



Day thirty-seven

For the next 40 days we are offering us all a challenge to consider 40 things that are sucking the life out of us. The challenge is to examine these and through confronting God's word, his Spirit, and his community of faith as we seek to be filled with his life and his love again. At the conclusion of each challenge there will be an opportunity to engage about this with another person and/or the larger community.

Today the thing we are asking us to explore giving up is:

selfish ambition.

Confronting the text

For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, (Titus 1:7).

Confronting my self with God

The word which the King James above translates as "self-willed" and the New Revised Standard Version translates as "arrogant" is the word self (*autos*) complacent, or satisfying, (*hedomai*).

There is nothing wrong with ambition. Without it we would have never gone to the moon or bettered ourselves with education. The sin here is when our ambition is focused on us only, when we are only satisfying ourselves.

One commentator contrasts this word *authades* with a similar word *philautos* from *philos* love, and self: self love.

The trouble with both of these is they are missing one of the major elements in ambition: spark.

Part of the reason that people are ambitious is because they are being sparked by other people, circumstances, and ideas. A spark can be painful and when we feel the pain, we might want to do something about it.

Listening to God's people

What is a painful thing in your life?

What are your reasons for not trying to move past it?

Who is someone that you could share this thing with to help you brainstorm change?