

# MIDWEEK EVENT

This week's main point is: Choosing our own way is selfish, but choosing God's way leads to selflessness.

**SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 6:33; Luke 6:33-35; Philippians 2:3-4

## THEOLOGY CONNECTION | SIN AS SELFISHNESS

When we sin, we are acting out of a selfish attitude and mindset that assumes our action will lead us to more happiness than if we were to obey God. Because sin is manifested in our tendency to be “curved inward” toward self, it is the opposite of love. Love looks outwardly to place others before oneself, operating from the mindset that others are more important (Phil. 2:3). Where sin selfishly seeks personal gratification and happiness, love works for the joy of others in the hopes of making them happy in God.

## CHRIST CONNECTION

Though the sacrificial system was instated to reveal God's holiness, provide a temporary method of forgiveness of sin, and help people worship God, it also revealed people's hearts. When Jesus came, people who put their faith in Him revealed tender hearts willing to believe He was the Son of God and the Messiah. Those who rejected Jesus as Lord rejected God as well.

## 1 MATTHEW 6:33; PHILIPPIANS 2:3a

### SIN IS SELFISH.

Sin is willful disobedience. In other words, sin happens when we choose to do something we know is wrong, when we choose to disobey God. Being selfish ultimately means we love ourselves more than we love God and more than we love others. We might not think that's what we're doing, but every time we choose sin, we're really choosing ourselves. The problem is that the world tells us this is what we should be doing. The world says we get to go our own way. And yet, the Bible speaks negatively about something called “selfish ambition.” This typically called out people who wanted to make themselves look good above all else as they pursued their goals, whether those goals were in line with God's or not. Pursuing goals isn't a bad thing, nor is caring for ourselves. But we have to go about both of these things the right way—with an attitude of God first. God calls us to a different way of life than the one the world pressures us to live. God promises that when we seek Him first, we'll have all we need. No, we shouldn't throw caution to the wind or ignore clear warnings, but we can ignore the call of the world to go our own way, trusting that God will provide everything we need and more.

- › **WHAT'S YOUR INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE IDEA THAT SIN IS SELFISH?**
- › **IS IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO SEE WHEN GOING AFTER A GOAL YOU'VE SET OR CARING FOR YOURSELF CROSSES THE LINE INTO SELFISHNESS? WHY OR WHY NOT?**
- › **WHEN HAVE YOU WANTED POPULARITY OR INFLUENCE AT ANY COST?**
- › **WHY IS THIS A BAD THING? HOW CAN POPULARITY AND INFLUENCE BE USED FOR GOD'S GLORY?**
- › **HOW DOES KNOWING GOD LOVES US AND WILL PROVIDE ALL WE NEED HELP US TO CHOOSE HIS WAY OVER SIN?**

# MIDWEEK EVENT

## 2 LUKE 6:33-35; PHILIPPIANS 2:3b-4

### **GOD CALLS US TO BE SELFLESS.**

“Selfless” isn’t exactly a buzzword in our world today. And let’s be honest, even if we know what it means to be selfless, we might not want to do it. Because being selfless means being generous without giving preference to our own desires. Again, it’s important to know when God calls us to be selfless, He’s not saying we should be careless with our lives, our time, or our resources. Instead, He calls us to manage them wisely so that we can love others well and honor Him with everything He has given us. In Luke 6:33-35, Jesus explained that selfless living includes loving our enemies; serving and giving to all people who are in need, even if we don’t like them; and giving without expecting anything back. For some people, this way of living seems upside down or might come as a shock. But it’s the way Jesus lived. He gave everything for us: He temporarily gave up His divine rights to come to earth in human form, and He gave His life to save us. Though Jesus said “No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13), that doesn’t mean we’ll be called to die for someone else. But He does expect us to give up behaviors that are harmful to others or tempt others to disobey Him. He does expect us to give generously to our friends, to show up, to be inconvenienced to help others. This is what it means to be selfless.

- › **WHAT’S YOUR TYPICAL RESPONSE WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD “SELFLESS”?**
- › **WHY DO YOU THINK PEOPLE STRUGGLE TO BE GENEROUS WITHOUT CONSIDERING THEIR OWN DESIRES FIRST?**
- › **WHEN DO YOU STRUGGLE MOST WITH GIVING THAT WAY?**
- › **HOW DOES KNOWING JESUS GAVE EVERYTHING, EVEN HIS VERY LIFE, FOR US ENCOURAGE YOU TO LIVE SELFLESSLY?**
- › **WHICH IS MORE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO GIVE UP: BEHAVIORS AND PREFERENCES, PHYSICAL POSSESSIONS, OR TIME? WHY?**

## WRAP UP

As a group, brainstorm some ways God might be calling your group to love others selflessly. Are there some single moms in your church who could use a night of rest? Do you know some senior adults who need help with house or yardwork? What about kids who feel lonely and might just need someone to read them a book? Come up with some ways to selflessly serve those around you and as you’re able, try one or two this summer!