreme selfishness, with a grandiose view of one's own talents and a craving for admiration

Self-love: When we love ourselves and serve our own interests first, expecting others to do the same.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

3 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ² For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.

In the last days, the trend of the culture will be toward Narcissism.

Who is in danger of becoming a Narcissist / a lover of self?

Everyone not currently engaged in the struggle against selfishness, and pressing in to know Christ.

John 5:37-42

³⁷ And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. ³⁸ You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

We are in particular danger of becoming self-infatuated if:

- We do not know the voice of God for ourselves,
- We have not had any significant revelation of God for ourselves,
- We do not have the Word of God abiding in us as a deposit from the Holy Spirit.

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; ⁴⁰ and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from men; ⁴² but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

The price: A Narcissist cannot have the love of God in them because it has been supplanted by the love of self.

I turn toward men because they glorify me, and away from God because He seeks my humility and glory for Himself.

1 Kings 21:1-7

21 Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. ² Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money." ³ But Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers." ⁴ So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food.

Ahab is a textbook Narcissist. His happiness is dependent on getting his own way, all the time, undisputed.

The one word a Narcissist cannot handle is NO.

A Narcissist is a conflicted person- very sure of themselves, yet very fragile, requiring constant affirmation or they become DEPRESSED and/or ANXIOUS.

⁵ But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?" ⁶ So he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you a vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" ⁷ Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

Narcissists seek out other self-loving people as an adornment to themselves. People are USED by them.

When unrestrained self-love and leadership/authority are combined, the outcomes can be terrible.

A true Narcissist, left unchallenged and unchanged, is ultimately capable of ANYTHING.

What can save us from ourselves? Only the love of God!

Phillipians 2:1-11

Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. ³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Love of God is the only power that can free us from self-love.

When we live self-sacrificially, God brings exaltation in His timing, humility remains, and God receives the glory!

Romans 5:5

⁵ and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.