



April 1, 2019

Dear Friends,

We just completed our first Advanced Training of the year and what a delightful group we had! We had quite a wide age range, with a number of young people. Each morning, we asked if anyone wanted to testify and time after time, one of the young people would come to the front and share how God miraculously set them free from captivity or healed them or how they demolished a stronghold. I was so blessed by the hunger and tenacity that was present in those who attended. Lives were transformed to the glory of God!

2 Timothy 3:2 says that at the end of the age, men will become lovers of themselves. Modern day science has a name for that—it's called narcissism and is considered an illness—God calls it sin. Narcissism is becoming more and more common—even among Christians. The following is a list of “symptoms” of narcissism:

1. The Person Constantly Points out their Achievements: The Spiritual Narcissist loves to self-promote. Every conversation is an opportunity to share just how superior they are to the average believer. They typically go about this by listing off their own achievements. You'll hear them talk incessantly about their upcoming book, their latest blog post, sermon series, missions work, or that time they led someone to Christ. Scripture tells us not seek our own glory and to let our work stand on its own (Proverbs 27:2), but the Spiritual Narcissist will flaunt anything they believe might bring them praise. The best way for Christians to counter this display is to follow the example of Micah 6:8, live justly, show mercy, and walk humbly with the LORD your God.

2. The Person Invades Conversations: The Spiritual Narcissist craves control, and their highest authority is always their own self-reference. As a result, it's not uncommon for them to invade the personal or private conversations of others. They'll often do this under the guise of “helping” or “correcting” fellow Christians, but they have no real interest in two-way dialogue. You'll notice they also have a way of injecting their own opinions into situations, and are the first to voice their complaints about recent events in the Church. The Bible warns that such people create division among believers and serve only their own appetites (Romans 16:17-18, Psalms 36:1-4).

3. The Person Twists Scripture: Susan B. Anthony once said, *“I distrust those people who know so well what God wants them to do, because I notice it always coincides with their own desires”*. In the same way, a Spiritual Narcissist uses scripture as a tool for their purpose instead of God's. They approach the Bible with a closed mind, memorizing only a handful of useful verses that will justify their behavior. Anything else, particularly scripture that conflicts with their actions, gets ignored. Like the men of Jude 1:4, they should not to be trusted.

4. The Person Professes Love, but Never Shows It: Perhaps the easiest way to identify a Spiritual Narcissist is to see if their works match their words. Many will claim they feel nothing but love and compassion for those they rebuke, but their actions prove otherwise. Matthew 7 teaches us we can judge a prophet by the fruit of his labors, *“A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.”*

5. They Talk, but They Don't Listen: Listening can be a powerful tool for Christians. Listening builds trust, creates empathy, and fosters understanding among individuals. James 1:19 even urges believers to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. The Spiritual Narcissist, by contrast, is quick to speak, quick to take offense, and incapable of listening. They enjoy being the loudest one in the room, and the idea of deferring to someone else galls them. A Christian listens to others, even when they might not agree with them. Listening requires that we be selfless.

6. They Live in Echo Chambers: In 1 Kings 22, Jehoshaphat king of Judah and Ahab king of Israel join forces to wage war against a neighboring adversary. However, before they depart, Jehoshaphat decides to seek the Lord for guidance. Four hundred prophets parade in front of the kings proclaiming victory is at hand, but Jehoshaphat isn't convinced. When asked whether there is still a disciple of the Lord they can speak with, Ahab reluctantly admits, *“There is still one prophet through whom we can inquire of the LORD, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.”* Like Ahab, the Spiritual Narcissist lives in their own personal echo chamber. They surround themselves with individuals who will always affirm their existing preconceptions or opinions. A wise Christian knows the right answer isn't always the popular one.

7. The Person Refuses to Acknowledge Their Mistakes: No one likes admitting they were wrong. It's a humbling (and let's be honest, sometimes embarrassing) experience, but accepting responsibility for your mistakes is the first step towards real maturity. Naturally, the Spiritual Narcissist will have none of it. Even when confronted with insurmountable evidence, the Spiritual Narcissist will continue to defend their actions as right. For them, it's not about the greater good, it's about protecting their self-image. Humility is a precious gift. It allows us to learn from our mistakes, recognize our faults, and grow into better people because of it. Philippians 3:13, tells us to accept what we've done wrong and strive to live for what comes ahead!

8. The Person Tears Others Down: 1 Thessalonians 5:11 reads, *“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing”*. A Spiritual Narcissist prefers to do the opposite. Rather than serving as a source of inspiration, the Spiritual Narcissist enjoys being a voice of derision. They’re quick to criticize others for their perceived failings, and frequently cause mischief by enflaming arguments amongst believers. In short, they build their sense of worth by tearing others down. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

9. They Lead by Force, Not Example: A Spiritual Narcissist makes for the worst kind of leader. They’re petty, uncompromising, spiteful, and controlling. Heaven help the ministry which falls under their stewardship. By comparison, great leaders have always inspired their followers by example. They correct others without humiliating them, mentor those who need growth, and weigh their words carefully before speaking. Take David, who despite his faults, showed humility and wisdom for God's anointed rulers (1 Samuel 24). A true leader knows their duty is to serve, not *be* served.

10. They Ultimately Put God Second: An expert in the law once asked Jesus what the greatest commandment was. His reply, *“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”* Matthew 22:37-40. Many Christians know this verse by heart, but the meaning behind Christ’s words goes much farther than we realize. Not only is Jesus calling believers to love God with all their heart, he’s telling them our faithfulness is affirmed by our love for our neighbors. To put it simply: *we can only love God if we’re unselfish*. A Spiritual Narcissist will always put God second. Whether it’s by neglecting Christ’s commands, or how they treat their neighbors, pride will always make a person spiritually toxic. Don’t let yourself miss out on God’s amazing plan by being a Spiritual Narcissist. Amen.

---

#### TESTIMONY FROM ONE OF OUR RESIDENTS

“During this last season, here on Our Father’s Farm, the Lord has been revealing to me that I can trust Him in any situation. As we are building a history together, and I choose to say yes to Him and to the shepherds He has placed me in the care of, I am finding I look forward to challenges and see them as opportunities to overcome instead of becoming anxious and running away at the first sign of a problem.

“He is teaching me to confront with love and how to fight for His beloved children as others have fought for me. He is showing me how to respond in love and forgive instead of taking offense.

“I am currently living in the TLC House with six other people and two dogs. As an introvert, I was not looking forward to it at first, but in choosing to trust the Lord, who has an incredible sense of humor, I am learning a lot and growing in ways I never saw possible. And I’m actually enjoying it!”

---

#### ADVANCED TRAINING TESTIMONY

“I just wanted to express my deepest gratitude to you and the whole farm family. The training was deeply impacting both in ministry to me personally and growth in my understanding in how to help others. Thank you SO much!

“Also, every time I step onto the Farm property, I perceive such a deep peace. Many times, it almost seems as if the land itself is rejoicing (if that be possible). I am eternally grateful to all on the Farm for laying down their lives for the community and service to others. Honestly, it makes my heart long for such community to be established in other places. His Kingdom come and Will be done!”

#### 2019 TRAINING SCHEDULE

- God Encounter Training is 9AM-5PM Friday and Saturday. This is the #1 method used on Our Father’s Farm to cultivate an intimate, experiential relationship with God. These encounters with God heal the deepest traumas and transform the human heart.
- Advanced Training begins on Sunday evening with orientation dinner at 6PM and ends at 5 PM the following Friday. This training is so much more than equipping people to facilitate God Encounter sessions. The training includes daily classes based on biblical truths relevant to healing. You will also receive and practice facilitating God Encounter sessions in a small group with one of our trained facilitators.
- Housing/meals are provided on a donation basis. We limit the number of attendees so register early.

#### 2019 TRAINING DATES

GOD ENCOUNTER TRAINING: **May 3-4**

GOD ENCOUNTER TRAINING: **Sept. 6-7**

ADVANCED TRAINING: **June 2-7**

ADVANCED TRAINING: **Sept. 22-27**

---

REGISTER NOW AT: [harvesthome.org](http://harvesthome.org) or email: [cindy.grove@harvesthome.org](mailto:cindy.grove@harvesthome.org)

Visit our online bookstore at: [www.harvesthome.org](http://www.harvesthome.org)

Harvest Home, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(C)(3) organization (#43-1723890)

Your gifts are tax deductible and greatly appreciated ☺

Phone: 816-522-9011