

Theme: False Christian Assumptions

Assumption 1 "It's selfish to have my needs met."

Job 30:25-27

Sarah was having a terrible day. Well actually a terrible life. Exhausted and lonely one day, she flipped on the radio and tuned in to her favorite Christian station. "So you're down, troubled, lonely, you're under crushing pressure. You wonder if things will ever change for you," the preacher was saying. Is he reading my mind? She thought, turning up the volume. "There's an answer," he announced. "Stop thinking of yourself and start thinking of others! Get off the pity pot. Repent of your self-absorption and find peace in sharing." Sarah's heart dropped. Peace in sharing? I've been sharing myself all weekend, and I'm in pieces, not at peace. She immediately felt guilty for her thoughts. I guess he's right, she thought bleakly. I'm just being selfish. As she flipped through her church bulletin to find another committee to volunteer for, she despaired about herself and her life.

Every day, well-intentioned ministers teach this same crazy-making, false Christian assumption: "It's selfish to have my needs met." On the surface this principle sounds Christian, but a deeper look reveals just the opposite. It's like someone saying, "I saw you at the gas station last night filling your car's tank. You need to be filling other people's tanks with that gas."

Jesus values our needs. In fact, He created us to be needy to help us to grow and be closer to Him. He intended for us to be incomplete in and of ourselves. He made us to be relationally dependent on Him and His body. He made us in such a way that we must reach out to survive.

A. The Root of the Problem:

B. A Biblical View of Needs:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain how getting your needs met can indeed be good stewardship rather than selfishness (see Galatians 6.5).
2. Why would God build dependency into all of us (1 Corinthians 12.21)? What can we experience and learn from that dependency that we might not experience and learn otherwise?
3. Each of us is to be functionally independent and, at the same time, relationally dependent. Explain this statement and evaluate how you're doing on both counts.
4. The Bible teaches that having our needs met frees us to meet the needs of others without resentment. God's Word teaches that the most comforting people in the world are those who have been comforted; the most understanding people are those who have been understood; and the most loving people are those who have been loved (Luke 7.47; 2 Corinthians 1.3-4; 9.6-7).

It is not selfish to have your needs met. Jesus created us to be needy so that we would draw close to Him and other people.

For Further Study/discussion

Read Matthew 5:3-6

Jesus is describing some needy people in these verses. But is he criticizing them for having needs? No. He's meeting their needs. Jesus wants people with needs. These needs draw us closer to Him and to other people. Our needs help us to be humble, since we can't "do it on our own." Our needs help us to grow because they force us to realize that we must look to God for the answers to our needs. His answers lead us to maturity, "attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). Our needs help us to be real.

Read Matthew 7:17-18

If God built us to have needs, then letting those needs go unmet can cause major problems in our lives. Just as neglecting regular oil changes will destroy your car's engine, neglecting our God-given, legitimate needs will cripple us. Bad fruits or symptoms are God's way of letting us know that something is wrong. Feelings of depression, anxiety, eating disorders, compulsive behaviors, and the like are all symptoms of a deeper problem. These symptoms let us know that we are not getting our needs met.