

Gospel Identity 8

It's All (No Longer) About Me

Last session we talked about idolatry. This session we are going to discuss one root cause of idolatry, selfishness and self-centeredness. Just a few problems that arise from a self-centered life are; self-generated righteousness, self-deception, and self-pity. Many more problems arise from a self-centered life style, let's discuss a few now.

First off self-generated righteousness. What the heck is it? Basically it is the idea that we know better than everyone around us, our parents, our friends, our teachers. Let's look at a few ways we may act righteous.

Health-righteous: you don't eat well or take care of yourself, therefore I will step in and tell you how it's done.

Grammar Nazi: O mi gooosh, howe derr yew spelt sumthin wrung. Ay musd Currekt yew.

Holiday righteousness: You work on Christmas? Shame, on you. Don't you know little baby Jesus delivers presents on Christmas?

Sports-righteous: who taught you how to throw/kick/catch/shoot/dribble/control/carry/tackle a ball? **Or** Why would you pick THAT team, don't you know their city hates baby's? It's true I heard it on the internet!

Theology/ideology-righteousness: How dare you claim to be a Christian. Do you even own a wwd bracelet?

Fashion-righteous: Wow, why would you wear that to church? Don't you know Jesus only wants you to wear your best.

Political-righteousness: If you don't vote for _____ you must be a nincompoop.

My-righteousness: How dare you criticize me?! My farts smell like roses!

Can you think of any **self-righteousness** we may commit?

1. Do any of these describe how you get righteous on others? If so describe how you say it to them.

We love acting better than others, and treating others like they are worse off without our amazing advice and wisdom. But this type of self-righteousness does not come from God. Let's give each other some grace here and explore this topic a little more.

Please read **Luke 11:37-54** then discuss.

2. What kinds of acts of self-righteousness does Jesus accuse the Pharisees of?
3. What acts does Jesus tell them to do instead, and why?

Please read **Romans 1:18-32** then discuss.

4. What do verses **18-21** tell us about our own self-deception?

5. How does self-deceit lead towards more outward sins described in verses **28-31**?

Please have different people read **John 12:3-8**; **Luke 22:3-6**; and **Matthew 27:1-5** then discuss the following.

6. How does Judas slide into a state of self-pity and despair through these 3 passages? What was the core of his downward spiral?
7. Whatever direction self-centeredness takes us; it takes us away from Jesus. So what are we saying to Jesus when we choose any of the self-centered behaviors?
8. Maybe we think we are doing something good, but are actually being self-righteous, how do we make sure we aren't doing this?

The root of pride and self-righteousness comes from your old-self. Your old-self wants to go in the opposite direction of God. Pride and self-righteousness will hinder our relationships with others because it will make us think we are better than we are.

Read **Ephesians 4:22-24** then answer the questions and discuss. You are going to be creating your own weekly challenge this week, so make sure you make time to contact your partner.

9. Where in your life are you still trying to hold on to your "Old-self"? Be as honest as you need to be with each other. Where are your constant struggles with life?
10. What is one practical way you can put off your old self and be made new in Christ? Write your answer below and have it be your weekly challenge.

Pray for each other as you end group.