

Selfish Ambition vs Selfish Provision

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 11 March 2018

Preacher: Rev. Clive Jennings

[0 : 0 0] Our theme today is about selfish ambition versus selfless provision. Mother Teresa said, it's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving. And thinking about Mother's Day, that probably resonates with many people because there's many people here who are fortunate and blessed to have been mothers and are mothers and grandmothers. You know what that actually costs.

There's a couple of cards that I was going through. I thought you might amuse you. Thanks, Pete. There we go. To mum, I'm hungry, I'm cold, I'm hot. Can I have, I want to watch. Where are you? To dad, where's mum? Here we go. I'm warning you, if you fall out of that tree and break both legs, don't come running to me. Treat mum to a bottle of wine this Mother's Day. Remember, you're the reason why she drinks. I was just thinking with that two contrasts of reading, one about love and the other one here, which is really some tough talking from James about challenging our character. You know, where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

And we know that. We know that where we sow, what is likely to come up.

And in this morning's reading, selfish ambition is often the heart of many issues that we face. You know, it's all about me. It's the I want, it's my way or no way. And so easily we can buy into that thing from the culture, a preference that's dressed up as a right. You know, this is my right.

Get even. I love, there was another card up there, which I just couldn't, it's got, get even. Live long enough to become a problem to your children. And we buy into all this, don't we?

[2 : 1 1] I was looking through the other day and they were saying that the most played or requested song at a funeral is My Way by Frank Sinatra. And I thought that is so sad because actually it reinforces everything that we're talking about this morning, about selfish ambition. And now the end is near and so I, my friend, I'll say it clear. I'll state my case of wish uncertain. I've traveled each and every highway, but more, much more than this, I did it my way. What a sad thing to have said on your final journey to meet with the Lord. I've loved, I've laughed and cried. I've had my full share of losing. And now as tears subsides, I find it all so amusing. Isn't that great? Really mess people's lives up around you. And for what is a man, what has he got? If not himself, he is not.

To say the things he truly feels and not the words of one who kneels. Ouch. How do people listen to the words when they choose it? I just thought the promises that we're thinking about this morning, we're getting gritty. We're talking about God's provision and not what we do for ourselves.

And this morning as we travel through Lent, we're halfway through our 40 acts. This morning, we're going to pause and just consider in what way our lives might change and how we can change them if we look at God's provision for us, as we've seen in the windmill, and what we can make a difference if we live in God's way and not just in our way. I was really disappointed the other day. I was at a meeting and somebody mentioned about, oh, you know, we need to construct the culture because people don't come to church on a Sunday anymore. And I thought, no, actually, that's the wrong way around.

The wrong way around is we as Christians need to influence the culture and we don't buy into the culture. That somewhere that church on a Sunday morning is so excited that you would want to come, that you would actually sort of make sure that you did football and everything else on another day of the week. Because actually to come and be with your friends and your family, to be so encouraged on a Sunday, this is the way it's going to be. And I pray for this generation that's coming through, for Harvey's generation, that we will actually, in prayer, claim back Sunday for God. Do the people say amen to that? I hope you do. That would be great. We can do that. And how do we do that? Because we shift the culture and look for God's provision in us and through us. We become attractive.

Mother's Day for money will be a huge joy. For others, it will be a deep sense of sadness, maybe regret, things we should have done. You know, I was just reflecting on how much I've, through my life, had become like my mother. You can laugh. Because I think Mandy looks at me sometimes at those moments and says, that is so your mother, isn't it? You know, those little inherited things that we pick up. And that is really good in many ways, if they are good things. But so often, we pick up almost the dirt and grime of life that we pick up that we need to get rid of.

[6:01] God's provision in us to be more God in who we do and what we are. And Jay's son, Zachary, last week, brought along a great thing. It's called a transformer. I don't know whether you knew transformers. They look like one thing, but you turn them inside out and they turn into something else. And do you know what? I was thinking about that this week, about how about God's provision of all the goodness that God has got for us, that somehow we turn ourselves inside out so that God can, people can see the goodness that is within us, that we would shine, like we've used a candle this morning, that we would shine into every situation that we've been called into as Christians, to be a changing and transforming power in the lights and places to which we are called during the week.

It is about being transformed. And this is for everybody in all ages. And we've sort of said this morning about, seek ye first the kingdom of God. And that's what we need to do more and more. What has God got for us? Sometimes we need to learn from our children. And there's a, my daughter showed me a clip that's gone viral. It's, they picked it up on the BBC. And it's a lad called Jacob. And do you know what he was so incensed by seeing a man begging on the streets, that he decided that he would do something about it? That it wasn't about what he wanted, but it was about God's provision to provide for somebody else. His mum must have been so proud of him. Shall we have the quick clip?

MUSIC PLAYS I saw homeless people in Brighton hiding in a scaffolding. When we got home, I ran straight upstairs and wrote a poster about wanted things and to pack 10 backpacks originally.

MUSIC PLAYS I'm, I'm really happy because one of these bags may save someone's life. MUSIC PLAYS I'm really happy because one of these bags may save someone's life.

MUSIC PLAYS I keep having to remind me that I'm really happy because one of these bags may save someone's life. MUSIC PLAYS I keep having to remind myself that everyone has been so generous because of him. And this whole thing exists because of his idea. And yeah, it's absolutely incredible.

[8:54] MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS I've got a present for you, Jay.

MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC CONVINCES MUSIC PLAYS MUSIC faisMik spat on, you know, it's not my fault I'm homeless.

No. It's not there for me. It's good. It's nice to see someone actually doing something and not, you know, criticising us for being homeless. That's nice meeting you, man.

Cool. Nice. Thank you to all the people that have helped out, and it's very simple to be kind, and at the end of the day, homeless people are just humans with a lot of bad luck.

I chatted away most of what I was going to say this morning, because you don't have selfish ambition when you're seven, do you? You look at God's ambition for what people want and to make a difference.

[10:10] So this morning, quite simply, we're going to submit ourselves to God for God's provision in us and through us to make a difference to this world.

And James says, submit yourself to God and his purposes, and it's a tough one to do, to say, Lord, I submit myself to your purposes.

And we're going to ask God to do that this morning. It takes an acknowledgement. It takes an acknowledgement in us, and it's a word that was used in submission, that we submit to God's will. I don't know about you, how much are we doing that I've done in my own strength when I can do so much more in God's strength? That he wants to do. I want to be more and more like Jacob. I want to be an agent of change, a mover and a shaker. And it says, fight, never submit. And do you know what? Sometimes we spend so much time fighting against God.

[11:12] Believe me, that we just need to submit and let him do what he wants to do in our lives. Does anybody feel like that sometimes?

Just that thing of, Lord, just almost let go and show me what you want to do. I love that thing of John Wimber who said, you've seen my ministry, now show me yours. That was his very simple prayer. You've seen my ministry, Lord, now show me yours. Turning from selfish ambition to his selfless provision is for all of us. And we can do that very simply this morning. And I'm not going to make a big, big, big, big, well, we might do an article, we'll see. No, we're going to actually just spend the time and we're just going to save, have a time of reflection for those things that maybe we have spent a lot of energy climbing the greasy pole of our career, of what we want in our lives, rather than actually relying on the amazing thing that God's got for us as well. The idea that God's got for our power too, can be on the nature of our■■■ saptens the facts the Vedic long-to-deind Cancer reclaimable as well.