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Please see the FULL EDITION Rewind for much more additional commentary, including a tribute to Rick's father, who passed away this last week.

What Do "Selfies" Say About Us?

Philippians 2:3: (NASB) *Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.*



"Selfies" - a modern day phenomena of simplicity and ease. The concept is simple - take pictures of yourself so the world can see you as you choose for it to see you. What could be wrong with that? After all it is your life and you should have control over it, right? As with any luxury of life, there is usually a basic thread of goodness somewhere within it, but as with any luxury in life that thread of goodness can and usually is overrun by excess and pride. Do "selfies" represent this excess and pride and if so, how do we reset ourselves back to a clearer reality? (hashtag) Like, stay with us and find out!!

Where did our "selfie seeds" come from? 1 John 2:15-17: Sin is formed through these three things or a combination thereof: The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. **In these three actions all sin is conceived, developed and committed...but all sin need not have all three:** Genesis 3:4-7: (NASB) *⁴The serpent said to the woman, you surely will not die! ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. ⁶When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.*

*saw that the tree was good for food = lust of the flesh;
that it was a delight to the eyes = lust of the eyes; and
the tree was desirable to make one wise = pride of life - taking God's credit!*

Rick's father, Richard Sr., died this past week. Richard was selfless - a complete opposite of the theme of this program. He was a spiritual hero and rock of a Christian example.

Has the "selfie" mentality ever shown its face before?

The photo is staged to look like something it is not in order to present to the world a perception. Every picture of yourself that you take is not a self-absorbed action, however. Taking a picture with you at the Grand Canyon, for example, or a picture with a friend or relative you haven't seen in a while are not the types of photos we are discussing here.

So, with social media, the whole advertised point is to connect - to see the lives of others, and most importantly, have your life be seen by others. Is that what is really happening? No, it has for the most part drifted into a category of "self-presentation." Interestingly, the whole idea of self-focus and self-gratification is ancient and the results have already been revealed:

(Source: Biblical commentary by McGee) Solomon also wrote the Books of Proverbs and the Song of Solomon. We will find Ecclesiastes to be quite different from the Book of Proverbs. In Proverbs we saw the wisdom of Solomon; here we shall see the foolishness of Solomon. Ecclesiastes is the dramatic autobiography of his life when he was away from God...Man has tried to be happy without God; it is being tried every day by millions of people. This book shows the absurdity of the attempt. Solomon was the wisest of men, and he had a wisdom that was God-given. He tried every field of endeavor and pleasure that was known to man, and his conclusion was that all is vanity. The word vanity means, "empty, purposeless." Satisfaction in life can never be attained in this manner.

King Solomon was given great wisdom and wealth. Ecclesiastes 2:1-4 We do not find fulfillment in the "things" and the "stuff," which is what selfies represent.

In comparison, Solomon and my dad were both very wise. My dad was focused on serving God, having made that life-changing decision at age 12. Unlike Solomon, he gave up pleasures when he gave himself to God. He was not a wealthy man, but in the most important way was wealthier than Solomon ever grew to be in the quality and richness of his life and family.



"Can We Auto-Correct Humanity," (Verse 1) Prince EA

Did you know the average person spends four years of his life looking down at his cell phone?
Kind of ironic, ain't it?
How these touchscreens can make us lose touch
But it's no wonder in a world filled with
iMacs, iPads and iPhones
So many "I's," so many selfies, not enough "us" and "we's"
See, technology has made us more selfish and separate than ever
'Cause while it claims to connect us, connection has gotten no better.

Now for some practicality in approaching the whole "selfie" mentality of our day: First, as we mentioned, all "selfies" do not fall into this category of self-promotion - it really boils down to the WHY, the HOW and the FREQUENCY of our "self-portraits." We will touch on five points to test our "selfie" awareness - **SELFIE SOLUTIONS** - as we use Philippians 2:1-11 as our guideline perspective.

**"SELFIE SOLUTION" Establish (or re-establish) our TRUE NORTH of AFFECTION:
Where do we look to fill the holes in our lives?**

Philippians 2:1-2: Many times we have friends with whom we do not have "fellowship." Fellowship is coming together with a common purpose. You can fill the holes in your life by going to others gathered for a higher purpose. Solomon looked towards pleasures to "test himself." That does not work.

Focusing on a fellowship of serving the Lord helps us to focus outside of "just me:" Romans 12:9-13:

Selfies can be used to cover up "what is" and present something that is different. Becoming obsessed by this practice can reveal the selfishness of our society.

King Solomon's excesses continue - notice the subject matter here: Ecclesiastes 2:5-8:
(NASB) ⁵I made gardens and parks for myself and I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees; ⁶I made ponds of water for myself from which to irrigate a forest of growing trees. ⁷I bought male and female slaves and I had homeborn slaves. Also I possessed flocks and herds larger than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. ⁸Also, I collected for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men—many concubines.

Self-gratification and indulgence - sounds like the lifestyles of the rich and famous! This was the opposite of Rick's dad...My dad built a legacy of spirituality and faithfulness and handed it to anyone who would take it.

Did Jesus encourage a "selfie" mentality? Mark 12:28-31: Did Jesus mean we should be adoring ourselves? No, we should be caring for ourselves, not being egotistical or proud. Our love for self comes out of a love for God first and foremost, which places us in our rightful position as *the created*. As such, love for self is humble, appreciative and God-honoring. Do we show our love for our neighbor in this way?



"Can We Auto-Correct Humanity," (Verse Two) Prince EA

And let me express first
Mr. Zuckerberg, not to be rude but you should re-classify Facebook to what it is:
An anti-social network
'Cause while we may have big friend lists
So many of us are friendless, all alone
'Cause friendships are more broken than the screens on our very phones
We sit at home on our computers measuring self-worth by numbers of followers and Likes
Ignoring those who actually love us
It seems we'd rather write an angry post
Than talk to someone who might actually hug us
Am I bugging?



"SELFIE SOLUTION" Establish, or re-establish our TRUE NORTH of MOTIVATION and ACTION: Are we moved to act by what we want and feel, or do the lives of those around us supply our motivation to action?

Philippians 2:3-4: Empty conceit is just that - empty - it has no lasting value. Godliness, on the other hand, is an unending source of strength, grace and perspective!

Solomon continues...Way back in ancient history, he lived the question "How much is enough?" Ecclesiastes 2:9-11: It all comes to a grinding halt, for no matter what we have, we are still mortal!

My dad instituted Sunday dinners that included family birthdays. He would ask, "Now that you are a year older, what are your words of wisdom for us?" It is a deep family tradition now.

Give your selfie a facelift! How? Romans 12:1-2: So, take the "i" out of "selfie" and replace it with an "L" for our Lord. Add Sanctification and Salvation to the conclusion of what was once "selfie" and you now have "selfless!" Thus we have our facelift, for you can only accept these changes if you continually look up!



"Can We Auto-Correct Humanity," (verse three) Prince EA

You tell me...
I asked a friend the other day let's meet up face-to-face
They said alright, what time you wanna Skype?
I responded with OMG, SRS, and then a bunch of SMH's
And realized what about me?
Do I not have the patience to have conversation without abbreviation?
This is the generation of media overstimulation
Chats have been reduced to snaps
The news is 140 characters
Videos are six seconds at high speed
And you wonder why ADD is on the rise faster than 4G LTE
But, get a load of this
Studies show the attention span of the average adult today
is one second lower than that of a gold fish.

"SELFIE SOLUTION" Establish, or re-establish our TRUE NORTH of ATTITUDE: Do we have such an attitude as Jesus to provoke us to be able to put our lives on the line - to be able to walk away from comfort and into conflict?

Philippians 2:5-7

Solomon continues...his perception of his world implodes around him as he is faced with mortality and the flawed thinking of a man who lavished too much upon himself:

Ecclesiastes 2:12-17: (NASB) ¹²So I turned to consider wisdom, madness and folly; for what will the man do who will come after the king except what has already been done? ¹³And I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness. ¹⁴The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I know that one fate befalls them both.

So far so good - wisdom is better, yet both the wise and foolish die.

¹⁵Then I said to myself, as is the fate of the fool it will also befall me. Why then have I been extremely wise? So I said to myself, this too is vanity. ¹⁶For there is no lasting remembrance of the wise man, as with the fool, inasmuch as in the coming days all will be forgotten. And how the wise man and the fool alike die! ¹⁷So I hated life, for the work, which had been done under the sun, was grievous to me; because everything is futility and striving after wind.

What happened? Solomon reached for and grasped so much in his life that when it all added up to his life being a terminal endeavor, he abandoned everything as vanity - even wisdom! This is a sad and poignant warning to our present "selfie" society about our own end results of our reaching and seeking fulfillment in places that only give you "stuff."

We always have a choice in how we deal with the world around us - it may not be an easy choice and it may not always be an obvious choice, but we do have a choice:

Joshua 24:14-16: Being obsessed with selfies is really serving the god of self. Choose this day who you will serve! Today we have the idol of ourselves.



"Can We Auto-Correct Humanity," (Verse Four) Prince EA

So if you're one of the few people or aquatic animals that have yet to click off
 or close this video, congratulations
 Let me finish by saying you do have a choice, yes
 But this one, my friends, we cannot auto-correct - we must do it ourself
 Take control or be controlled,
 Make a decision. Me?
 No longer do I want to spoil a precious moment by recording it with a phone
 I'm just gonna keep them
 I don't wanna take a picture of all my meals anymore - I'm just gonna eat them
 I don't want the new app, the new software, or the new update
 And If I wanna post an old photo, who says I have to wait until Thursday
 I'm so tired of performing in the pageantry of vanity
 And conforming to this accepted form of digital insanity.
 Call me crazy, but I imagine a world
 where we smile when we have low batteries
 'cause that will mean we'll be one bar closer - to humanity

"SELFIE SOLUTION" Establish, or re-establish our TRUE NORTH of PURPOSE: Is the purpose of our lives so vibrant that our humility and obedience to it will shine through, no matter what the cost?

Philippians 2:8: Purpose brings choice which brings the courage to change! Philippians 3:7

Instead of "take another selfie," how do we give in a way that is selfless?

A last look at Solomon - here having given in and realizing that what is given by God is a blessing, and what we rush around to amass for ourselves is nothing but busy work with no reward: Ecclesiastes 2:24-26: At least he began to again acknowledge God. He asked for and received wisdom but over time decided to test himself with pleasures and diversions. He really should have asked for wisdom with humility.

I wrote an allegory called "Road Signs" in tribute to my dad. You see signs on the road every day and take them for granted until something happens like a snowstorm at night and your sense of direction is off. Then you look for the road sign as a marker to get home. He was a "road sign" where what he was telling us was wise and gave us important direction. See *CQ Rewind FULL EDITION Bonus Material*.

James 4:6-10: Submitting to God is the opposite action from "the pride of life" and from "I'll take another selfie!" Being double-minded is basically being lazy because we are not fully committed either way. We MUST shake off the lethargy of double-mindedness and reach with intention for the selfless humility of serving God through Jesus! If we put our hope in man - in ourselves - what hope of glory can possibly exist?

What if we hope in God through Christ? Colossians 1:27-29: Beauty is not about the photo, it is about the purpose.

"SELFIE SOLUTION" Establish, or re-establish our TRUE NORTH of VISION: Does our faith in the vision of God's future override and obliterate the paltry visions of our own little lives?

Philippians 2:9-11: Our vision is the glorification of Jesus - his name; his work. It isn't about me. When we can clearly see that, all of the other distractions in our lives can go away. There is value in living a life bigger than ourselves.

We have become slaves to the god of ourselves, the god of image and presentation. In reality we can choose to walk away from that and be servants of the God of righteousness, mercy, love, justice and wisdom. We can walk a life connected to those around us. Put the selfies away and bring instead selflessness and see how much better life is.

**So, what do "selfies" say about us?
 For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
 Think about it...!**