

An Enemy of the Home/What Am I?

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Phil. 2:1-4; 2 Tim. 3:1-7

- We can be our own worst enemy, like Eve, who was persuaded that her will was "autonomous" (answerable to no "law" outside of herself) - Gen. 3:1-6.
- Humanism elevates man to the place occupied by God and teaches the preeminence of this (self).
- Obsession with this (self) can show up in a variety of ways:
 - Self-absorption* (narcissism).
 - Self-glorification* (vanity, arrogance, boastfulness).
 - Self-service* (selfishness, greed).
 - Self-will* (stubbornness).
 - Self-obedience* (lawlessness).
 - Self-indulgence* (gratifying the lusts of the flesh)
- All destructively undermine family, church and community.

Turns true worship into idolatry.

- Idolatry puts someone/something else in God's place - e.g. Col. 3:5-11.
- Replacing God's will with *human* (self) will is the essence of sin - Gen. 3:1-6.
- Rom. 1:18-25 "*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient*" (v. 28).
- Elevates human tradition – Mk. 7:6-8, v. 13 "*making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.*"

Degrades relationships with those who should be closest to us.

- This may be masked in different ways:
- In indulging children, lack of discipline, buying affection - children learn to hate & harm those who disrespect their sense of self.
- In loving only those who love us – Mat. 5:43-48; Lk. 6:35.
Some churches attempt to attract people by focusing on self: the gospel of wealth, entertainment, designer worship; social agenda becomes central rather than serving and glorifying God.
- **What has happened to the institution of marriage is one evidence of the destruction of human relationships that results from this (Me-First) philosophy.**

- In contrast – Eph. 5:21; Phil. 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.**"

We damage the very thing (self) that we worship.

- Self-respect comes from **doing our duty**, e.g. Ecc. 12:13.
 - Involves obeying God and serving others selflessly.
 - When we are centered on *this* (self), serving others is unimportant.
 - It is the basis for most addictions and obsessions.
 - Keeps us away from the only environment provided by God by which we are provoked unto love and good works (Heb. 10:22-25).
 - Keeps from service except when "convenient," or profitable to *this* (self).
 - Causes us to reject the counsel of godly Christians.
 - Keeps many from obeying the gospel/surrendering this (self) to Christ.
 - Will keep multitudes out of heaven.
- The truth about *human dignity* (self-respect) is embodied in Jesus' words – Mt. 20:20-28.
 - Not from the "*Be Somebody*" philosophy
 - Rather, from the "*Serve Somebody*" philosophy.
- Christ calls us to help the helpless (Jas. 1:27) – **we will never know the real meaning of service, or appreciate the fulfillment of it, until we serve those who have nothing with which to repay us; when doing our duty to God becomes its own reward.**
- To love and care for our brethren (Jas. 2:15-17).
- To preach the gospel to all creation (Mk. 16:15).

Decision:

- Paul predicted a time when "men will be lovers of themselves..." (2 Tim. 3:2).
- **WHAT AM I? LOVE OF SELF/SELFISHNESS...**
- Could there be a more accurate description of our age?
- What could be more harmful to family & church?
- Jesus' example is selfless - Jn. 13:14-15, 34-35. Cf. Phil. 2:5-8.
- We can do nothing better than to do the same.