 In Christ

> No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.
> *— 1 Corinthians 10:24*

Book: New Testament / 1 Corinthians
Topics: selfishness, love, neighbor

Interpretation:
The Bible verse *1 Corinthians 10:24* teaches us an important life lesson that we often overlook. Modern life has caused us to focus on our own needs, goals, and objectives.

We are so concerned with achieving our own goals that we often focus only on ourselves, without considering others. But God calls us to seek the good of others and not just worry about ourselves. Why is this so important?

The meaning of the bible text

The context of this verse in *1 Corinthians 10* shows us how *the apostle Paul* is advising the church in Corinth to stay on track amid the difficulties they are facing. He reminds the Corinthians that the freedom to do whatever they want should not be used as an excuse to indulge their own desires. Instead, they should be concerned about the well-being of others, both inside and outside the church.

Verse 24 sums up the entire letter by telling us that in everything we do, we should seek the good of others. Paul calls Christians to change their selfish tendencies and put the interests and needs of others above their own.

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> Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

> — *1 Corinthians 13:4-5*

Book: New Testament / 1 Corinthians
Topics: selfishness, anger, love, patience

Interpretation:
Love is one of the main themes of the Bible, especially the New Testament. God's love is unconditional love that offers us salvation through *His Son Jesus Christ*.

For Christians, love is an emotion that is part of their daily lives and is also one of the fruits of *the Holy Spirit* in our lives. The main passage for understanding Christian love is found in *1 Corinthians 13:4-5*. This passage describes love in terms of how it is shown and how it behaves in our relationships with others.

Love is patient

Love is able to endure any adversity. It does not give in at the first obstacle, but rather perseveres and remains steadfast. Love requires patience, forgiveness, and tolerance. It is easy to love when things are going well, but true love is the kind that endures even in difficult times. When we love, we must be willing to suffer.

Love is kindness

Love is kindness in action. Kindness means being kind and compassionate to others. Love must be kind in every detail of our lives; not just in words but also in kind behavior towards others. Kindness is an unmistakable sign of love.

Love knows no envy

Envy is a powerful force that makes us desire what others have. Love, on the other hand, always seeks the welfare of others and is not subject to envy or jealousy. Love rejoices in the success of others and seeks their happiness. Envy is an obstacle to sincere and selfless love.

Love does not boast, is not proud

Love does not seek glory or recognition for itself. It does not behave arrogantly or take pride in its achievements. Love is humble, accepts its limitations and is not selfish. That is, love is also a way of serving others.

Does nothing reprehensible

This means that true love does not involve evil, immoral or illegal actions. Love seeks to do what is right and not to harm others. Those who truly love others try to do good, not evil.

Does not seek their own

People who love do not seek their own interests, but the interests of others. True love is altruistic, meaning you give your all without expecting anything in return.

Does not get irritated

True love is not easily angered, and it does not allow itself to be carried away by anger. Love is patient and tolerant, it does not seek to hurt others, but seeks to understand and forgive the weaknesses of those around us.

It does not hold grudges

Love is a feeling that does not allow resentment to exist. True love does not hold a person accountable for past mistakes, but rather aims to reconcile and find solutions.

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> Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become “fools” so that you may become wise.
> *— 1 Corinthians 3:18*

Book: New Testament / 1 Corinthians
Topics: selfishness, thoughts, wisdom, world

Interpretation:
In *1 Corinthians 3:18, the Apostle Paul* calls for reflection and humility, warning that no one should think themselves wise in this world, for this can be a form of self-deception.

What does it mean to be wise in this world?

Worldly wisdom is that which is based on knowledge gained through experience, observation, and reason. This wisdom is important, but it can be insufficient when it comes to understanding the deepest and most transcendent reality.

In this sense, divine or spiritual wisdom is that which allows people to access deeper truths related to their purpose and destiny.

How can we become foolish?

For Paul, foolishness is not a lack of knowledge, but a humble attitude toward reality. So he calls us to become foolish in the sense that we give up our pretensions to know everything, making room for experience, humility, and listening.

In other words, to be truly wise, we need to develop a desire to continually learn, putting aside our ego and recognizing our own limitations.

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> However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.
> *— Acts 20:24*

Book: New Testament / Acts
Topics: selfishness, Evangelism, grace, life, valuable, work

Interpretation:
In the book of Acts, the author Luke presents various key moments in the life of the *apostle Paul*. *Acts 20* tells of one of Paul's last meetings with the leaders of the church in Ephesus. Paul had been ministering in Ephesus for three years and had built a strong, vibrant church that was growing rapidly.

At this meeting, Paul spoke about his ministry, his commitment to the gospel, and his future. He knew that his time on earth was coming to an end and that his martyrdom was imminent. Despite this, the apostle insists that he never considered his life more valuable than his devotion to Christ.

In verse 24, Paul makes his position on life and his ministry clear. He says that nothing is more important than fulfilling God's calling on your life, even if it means giving your life. For Paul, the gospel was always more valuable than the comfort, safety, or survival of his body.

This may seem extreme, but it is important to understand that God's call to each person will be different, and that we can only fulfill that call if we are willing to sacrifice everything for Christ. He calls us to give ourselves completely to His work, and that may mean enduring hardships and trials.

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> I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
>
> *— Galatians 2:20*

Book: New Testament / Galatians
Topics: selfishness, Crucifixion, faith, life, Savior

Interpretation:
Galatians 2:20 is one of the most famous verses in the Bible. In one sentence, the Apostle *Paul* summarizes the Christian life and the relationship we as believers are to have with *Jesus Christ*. This verse is so important that many theologians call it *“a summary of the Christian life.”*

In this verse, Paul reminds us that our lives as Christians are to be centered on Jesus Christ. We are to be *“crucified with”* Him, meaning we are dead to sin and alive to God. We are no longer slaves to our own desires and passions, but are free to live according to the will of God. In other words, Jesus Christ lives in us, and we are to allow His Spirit to guide us in everything we do.

The second part of the verse allows us to see that our lives are now lived by faith in *the Son of God*, whom *the Father* sent into the world to save us from sin. It is important to remember that we cannot live the Christian life in the flesh, but only in faith. This means that our lives cannot be directed by our own desires and aspirations, but by faith in Christ and all that He did for us on the cross.

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> “You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?” declares the Lord Almighty. “Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house.
> — *Haggai 1:9*

Book: Old Testament / Haggai
Topics: selfishness, awe, gratitude, punishment, righteousness, serving

Interpretation:
The Bible verse in *Haggai 1:9* reveals the dissatisfaction that comes from constantly searching without true direction. *“You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little”* shows that the search for human satisfaction is a difficult task in itself, without the presence of God.

This verse also talks about the need for righteousness. The phrase *“What you brought home, I blew away”* shows that the lack of a sense of righteousness and devotion to God can lead to dire consequences.

God says that His house is desolate. This House is a symbol of the Church, where God desires to be worshiped and has a close relationship with HIS people. The house represents the place where believers gather to honor God and hear His word. We can understand that this House of God has become an empty and desolate place. People have forgotten God and sought to satisfy their personal desires, leaving aside their duty of worship and devotion.

The Bible tells us that as children of God, we are to put God first. He expects us, like the Israelites, to be fully committed and serve Him at all times. We should seek a closer relationship with God rather than focusing our efforts on the pursuit of material satisfaction. Instead of focusing on our own desires, we should strive to be obedient to God and allow Him to shape our lives according to His will.

Moreover, we must remember that our relationship with God cannot flourish if we leave the house of God. It is in the Church that we can be strengthened and nourished as children of God. *The Church* is a place where we can find emotional and spiritual support. It is a place where we can worship, pray, and share our faith with other believers.

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> For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.
> — *James 3:16*

Book: New Testament / James
Topics: selfishness, evil, sin

Interpretation:
The Book of James is considered an important text in Christianity. It contains a number of teachings that encourage reflection and the holistic practice of religion in everyday life. One of the most profound and meaningful verses in the book is *James 3:16*, which talks about the presence of envy and selfish in our lives and how it can affect our actions and relationships with others.

Envy and selfish

Envy and selfish are two emotions that are very present in our lives. We can feel envious of someone who has something we want, or we can feel selfish with someone who seems more successful or happier than us. But these emotions can cause us to act unconsciously and even cruelly, affecting our relationships and our own happiness.

In *James 3:16*, we are warned of the danger of allowing envy and selfish to dominate our lives. Having these emotions can lead to frustration and evil deeds. Therefore, we must make an effort to recognize these emotions in ourselves and learn to control them so that we can live in peace and harmony.

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> The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.
> — *Mark 12:31*

Book: New Testament / Mark
Topics: selfishness, law, love, neighbor

Interpretation:

In the Gospel of Mark 12:31, Jesus teaches that the second greatest commandment is to *love your neighbor as yourself*. This teaching is a natural extension of the previous commandment, which is *to love God* with all your heart, all your strength, and all your mind. Jesus teaches that there are no other commandments greater than these two.

A natural question many might ask when reading this verse is: Who is our neighbor? Jesus answered this question in the parable of the Good Samaritan. In the story, a man is attacked and injured on the road. Three people pass by, but only the Samaritan stops and helps the man. Jesus shows that our neighbor is anyone in need, even someone we don't know or who comes from a different religion or culture.

The commandment to love our neighbor is fundamental to our relationships with others. This commandment calls us to look beyond our differences and see all people as equal before God. The practice of loving our neighbor has many concrete consequences in our daily lives: helping those in need, compassion for those who suffer, forgiving those who harm us, and an attitude of service to others.

An essential part of the commandment to love our neighbors is to love ourselves. What we need is not self-centeredness, but a healthy attitude toward our human value and the image of God that we carry within ourselves. If we learn to love ourselves and treat ourselves with respect, we will be able to project this love and respect onto others.

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> Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."
>
> — *Mark 8:34*

Book: New Testament / Mark
Topics: selfishness, Crucifixion, following, Jesus, Salvation

Interpretation:
Mark's Gospel was written to Gentile believers, most of whom had no knowledge of the Jewish religion. Mark's goal in his gospel was to present *Jesus as the Son of God* and to emphasize the need

to follow Him and have a personal relationship with Him. In chapter 8, Jesus is in Galilee with His disciples and performs several miracles, after which He teaches them the cost of following Him.

The cost of discipleship

In verse 34, *Jesus* calls the crowd and His disciples and tells them that if they want to follow Him, they must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him. This is a fundamental teaching of Christianity, which involves giving up our own will and following Jesus in every aspect of our lives. This verse can be difficult for many Christians to accept because it involves self-denial and a conscious decision to follow Jesus. It means that we must give up our own desires and ambitions in order to follow God's will.

Self-denial

The phrase "deny yourself" is an invitation to abandon your selfishness and focus on serving God and others. Instead of seeking our own comfort and ambition, we must be willing to give up our needs for the sake of others. This attitude of service reflects *Christ's* love for us and allows us to live a full and meaningful life.

Take up your cross

"Taking up your cross" means the sacrifice and suffering required to follow Jesus. The cross was an instrument of torture and death, so taking up your cross means accepting suffering and persecution for your faith. In doing so, we follow in the footsteps of Christ and can be assured that He is with us always.

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> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.
> *— Philippians 2:3*

Book: New Testament / Philippians
Topics: selfishness, humility, neighbor

Interpretation:

Philippians 2:3 reminds us of the importance of humility in the Christian life. This virtue is defined as the willingness to acknowledge one's own limitations and weaknesses and to accept the superiority of others without feeling resentful or envious. Humility is contrasted with arrogance, vanity, pride, and selfishness—worldly attitudes that distance us from God and our brothers and sisters.

Competition and vanity

The apostle *Paul* warns us not to do anything out of selfish ambition or conceit. Competitiveness is unfair competition with others in which we seek to prove that we are better, smarter, or more successful than they are. Vanity is self-idolatry in which we consider ourselves superior to others and seek approval and recognition above all else. Both approaches are harmful to ourselves and others because they cause us to act with pride, jealousy, envy, and dissatisfaction.

Humility and respect for others

Humility means respecting others as beings greater than ourselves. It does not mean that we should look down on ourselves or that others are perfect or infallible. Rather, it means recognizing that others have value and dignity as human beings who deserve our respect and love, even if we disagree with them or if they have hurt us. Humility helps us maintain an open, kind, and compassionate attitude toward others, and be more sensitive and understanding.

The importance of humility in the christian life

Humility is a fundamental virtue in the Christian life because it brings us closer to God and our brothers. Above all, humility makes us aware of our dependence and need for God, who is the sole master of our lives. It helps us to recognize our condition as sinners and to ask for forgiveness and mercy for our mistakes.

Secondly, humility allows us to treat others fairly and equitably, without imposing our will or putting others down. It allows us to be patient, compassionate, generous, and kind to others, just as *Jesus* was to us.

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> A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.
> *— Proverbs 11:25*

Book: Old Testament / Proverbs
Topics: selfishness, food, generosity, giving

Interpretation:
The Book of Proverbs is a book of wisdom, containing advice for daily living, justice, and morality. Chapter 11:25 teaches a doctrine of generosity and prosperity, calling us to share with others so that we too can have abundance.

Generosity as a path to prosperity

The central idea of ??this verse is that generosity brings abundance and blessing. When we give to others from a pure heart, we not only do good, but we also sow the seeds of benefit for ourselves.

The term “generous soul” refers to a person who is generous with his or her kindness to others. The “prosperity” of such a person means that he or she will live in abundance – materially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Sharing the feast

The second aspect of this verse from *Proverbs 11:25* is the idea that “whoever feeds others will also be fed himself or herself.” The term “feed” refers to the satisfaction of a specific need, whether physical (e.g. hunger) or emotional (e.g. sadness).

When we are able to meet the needs of others, we contribute to their happiness and well-being. But in turn, this generous act benefits us as well, since the act of giving and receiving is mutual.

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> Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions.
> — *Proverbs 18:2*

Book: Old Testament / Proverbs
Topics: selfishness, speaking, wisdom

Interpretation:

The verse begins with the word *“Fools.”* In the Bible, the word *“foolish”* refers to a foolish or ignorant person. This type of person does not care about learning or listening to the advice of others. Instead, they are more concerned with their own opinions and showing off their knowledge. This attitude can be dangerous because it can lead to arrogance and pride, which can cause conflicts and problems in everyday life.

The second part of the verse mentions that a fool does not get pleasure from intelligence, but from *expressing his own opinion*. This means that a fool does not find satisfaction in learning or knowing more, but in making his voice heard. This attitude can lead to a lack of dialogue and exchange of ideas between people. If everyone expresses his own opinion without listening to the opinions of others, effective solutions to problems cannot be found.

So, how can we apply this verse in our daily lives? First of all, we must have an open mind. We must be willing to listen to the opinions of others and learn from them. We must be humble and admit that we do not know everything. Recognizing that there is always something to learn is key to personal growth and interpersonal relationships.

Secondly, we must be careful not to fall into pride and arrogance. We must not think that we are always right or that our opinion is the only correct one. Instead, we must respect the opinions of others and be willing to admit that sometimes we are wrong.

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> Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.
> *— Psalm 119:36*

Book: Old Testament / Psalms
Topics: selfishness, greed, heart, law

Interpretation:
Greed is an attitude or behavior that leads us to cling to material goods without regard for the needs of others, often seeking our own gain at their expense.

In *Psalm 119:36*, the psalmist asks God to incline his heart to God's revelations and turn him away from greed. This is a prayer for God's help in overcoming a common human tendency: allowing greed to control us.

Why is it important to fight greed?

Greed can not only lead us to harm others for our own gain but also distance us from God and our relationships with others. Putting the love of money and possessions above love for God and others can lead to undesirable relationships and behaviors.

How do we apply this verse to our lives?

Greed can confuse each of us, and it's important to know how to fight it. This verse gives us an important tool: *asking God for help to incline our hearts to His testimonies*.

This means regularly reading and studying *God's Word*, praying for wisdom, and asking God for help in following His commandments. By focusing on God, we can gain the strength to resist the temptation of greed.

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> Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.
> — *Romans 15:2*

Book: New Testament / Romans
Topics: selfishness, encouragement, neighbor

Interpretation:
Apostle Paul in his letter to the *Romans 15:2* tells us to please our neighbor for his good, which means that we should consider the needs and desires of others and do everything we can to please them, as long as it does not conflict with our biblical principles.

This is a very different attitude than what we often encounter in the world, where people tend to think only about themselves and do not care about others. But as followers *of Christ*, we must be different by showing humility and love for our neighbors.

Building as the goal of our relationships

The ultimate goal of our relationships with others should be their edification. We must realize that our actions and words can both help and harm others, so we must strive to build up and support those around us. We must always remember that every action we take can be an opportunity to have a

positive impact on someone else.

It is important to remember that this does not mean that we should please everyone at the expense of our own well-being. The Bible teaches us that we should keep a safe distance from people who can have a negative influence on us. But if we can help and be a blessing to someone, we should do so.

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