

**2009 Holiday Sermon Series**  
**“Making Jesus the Center of All”**  
*Pastor Dale Campfield – Eastgate Community Church*  
*December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009*

**Intro:**

**Matt 28:19**    *“Go and make disciples of all nations...”*

**ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve**

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Today, we will continue with the “2009 Holiday Sermon Series” with...

**“Making Jesus the Center of All”**

Have you ever noticed how everyone always wants to be in the center or the middle of everything? We all want to be in the middle of something. It’s in the center, the middle where things happen. It’s where the excitement is. Being right smack dab in the middle of something.

**For example...**

- Sitting in the middle of the theater watching a movie as opposed to the side view.
- Walking down the center isle for a wedding as opposed to a side isle of some kind.
- The middle of a tootsie roll pop. How many licks does it take to get to the center of a Tootsie Roll Pop?
- The center of the stadium at the game; getting as close as you can.
- The heart of a watermelon.
- The center piece of Butch’s brownies.
- Everyone wants to know, “What’s at the center of the universe?”
- Also, “Journey to the center of the earth.”
- Back in the day, Aristotle and Ptolemy among others (including the RCC) adhered to the Earth centered model of our galaxy. They thought the earth was the middle of it all.
- You have to stay in the middle of the boat so you won’t capsize the thing.

The middle! The center! Everyone needs to stay in the center!

**Question: What is at the center of your life?**

Question: Do people want to get there?

Question: If Jesus Christ is at the center of our life; do people want to get to what you really are?

### **John 12:32**

“And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.”

If we lift Jesus up, all men will be drawn unto Him. This of course is referring to Jesus being lifted up on the cross, but as well, I think we can take it to the point of having Him lifted up from within us... Christ becoming the center of our lives.

If He's at the center of our life, He'll be lifted and people will automatically be drawn unto Him. If your life is not automatically drawing people to Christ, then you must question whether or not He is at the center of your life.

### **LAST WEEK: “Tag – You're it!”**

Last Sunday we talked about the fact that we are “it”. God has tagged us and we are “it”. We have been tagged by His love and now we must go out and tag someone else. We are the hands and feet, the mouth and actions of Christ on this earth – we're it! Tag – you're it!

Since we're “it”... Just how effective have we become? I propose to you, the IMPACT that we can make upon the lives of people in being “it”... will be no greater than the IMPACT Christ has upon our lives; being the absolute center of all that we are! We must have Christ in the center of everything that we are in order to truly go out and TAG someone for the Kingdom of God, knowing we are “it”!

This morning we're going to compare Self Centered People to Christ Centered People so that we can learn the difference and hopefully walk away from this message with a desire to be a Christ Centered Person!

### **Today – We'll look at the comparisons of being SELF CENTERED vs. CHRIST CENTERED.**

These two battle each other in the life of the Christian every day! And yes... Christians can be a self centered as anyone else! In fact, sometimes they are! We can claim to be a Christian, which most of do, and still live a life that is self centered!

Being CHRIST CENTERED is the antithesis of the path the world is on, it is diametrically opposed to the way the world lives. Here is the word that describes the world - SELF CENTERED. SELF CENTERED is the essential bias of the unregenerate heart and it is the potential weakness of the regenerate heart. For the unsaved, life is lived rather selfishly. No matter what garments of humanistic philanthropy or benevolence they may cloak it in, it is, never the less, SELF CENTERED. SELF CENTERED living is self damaging in the short term, and ultimately self destroying in the long term. Salvation is God's way of turning you from a SELF CENTERED, self damaging and self destroying life to a CHRIST CENTERED way of life. Living a Christ centered life is neither form nor method, it is source.

### **Colossians 3:1-3**

"Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

### **Philippians 2:13**

"It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

### **Deut. 3:20**

"Choose to love the Lord your God and to obey Him and commit yourself to Him, for He is your life."

### **1 John 5:11-12**

"And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life."

Paul says it this way . . . **Gal 2:20**

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me."

So... let's look at it closer... Let's look at the comparisons of those who live a Self Centered Life to that of a Christ Centered Life. Here we go...

## **11 Comparisons between Self and Christ Centered People**

### **Comparison #1**

#### **Self Centered People: Absorb the energy of those around them.**

They basically suck the life out of you. They are incredibly needy and always wanting a piece of you.

#### **Christ Centered People: Release the energy of God to those around them.**

They are consistently giving off a Godly energy to those around them who are in need. They are like a power source that God uses. And energy station that others can come to and get refreshed.

Have you ever met someone like that? You just wanted to be around them. They always encourage you and lift you up. They make you feel better when you leave them than before you came to them.

## Comparison #2

### **Self Centered People: Can talk the walk.**

They can talk up a good game. They know just the right words to say at the right time. They can even trash talk with the best of them. In talking with them, you'd think they can probably walk on water. However, when they start walking it, they're just all wet.

### **Christ Centered People: Can walk the talk.**

They can follow through with what they say. They live the example of Christ in their lives and not just talk about it. They're not about talking about it; they're about walking it out.

## Comparison #3

### **Self Centered People: Repel you.**

You don't even want to be around them. Their arrogant attitudes and stuffy way of life just makes you sick. In fact, you run from them when you see them coming; they just repel you.

### **Christ Centered People: Compel you.**

You want to be around them and they compel you to go out and make an IMPACT in the lives around you!

## Comparison #4

### **Self Centered People: Love to be served.**

They think in fact that they deserve to be served. They surround themselves with people who buy into their self absorbed way of life and wait for them to serve them. They expect the red carpet to be rolled out whenever they are in town. These people are complete "inward focused."

### **Christ Centered People: Love to serve others.**

They have the true heart of a servant, one who wants to serve others. One who understands that they are "it" and they need to tag someone else. These types of people are completely "outward focused."

## Comparison #5

### **Self Centered People: Love to be acknowledged by others.**

When they walk into a room, they want everyone to know they are there. When in a meeting, they just wait for you to acknowledge them and get upset when you don't. These people love to score in life, make a touchdown, or whatever metaphor you can add to this, and then put their finger in the air as if they are number one!

### **Christ Centered People: Love to acknowledge Christ.**

It's not about them, but about God! Everything they do, they give the credit to Jesus. Their lives are all about bringing people to seeing Jesus in what they do. When they walk into a room, you may not even know it; but you may be able to sense the spirit that is within him. The Spirit of God within them.

## Comparison #6

### **Self Centered People: Dwell in your basement.**

They are always tearing you down, tearing you apart, and speaking negatively about you and to you. They always doubt your abilities and dreams. They love to bring you down.

### **Christ Centered People: Dwell in your balcony.**

They are always lifting you up to be better than you were before. They believe in you. They are encouraging you like crazy and cheering you on to succeed!

## Comparison #7

### **Self Centered People: Seek to please others.**

They love to please people and make people like them. They go with the flow and don't make waves with others so that they'll be liked. They'll change their minds on what they really believe just so they won't offend someone and turn that person away from them. Have you ever experienced a politician change his stance on something just to get the vote of the people?

### **Christ Centered People: Seek to please God.**

They aren't people pleasers. We are to seek to build others up through love but we are not to make our goal in life to be people pleasers.

## Comparison #8

### **Self Centered People: Shine the light on themselves.**

### **Christ Centered People: Shine the light on others.**

Matt 5:14-16 Jesus says, "You are the light of the world." Jesus didn't command us to be lights. Jesus didn't suggest that we be brighter. Jesus said in effect, "You already do shine, you are a light—that is who you are!" He then added that a light is useless if it is placed under a bowl or basket.

A light should be placed on a lampstand so that it gives light to all the darkness surrounding it. Usually, in the Greek language, a pronoun or subject would come later in a sentence, but Jesus placed US first. This should catch everyone's attention. The pronoun YOU is in a place of odd emphasis, as if to say, "YOU, yes YOU—are the light of the world." You are "IT!" Jesus is speaking to YOU and ME—to US!!!

Our greatest significance is found in the darkness, not in the light. The smallest light will defeat the darkest of night.

### **Comparison #9**

#### **Self Centered People: Walk by sight.**

If they don't see it, they don't walk it. They have to see it to believe it. There is no element of faith involved with them. It's all about confirming within themselves the way to walk.

#### **Christ Centered People: Walk by faith.**

If they don't see it, it's okay. If it's God, then let it be so. A pastor friend of mine, Barry Clardy says, "If you wait to see it before you see it, you'll never see it."

### **Comparison #10**

#### **Self Centered People: Find the bad in others.**

If you have a fault, they'll find it and point it out to everyone. They'll embarrass you if they need to. They do this because it makes them feel better about themselves. If they can tear you down by finding something bad about you, then it makes them look better.

#### **Christ Centered People: Find the good in others.**

If there's good to be found, they'll find it in you. They don't exploit your weaknesses, they highlight your strengths! Therefore, you want to be around them!

### **Comparison #11**

#### **Self Centered People: Sing "I want it my way."**

#### **Christ Centered People: Sing "I want it God's way."**

#### **Conclusion:**

**Question: Who do you want to be around...  
The Self Centered People or the Christ Centered People?**

**Question: What kind of person are you?**

**BONUS COMPARISON:**

**Self Centered People: Will have a flesh centered Christmas.**

It will be all about them; their gifts, their needs, their fun, their celebrating, their way.

**Christ Centered People: Will have a Christ centered Christmas.**

They understand that Christmas is all about Jesus! We must have a Christ Centered Christmas!  
Christ is in Christmas.... Always has been, always will be!

In 2010.... Let's be Christ Centered as opposed to Self Centered....

And as we do...

**You Watch... You Wait... You'll SEE!**