



March 3, 2024

Jesus Saves!?

From the Tyranny of the Black Hole of Self

Luke 9:23-25

The Upside-Down Way of Jesus

The way to **save** one's life is to **lose** one's life; self-denial is the way to self-actualization
Self-denial is not self-hatred or self-rejection, but rather a necessary form of self-love

Our Relationship with the Self

Self consciousness suggests "a relationship" with the self, distinguishes us from animals

We can stand outside ourselves, evaluate and judge ourselves, challenge ourselves

Self-fulfilled: healthy self understanding rooted in congruence and results in manifold love (centrifugal)

Self-centered: diseased obsessive self-preference rooted in lack and results in manifold sin (centripetal)

"Self-Fulfilled" (Centrifugal) Unpacked

"Healthy": God intends for us to be "whole" (filled up)

"Self-understanding": this requires understanding of what it means to be human and how to live well

To be fully human is to embody the image of God (as Jesus did) in centrifugal living

This also requires an understanding of the value and beauty of my particular self

"Rooted in congruence": when my understanding is sound and I act accordingly, I become "full"

"Results in manifold love": when I am full, I am able to turn my energies outward toward others

Love reinforces and refills the self, resulting in a self-fulfilling upward trajectory

"Self-Centered" (Centripetal) Unpacked

"Diseased": a sign that something is wrong, broken, not working as designed, beginning at infancy

"Obsessive self-preference": instinctive habitual putting self first to detriment of others

"Rooted in lack": trying to fill a hole with things that do not fill but increase the hole

"Results in manifold sin": when I am focused on futile self-filling, every form of sin follows

Jesus Saves Us from the Black Hole of Self-Centeredness

By showing us what it means to be fully human (the centrifugal life): **Philippians 2:3-5**

By affirming our value and belovedness, filling our emptiness: **Ephesians 3:14-19**

By literally empowering us to resist and overcome the pull of self-centeredness: **2 Corinthians 5:17**

By rewarding/reinforcing the abundance of the centrifugal life: **John 10:10**

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The 2024 Lenten Journey

Date	Focus
2/14 Ash Wed	Introducing the Theme Jesus Saves!?
2/18 Week One	Overview of Salvation History and How to Tell the Story
2/25 Week Two	Jesus Saves from the Tyranny of Dark Ignorance
3/3 Week Three	Jesus Saves from the Tyranny of the Black Hole of Self
3/10 Week Four	Jesus Saves from the Tyranny of Despotism and Idolatry
3/17 Week Five	Jesus Saves from the Tyranny of Isolation & Identity Amnesia
3/24 Week Six Palm Sunday	Jesus Saves from the Tyranny of Suffocating Despair
3/31 Easter	Jesus Saves from the Tyranny of the Last Enemy Death

Bedtime Pause Cards Supplement Packs are Here!

Pick up your *Bedtime Pause Cards* supplement pack today!. There is a prompt card for each day of Lent that corresponds with our Sunday themes and helps us to carry the reflections of the saving work of Jesus throughout our weeks from Sunday to Sunday. Each prompt invites a few minutes of engagement, a great way to settle the mind and soul in preparation for a good night's sleep.

And the Daily Noontime Lord's Prayer Practice!

And set your watches and phones to a daily ring at NOON to remind you to pray the Lord's Prayer every day during Lent together with your dispersed Highland family. This is a simple practice that can cohere us together during our busy weeks and keep our eyes on Jesus the Savior, who feeds us, forgives us, delivers and protects us, and brings His kingdom into our worlds.