“Narcissism Exposed”

Romans 12:2-3

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Sean Hoisington, Hayden Bible Church, 10/30/22)

Narcissus (from Greek mythology) fell in love with his own image in a pool of water. He spent the rest of his life focused on himself. Secularism has hijacked Divine healing (Q1), replacing the renewing of our minds with coping mechanisms and avoidance strategies, where change isn’t even part of the discussion. (Q2) God has ordained a pathway to change in His Word, summarized in Rom. 12:2-3.

Secular psychology promotes tools to diagnose mental health conditions in the DSM-5 manual. One of these disorders is called narcissistic personality disorder. This syndrome has real characteristics, but the secular world offers no hope for change. There is hope for change through the transforming grace of Jesus. Once you “believe in Jesus’ grace to change you, you are changing.” (Lambert, Finally Free) That’s the starting point.

Our only hope is in Jesus’ once-for-all sacrifice, accepted by the Father for our redemption. Rom. 12:2 tells us to “not be conformed to this world…” Jesus transforms His people into His image over time. How do you renew your mind? Prayer, meditating on God’s Word, the help of the Holy Spirit, repentance, and steps of obedience. (Q3) (Q4) Read 2 Cor. 3:18. Self-absorption, like Narcissus fixating on his reflection, leads to death. Reflecting the Lord’s glory, causing us to be transformed into His likeness, leads to life.

Narcissistic personality disorder is characterized by grandiosity, exaggerated self-importance, and an over-estimation of one’s abilities and accomplishments (see Prov. 12:15; Isa. 5:21; Rom. 12:3,16). Christ-followers are characterized by humility (see Phil. 2:5-8). (Q5) Narcissists have a need for admiration and a lack of empathy. Jesus was tempted in every way we are (Heb. 2:18). He gets us! And He will transform His followers to be empathetic like Him. Narcissistic personality disorder is simply sinfulness. God’s Word calls us out of these sinful tendencies. We can change!

In Isa. 55:10-11, God says that His word “shall accomplish that which I purpose.” This is for our sanctification and His glory. You just need to humble yourself under His mighty hand. You need to examine yourself. Are you really a born-again Christian (2 Corinth. 13:5)? Even if you fail that test, there is still hope! You CAN change, starting with repentance, belief in salvation through Jesus, and following Him all of your days.

Step one is letting the Word of God minister to you. Check for that log in your own eye. Step two is to find a skilled friend or elder or pastor (Gal. 6:1) who can help you see clearly. Step three is to develop a plan to navigate through this. All of this is done with the hope of change and restoration. Narcissism is sinfulness. We don’t live for ourselves; we live for our King (2 Cor. 5:15)! (Q6)

**QUESTIONS**:

1. What does Divine healing look like in 2022?
2. Instead of addressing the root problem of sin, how does man cope with disordered behavior?
3. In the renewal of your mind, which steps come first? Why?
4. Read Heb. 5:14. We grow by steps of obedience. What, specifically, are we called to obey?
5. Pastor Sean had us look back at Deut. 9:3 to see where the TRUE power comes from. What practical steps can we take to give God the glory and avoid getting puffed up ourselves?
6. OK, let’s assume you and God are hard at work on your selfishness. What can you do to help raise children and grandchildren who are selfless, reflecting our King and not our culture?

“Victory in Jesus” (Bartlett)

I heard an old, old story how a Savior came from glory,  
How He gave His life on Calvary to save a wretch like me;  
I heard about His groaning, of His precious blood's atoning,  
Then I repented of my sins and won the victory.

***O victory in Jesus, my Savior, forever.  
He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood;  
He loved me ere I knew Him, and all my love is due Him,  
He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.***

I heard about His healing, of His cleansing power revealing.  
How He made the lame to walk again and caused the blind to see;  
And then I cried, "Dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit,"  
And somehow Jesus came and brought to me the victory.

I heard about a mansion He has built for me in glory.  
And I heard about the streets of gold beyond the crystal sea;  
About the angels singing and the old redemption story,  
And some sweet day I'll sing up there the song of victory.