

## **Narcissism: The Sinful Attitude that made an Angel into a Devil!**

A warning to all!

We have learned that God shows the end from the beginning; so by looking at the beginning of sin in the universe, we can learn much that can make us Students of Prophecy wise to dangers that are attacking us right now as we near the time when sin is going to be wiped out forever.

We have all read the story of the Pride, Jealousy, and Self-exaltation that led Lucifer, most noble of the angels of God, to become Satan, enemy of his own Creator! (If you haven't then grab the book Patriarchs and Prophets and read it!)

***"It is impossible to stand upon a lofty height without danger.*** The tempest leaves unharmed the modest flower of the valley, while it wrestles with the lofty tree upon the mountaintop. There are many men whom God could have used with wonderful success when pressed with poverty,-- He could have made them useful here, and crowned them with glory hereafter,-- but prosperity ruined them; they were dragged down to the pit because they forgot to be humble, forgot that God was their strength, and became independent and self-sufficient." 4T 544.

I fear we do not take seriously enough the many warnings in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy about pride, and what it can do to any that harbor it. Anyone who is put into a high position, either by himself or by others, is in great danger of becoming proud and self-exalted. Satan watches eagerly to catch any who are in a position like this, especially in the Lord's work, so that he can subtly lead them into having the kind of character that he has.

This is actually how Satan works. He first gets his victim wanting what he desires for himself. He desired power; to rule and control; to break free from God's authority; so his tactics were to get the other angels to want the same thing. What he did **not** tell them though, was that he intended to control them also! He made them feel that by joining with him, they were becoming his partners and buddies; when actually, they became his slaves!

When he came down to earth to tempt Adam and Eve, he first led Eve into wanting what he himself wanted; power, authority and self-exaltation; then he could lead her to distrust God and fall into disobedience which was a form of the very rebellion he himself was involved in. Like the angels, he did not tell her that by taking his attitude and advice, she would become enslaved by him.

### **The Narcissistic Character Pattern**

There were certain tactics of Subtle Manipulation that Lucifer used in his campaign against God which resulted in a third of the heavenly angels being deceived and at least another third being confused. Satan is actually the originator, ultimate example, and implementer of the character pattern modernly known as Narcissism. Angels are not stupid beings; not at all; but the fact that most of them were affected by the traits and tricks that Lucifer brought into action, shows that this pattern can be very deceiving indeed!

The Narcissist is the ultimate chameleon; to most people they can seem such very nice persons; and amongst God's people he or she will pass as ever so devout and full of zeal for God's work, when in actuality, they are promoting their own interests. Satan claimed to have only the good of heaven and the honor of God as his motives, when nothing but the dead opposite was true.

One of the destructive methods Satan used, and the Narcissist will use, is to gather information from others, by pretending to take them as his special buddies; he takes the information thus gained and uses it to attack the motives and personalities of any that he sees as possible rivals, including the person who trusted him enough to give the information, the minute the Narcissist may feel threatened by them.

We see this all too often I fear, even among the very elect of God's children. A person who has led out and perhaps has been used of God greatly in His work, gradually becomes proud and falls into this mind set of Narcissism. Satan leads ever so softly and they don't recognize where they are going, He also gets him to affect humility to those he meets so they do not suspect the poison that is at work within. The more polished of Satan's Narcissists are unsuspected by all but those who fall prey to them and these are often totally unaware of the danger until they suddenly find themselves viciously attacked by the Narcissist. Then when they try to sound a warning, they are ostracized and made a laughing stock, as no one will believe what they say; the charisma of the Narcissist is to great.

Many, if not most of these Narcissistic folk get the idea that it is their job to dictate to others and ride herd on all they can access, to make sure they are in line with promoting the Narcissist's own teachings, ideas and beliefs, and promoting his goals. Any who would dare to differ from him will be called heretics. Every Narcissist has in themselves the spirit of the inquisition; and they will use it just to the degree that their power and influence allows them to! If at all possible, Satan promotes these people into positions of trust and authority, because they are polished tools in his war against true goodness. They tend to be very intelligent and love to control and manipulate otherwise intellectually able people.

He will either subtly or openly play down others to the degree he can; people who are duped into being his best buddies are brainwashed into looking to the Narcissist as the ultimate in wisdom and righteousness. One can be around a Narcissist for a long while and never actually wake up to what is happening! How the wake-up call occurs, if it ever does, is when things begin to accumulate that the honest in heart person, deceived by the Narcissist, cannot help but see are wrong in what he is saying or doing. At first the honest person will excuse these things; saying perhaps that he himself is misunderstanding the events; or maybe it was an accident or a mistake. But after a while a time may come when the wrong cannot be excused or ignored anymore; for some slaves of Narcissists, this time of awakening never comes!

The honest person then will speak about his concerns to the Narcissist; maybe in the nicest way at first. The Narcissist will respond by quickly brainwashing and using all his manipulative skills (and he has plenty) to soothe the person back to sleep. Sadly, too often it works. But even if the person does give up his concerns to believe the propaganda of the Narcissist, the Narcissist knows that he can no longer trust that person. Often he will begin to attack him in subtle ways; he will seek to discredit him to others so that his influence, which might be used against the Narcissist, is destroyed ahead of time.

So what happens if the honest person wakes up and refuses any longer to be duped into being the servant and promoter of what he is coming to realize is a monster? Well then his best course is to get away from whatever relationship he has with the Narcissist and do it fast; because they will stop at nothing in their efforts to destroy anyone they know has become wise to what they really are!

Usually trying to alert other people rarely works; because the more advanced Narcissists have a circle of devoted followers and promoters that will never believe what the honest person tries to say! They rally around the Narcissist and pat him and pity him and sympathize with him—and the honest protester finds himself shut outside in a very cold world indeed, or some fate even worse. Somehow it seems they always come out smelling like a rose, while the honest person ends up the skunk. The Narcissist will use all the weapons he has collected against the person, until his credibility, and often his very self-respect,

is left in bleeding tatters. These Narcissistic people fairly drip with the blood of wounded souls on their garments of self-righteousness!

## Seems like a Fairy Tale?

I know this all seems very over-dramatic, exaggerated, and theatrical doesn't it? Surely nothing as evil as this type of character could hang out with God's dear children and they not recognize it? How could the kind of power, subtlety and viciousness described above be in the heart of one human being? How is it that they are all so alike in their ways? Do they all have to attend some school and get a degree in Narcissism for them all to be so alike that they seem like carbon copies of the master plan?

Well, the important thing to realize is that when any person, knowingly or unknowingly, begins to develop jealousy and pride and desires self-exaltation—the master Narcissist, Satan, quickly moves in and carefully begins to run the show. The more influence the potential Narcissist has, especially among God's people, the more charisma and power the dark angels will provide him with. Please, brothers and sisters, be not deceived, when you deal with any Narcissist, from the little family ones to the big organizational ones, you are confronting evil spirits lurking in the background assisting them. So pray much, even if you only suspect you may be dealing with this very real problem, you need much prayer for protection.

Let's look at a list of some of the behaviors and traits of Narcissistic personalities.

### Some Narcissistic Characteristics:

- An exaggerated sense of one's own abilities, intelligence, achievements, rights and privileges. (Satan envied his own Creator and thought he was smarter than God!)
- A constant need for attention, affirmation and praise. This makes it almost impossible for a Narcissist to step down from a position or retire! They cannot bear to be quietly in the background. (Satan's desire for worship.)
- A belief that he or she is unique or "special" and should only associate with other people of the same status. Internally the Narcissist worships himself, even though externally they may portray a picture of humility and submission. They are very proud and extremely vain, and in conversation will mainly talk about themselves in some way. Like Satan, they really see themselves as superior to all.
- Persistent fantasies about attaining control, success and power. (Isaiah 14:13, 14.)
- Using and exploiting other people for personal gain. The Narcissist uses and throws away people with no sense of owing them anything or gratitude for even years of service. The Narcissist know no loyalty but to himself.
- A sense of entitlement, and expectation of special treatment. Rules and even laws that apply to others do not concern him in the least.
- A preoccupation with power or success.
- Feeling envious of others or believing that others are envious of him or her.
- A lack of empathy for others; they have no true feelings and are incapable of really caring for anyone. They do not see other people as real somehow; other people are seen only as actors in the Narcissist's own play, and they write the script! It is when you stop following the script that they show their real colors!
- Exaggerating, prevaricating, misstating the facts, and outright lying; they can lie while seeming completely innocent, because really, to them it isn't lying; they have their own reality which they create as they go along; so when they say something—to them it *is* true.

- They love and thrive on argument and conflict, even though they pretend to hate it; and seem to gain strength and pleasure by provoking a person to anger. Creating a condition of confusion is delightful to them.

### **Narcissistic Habits and Practices:**

**1: Projection;** if any error is pointed out; it will be immediately thrown back at the one pointing it out that they are the one who did or does this, not the Narcissist. They will do this in spite of the fact of its being obviously and glaringly false.

**2: Gas-lighting or Gaslighting;** a form of mental abuse in which false information is presented with the intent of making victims doubt their own memory, perception, and sanity. Instances may range simply from denial by an abuser that previous abusive incidents ever occurred, up to the staging of bizarre events by the abuser with the intention of disorienting the victim. It is a very cruel form of mental abuse. The Narcissist will claim you said things you did not; insist that they said or did not say things that they did or did not. Another variation of this is taking things you said at different times, and then combining them inappropriately to create a very false picture of what you actually said or intended. The Narcissist also uses various processes of interrogation and attempts aimed at controlling another individual's very thoughts or feelings.

**3: The Always Innocent Routine.** A strong identifying characteristic of the Narcissist is their absolute refusal to admit any wrong-doing and their many clever ways of side-stepping guilt. One is outright lying; but if this fails they blame someone else. If this fails and they have to admit, at least a little, that they did something wrong, they then accuse you of being nit-picky and making a big deal out of nothing. You are chewed out as being a very obnoxious person for this. This will be all done in bitterness and anger, sometimes even fury completely disproportionate to the situation.

Another side-step used when guilt has to be admitted, at least a little, is to respond; "Well that is in the past. I can't do anything about that now. If I pay attention to all that stuff from the past, I will never get anything done. I have enough problems to deal with and I can't be bothered with the past." Again you will be made to look like a foolish, nit-picky person and they to be the sensible and rational one.

**4: Unfeeling Heartlessness:** If a person, who is in need of help, encouragement or sympathy, makes a bid for any of these from a Narcissist person, he will be mocked, and/or ridiculed; and made to feel it is all his fault anyway, because he is so stupid. He will be accused of bothering a very busy and important person, who has no time for him; or he will be scathingly attacked himself for a whole list of imaginary faults. The Narcissist person in this way side-steps any responsibility that he may have to assist in the other persons needs. He also leaves the hurting person hurt much worse. If these people are dependent on the Narcissist person—they end up concluding that no one cares about their feelings at all and they might as well keep quiet.

It is said as an effort to explain this trait, that if you fall and smash your head open and are lying bleeding on the floor, the Narcissist will be furious at you for stupidly bleeding on the carpet.

NOW there is another side to this that can really muddy the water; if the Narcissist wants to influence a new supporter or groom a new victim, they can seem oh so sweet and loving! People say, "Oh, I have never had such a caring relationship before!" In religious things they are led to think that the Narcissist is so Christ-like!

**5: Defensiveness!** Narcissists are constantly on the alert for anything in word, gesture, or even expression that they can construe as an affront to them. They seem to be in a constant state of being

offended, and when conversing with them, you can often notice them watching your face to see if you are only joking so they won't be offended. They seem to relish any excuse to take offense.

This causes people who have been raised by Narcissists or who are in situations where they are dependent on Narcissists, to develop a curious habit of giggling much of the time. Some also fall into the habit of saying silly things and foolish talking because this seems to gratify the Narcissist and prevent his scathing attacks. This also serves the purpose of making themselves to be small and stupid so the Narcissist is allowed to feel his superiority over them and doesn't attack as much. Any person that shows himself smarter; more skillful; even more religious; in anything or any way superior to the Narcissist will be hated and shunned, and if possible, abused or attacked by the Narcissist person.

**6: Privilege of Rank;** The idea they have special privileges or deserve special treatment different from others.

**7: Inconsistency:** the Narcissist can say one thing and right in the same paragraph say the opposite and do not seem to recognize their illogic and inconsistency. It is all part of the way they keep people confused and in their power.

**8: Superiority;** They feel they have a perfect right to treat you cruelly as they are far above you.

**9: Chaos Cultivators;** They can never tolerate peace and order for long; they love to create confusion and discord and they thrive in this atmosphere. They seem to be provoked by anyone's happiness unless it is their own.

**10: Imposed Isolation;** Another key indication of the Narcissistic person is as soon as they begin to establish a relationship with a person, they will discourage them from maintaining their former contacts. Friends, and even closest family members are scorned and shoved aside, as the Narcissist seeks to impose themselves as the only friend and contact the person has. If the victim allows this, he finds after a while that he is alone; isolated from any support network, including friends and family. The Narcissist wants them to have nowhere to run, and no one to turn to for help. This is also known as Alienation; cutting off or interfering with an individual's relationships with others. This is an especially Satanic practice that the devil uses all the time.

**11: The Abusive Cycle:** This is the name for the ongoing rotation between destructive and constructive behavior, typical of many dysfunctional relationships and families. It is also known as the 'push-pull' syndrome. The Narcissist will treat one kindly, telling them they are their best buddy; then reject them and make a cruel attack, then turn around and be kind again. This creates great confusion and tension because one never knows what to expect.

**12: Having a Selective Memory:** the Narcissist remembers what they want to remember, and the way they want to remember it; but conveniently forget what they don't wish to remember, especially anything unfavorable to their picture of themselves. They will use the term "As I remember it . . ." or "As I recall. . ."

### **A Few More Narcissistic Traits:**

**A Brilliance that passes for High Intelligence:** The Narcissist is usually a fast talking, seemingly very intelligent person. His clever statements and ability to overwhelm one with a flood of words causes many to admire him; but if one were to take the time to carefully analyze the communications of the Narcissist, it will be found that accuracy, consistency and often common sense are lacking, while their place is taken by clever phrases, jests, sarcasms, exaggerations, and an extreme over-confidence. They also use much dramatization and exaggeration in their speech.

If the Narcissist considers himself an authority on any subject, he will spout out massively on it, but will refuse to discuss any aspect where he knows his ignorance may be exposed. Asking such a query, or questioning his self-perceived expertise, can often result in a torrent of angry words and the Narcissist will endeavor to ridicule and belittle the question and the person who asked it. If it is on Biblical topics, the Narcissist will seem to have an answer for any objection, however they will not comment on areas which they are actually ignorant of, but cleverly gloss over them with irrelevant verbiage. If these areas arise, he will change the subject back to areas where he considers himself undefeatable.

There is a vision in the Spirit of Prophecy that is related to this satanic brilliance; it is where when the praying group rose up and followed Jesus into the Most Holy Place in 1844, but others remained behind and Satan was pouring out light and power—but there was no love, joy, and peace with it like Jesus gives! This is the Narcissist's form of brilliance; light and power, but they know nothing of love, joy, and peace!

**"Always" and "Never" Statements:** "Always" and "Never" Statements are declarations containing the words "always" or "never". They are commonly used but rarely true. They also often use the phrase, "I have come to a decision" but their 'decision' is really only fleeting and usually based on unreal concepts of a situation.

**Self-pity and Anger:** Expressing a sense of unresolved anger and exaggerated perception that they have been wronged, invalidated, neglected or abused. The Narcissist often will use self-pity and their own weaknesses to manipulate another into submitting to them out of compassion or pity. Feeling sorry for a Narcissist, is not compassion, it is folly! (Satan claimed God was trying to humiliate him.)

**Baiting and Bullying:** Deliberately doing things to provocative an angry, aggressive or emotional response from another individual; then accusing them of having a bad attitude. Pushing their weight around, as it were, to trample the little guy.

**False Accusations and Belittling:** Unwarranted or exaggerated criticism directed towards someone else. Creating an environment where an individual is caused to believe that their or some others, thoughts, beliefs, values, theories or physical presence are inferior, flawed, problematic or worthless. The Narcissist is preoccupied with his own agendas, and expresses in many ways that any other person's work, doings, or words are stupid or irrelevant.

### **Seeking it out:**

So what must we do as we face the fact that this spirit is found among us, yea, even among those claiming to have the final message of mercy for a dying world? Also we see that even God's people seem to gravitate to these kinds of leaders! Well the first place we need to look at is in our own hearts!

First, we must rid ourselves of any of our own Narcissistic ways and also our own affinity for such persons. We cannot use Satan's methods and ways and still claim to belong to the Lord. Anyone who has the belief that he has the right to control others, tell others what to believe, and even act as conscience for them, and that they have to believe only what he tells them, are demonstrating the character of Satan and the Beast! If we use manipulation and propaganda to control others, or any of the above listed habits, we must examine our own ways, and repent of any Narcissism in us. God can heal Narcissism; but only He can; and only when the Narcissist truly repents.

The worldly psychiatry model says Narcissists are incurable; they call it a disease. I puzzled over this question for a long time; "Is Narcissism a sickness? Or is Narcissism one of Satan's fetters of Sin with which he binds the hearts of those who play his pride and self-exaltation game." I did not know where to find out the truth until I found it in the Spirit of Prophecy. Sister White dealt with at least two Narcissists

in her time, although the name 'Narcissist' is not used and likely hadn't been invented yet. We have the counsels and the letters she wrote to them. They were Dudley Canright and Fannie Bolton; and as you read what she wrote to them and about them, you see that she in no way referred to it as a disease. She did not in any way excuse their behaviors, she called it sin, and warned and rebuked them, urging them to repent and forsake it.

So it is not illness; it is Pride, arrogance and Sin! It is nothing but the character of Satan, which we all have naturally, unless we are fully surrendered to Jesus and He is in charge of our lives. God would not demand of these persons that they turn away from their patterns of behavior and repent if they were sick and unable to do so even through His grace. Let us not excuse any of these behaviors in ourselves or among ourselves; let us seek the Lord in surrender and repentance and put these satanic attitudes far from us!

### **Finding Your Escape Route:**

What is the best thing to do when we find ourselves in any relationship with a Narcissist? You can actually be in such a relationship for a long time before the evidence piles up to the point you can't help but see it. Often a person needs to get information about these patterns before he recognizes what he is faced with. This is because of the subtle destruction of the person's self-confidence and self-regard that the Narcissist carries out relentlessly, and the person comes to believe that he *is* inferior and deserves this disrespect and bad treatment. But if and when he wakes up, he finds he is facing his worst nightmare come true.

Basically, if at all possible one needs to get away from the relationship as fast as possible! If there are no entanglements, simply walk away and cease all contact. If they are in a position to do you harm, then plan your escape route carefully and prayerfully, do the best you can to protect yourself and others who may be involved; then pray and act to get away from it. Delay is dangerous once they suspect you know what they really are.

When faced with someone who takes it on themselves to dictate to you what you can or cannot do, think or believe; refuse to respond to them anymore. Be like Jesus when the leaders asked him "by what authority do you do these things?" He side tracked them by asking them a question and did not reply to theirs.

If we dialogue with the Narcissist when they do these things, then we empower them to be our boss. We virtually say, "Yes, you have the right to pass judgment on me and my work; you have the right to be my conscience." The big thing is we need to not dialogue with the Narcissist! Dialoguing feeds the evil beast in him. When people refuse to respond to this manipulation, refuse to play the Narcissist's games any more—and yes, it is like games to them; when they find themselves ignored, then they really show their true colors!

There is a time to be silent; if they attack people and they ignore him; this is the best way to handle a narcissist. They feed on argument and debate; they just love to get you angry and set you off defending yourself, explaining yourself to them, and replying back to them; this feeds their need for attention and gratification! You owe them none of this!

If all stop replying to the Narcissist or trying to counsel him, and he starts seeing that people are ignoring him, it will set him back on his haunches as it were; he will be startled by it. You can't convince the devil; and that is what controls the unrepentant Narcissist. We have to stop feeding the beast; stop letting such folk get us down from the wall to interact back and forth with them. Walk away and Pray for them; there is no other answer.

## Narcissism

A person's only defense with 'these people' as I call them, is to know their pattern and stop expecting that they can be reasoned with. They cannot! Like a dangerous animal, you must know their habits to protect yourself from them. Our attitude must be like Nehemiah's:

Nehemiah 6:2 "That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. 3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"