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THE SELF-GOD

By G. W. Fink

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FOREWORD

"The Self-God" is not a beautiful or pleasing title for a book: And we do not expect any demand for it except from truth-seekers; such as are willing to obey the Savior's command to deny self and take the cross, which crucifies self. Lovers of this present sinful world and pleasure seekers will not be attracted by this title, for Paul says that by the cross the world is crucified to him, and he unto the world (See Gal. 6:14). But as we must all meet these truths at the final judgment, it would be good for even the self-indulgers, and sin-lovers to read this little book. So we ask all persons interested in their future well-being to investigate the statements made in this book, and compare them with the Word of God, to see whether they are, or are not worshipers of "The Self-God." So we dedicate the same to the good of all who read it, and to the glory of God. Your Brother in the race for an incorruptible crown.

G. W. Fink

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THE SELF-GOD

"This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim. 8:12). The word perilous in this text means hazardous, or dangerous times: This does not mean physical danger, although in a sense it includes it, but means spiritually hazardous, because of the spiritual delusions of these days: such as Spiritism, Tongueism, Russellism, Higher Criticism, Christian Science, and other like societies. Not only these truth-perverting spirits recognized to be such by sound theologians, but scores of holiness factions are inspired by these same seducing spirits,

which are transformed into angels (or spirits) of light (2 Cor. 11:14,15). These are superintended by the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). One of the chief causes is recorded in the second verse of this third chapter of Timothy: "For men SHALL he LOVERS of their OWNSELVES." "The gods' of the people are idols (1 Chron. 16:26). And the self-god is the chiefest, and sacrifice is done to it more than to any other god of Satan's device, "For whatsoever is not done wholly to the Lord must have some self-devotion in it, and self-service robs God of the service and glory due Him. Hence the commandment that "whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do ALL to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

The very foundation of a Bible experience is the denying of SELF; and all of self's desires, purposes, ambitions, and affections must be denied, and a complete surrender made to the Lord before the experience of pardon can be realized; for Jesus says, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23). After we have experienced pardon of all our sins, and a clear witness of the same we will find under temptations of the devil that selfish desires will spring up from our inherited depravity, or in plainer terms, our sinful nature that was born in us. The temptations may come on different lines, such as, vindicating ourselves when we are persecuted or misrepresented; or a desire for promotion to some seat of honor after which some one else is aspiring; or possession of some property to which another has a right, instead of "preferring the other" before ourselves. We seek selfish advantage in these things, and so we do not "unto others as we would they should do unto us," thus rendering service unto the self-god. We wish to say right here that it is God's plan to destroy and cleanse out ALL of that nature that would acquiesce in any temptation of the devil on these lines, as Paul said to the church (1 Thes. 4:3), "This IS the will of God, even your sanctification," i. e. your cleansing.

There are many avenues through which the "self-god" is worshipped, but he is especially worshipped through the five senses; these the devil took into possession first in the Garden of Eden: and at that instance the self-god was first set up by human beings as an object of worship, when mother Eve gave a listening ear to the "Old Serpent." He opened conversation and she listened: here the sense of hearing was first misused; and that was the beginning of the defilement of every sense, and power of mankind. Since the opening of the ear-gate to the serpent in the garden of Eden unto this time Mother Eve's posterity has ever an open ear to the "Old Serpent's" propositions. He talks; they listen. Then they are beguiled and led away captive by him at his will; following the steps of Mother Eve, who in the very act of believing the serpent doubted God's Word. Here sin was conceived in the heart; for doubt is the foundation of the whole sinful structure. This foundation is never fully discovered by a child of God until he seeks sanctification, the light of the Holy Ghost, and the Word of God shines clearly upon it: making it manifest, and shewing it to be the last spark of life that sustains the carnal nature; called the "Old Man," or "that old doubter." So in the act of perfect believing "The old man" is crucified (See Rom. 6:6), and the Holy Ghost bears witness that we are wholly sanctified. Doubt was the first enemy received into the soul: and it is the last enemy found in the human soul when seeking purity.

Now we will go back to the defiling of the five senses. After the woman had listened to the propositions of the serpent she turned her eyes toward the object of conversation, vis., the "for hidden fruit Here the lust of the eye was conceived, one of the main avenues through which the "self god is worshipped The fruit was pleasant to the eyes, and she thought it desirable to make one wise So the desire for that which God had forbidden was conceived for she had believed the

serpent's misrepresentation of God's Word. Here the heart of mankind first beat in harmony with the devil's will, and no wonder that in their posterity, we find men and women looking with lustful eyes upon the glittering idols of gold and silver, which God in His Word has forbidden His children to wear as ornaments to make themselves to shine, and to attract the eyes of others to themselves instead of to God, and thus rob Him and do service to the "god of self," although God in His Word does plainly forbid the wearing of gold as found in 1 Timothy 2:9, and 1 Peter 3. And in the Old Testament when Jacob went up with all his family and servants to Bethel (the house of God), he sanctified them by taking their idols, and their earrings and hiding them under an oak tree at Shechem (Gen. 35:2-4).

Again God commanded the Israelites to put off their ornaments that they had borrowed of the Egyptians when they came out of Egypt, and at Mount Horeb they stripped off their ornaments. And again in Isaiah 3:18, God declares He will take away these things from the Daughter of Zion as spoken of in the 16th verse. Yet multiplied thousands of professed Christians, like Eve are believing the misrepresentations of the plain Word of God. You often hear them say it does not mean this or that, although it be a plain declaration of God's word. And so they take the questionable side in making their decisions, and that is always the devil's side. As soon as the lust of the eye was fully begotten, the feet began to take the way to the forbidden tree. Here man first put off the "shoes of peace," see Eph. 6:15, and put on the devil's shoes of disobedience, and condemnation. Since then "the way of peace they have not known" (Rom. 3:17), except when they have repented and believed, and have been restored to the old path of peace. Here was "the wide gate" first entered, and the "broad way" first traveled, that leads to death and hell.

When she came to the forbidden tree, she put forth her hand (touched it), and partook of the fruit. Here the sense of feeling was first defiled. God had said "Thou shalt not touch it lest thou die." Yet unto this day multiplied thousands through the defiled sense of feeling are serving the "god of self"; such as, effects of intoxicating liquors, or morphine, or "giving themselves over to fornication," as in the days of Lot (see Jude 7th verse). Here the hand was first defiled; here it handled that which stained it with iniquity; and Eve's posterity have ever since "put forth their hands" and partaken of that which religiously and lawfully does not belong to them. Then as she put the fruit to her mouth her nostrils inhaled for the first time the perfume of that forbidden fruit and the sense of smelling that which sometimes intoxicates the brain was experienced. Then she ate, and the sense of taste was first misused; and from that time to this very day, multiplied thousands are following after Eve, in eating and drinking things forbidden by God: and the very things they know to be destructive to soul and body, such as, tasting pleasant wines and liquors, perfumed tobaccos, and certain drinks that contain narcotics, and opiates, such as coffee and tea, and soft drinks that contain cocaine, and other harmful ingredients. Sometimes persons serve the "self-god" through their defiled sense of taste by a gluttonous appetite eating of things they like until they are in distress. This they will do on the Sabbath day, until they are so stupid that if they go to an afternoon service they will go to sleep in the meeting. This class of persons is found in the worldly churches engaged in feasting in God's house. They worship the self-god by getting up oyster stews, ice cream and strawberry festivals, cake walks, etc. Instead of paying the clean cash to the cause of God and charity, they must defile the money by causing it to pass through an ungodly performance in which many ungodly sinners engage, and in which they have a hilarious time, as they would at a show or picnic or state or county fair, in which the god of self is much served, by filling their stomachs with ice cream and cake, and soft drinks until they are oftentimes sick for a

number of days. Here is what Paul says about this class of religious devotees: "Whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame" (See Phil 3:19; Rom. 16:18). These pretend to serve God through their stomachs, and the stomachs of sinners, but all the honor stops in their own bellies. No self denying, in these modern church-fairs, etc., but self indulgence, and so the "god of self" is highly honored. All these might, be taken in a proper amount, and for a right purpose, but because of a perverted appetite they are eaten in sacrifice to the "god of self."

The woman, after eating of the forbidden fruit, immediately sought her husband (the first agent of the devil, his only solicitor), and gave to him some of the forbidden fruit. Here is the first instance where a human sinful influence was wielded over another human to the extent that the other accepted and also became a sinner. Ever since that time the example and influence of sinful persons have been the most successful instruments of the "Old Serpent called the Devil and Satan."

The "Old Serpent" lied to mother Eve,
And she believed it all;
And doubting God did sin conceive,
And took that fatal fall.

The devil said God did not mean
Just all that He had said;
To be like gods the serpent saw,
Our foreparents could be led.

Yes, just like gods of evil kind
They surely did become:
In bondage to the carnal mind,
And after Satan run.

And captives still he leads them on,
Whose eyes by sin are blind,
Until life's precious years are gone,
No hope of any kind.

And then to hell their souls he'll take
For that's his final home;
And bound with chains they cannot break
They'll weep and wail and moan,

O sinner, you this warning take,
And come to Jesus now;
All your chains of sin he'll break,
Just now before him bow.

It was the temptation to honor the self-god that caused the good king Hezekiah, after being raised from the gates of death, and promised a probation or extension of days for fifteen years -- God even reversing the sun in the heaven ten degrees as showed on the sundial of Ahaz (Isaiah

38.7 8) nevertheless when the king of Babylon sent letters of congratulations and a present to Hezekiah, by his servants, he was tempted to shew them his house of precious things even his treasures of silver and gold, and thus making a display of self's possessions and courting the honor of the king of Babylon, a heathen worshiper. His self worship brought a loss of all his treasures, also of his sons that were carried away with all his treasures to Babylon and so it is ever with those that worship the self-god (Read Isaiah 39:1-7).

We see also how that great king Nebuchadnezzar whose kingdom extended to the ends of inhabited parts of the earth (Dan. 4:22) was brought down through worshipping the self-god and his reason taken from him and he was made to eat grass like an ox for seven years (seven times, see Dan. 4:23-32), until his hair grew long like eagles' feathers and his fingernails like birds' claws (See verse 33). Here was the first act recorded of his self-devotion after being warned of God in a dream. (See verses 29, 30). At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake and said, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of my kingdom by the might of my power (self's power) for the honor of my Majesty?" Not the glory of God but self's glory.

It was to do service to the self-god that the first murder was committed, and ever since no murder has been committed except to gratify self in some way. Cain killed Abel because self was not honored, and Abel was honored of God so he was envious at his brother Abel and slew him to get him out of self's way (See Gen. 4:3-8, also 1 John 3:12). And so all murder is committed to honor self. Even the women and girls that commit infanticide do it to the honor of the "self-god." The person who steals does it to the honor of the self-god. Not only murder and theft, but adultery, fornication, perjury, arson, blasphemy, and every sin committed by mankind, angels or devils has been committed to the honor of self. The Jews demanded the crucifixion of Jesus for nothing less than their selfishness. They hated his rebukes for such things as praying to be seen of men (worshipped of men). Pilate gave sentence in their favor when he knew Jesus was innocent (John 18:38), because of his self-honor and when they said, "If thou let this man (Jesus) go thou art not Caesar's friend" (John 19:12). rather than to lose his self-interests with Caesar he condemned the innocent, and so did service to the self-god.

The angels of heaven that fell did so because they sought the honor of self (See Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4, Rev. 12:4-9). Some say it was pride that caused the angels to sin, but pride is based on nothing else but self-worship. If there were no self principle or a selfish character there would be no pride. The proud in heart are lovers of self, so because men and women are "lovers of their own selves," not only are all sins committed but because of the same self-devotion, they refuse to humble themselves and repent, hence the sin of rebellion with all others lies at the door of the worshiper of the self-god.

Dear reader, stop and think, and ask yourself the question, what sin has ever been committed that has not been to the honor of self? If you can discover one please inform me of the same.

Men and women begin to worship the self-god when quite young. We see young children starting out in their very earliest period of childhood in the practice of doing service to the self-god They will manifest a selfishness in playing with their toys; and at the table they will select

the largest or best piece of chicken or the largest piece of cake or pie, or the largest apple or orange or bunch of grapes, or they will use unfair means at school in order to pass their grade, or get some offered prize. Boys and girls will do some stunt, or say some smart thing to attract others to self. Older persons are guilty of the same; sometimes it is telling funny jokes to attract to self. Christian parents should not only be saved from rendering service to the self-god, but should be very particular in teaching their children to deny themselves, preferring others to themselves. But it is not so, for from the small child to the greatest statesman and highest officers of the nation they vie with each other for the advantage over the other fellow that self may be honored, and self may have the advantage. It is the same in the churches from Sunday School teacher to the bishop, the majority of them are after self-interests, ignoring such plain admonitions as that found in 1 Cor. 10:24, "Let no man (i. e. a Christian man) seek his own, but every man another's wealth." This means that every Christian should seek other men's best interests and prefer the other fellow in preference to self, "Do unto others as we would that they should do unto us." A greater part of the fault lies in the "pulpit," for preachers are "lovers of their ownelves" (2 Tim. 3:2), and they will pull wires to get the best appointments, or the best paying stations, all to the honor of the self-god. If they fail to have their own way they worship self by balking or pouting, or speaking evil of the one they envy, because of self.

You will hear people testifying to the self-god in their contention for their relations, or friends, or their nation, or the state where they were born. They will get all stirred up if anything is said against their native place, or their political party, or their church, or their children.

We know a "holiness preacher" (?) who lived at Jobs, Ohio. While quarreling with a drunken neighbor over their children he threw a cinder and killed him, sending his unregenerated soul to hell. The preacher was at last judged insane, and released, but is nevertheless guilty of sacrificing a human life to his self-god. All these spoken of shew forth a spirit of self-devotion. We have heard holiness preachers preach up their church far more than they did Jesus, and their general conversation showed that they thought theirs was the very best, or that no other church was just right but theirs. And they would proselyte other holiness church members into their church by every available means.

Now Paul says, "We preach NOT ourselves but CHRIST JESUS the LORD" (2 Cor. 4:5). Such preachers need the experience set forth in the 13th of 1 Corinthians, for that charity "seeketh NOT her own," "Charity vaunteth NOT itself," "Is NOT puffed UP," "Charity envieth not." So when others are favored we are not envious at them because of the same, if we have this charity shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. See Rom. 5:5. We have known preachers to show much of a spirit of selfish envy when in a union meeting more would join the other preacher's church instead of theirs, and when more credit was given the other assisting minister for the success in the meeting than to them, they would be all stirred up to contend for the self-god. The same may be said of doctors and lawyers. They will speak disparagingly and disrespectfully of other doctors' or lawyers' ability in order that self would get more practice. Merchants will cry down the other fellows goods, and cry up their own, thus doing great service to the god of self

Undertakers are especially polite, and friendly to you so they can get the job of burying you. This is politeness and friendliness to get honor to self. Here is what Peter says about such

characters, "And through covetousness shall THEY with FEIGNED words make merchandise of you" (2 Pet. 2:3). Covetousness is the fruit of selfishness.

That young man who parades around in public, or drives out in a car with arms bare, or neck and breast bare does it to attract attention to self.

Last winter we met a young man, a college student on the street in Athens, with bare head and a low-necked jersey sweater on and it was quite a cold morning; so much so that I was cold with an overcoat on: but he must make a show of self. Sometimes it is a young woman with arms bare, often to above the shoulders, and breast open to the view of the lustful eyes of men, and all this exposition of her person is to attract others to self, and besides all this often there is tittering and loud boisterous talking and laughing which is to attract attention to self. They wish self to be admired instead of Jesus, and many of them profess to be His followers, while they are only worshipers of self. They do not go to church but to attract others to self, instead of Jesus. As Solomon has said of these women "She is loud and stubborn, her feet abideth NOT in her house, now is she without, now in the street, etc. (Prov. 7:11,12), all this to gratify self. Oh, where is that old-fashioned girl or boy of sixty years ago with their quiet and modest conduct and dress? They are hard to find even among the holiness ranks. We do not infer by this reference to the bare arm and breast brigade that it is wrong for woman to work about the privacy of the home with her sleeves rolled up when washing clothes or mixing bread, etc. The man likewise when working about the home at work that soils the clothes would be justified in rolling up his sleeves to keep them from being soiled. But when a woman or girl wishes to disrobe, or partly do so let her go into the privacy of her room to do so and not expose her self even to the farm hands, in a semi-nude condition. Even many holiness professors, and we know of some of the local holiness preachers, that will go into the wash rooms of the coal mines, and wash with the ungodly, exposing their naked bodies which are supposed to be a temple of the Holy Ghost to the view of the wicked, while they listen to their filthy and blasphemous conversation. Oh, where is the modest man or woman who at home and abroad are modest enough and have 'shamefacedness' as Paul instructed Timothy, and are clean enough to discountenance all these things for the glory of God, rather than in these things to serve the god of self. And what are those white shoes for? We were at a Free Methodist meeting one night, when in came several "no-sect" men some of them had joined the F. M. Church but' they were all dressed out in white shoes, and some with short sleeves, and others with them rolled up. When testimony service was opened they began to parade around over the floor and jump and yell and hug each other, and pound each other with a wild kind of a spirit like an insane person. The more they demonstrated the more we were disgusted, not that we did not believe in demonstration of the right spirit, in shouting or even leaping, but the spirit they manifested, and the white shoe display, we could not endorse. We smelled tobacco on one of them and that was the smell of a bad spirit. This one man kept on mocking God until he became insane and was sent to the asylum, afterwards was released, but became partly paralyzed, and is a semi-idiot. The others that joined the F. M. Church left it with the Labor Union crowd that was voted out of the church.

Remember the preacher in charge that night of the white shoe parade censured us because we did not take part in their wild demonstrations. But time showed it to be a delusion of the devil, operated by a pseudo religious spirit, for a display of self, and to render service to Satan by the same.

God's Word commands us to be clothed with humility, (1 Pet. 5:5), so we cannot have the pride of opinion or knowledge, for even it is builded on the foundation of self-worship. For what have we that we did not receive, or what do we know that we were not taught, or did not learn from another? Then why should we think or speak or act as though we received it not, (1 Cor. 4:7)? That boy or girl that uses face powder to beautify their looks are devotees to the self-god, and hypocrites as well, for they suppose the powder makes them look better than they would without it, hence the powdered face is a deceitful hypocritical face, and its owner a fraud, and a lover of the self-god.

Yes, that man or woman that pins a rose or bouquet on their coat lapel or breast, or on their hat do it to be seen of others and to attract others to self. This is doing service to the self-god. Oh how these things magnify self, and detract the minds of others from God to self. All worshipers of the self-god are robbers, for by the above described self-devotion they rob God. Oh what a display of self we see on every side in "these last days." What does that gaudy ribbon on the hair or that tie under the chin proclaim? Someone says, "Oh that is necessary to tie the hair." But why so many feet more than is needful to tie the hair neatly? Oh this is for display to attract to self. And how about that sash about the waist with two or three yards extra flying loose? All that is to invite the attention of others to self. A young lady with some large plumes on her hat paraded into a church where Charles G. Finney was to preach. After seating herself just behind him, he asked her if she had come there to divide the worship of God, by making a display of herself. She saw her self-devotion and that day fell at the altar and surrendered her SELF to God, although she was the most fashionable young lady of the town. Parents that buy such things for their children or allow them to wear them are as much devoted to the worship of the self-god as the children who wear them and more so. See that girl and young woman in boy's pants, and perhaps her father a preacher or at least a church member. What is all that parade in men's clothes for? Just to attract attention to self, and parents are guilty as well of violating God's law by allowing it. See God's Word, "The woman shall not wear that which PERTAINETH unto a MAN, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for ALL that do so ARE ABOMINATION unto thy God." (Deut. 22:5.)

And why do you have in your home the pictures of these same persons dressed in opposition to the Word of God and the law of the land? And why do you so frequently have your picture taken, and take special pains, to display it or show it to visitors? Is it not to preach self? And sometimes you will complain that it is not a good picture making it appear that the picture does not give you credit for all your beauty. This does not satisfy you as you do not get enough honor so you have it enlarged and hung in a conspicuous place in your parlor, so your friends may also worship you. And often there is a secret feeling of pride because of some good qualities that you think your picture displays. Thus you worship the self-god. If one tenth of the money wasted by professors of religion on pictures were given to the missionary work much suffering would be relieved and many souls would be saved. We have seen holiness preachers sitting at camp meetings having their pictures taken when they ought to have been on their knees crying to God for the salvation of the lost. Oh, what a display of self we see everywhere among the professed followers of Jesus, in the picture taking craze. God commanded under the law that His people should make no likeness of anything in the earth or heaven above or in the sea; either male or female. See Exodus 20:4 and Deut. 4:16. We will admit that we have seen a few pictures that we thought might glorify God, such as plainly dressed saints of God. A picture that preaches Jesus and

the Word of God would be to His glory. But this is the exception and not the rule. So we have decided that a good picture is of God, i. e. one that glorifies God and not self, and a bad picture is of the devil. That picture on your wall that does not preach Jesus, preaches self and the devil.

If we publish a religious article, or book with a secret desire for honor or praise of men, we are bowing to the god of self. For God giveth the ability, therefore to Him belongs the praise.

The child that disobeys its parents, does so because self wants its way. The cigarette fiend indulges service to self when he knows it will bring him to a premature grave. The same with the drunkard; he not only sacrifices manhood, money and health to gratify self, but his immortal soul as well. Yea, they are willing to spend eternity with the damned, in eternal fire in everlasting punishment, if they are just permitted to indulge in self-service here for a short time. We hear people speak of the "god of pleasure" but the god of pleasure" would have no worship at all were it not that self is to be gratified. The pleasure we get in serving God is by DENYING SELF. We will no doubt be accused by the "time-serving ministry" of taking a captious position because we criticize many things that they endorse in their churches, especially the many entertainments in the church for the young people But they are only contributing to the worship of the self god when they endorse these things We will go a little deeper with God's help when there is a secret desire to make a display of our talents by using some high sounding terms, or some word or sentence in prayer or preaching, or testimony that we think others will admire; and when we have special help in prayer or exhortation and we feel a self-gratification or a self-satisfaction because of it, this is self-worship, and robs God of the glory due Him for the ability He has given us to do these things And when in our secret thoughts we do not wish others to enjoy the same privileges that are accorded us when being entertained, or otherwise, we are selfish; and when God 'has answered our prayer and some one is converted or sanctified, or healed, we tell it with a secret feeling that we might receive honor of those that hear us, or see these things, we are robbing God of the glory for the power by which we have done these things, and rendering service to the self-god. When we pout or feel irritable because we cannot have our way we are serving the self-god: for "charity envieth not."

Oh my brother, my sister, dost thou serve God with ALL thy heart? Or dost thou serve the self-god? If there is a single thing or person that you have not surrendered, or given up for Jesus' sake, you are guilty before God as an idolater, a worshiper of the self-god. You cannot find a single sin spoken of from the foundation text to the last word in Paul's prophecy concerning these last days but what it points directly to the worship of "the self-god."

Please read from the text of this subject from 2 Tim. 3:1-5 and see for yourself whether there is a sin there mentioned that is not done for a selfish purpose, "Little children (God's children) KEEP yourselves from IDOLS." Especially the "self-god." AMEN.

Your brother for the "old-fashioned way."
The Author.

Oh, that the self within was slain,
And all his goods cast out;

And nothing but my Lord remain,
No self, no fear, no doubt.

For this Thy precious blood was spilt,
On Calvary's cruel tree;
That from the gold the dross might melt,
And make The pure and free.

'The "self-god" from Thy temple cast,
And purify by fire;
An image like Thyself to cast,
Like God Thy holy sire.

My heart shall be Thy holy throne,
The place of Thine abode;
Until I go to that bright home,
To be with Christ and God.

G. W. Fink.

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THE END