

2 Timothy 3:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous,
boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents,
unthankful, unholy,

Analysis

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. Paul begins a vice catalog describing "perilous times." "Lovers of their own selves" (philautoi, φίλᾱυτοῖ) is self-love, narcissism—foundational sin from which others flow. Philos (φίλος) means friend, lover; combined with autos (self), it describes those who are their own best friends, prioritizing self above God and others. This is the spirit of the age.

"Covetous" (philargyroi, φιλάργυροι) literally means "lovers of silver"—greed, materialism. "Boasters" (alazones, ἀλαζόνες) means braggarts, those who claim more than they possess. "Proud" (hyperēphanoi, ὑπερήφανοι) combines hyper (above) and phainō (appear)—those who show themselves above others, arrogant, haughty. "Blasphemers" (blasphēmoi, βλάσφημοι) means slanderers, those who speak evil—against both God and humans.

"Disobedient to parents" (goneusin apeitheis, γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς) violates the fifth commandment (Exodus 20:12), breaking down family structures. "Unthankful" (acharistoi, ἀχάριστοι) means ungrateful, lacking appreciation—failing to recognize God's gifts or others' kindness. "Unholy" (anosioi, ἀνόσιοι) means profane, lacking reverence for sacred things. These eight vices paint a society characterized by radical selfishness, material greed, arrogant pride, verbal abuse,

familial breakdown, ingratitude, and irreverence—a comprehensive picture of human depravity unleashed.

Historical Context

Ancient moralists compiled vice lists to identify cultural problems. Paul adapts this literary form to describe last-days society. Significantly, these vices characterized pagan Greco-Roman culture but increasingly infected the church. The order is deliberate: self-love produces greed (loving money), which produces boasting (self-promotion), which produces pride (superiority complex), which produces blasphemy (no fear of God), which produces familial rebellion (no respect for authority), which produces ingratitude (entitlement mentality), which produces irreverence (nothing is sacred). Each sin flows from the previous, creating downward spiral.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Which of these vices do you struggle with personally, and how does self-love fuel other sins in your life?
2. How does contemporary culture embody these characteristics, and how do they infiltrate the church despite believers' profession of faith?
3. In what practical ways can you cultivate opposite virtues: other-centeredness, generosity, humility, edifying speech, honor for parents, gratitude, and reverence for holy things?

Interlinear Text

ἔσονται	γὰρ	οἱ	ἄνθρωποι	φίλαυτοι	φιλάργυροι
shall be	For		men	lovers of their own selves	covetous
G2071	G1063	G3588	G444	G5367	G5366
ἀλαζόνες	ὑπερήφανοι	βλάσφημοι	γονεῦσιν	ἀπειθεῖς	
boasters	proud	blasphemers	to parents	disobedient	
G213	G5244	G989	G1118	G545	
ἀχάριστοι	ἀνόσιοι				
unthankful	unholy				
G884	G462				

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 2:21 (Parallel theme): For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

Psalms 10:3 (Parallel theme): For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.

Jude 1:16 (Parallel theme): These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

2 Timothy 3:4 (Love): Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

1 Timothy 6:10 (Love): For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Colossians 3:5 (Parallel theme): Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

2 Peter 2:18 (Parallel theme): For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

James 4:6 (Parallel theme): But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

1 Timothy 6:4 (Parallel theme): He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

Luke 12:15 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

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