

## The Dreaded "Selfie"

In 2013 the word "selfie" was added to the Oxford Dictionary. Most of us have taken one. We are on vacation and decide to pull out the old cellphone and take a picture of ourselves with the fill in the blank in the background. By fill in the blank I mean the beach or whatever it may be that shows we are having a good time. Or it might be a picture of the group we are having fun with. Whatever it may be, we take the picture and then share it with others on some web site. What could be wrong with taking a selfie?

One result of the "selfie" is death. Since 2012 there have been more than 250 deaths due to people taking selfie's in life threatening places. Some have drowned, others were killed in accidents involving transportation, and a good number have fallen to their death. Some have literally taken a step backward in order to get that special shot and walked off the cliff.

This made me to think of self-ish-ness and its danger to our souls.

A lot of sins in the Bible start with the word "self." Paul warns Timothy of: men becoming "*lovers of themselves*" (2 Timothy 3.2ff). After verse two there is a list of sins which result from this self-love. Obviously, the sin of being selfish or selfishness (James 3.14-16), being self-willed (2 Peter 2.10), self-indulgence, self-imposed religion, self-righteous, and even self-abasement is found in the Bible. It is often said that SIN has a capital "I" in the middle of it. As in what "I" want. For instance, abortion in most instances occurs because the woman does not want the baby. Perhaps a child will infringe on her lifestyle, or education, or be a financial burden. The concern is usually about what she wants and not on the unborn child.

A real danger of selfie-ish-ness is not recognizing the spiritual danger. "*Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*" (1 Corinthians 10:12) Many have committed sin because they were so busy having a good time, they did not see its danger. For instance, Belshazzar in Daniel 5 was having a real good time drinking with his friends. He decides to drink from the golden vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem. Suddenly a hand

appears writing on a wall. Eventually Daniel is called in to see if he knew what the words on the wall meant. *"And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. 26 "This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; 27 "TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; 28 "PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."* (Daniel 5) That very night Belshazzar's kingdom and life was taken from him. I wonder how many Belshazzar's there are today. Living as if there is no tomorrow until they suddenly die and stand before the Great Judge in Heaven.

Selfie-ish-ness is found in the unbelieving and in the god fearing. James, John, and their mother were being selfie-ish in Matthew 20.20, *"Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. 21 And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." 22 But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." 23 So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." 24 And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers."* They were wanting to be in a place of honor and pre-eminence for the sake of themselves. Jesus had to point out greatest in the kingdom was serving and not being served.

There are times the Bible uses the word "self" in a good sense. It speaks of self-examination. *"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? --unless indeed you are disqualified."* (2 Corinthians 13:5) A truthful self-examination will make us aware of where we are at and what we must do to improve our service to God and our fellowman. Another good "self" is self-control. It is listed as one of the elements in the Fruit of the Spirit,

Galatians 5.23. Being able to control our thoughts, our words, our actions is essential in resisting temptation and sin.

Think about it. –Dennis Tucker