

Dying to self.

Is the self love that
is taught in modern
day churches
a false doctrine?



Death to self.

Jesus said there are two great commandments, one of which is to "love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:34-40).

But if we say we can't love others until we love ourselves, we are essentially saying Jesus gave us a third commandment.

In fact, without realizing it, we are suggesting that to love yourself is the second greatest commandment, for we are saying it comes before the commandment to serve others. We are saying that loving ourselves is a precondition to loving other people.

Philippians 2:2-4.

Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

JOY: Jesus first

 Yourself last & others in-between....



Dying to self.

The cross is recognised as a symbol of Christianity worldwide, but it is mostly seen as the cross that Jesus died on.

The fact of the matter is that Jesus spoke of the cross as something that everyone who wanted to be His disciple would have to take up if they wanted to follow Him.

Today I want to speak about the 2nd cross of Christianity.

1. The 1st cross is the one where Jesus died.
2. The 2nd cross is where you and I die if we want to follow Him.

To begin I want to recap a little on the ministry from December where we looked at the cost of following Jesus Christ before we performed the baptism in water for those who had requested it.

Dying

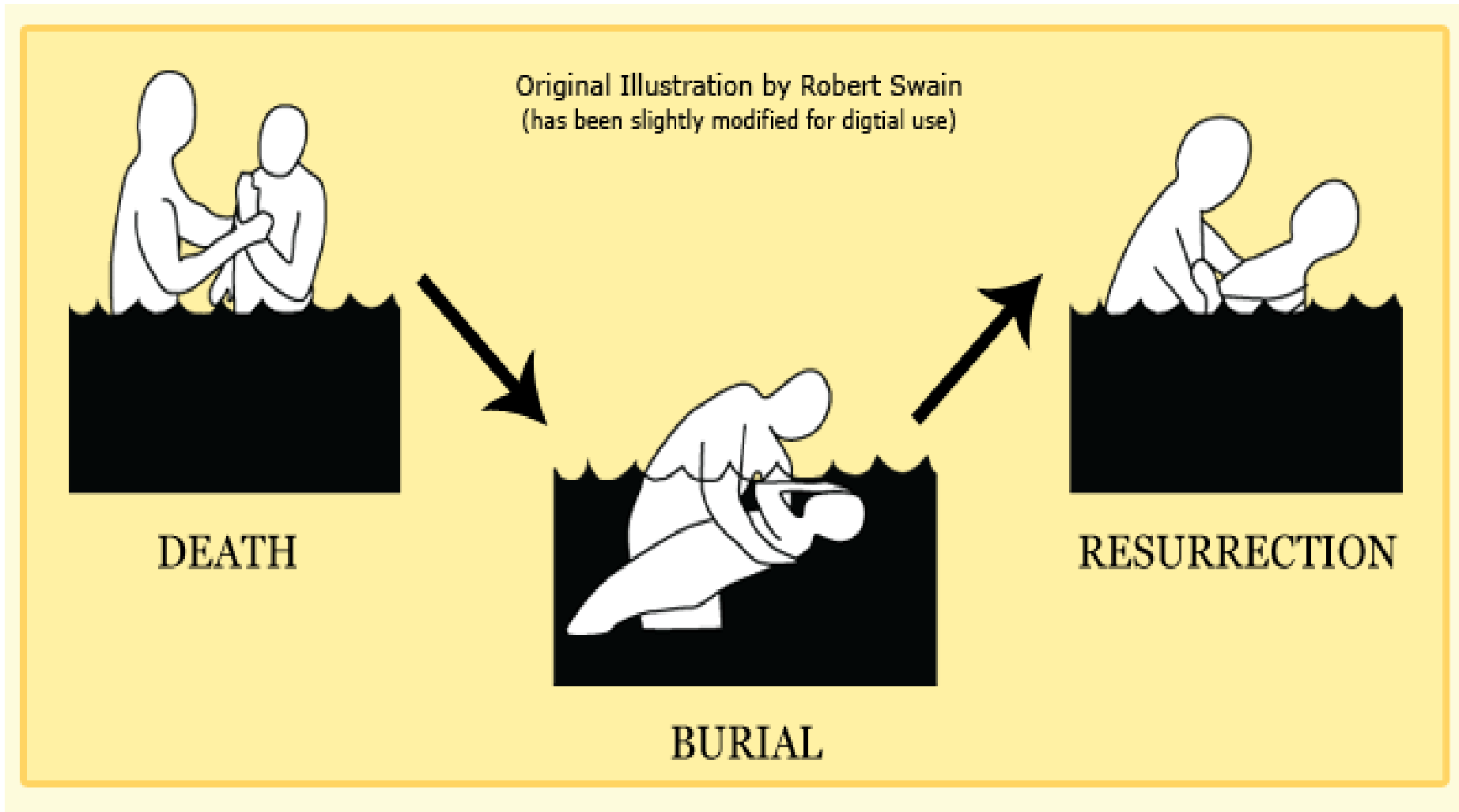
to

Self



The cost of following Jesus.

Baptism is symbolic of the cost involved in following Jesus, it is symbolic of the death of our life (A funeral, or burial) so that Christ can live His resurrected life through us.



The cost of discipleship.

Jesus didn't hide the cost when he called people to follow Him.

Luke 14:25-33.

Large crowds were travelling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, This person began to build and wasn't able to finish. Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace.

In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.

The cost of been chosen by God.

When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die.



Dietrich Bonhoeffer

- “When Christ calls a person, He bids him come and die.”
- Die to the world’s way of living, speaking & thinking.
- Die to my own passions, pleasures & desires.
- Christ bids us come and die so that we might fully live in Him alone.

Dying to sin.

When a person responds to the Gospel in repentance, recognizing their sinfulness and the goodness of God a change takes place within them that is referred to by Jesus as “Been born again”.

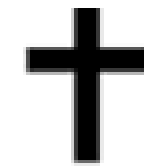
In this process there is a decision made by the person to die to sin and to live according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit that has taken up residence in the new believer.

1 Corinthians 5:17.

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is new creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.

This verse has to do with the inward transformation that takes place when a person repents and is “Born again”

Death of the sinful nature.....



DEAD

TO SIN

ALIVE IN

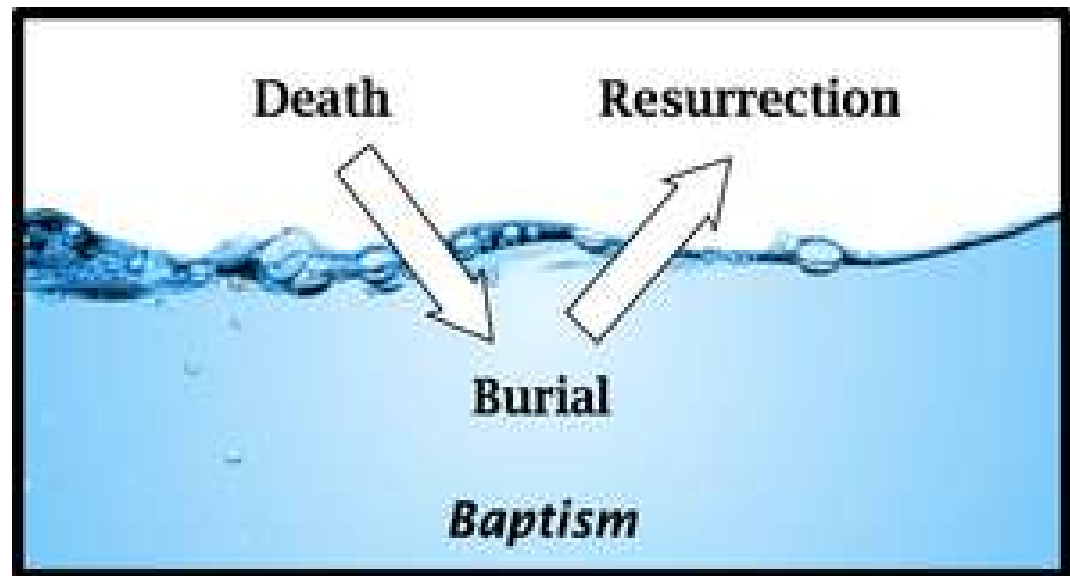
CHRIST

Romans 6:11

Dying to sin.

Romans 6:1-8.

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.



Dying to self.

There is also another death that is needed for the new believer and that is death to self.

This is not a once off occurrence, it is a daily requirement.

Luke 9:23-24.

Then he said to them all: Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

Galatians 2:20.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.



The false gospel of self esteem.

The modern day prosperity gospel totally contradicts the Gospel of self denial that Jesus and the Apostles preached.

"Christian counselling" has become a very prominent feature of the Church of Jesus Christ. The fact that the general area of "counselling" is rife with the philosophies of man results in great danger that the "wisdom" of this world will infiltrate the message of the Church at the expense of the wisdom of God. A growing deception found in Christian counselling (and throughout society) is the false gospel of "self-esteem" which is incompatible with the Biblical Gospel of the Cross of Jesus Christ.



The false gospel of self esteem.

Increasingly, the counselling mentality is that "low self-esteem" is the root cause of a teenager deciding to engage in pre-marital sex or of a house-wife who is always depressed. In fact, prominent Christian personalities can be heard to claim that society's greatest problem is that of "low self-esteem", and that everything from abortion, school drop-outs, teen pregnancy to rape, robbery, and poverty can be solved if only we help people to esteem themselves more highly; to love themselves more and more; and to realize their great self-worth!

Those of us who call ourselves Bible-believing Christians must ask some crucial questions.

- Is mankind's problem a lack of self-esteem or is it pride, self-centeredness and rebellion?
- Is the answer to our problem "building self-esteem" or is it brokenness and repentance at the foot of the Cross?
- And how about my "self-worth"? Doesn't God's Word say that in-and-of my "self" I am worthy of eternal hell?

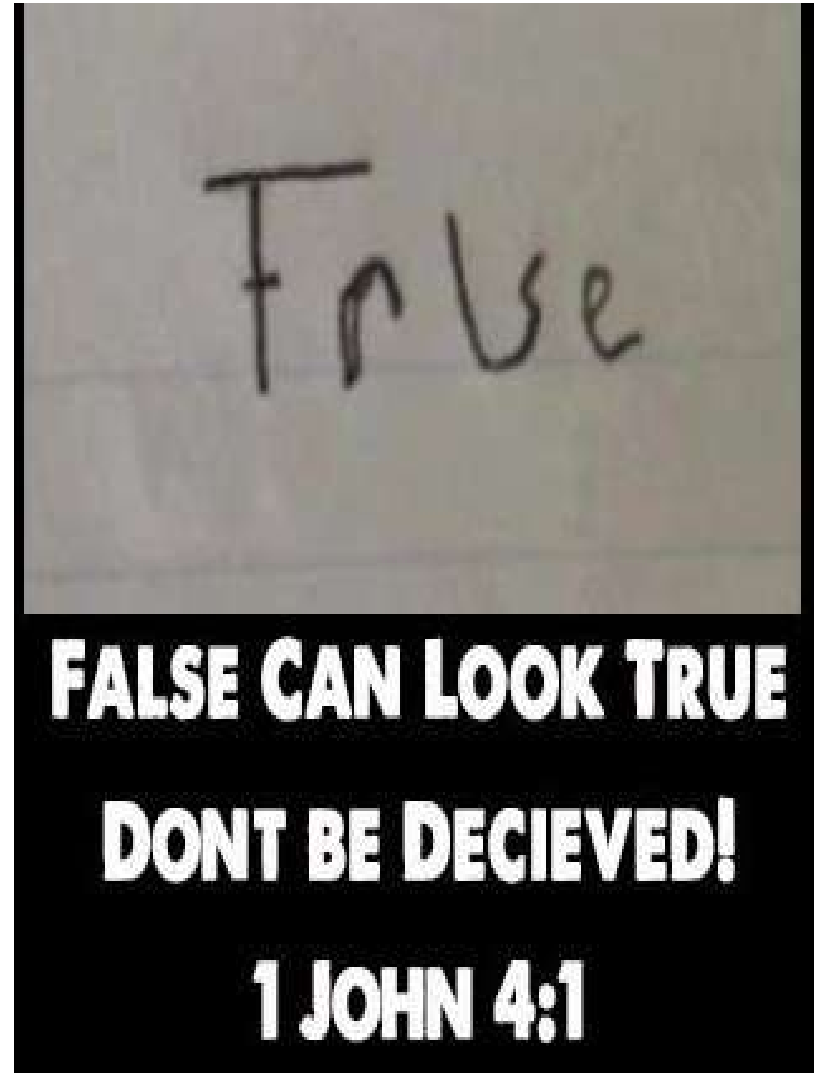
The false gospel of self esteem.

The origin of the theology of "selfism" can be found in Isaiah 14:12-14 where Satan's long list of self-exalting "I will's" are recorded.

Satan then took his message of "Self" to the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3 where, in the form of the serpent, he told Eve that she could be her own god and decide for herself what is right and wrong.

Revelation 12:9. says,

"...that serpent, Satan, who deceives the whole world."



The false gospel of self esteem.

Far from exalting or esteeming "self", Jesus says in Matthew 16 that we should deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow him.

- Jesus says in Matthew 22:34-40 that the two (not three, but two!) greatest commandments are to love God and to love your neighbour as yourself.
- Jesus wasn't, also, giving us a third commandment to love ourselves. He was acknowledging that even in our sin nature we love ourselves already: we feed ourselves, we clothe ourselves. He is saying, "Now, go and serve other people like you are already serving yourself." The whole Christian life is built upon dying to self and serving God and serving people. We are to our eyes off of self and fix "eyes on Jesus " Hebrews 12:2



Dying to self.

The Bible says that there is coming a one-world religion whose inspiration is the author of "Selfism".

May we never take part in synthesizing the Evangelical Church into that one-world religion.

1 Timothy 4:1 tells us that,

"In latter times some will abandon the faith and follow after seducing spirits and the doctrines of devils."

2 Timothy 3 warns,

"But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves..."

and chapter 3 goes on to list the inevitable results of a self-absorbed society.



Dying to self.

In fact, the fundamental call to salvation, the words of our Lord are utterly opposite how people think in our culture. We live in a culture of self love, to put it simply, a culture that is consumed with self love, ego building, self esteem, feeling good about yourself, thinking you're important, thinking you're valuable, thinking you're a hero, thinking you've achieved something, thinking you're worthy of honour. We're drowning in awards for everything imaginable and unimaginable. Parents are consumed with boosting the egos of their children with every imaginable means, as well as boosting their own sense of self value. This is the generation of self lovers

What does it mean to deny yourself?

Denying Our....

- Self-trust
- Self-sufficiency
- Right to run our own lives
- Love of ourselves

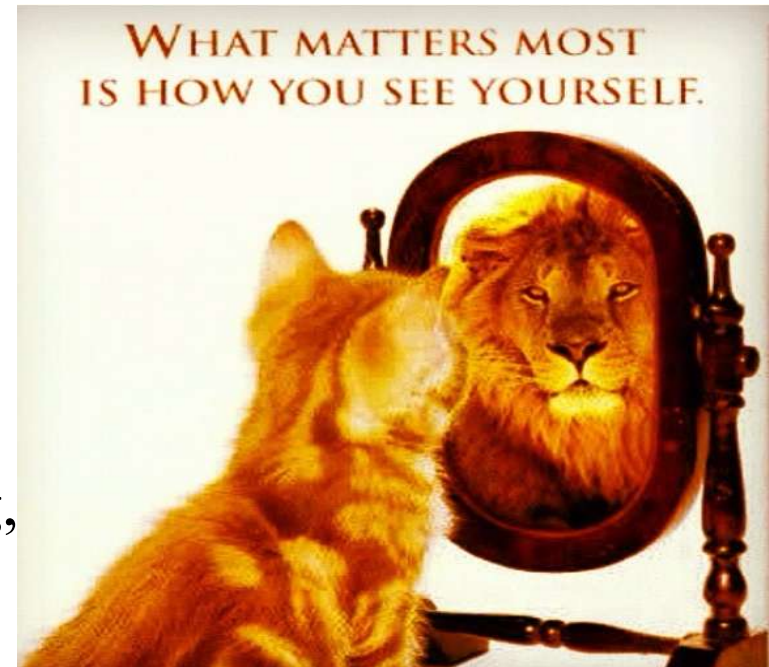
"People will be lovers of themselves"
2 Timothy 3:2

Dying to self.

A very well known mega church preacher gained the respect and admiration of Oprah after he gave a sermon called “The Power of I Am.”

Students of Scripture, familiar with Exodus 3:14, might assume that such a sermon would be focused on the power of God, but in fact the *I Am* that he has in mind is not YHWH but us. “When you wake up in the morning, don’t focus on all your flaws,” he says. “Instead, look in the mirror and dare to

say “I am beautiful, I am young, I am vibrant, I am confident, I am secure.”” According to him, the words we use to talk about ourselves have power to shape how we actually are. Therefore, rather than focusing on God’s Word, we should focus on our own words, seeking to mould ourselves through the power of positive thinking into the kind of happy, successful people that God wants us to be.



Dying to self.

The narcissist test: Are you too self-obsessed?

(The Telegraph (January 2016)

Don't worry if you show signs of narcissism. It may sound vain and egotistical, but a little self-love can go a long way. Narcissists are an unpopular bunch, typically associated with the brash egomaniacs on reality TV or pouting selfie - fanatics. But we shouldn't be too quick to flinch from self-adoration, says a Harvard psychologist.

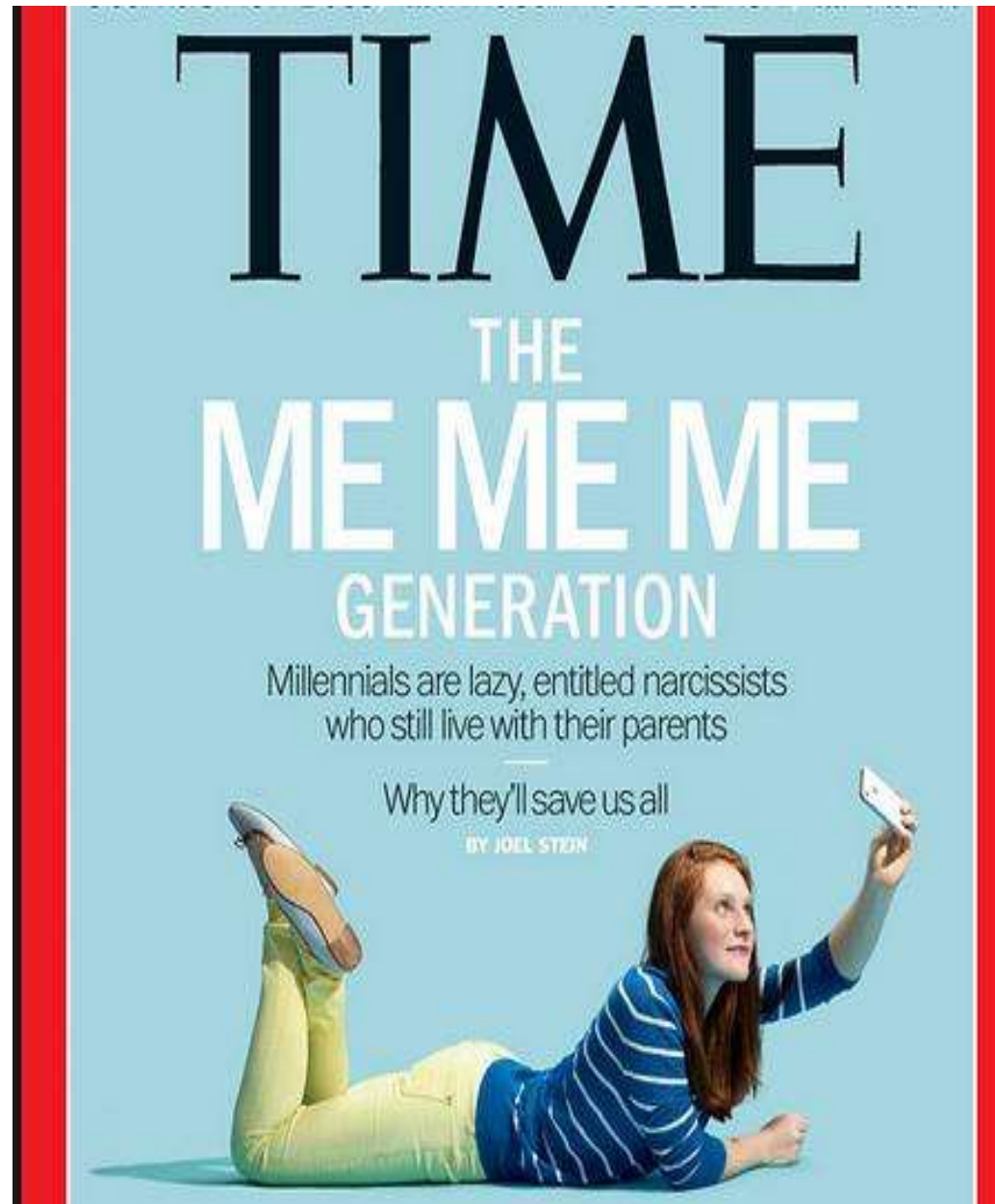
This is what the world says and sadly the same principle of self love is being preached from pulpits today.



Dying to self.

2 Corinthians 11:3-4.

But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.



Dying to self.

We must distinguish between the sinful nature and “SELF”

Adam and Eve did not start off with a sinful nature but thinking only of themselves led them into sin.

Genesis 3:6.

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Jesus did not have a sinful nature but he had to deny himself and do the will of the Father.

Matthew 26:39.

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

The flesh says	God's Word says
I don't feel like praying	1 Thessalonians 5:17. <i>Pray without ceasing</i>
I don't feel like reading the Bible	Colossians 3:16. <i>Let the Word of God dwell in you richly</i>
I don't feel like praising	Philippians 4:4. <i>Rejoice in the Lord always</i>
I don't feel like going to church	Hebrews 10:25. <i>Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together</i>
I don't feel like fasting	Matthew 6:7. <i>But When you fast (not if you fast)</i>
We are saved because Jesus did what he did not feel like doing but chose to do the Father's will	Matthew 26:41. <i>Watch and pray so that you temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak</i>

Dying to self.

Jesus led by example and rebuked Peter as an instrument of Satan when he spoke against what Jesus had said.

Mark 8: 31-35.

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.

Before we judge Peter too harshly let us look at him more closely.

Peter had made great sacrifices to follow Jesus.

Mark 10:23-31.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, Who then can be saved? Jesus looked at them and said, With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.

Then Peter spoke up, We have left everything to follow you! Truly I tell you, Jesus replied, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields along with persecutions and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Praying vs sleeping.

The flesh wants it's needs and desires to be put first and that is why Peter and the other disciples were not praying with Jesus in the garden on the night he was betrayed.

Matthew 26:36-46. *He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me. Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, My Father.....Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour? he asked Peter. Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away a second time and prayed..... When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time..... Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come, and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!*

Ruling vs serving.

Luke 22:24-32.

A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

In this context Jesus gets up and he washes the feet of his disciples...

Ruling vs serving.

Some use ministry as a means to serve their own ego's and deficiencies instead of using it to serve others and the Lord.

It is not about us, it is about the Lord and His people that He has given us the privilege of serving as unto Him.

The Church is at times to blame for this as people are put into positions of responsibility without been proven faithful in small things.

1. Samuel opened the doors to the house of the Lord **1 Samuel 3:15.**
2. Elisha served Elijah **11 Kings 3:11.**
3. Joshua served Moses **Exodus 24:13.**
4. David looked after sheep **1 Samuel 17:28.**

What about you are you wanting to serve or to be served?

Paul had Timothy.

Philippians 2:19-24.

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare.

For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.

I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

We don't need people who love themselves, the world and the church are full of them, we need those who love the Lord with all their hearts and are compelled by that love to serve him and their fellow man.

We need a Holy Ghost revival to bring a self absorbed church to it's knees in true repentance.

Audio (WMA) and text (PDF) ministry

FREE MINISTRY DOWNLOADS



AUTHOR: Ken Paynter

- ❑ For more ministry downloads visit:
<http://www.agfbrakpan.co.za/ministry-archives.aspx>
- ❑ For more ministry downloads by Ken Paynter visit:
<http://www.agfbrakpan.co.za/ministry-archives.aspx?speaker=Ken%20Paynter>

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

- ❑ NOTE 1: Biblical illustrations by Jim Padgett, courtesy of <http://sweetpublishing.com>
- ❑ Unless otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are taken from the NIV:
 - THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
- ❑ Scripture quotations taken from the NASB:
 - New American Standard Bible®,
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977,
1995 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission. (<http://www.Lockman.org>)