

“They have their reward”

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“Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?

They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them.” (Gal 4:16-17)

“Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!” (Ps 37:7)

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The purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God's message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.

Introductory Remarks

My Mother used to remark about people who make a show of their good works; or wealth to impress ministers; or use all sorts of unethical means to gain favours, positions or 'opportunities to serve' as they like to say; or to isolate others for ambitious purposes.

The principle is this:

"They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, and **they love the place of honor** at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues **and greetings** in the marketplaces and being called rabbi by others."
(Matt 23:5-7)

They love to be acknowledged and thought of in high esteem – in the wrong, selfish way for a number of reasons. One is so that they can be recognized and thus ordained; or to gain a following within the Church.

My Mum said that "they have their reward" quoting Jesus Christ. Let us read His words for ourselves:

"Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for **then you will have no reward** from your Father who is in heaven.

Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. **Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.**

But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. **Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.**

But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you." (Matt 6:1-6. Cf Luke 6:24 and James 2:1-10)



A truly strong person does not need the approval of others any more than a lion needs the approval of sheep.

If one aspires to gain something one is not supposed to gain, but obtains it (eg accolades or positions or social status), then they have their reward now in this life. One will not receive their reward (or have a reduced reward) in the Kingdom.

Unfortunately humans have a weakness where they do something for gain. Or to 'feather their nest.' Or to gain accolades. Or to get noticed to enhance their chances of a position and such like.

"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark 8:36-38)

This should stand out as a warning to all of us.

The way of GET or selfishness is the opposite to the way of GIVE or outgoing love and concern for others. This way is one of empathy and feelings for others. Of self-sacrifice and extending a hand of help.

But those with ambition despise and almost invariably trample over others; doing all they can to isolate others is a serious sin:

"He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, **and treated others with contempt [KJV "despised others"]**:

"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.'" (Luke 18:9-11)

So why do some despise others? Why do they look down at others?

Ask yourself "is that a Godly attitude?" or narcissistic smugness?

Now let us answer the above questions:

- Jealousy of others – seeing them as competitors and thus isolating them by slander, gossip, refusing to accept invitations and refusing to invite others
- Considering others as inferiors and ‘there is a bad smell’ around them (one which they created)
- While some might be a little different, mistreating them is shocking – but their differences offend greatly the snooty, mightier than thou people
- Cliquishness to form an inner circle – a power elite that has all the opportunities and freezing others out. Having cornered the social market they can dictate the terms of fellowship

But what does the Bible say?

“I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices;

...

who say, "Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you." These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all the day.” (Is 65:2, 5)

“There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him:

haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.” (Prov 6:16-19)

“Not that we dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. **But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.**” (II Cor 10:12) [ie they look down upon the poor and those different]

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, **but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.**

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:3-5)

“For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” (I John 3:11)

Looking out for the needs of others – thinking about their wants – now that is a novel idea!

One characteristic of these people who practice the way of GET is how they eschew the lowly within the Church. Instead, they 'hob nob' with those of influence or in a position, appearing so 'sweet and innocent' before them. They prefer those well off and those with nice homes so that they can socialize together.

By this method they gain their wishes – their goals are attained – often at the expense of others.

“Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.” (Rom 12:6)

“My brothers, **show no partiality** as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. **For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing** and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? **But you have dishonored the poor man.** Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?” (James 2:1-7)

“But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?

Little children, **let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.**” (1John 3:17-18)

To be quite frank, to be hospitable to and to treat others well - this is so well known by athiests, Hindus, Buddhists et al that it defies belief when one is exposed to the rank carnality or selfishness by those that should know a whole lot better.

Jealousy and Envy

What are the causes for such behaviours?

Don't they realise that one sin begets another? For instance one has to descend into tactics to undermine others such as involving gossip, slander, avoidings, refusal to recognize them and so it goes.

Being political, having ambition which leads to trampling over others, self-centredness, showing off and such-like is not of God. These fit within the 'fruit of the flesh' that Paul warned of such as jealousy. It is an attention addiction – like little children

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of

the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

idolatry, sorcery, **enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,**

envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Gal 5:16-21)

“But if you have bitter jealousy and **selfish ambition** in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth.

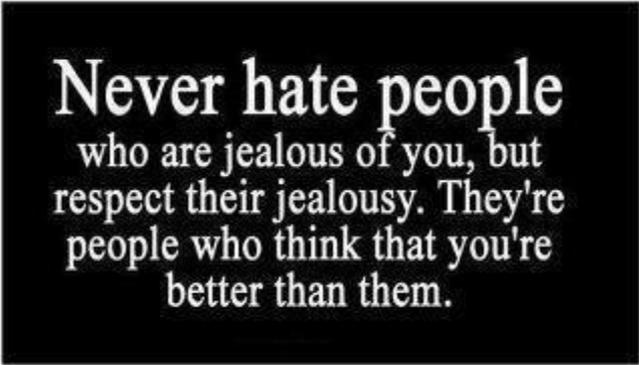
This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, **demonic.**” (James 3:14-15)

So, for those that think that all they have to do is just go to Church on the Sabbath. Or to keep Sabbath in accordance with the letter of the Law. Others go along to Church and come away disappointed by the utter piffle that is preached. While others visit other groups to obtain spiritual nourishment and fellowship.

The Sabbath should be a time of asking others about their needs; of arranging get-togethers; looking out for others – that is to me Millennial in a sense. It is not the time for selfishness and ambition!

It is a time to represent the Messiah: to learn and practice they way of GIVE and not of GET.

My friends, Sabbath-observance is not only about church attendance – it is also a spiritual experience. One that seeks to serve others and not finding justification for selfishness and clique-ism – building up walls between their selves and others to form an ‘in-group’ of power hungry people.



Never hate people
who are jealous of you, but
respect their jealousy. They're
people who think that you're
better than them.

The Sabbath is not there to say ‘how are you’ and then rush off to one’s inner power group acting selfishly.

Such a charade!

Behaviours of Sabbath and Feast observance can be an act or to look good to others or ministers. Like wearing a mask to hide one's true identity of lying, gossip, fornication, false doctrines and so on. Sabbath observance is a sign of true believers. It can also be used as a time to appear righteous and innocent. (refer to the **Appendix. Things Narcissists Do** for further insights).

Under the mask lurks all sorts of things. You see, on the surface one appears so generous or pious. But under the mask is one desperate to be acknowledged and praised by humans, placing one in a position toward ordination; or gaining a social following.

But all glory should be directed to God Whom gave us wealth, opportunities and gifts.

Tragically, they have their reward. Notice:

“... that there may be no division in the body, but that **the members may have the same care for one another.**” (1Cor 12:25)

“I appeal to you, brothers, to **watch out [KJV= avoid] for those who cause divisions and create obstacles** contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. [ie those that do not care for others are causing division]

For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, **and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.** [cp Dan 11:34]

For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but **I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.**” (Rom 16:17-19)

“... that we may be mutually **encouraged by each other's faith**, both yours and mine.” (Rom 1:12)

So, by not caring for others properly is causing division!

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace, patience**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.” (Gal 5:22-26)

So many people are unaware of the cunning nature of the envious – jealous of the accomplishments or talents of others.

There are many ways such a jealous person may operate. For instance, because their self-centredness and jealousy makes them feel threatened by another, they must undermine them, leave them off invite lists, undermine them and undertake means to isolate them so that they feel unwanted and attend Church seldom.

Another way of putting it is that they 'have the spirit of competition' – that is they see the other person as a rival. They become envious.

“Envy is the feeling of disapproval by hearing the successes of others. This term is always used in the negative or evil sense in the New Testament. Some preachers in Rome evidently resented Paul’s success in ministry.

It takes maturity to rejoice in the success of others. Immaturity constantly compares self with others. **Juvenile Christians are intimidated by the accomplishments of others.**

Envy not only means to desire to have what someone else has but to seek to deprive another person of what they have. In other words, in some way envy seeks to diminish the accomplishments of others. If a church in town is blessed with significant growth, another church may say “all they are concerned about is numbers.” Envy never builds up; it always lessens the person who exercises it. “Envy is rottenness to the bones” (Proverbs 14:30); envy will rot the core of our person.

When people feel diminished by the success of others there is a corollary that always comes with this—strife. Strife is an expression of enmity. These two evils are stitched together in James 3:16, “For where envy and self-seeking (strife) exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.” People try to outdo and eclipse others where there is envy in motivation.

Churches are often neutralized because of this deadly combination. Think of a church full of people threatened by everybody else. Strife is inevitable.” (Grant Richardson, *Verse by Verse Commentary* online)

It is the ‘tall poppy syndrome’ – cut down and even eliminate those one is jealous and envious of. Some cultures have this characteristic so imbedded that they do this as second nature and go into denial mode when this attitude is brought to their attention. (refer to the **Appendix. Things Narcissists Do** for further insights).

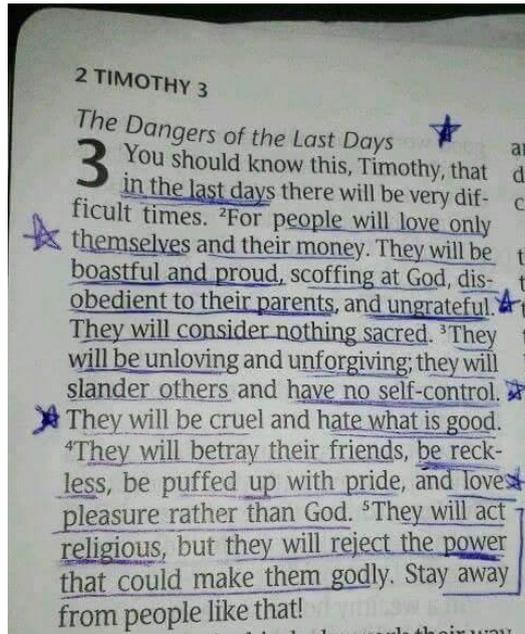
They will put their own family and inner group of friends against you – subtly or aggressively. Where is the fruit of the spirit or the beatitudes in all of this? The Sabbath is not the time to do this.

To overcome this sin, one must show concern and compassion for others. You know, do even the little things for others by considering their needs and anticipating what the other person needs or wants.

The sin of inconsideration and of ingratitude persists with people who have ingrained within them the GET way of life instead of the GIVE way.

For those that suffer at their hands both within and without the Church, God assures us

“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Cor 4:8-9)



Will they become your enemy?

These sorts of people may become your enemy! By such, their Sabbath charade is exposed.

Both Old and New Testaments have a lot to say about the enemies of God's people – from both within and without the congregation. Here are a few samples from the books of Psalms:

"Arise, Lord! Deliver me, my God! Strike all my enemies on the jaw; break the teeth of the wicked." (Ps 3:7)

"All my enemies will be overwhelmed with shame and anguish; they will turn back and suddenly be put to shame." (Ps 6:10)

"Arise, LORD, in your anger; rise up against the rage of my enemies. Awake, my God; decree justice." (Ps 7:6)

"Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger." (Ps 8:2)

"How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?" (Ps 13:2)

"I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not turn back till they were destroyed. I crushed them so that they could not rise; they fell beneath my feet. You armed me with strength for battle; you humbled my adversaries before me. You made my enemies turn their backs in flight, and I destroyed my foes. They cried for help, but there was no one to save them— to the Lord, but he did not answer. I beat them as fine as windblown dust; I

trampled them like mud in the streets. You have delivered me from the attacks of the people; you have made me the head of nations." (Ps 18:37-43)

"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." (Ps 23:5)

"I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me." (Ps 25:2)

"See how numerous are my enemies and how fiercely they hate me! Guard my life and rescue me; do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you." (Ps 25:19-20)

"I will exalt you, Lord, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me." (Ps 30:1)

My all-time favourite Psalm dealing with enemies is Psalm 55:1-23

Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not yourself from my plea for mercy!
Attend to me, and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and I moan,
because of the noise of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked. For they drop trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me.

My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death have fallen upon me.
Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me.

And I say, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest;
yes, I would wander far away; I would lodge in the wilderness; *Selah*
I would hurry to find a shelter from the raging wind and tempest."

Destroy, O Lord, divide their tongues; for I see violence and strife in the city.
Day and night they go around it on its walls, and iniquity and trouble are within it;

ruin is in its midst; oppression and fraud do not depart from its marketplace.

For it is not an enemy who taunts me— then I could bear it; it is not an adversary who deals insolently with me— then I could hide from him.

But it is you, a man, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend.

We used to take sweet counsel together; within God's house we walked in the throng.

Let death steal over them; let them go down to Sheol alive; for evil is in their dwelling place and in their heart.

But I call to God, and the LORD will save me.

Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he hears my voice.

He redeems my soul in safety from the battle that I wage, for many are arrayed against me.

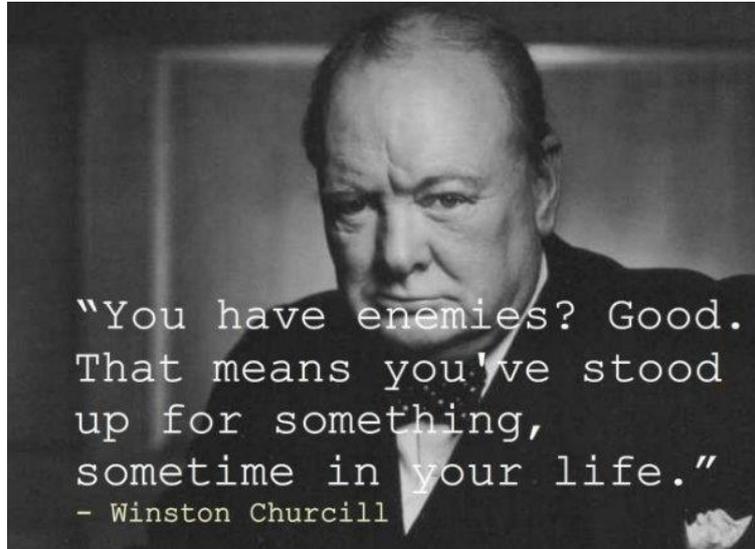
God will give ear and humble them, he who is enthroned from of old, *Selah*
because they do not change and do not fear God.

My companion stretched out his hand against his friends; he violated his covenant.

His speech was smooth as butter, yet war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords.

Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

But you, O God, will cast them down into the pit of destruction; men of blood and treachery shall not live out half their days. But I will trust in you.: (Cp Ps 54:1-7)



Internal attacks and deviousness to cause grievous spiritual harm is not of God.

"To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy. A Miktam of David, when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to kill him. Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; protect me from those who rise up against me;

deliver me from those who work evil, and save me from bloodthirsty men.

For behold, they lie in wait for my life; fierce men stir up strife against me. For no transgression or sin of mine, O LORD, for no fault of mine, they run and make ready. Awake, come to meet me, and see! ...

My God in his steadfast love will meet me; God will let me look in triumph on my enemies." (Ps 59:1-4, 10) [cp Ps 37:24, 32]

"As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.: (Luke 13:17)

Relevant Scriptures

Here are a few Scriptures to dwell upon that reveal further about the attitudes discussed so far. They are also somewhat confronting to all of us.

“If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest.” (Ex 22:25)

“There will always be some in the land who are poor. That is why I am commanding you to share freely with the poor and with other Israelites in need.” (Deut 15:11)

“Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist them.” (Job 29:11-12)

“And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends. And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.” (Job 42:10)

“Blessed are they who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times!”
(Ps 106:3)

“Light dawns in the darkness for the upright; he is gracious, merciful, and righteous.

It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice.

For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever.” (Ps 112:4-6)

“A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is his delight.

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.” (Prov 11:1-3)

“One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.

Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.

Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.” (Prov 11:24-25, 28).

“Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? ... **if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.**” (Is 58:7, 10).

“As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share” (ITim 6:17-18).

“Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.” (Prov 14:31) [cp James 2:6]

“A just balance and scales are the LORD's; all the weights in the bag are his work.” (Prov 16:11)

“To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin.

The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor and a snare of death.

The violence of the wicked will sweep them away, because they refuse to do what is just.

The way of the guilty is crooked, but the conduct of the pure is upright.” (Prov 21:3-8)

“Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.” (Prov 21:13)

“The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life.

Thorns and snares are in the way of the crooked; whoever guards his soul will keep far from them.” (Prov 22:4-5)

“Do not rob the poor, because he is poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate, for the LORD will plead their cause and rob of life those who rob them.” (Prov 22:22-23)

“Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always, but **whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.**

To show partiality is not good, but for a piece of bread a man will do wrong.

A stingy man hastens after wealth and does not know that poverty will come upon him.

Whoever rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with his tongue.

Whoever robs his father or his mother and says, "That is no transgression," is a companion to a man who destroys.

A greedy man stirs up strife, but the one who trusts in the LORD will be enriched.” (Prov 28:6, 13-14, 21-25)

"Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse." (Prov 28:27)

"The godly care about the rights of the poor; the wicked don't care at all." (Prov 29:7)

"Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy." (Prov 31:9) [cp James 2 and 5]

"What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.

"When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts?

Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations— I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood." (Is 1:11-15)

"Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause." (Is 1:17)

"the elder and honored man is the head, and **the prophet who teaches lies is the tail**; for those who guide this people have been leading them astray, and those who are guided by them are swallowed up. Therefore the Lord does not rejoice over their young men, and has no compassion on their fatherless and widows; for everyone is godless and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly." (Is 9:15-17)

"Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon [spiritually as well as in the resurrection]. The LORD will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring." (Is 58:10-11)

"You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

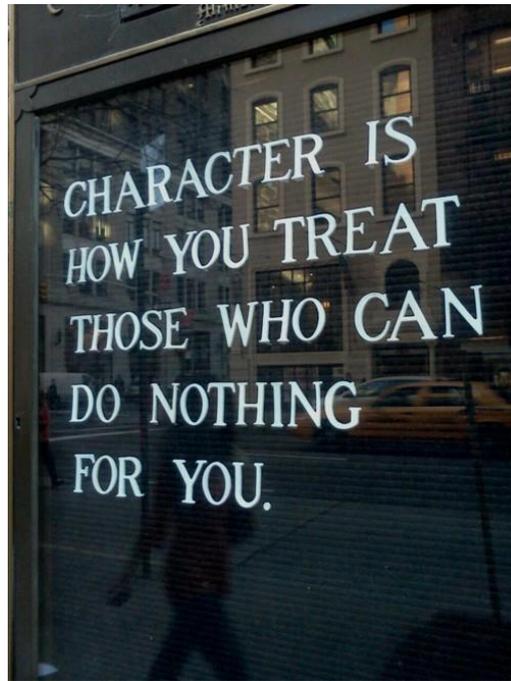
You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child.

If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

"If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him.

If ever you take your neighbor's cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down,

for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.” (Ezek 2:21-27)



“The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.” (Matt 19:20-22)

“And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:31)

“Give, and you will receive. You will be given much. Pressed down, shaken together, and running over, it will spill into your lap. The way you give to others is the way God will give to you.” (Luke 6:38)

“Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod’s household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.” (Luke 8:3)

“Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Luke 12:33-34)

“I do not receive glory from people.

But I know that you do not have the love of God within you.

I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? (John 5:41-44)

“The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.” (John 7:18)

“By all these things, I have shown you that by working in this way we must help the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:35)

“If I give all I possess to the poor and exult in the surrender of my body, but have not love, I gain nothing.” (1Cor 13:3)

“if it is to encourage, then **give encouragement**; if it is giving, then **give generously**; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.” (Rom 12:8)

“**We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord.** For even Christ didn’t live to please himself. As the Scriptures say, “The insults of those who insult you, O God, have fallen on me.”” (Rom 15:2-3)

“Do not be concerned about your own interests, but also be concerned about the interests of others.” (Phil 2:4)

“Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ.” (1Thess 2:6)

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people.” (2Tim 2:1)

“Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing [or lonely, social orphans, destitute], and you say, “Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well”—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn’t enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.” (James 2:15-17)

“Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. **Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies.** Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.” (1Pet 4:11)

What else should we be doing?

“And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, **bearing fruit in every good work** and increasing in the knowledge of God.” (Col 1:9-

10)

“He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and **increase the harvest of your righteousness.**” (II Cor 9:10)

“**filled with the fruit of righteousness** that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” (Phil 1:11)

What Commentaries Reveal

Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges commentary on Matt 6:1-2:

"2. *do not sound a trumpet before thee*] The chests for alms in the Court of the Women, where the temple-treasury was placed, were called "trumpets" from their shape. Possibly the words of the text contain an allusion to these alms-chests. See Edersheim's *Temple in the time of our Lord*, ch. ii. p. 26. But perhaps the expression means simply, "avoid ostentation in almsgiving."

hypocrites] Lit. actors; those who play a part in life, whose actions are not the true reflection of their thoughts, whose religion is external and unreal. Such men begin by deceiving others, but end in self-deception. It is against these that our Lord's severest reproofs are delivered.

in the synagogues] To this day alms are given in the Jewish synagogues.

They have] Strictly, have in full. Their reward is *now* and *on earth*." [emphasis mine]

Barnes' Notes on the Bible:

"Do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do - The word "hypocrite" is taken from "stage-players," who act the part of others, or speak not their own sentiments, but the sentiments of others. It means here, and in the New Testament generally, those who "dissemble" or hide their real sentiments, and assume or express other feelings than their own - **those who, for purposes of ostentation, gain, or applause, put on the appearance of religion.** It is probable that such persons, when they were about to bestow alms, caused a trumpet to be sounded, professedly to call the poor together to receive it, but really to call the people to see the proofs of their liberality and piety; or perhaps it may mean that they should not make a great noise about it, like sounding a trumpet.

In the synagogues - The word "synagogue" commonly means the place of assembling for religious worship known by that name. See the notes at Matthew 4:23. It might mean, however, any "collection of people" assembled for any purpose, and it is not improbable that it has that meaning here. It does not appear that they made a noise in bestowing charity in the synagogues, or that charity was commonly bestowed there; but it was probably done on occasion of any great assemblage, in any place of concourse, and at the corners of the streets, where it could be seen by many.

They have their reward - That is, they obtain the applause they seek the reputation of being charitable; and as this applause was all they wished, there is, of course, no further reward to be looked for or obtained."

Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible:

"Wherefore, when thou dost thine alms,.... Christ proceeds to give some directions and cautions about giving of alms, that they might be done aright, and answer some valuable purposes for the glory of God, the good of others, and their own:

do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. The persons Christ has reference to were the Scribes and Pharisees, who did all they did to be seen of men; **whom he calls "hypocrites"; as he often does, because they put on an appearance of religion and holiness, but inwardly, and otherwise, were very wicked men.** It does not appear that any such practice was literally performed, as blowing a trumpet before them, when they gave their alms; though the collectors of alms did, by some means, publicly notify to the people when they were about that service: for one of their rules is (m),

"the collectors of alms do not proclaim on a feast, as they proclaim on a common day; but they collected "privately", and put it into their bosom, and distributed it to everyone by himself."

Wherefore this must be understood proverbially; and the sense is, that when they did their alms, they chose public places for it, such as the "synagogues", where was a large concourse of people met together for religious worship; or the open "streets" of the city, where people were continually walking to and fro, so that nothing could be done in this way, but what must be seen and observed: and moreover, they took care, either by themselves, or others, to proclaim their good actions, that they might "have glory of men"; not only of the poor, or the collectors for them, but of the spectators. R. Aben Ezra (n) says, that

"a man that gives alms to the poor, must not give it because of the glory of the collector, i.e. that he may have glory of him; nor that the children of men may praise him."

But his ancestors were of another mind: but what did they get by it?

verily I say unto you, they have their reward; and a poor one it is, the applause of men: however, it is what they seek after, and is all their empty performances deserve, and all they will have.

"He that glories in anything done by himself, , "he takes", or receives "his reward" (o); for as for any reward from God, they will have none;"

in this sense, as the Ethiopic version reads it, "they have lost their reward": and, **as a learned critic has thought, is the sense of the Greek word, "they forbid", or "hinder their reward". By seeking the glory of men, they lay impediments in the way of receiving honour from God."**

In other words – like their spiritual ancestors, the Pharisees – they have an outward form of godliness (2Tim 3:5). What does this mean?

Well, they attend Sabbath services and feast days; keep clean and unclean meats commandment; tithe and look good to others. That is all well and good, of course.

However, they are self-seeking, 'making themselves available' for positions; trample over others; form selfish cliques; do nothing or little for those in need (eg money, social life, helping out etc) and do those things to make themselves look good and available to be ordained. They want to be seen by others and the ministry in a light which does not reflect authenticity (Mar 12:39).

So, they have their reward!

Love never
dies a natural death
It dies because
we don't know how to
replenish it's source
It dies of blindness and
errors and betrayals
It dies of illness
and wounds
it dies of weariness
of witherings
of tarnishings

Anais Nin

Haven't they read and internalised Christ's words:

"When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**" (Luke 14:8-11)

And of course we have:

"He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. **But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.**" (v 12-14)

There is no room for favouritism, self-satisfaction and cliques.

You see, it is not the thing that is wrong – eg riches, family, friends, parties etc - it is as Christ is demonstrating – the attitude and use of resources in the service of others. Anyone can go to a church on the Sabbath; crawl to ministers; get themselves into positions; get accolades; get friends together to form selfish cliques.

It is all GET GET GET – utter selfishness. The way of GIVE – which is outgoing concern and empathy/feelings for others – they have not learned nor do they want to know.

As my Dad used to say: this is a generation that is all about self – get, get, get.

They have not learned the lesson of the two trees – one produces the fruits of the flesh and the other the fruit of the spirit. One produces selfishness while the other produces the beatitudes. One leads to the development of holy, righteous, Godly character – the other does not.

They have their reward – in this life - if they carry on in the way verse 12 above describes.

Is that what we want – a reward in this life, rather than the next?

Concluding Remarks

So where do we go from here?

How does one fix the problem of selfish desire which leads to accolades and rewards in this life rather than the next?

Answer

“What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. [spiritually showing off before others]

"When you come to appear before me, who has required of you this trampling of my courts? [polluting the Church of God]

Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations— I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. [polluting God’s Church and Sabbath services]

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. [spiritually spilling the blood of innocent members by slander and gossip and thus isolating them]

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil,

learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause [or anyone underprivileged or in need].

"Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;

but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (Is 1:11-20)

Instead of being like the world, the Bible shows that we should care for each other. Be concerned for each other.

Yet, even so many in the world are compassionate and care for others, demonstrating sincere concern and reach out to help. How come so many of us do not so?

The Biblical warning is this: be careful for what you wish – because you may seek then gain what you lust after so much. You may end up having your reward in this life and its consequences – such as the ‘in group’ with the minister; or giving sermonettes; or even achieving ordination!

Instead, Christians are supposed to look out for one another; care for each other; and even seek each other out if one acts as a lost sheep. We have a duty of care for one another:

“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression [eg slander, aloofness and inner circles], you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.” (Gal 6:1. See Ps 51:13; Prov 11:30)

“And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.” (Dan 12:3)

For those oppressed and lied about by some, God’s Word provides encouragement:

“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair;
persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” (II Cor 4:8-9)

I warn the reader about those that cause such horrendous and upsetting division in order to get ordained even though they have expressed many views against the Church and its conservative doctrines.

Beware those who are selfish. Beware those with ambition. Beware those that isolate you with lies and slander.

For they have their reward! They have their inner circle and closed off groups to enjoy time with.

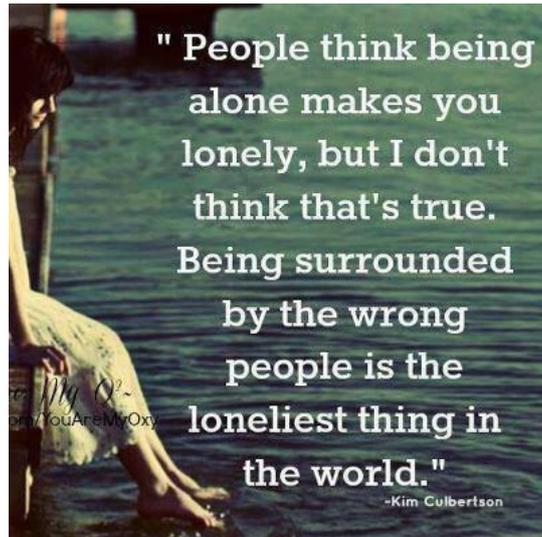
Some of the innocent are ignorant of what goes on. Then there are those who wish to ‘keep the peace’ and do nothing about what they observe. While others go into denial mode, not wanting to believe what they see. It hurts too much.

Others pretend that there is great difference between the Church and world’s behaviours. Where is the selfishness they say? This is accompanied by denials, lies and game-playing.

How does it differ from the world? It looks the same; the results are the same; actually it is what the Bible teaches as worldliness – so it doesn’t differ from the world, then does it?

I mean, just turning up at Church on the Sabbath; mixing only with your clique and avoiding the poor and lonely; trying to look good to Church leaders to get ordained etc – believe it or not this is sin or worldliness!

Understand?



Unfortunately they have seared their consciences and no longer feel guilt – indeed have no feelings for others – no compassion.

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared." (1Tim 4:1-2. Cp Is 5:20; Rom 2:15; 1Tim 1:5)

For it is

"the failure to feel guilt is the basic flaw in the psychopath, or antisocial person, who is capable of committing crimes of the vilest sort without remorse or contrition." (William Gaylin)

"I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!"

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, **but through love serve one another.**

For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another." (Gal 5:12-15)

Unfortunately, that is exactly what they do. Slander, gossip, literally shouting and screaming at God's holy children in a terrible effort to isolate them to 'get ahead' in the crowd or the Church. To GET influence. To GET a position.

Sadly, they now have their reward.

Appendix

Things Narcissists Do

<http://themindsjournal.com/things-narcissists-do/>

1. THEY REFUSE RESPONSIBILITY.

It's not their fault. Not EVER. It's always your fault. His fault. Her fault. To a narcissist, it's not their fault they hurt you, it's your fault for being hurt-able. If your feelings are hurt, it's not their fault; it's your fault – for having feelings. (You may be told that you're "choosing" to feel bad about the hurtful things they've done, and that it's the wrong "choice".) If caught doing something insensitive or selfish, they will tell you they "had to" do it because of someone or something else. If you imply that anything is their responsibility, they give you excuses and lies, and often, if those fail to work, they will finally make it clear that the bottom line is they simply don't care because they don't have to, and the fact that you care is just unnecessary or wrong. From their perspective, you shouldn't care — you should get it right like they do, and be more like they are. Uncaring.

2. THEY LIE.

Narcissists lie to make themselves look good. They lie to get out of emotional responsibility. They lie to manipulate. They lie to gain influence. They lie out of habit. Life is a game to narcissists – a game they have to think they're winning – and truth is one casualty in their game plan. The only time a narcissist has any interest in telling the truth is when it will serve them or cost them nothing to do so. The rest of the time, they don't consider it necessary or important to be all that honest. Honesty can impede their self-gratification and compromise their powerful persona, and they don't like that. To narcissists the truth is frequently "flexible" and optional. There's no such thing as an honest narcissist.

3. THEY LOOK DOWN ON YOU.

Narcissists have to make themselves feel bigger by convincing themselves others are smaller by comparison. They're no strangers to being condescending, snobby, clique-ish, elitist and superior; however, they may be very good at hiding their disdain to prevent a loss of popularity, which narcissists know brings them power. Narcissists with money look down on the working class. Narcissists in the working class look down on those with more money. Educated narcissists dismiss the opinions of those who have no degree. Narcissists with no degree claim educated people don't actually know anything. Whatever narcissists HAVE (or think they have) is what they use to look down on others WITH. No-one else's background, appearance, values, political persuasion, school, preferences, religion, way of life, profession or opinions are ever any good or worthy of their respect unless they themselves value and/or possess the same. If you think or choose differently from a narcissist, you're "wrong", and they're "right".

4. THEY'RE TWO-FACED.

Narcissists literally have two faces — their real face and their stage face. And neither is anything like the other. Which one you see will depend on how long you've known them. Narcissists can be very charming and know how to gain favor. Anyone who doesn't know a narcissist well will tell you the narcissist is one of the greatest people they've ever met! They believe this is one of the most intelligent, kindest, most interesting, funny, agreeable, most attractive, talented or accomplished people ever. They may wish they themselves had it so "together" or were so popular. However, anyone who knows that same narcissist better (family members, longtime coworkers, etc) will tell you the narcissist is one of the most horribly frustrating and toxic people they know, and the mere mention of their name makes them feel uneasy, angry, frustrated or otherwise unhappy. Being the only one who is experiencing a narcissist's real face, while all other family members or coworkers can still only see the narcissist's stage face is a very lonely, painful and frustrating place to be. Thankfully, the number of people who can see through the facade tends to increase with time.

5. THEY'RE VINDICTIVE.

If you dare to question a narcissist or request things like healthy boundaries and honesty, you're going to become public enemy number one. The "Mr. or Ms. Wonderful" mask immediately comes off, and there is no level they will not stoop to in order to "punish" you. They have myriad ways of attempting this;

some are covert, and some are open and obvious. The narcissist has a seemingly inexhaustible obsession for making people who cross them “pay”. Once they set their sights on you, you’re a permanent enemy, and their seething spite will feel as intense years down the road as it did when it first began. The length of time they can keep up the full intensity of their hatred for you and their campaign to exact revenge is absolutely dumbfounding to non-narcissistic people.

6. THEY PROJECT PSYCHOLOGICALLY.

Many mentally disordered individuals project frequently. Narcissists, however, are some of the most actively and severely projecting people encountered. Ever full of accusations and criticisms, the most crazy-making thing about most of the narcissist’s claims is that YOU are doing exactly what THEY are doing. (Projection.) Have they just lied to you? Well, you’re about to be called dishonest. Are they cheating you out of an opportunity? You’re going to get the finger pointed at you for being sneaky. And you can’t say a word to them about something hurtful they have done, because that makes you an abuser – of them. You can’t give them anything but glowing feedback without their raging at you, but you’ll be the one constantly criticized severely and then called freakishly oversensitive if you show any feelings about it. And if they say so, it’s law — you don’t know what you’re talking about.

7. THEY SMEAR PEOPLE WHO OPPOSE THEM. Narcissists are allergic to healthy boundaries and fairness. If you question the insensitive things they do or put any limits whatsoever on their bad behavior, you will be targeted for social, professional, or personal obliteration. Whatever narcissists perceive to be your psychological or situational “weak spots” will be their prime targets. For instance, if the narcissist knows that your greatest fear is social ridicule, that will be the main focus of the smear campaign. If he or she knows that recently, you made a mistake for which you feel guilty, that will be used against you. Narcissists know that the more effectively they can pinpoint your insecurities or flaws, the more successful they will be in eroding your confidence and your influence. And if they manage to do that, they stand a good chance of getting back the power they planned to do whatever they pleased with before you “got in their way”.

Post from and by [After Narcissist Abuse \(Ana\)](#) Click here to [visit their website](#) and read more of such helpful posts

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Old WCG	vs	many today
EARLY BELIEVERS		CHRISTIANITY
WILLING TO SELL EVERYTHING THEY HAD FOR THE GOSPEL		BUY A NICE HOUSE IN THE SUBURBS, SUV, AND GO TO SOCIAL CLUB CALLED CHURCH
BEATEN, WHIPPED, MURDERED, DEPRIVED, IMPRISONED FOR THE ADVANCE OF GOSPEL		STAYS IN COZY CHURCH BUILDING HOLDING EVENTS HOPING PEOPLE COME
TAUGHT SOUND DOCTRINE, STUDIED TO SHOW SELF APPROVED UNTO GOD		WATERED DOWN MESSAGES THAT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH SCRIPTURE.
BELIEVERS DILLIGENT TO LEARN ALL SCRIPTURE		SO-CALLED BELIEVERS THAT KNOW A FEW VERSES THAT TICKLE THEIR FANCY.
WILLING TO PICK UP CROSS		NOT WILLING TO DO ANYTHING
LIGHT TO THE WORLD, LIVED A SET-APART LIFE, ACTED AS LIVING EXAMPLE		WANTS TO BLEND IN AND DO EVERYTHING THAT PAGANS DO.
ABOUT OTHERS		ABOUT ME, ME, ME, ME, ME, ME
GENUINE LOVE FOR OTHERS		PUT ON A PHONEY SHOW
MESSIAH MAKING PEACE BETWEEN MAN AND GOD		BEING BRIBED: BELIEVE IN JESUS AND GET TO GO TO HEAVEN
BEING TRANSFORMED INTO NEW CREATION		NO CHANGE, JUST GIVE ME THE FREE TICKET TO HEAVEN

[NB: for "heaven in the bottom, right-hand corner insert "Kingdom"]