



## LEADER DEVOTIONAL

If you have any doubt that greed and selfishness are inherent in people from the very beginning, just spend a little bit of time with a toddler. I'm proud to say that my oldest daughter's first word was "dadda" (although "mamma" may dispute that). But very shortly afterwards, she developed a new favorite word — "mine." According to her, just about everything she could point to was "mine." Blankie — "mine." Pacifier — "mine." TV remote — "mine." Cordless power drill — "mine." And I have no doubt that she understood what "mine" meant, because whenever she was denied access to what was "mine," she would erupt in tears.

I've always believed that my daughter was way more advanced than any other human child (what father doesn't), so I could have easily thought she was ahead of the curve on developing her selfish streak. But two kids later and it's become apparent that she was no more or less selfish than any other kid that age. It's ingrained in our sinful selves from the very beginning that we should get what's "mine" and we should get it first! That's why it's so counterintuitive to heed the Apostle Paul's command:

**"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."**  
**Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)**

I have to continually remind myself that my "autopilot" is set to selfish. As much as I love serving others, it's still a daily battle for me to value others above myself, but it's a battle worth fighting. Although it seems slightly counterintuitive, I find that putting others before myself is far more rewarding than the alternative. I find that God has a way of blessing me in my most selfless moments. I find a deep and enriching peace in abstaining from the race to grab what's "mine." I find an immense pleasure in saying the words, "you first."

If you haven't already, try to step outside of your "autopilot." Be willing to open your hands and let go of what you believe to be "mine." For when you empty your hands of what you believe is rightfully yours, you give God a chance to fill them with things far greater.

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