

C. Unrealistic Expectations

A believer who is self-absorbed is never happy with the way people treat him. Others don't ogle over him, tell him how wonderful he is, or they fail to exhibit what is classified as "*true Christian love*." This is subjective preoccupation with self and is a sign that the person functions under the three arrogant skills. Preoccupation with self indicates that a person has reacted to thoughts, people, systems, or circumstances because of spiritual polarization.

Under the three arrogant skills, a believer polarizes in his soul either as a legalist or an antinomian.

Legalists are usually very hypersensitive. This hypersensitivity demands attention, seeks to control everyone, and imposes false standards of legalism on both believer and unbeliever alike. On the unbeliever it imposes salvation by works; on the believer it imposes spirituality by works.

The legalist can't accept the idea of grace and thus assumes that human energy and action are a necessary part of a true conversion. Therefore, in order to verify one's own salvation as well as that of others, legalism decides upon a behavior pattern which, when executed, proves one's membership among the elect.

This behavior pattern is defined by a fraudulent set of norms and standards which must be habitually followed if one is to be sanctioned. Those who can't measure up are classified as reprobate and consigned among those who were foreordained by God to eternal damnation.

The damnable misery of it all is that hypersensitive people are unteachable. Reasons:

1. Recovery is not possible without knowledge of doctrine and recovery cannot begin unless he admits to himself that he is wrong, in this case arrogant.
2. The arrogant believer always makes an issue out of himself rather than Bible doctrine.
3. He makes an issue out of the failures of others due to unrealistic expectations and role model arrogance.
4. As a result, he has his eyes on self, eyes on people, or eyes on things.
5. An arrogant person never sees his own faults, only the faults of others.

All of this results in a lifestyle of unhappiness. When a self-righteous believer depends upon the behavior of others to provide him with his happiness, then he has turned the control of his life over to them. It is obviously unrealistic to expect that others are always going to make you happy, especially when happiness is defined by an over-emphasis on self.

Please note that when you have your eyes on people you do so because you first have eyes on self. You want others to measure up to your standards. You identify a candidate and assign to him those standards. He becomes your role model. He eventually exposes to you his feet of clay. Your bubble bursts. Your icon is flawed and must be destroyed. Iconoclastic arrogance results as you reach out and push the role model off his perch. Unrealistic expectations have now resulted in the arrogance of unhappiness.

The arrogance of unhappiness must blame others for its misery and so the unhappy iconoclast projects the blame for his unhappiness onto his role model. It never crosses the mind of the unhappy iconoclast that he is responsible for making an idol out of someone else and then, because the role model doesn't live up to expectations, is forced to destroy his own creation. He built the idol; he destroys the idol. Needing a successor, he appoints himself since projection self-justifies his self-appointed status of perfection. This is unrealistic expectations taken to the extreme. Appointing himself as role model only results in intensifying his problems.

Instead of going to the biblical problem-solving devices he intensifies the problem by reacting to everything. Under self-righteous reaction he seeks to solve all the problems he's created by assigning them to his deconstructed icon. Solutions chosen are human solutions which are no solutions, i.e., malice, vituperation, vilification, revenge, violence, and even murder.

Absalom becomes an excellent example of how the mechanics of iconoclastic arrogance, if not stopped by biblical problem-solving devices, can result in murder.