



Title: Defeating narcissism
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One of today's top enemies of discipleship and self-denial is called **narcissism** –

Definition: “excessive self-admiration and self-centredness”

A. Paul's description of the last days

2 Timothy 3:1–5 (NRSV) ¹ You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. ² For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, brutes, haters of good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid them!

Narcissism can manifest itself on 3 love levels :

Lovers of self

Lovers of money

Lovers of pleasure

- An individualistic focus – the basis for greed
- My freedom to make my own choices, whether right or wrong
- relativism
- Our demand is to be happy whatever it takes
- love of pleasure, hedonism

“Looking good and feeling good had replaced being good and doing good.”

B. Augustine explains the 3 types selfish men:

- The one who seeks what he cannot obtain suffers torture
- The one who has got what is not desirable feels cheated
- The one who seeks what is not worth seeking is diseased

C. How does Jesus confront the narcissistic worldview?

Luke 9:23–24 (NRSV) ²³ Then he said to them all, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it.

- **Changing our focus and changing our orientation (positioning)**
- **Focusing on who we are becoming**
 - ☐ Denying yourselves
 - there is a higher cause
 - ☐ Take up your cross
 - obedience that is relevant for our season
 - ☐ Follow Jesus
 - staying connected to the divine timetable

D. How do we fight narcissism and disciple people in this culture?

1 John 2:15–17 (NRSV) ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; ¹⁶ for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.

1. Discipline:

- Love the right things(desire)
- In the right order(divine order)
- In the right way(divine methodology)

1 Peter 5:8 (NRSV) ⁸ Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour.

2. Resist :

- Soberness
- Watchfulness

John 4:34 (NRSV) ³⁴ Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.

3. Obedience

- Find true rest in obedience

Luke 18:29–30 (NKJV) ²⁹ So He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰ who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

E. Conclusion

“The focus on the eternal perspective”