



"FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE."

Dispensing good where'er He came,
The labors of his life were love;
Then if we bear the Saviour's name,
By his example let us move."

Selfishness.

SELFISHNESS is how defined by Webster?

"That supreme self-love or self-preference which leads a person to direct his purposes to the advancement of his own interest, power, or happiness, without regarding those of others."

2. What specific commandment forbids this sin?

"Thou shalt not covet." Ex. 20 : 17.

3. Selfishness, then, is contrary to what law?

"If ye fulfill the *royal law* according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well." James 2 : 8.

4. How does it show itself in the conduct of an individual?

- (1.) *As Lovers of Self.* — "For men shall be *lovers of their own selves, covetous.*" 2 Tim. 3 : 2.
- (2.) *As Pleasing Ourselves.* — "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and *not to please ourselves.*" Rom. 15 : 1.
- (3.) *As Seeking Our Own.* — "Even as I please all men in all things, *not seeking mine own profit*, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." 1 Cor. 10 : 33.
- (4.) *As Seeking after Gain.* — "Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand : they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter." Isa. 56 : 11.
- (5.) *As Seeking Undue Precedence.* — "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." Matt. 20 : 21.
- (6.) *As Neglect of the Poor.* — "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John 3 : 17.
- (7.) *As Performing Duty for Reward.* — "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money ; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us ? none evil can come upon us." Micah 3 : 11.

5. Show that selfishness is inconsistent with the communion of saints.

"There should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." 1 Cor. 12 : 25, 26. Read the connection from verse 12.

6. Prove that it is contrary to Christian charity, or love.

"Charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, *seeketh not her own*, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." 1 Cor. 13 : 4, 5.

7. How are we admonished with regard to selfishness?

"Let no man seek his own." 1 Cor. 10 : 24. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Phil. 2 : 4. Read also Zech. 7 : 9, 10.

8. By what means may we overcome selfishness?

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. 5 : 14, 15.

9. How prevalent is this sin?

"For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." Phil. 2 : 21.

10. What among other things will help to make the last days a perilous time?

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be *lovers of their own selves*, covetous," etc. 2 Tim. 3 : 1, 2.

11. Can we be followers of Christ without overcoming selfishness?

"If any man will come after me, let him *deny* himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matt. 16 : 24.

12. Show that Christ condemned selfishness by his example.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." 2 Cor. 8 : 9. "For even Christ pleased not himself." Rom. 15 : 3.

13. What should this lead us to do?

"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification." Rom. 15 : 2.

14. What example has the apostle Paul given us in this respect?

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." 1 Cor. 10 : 33 ; 9 : 19-23.

15. Give some Bible examples of selfishness.

Cain (Gen. 4 : 9); Nabal (1 Sam. 25 : 3, 11); Haman (Esther 6 : 6); princes (Isa. 1 : 23); priests (Isa. 56 : 10, 11); James and John (Mark 10 : 35-37); the multitude (John 6 : 24-26).

16. What is the condition, and what will be the final punishment, of those who continue to be governed by selfishness?

"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." Jude 11-13.

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 WHEN, my Saviour, shall I be
 Perfectly resigned to thee?
 Poor and vile in my own eyes,
 Only in thy wisdom wise;

Only thee content to know,
 Ignorant of all below;
 Only guided by thy light,
 Only mighty in thy might?

Fully in my life express
 All the heights of holiness;
 Sweetly let my spirit prove
 All the depths of humble love.

CHARLES WESLEY.

