

THE SET-UP

Our word "narcissism" is born of the Greek myth. Narcissus, a handsome hunter who was proud of his looks, callously spurned suitors. Nemesis punishes Narcissus for his cruelty by luring him to a spring where he catches sight of his own reflection on the water's surface. Narcissus is transfixed by his own image and his obsession leads to death. Do cultural messages of our day encourage self-obsession? What happens when we strive to reflect our own image rather than God's image to our neighbors and communities?

all is gift

NARCISSISM**SO, WHAT NOW?**

We live in the "information age" of social media. Connecting with others is immediate and accessible like no other time in history. Every personal thought, every movement of our lives can be broadcast to a random audience whenever the urge strikes. Yet, experiences of isolation are ever present—we still feel disconnected in our most connected era. We are made in God's image to be gift-givers like him. **When we place ourselves at the center of the universe, we no longer reflect God's image or experience his fullness.** We miss the blessedness of giving and the wonder of God.

QUESTIONS:

- 1 *Stephen Grabill mentions some popular phrases in culture: "Taste the rainbow," "Be true to the god within you." How do these attitudes affect our world, today?*
- 2 *Jesus said, "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it" (Matthew 16:25). What does this mean?*
- 3 *How might modern media be used to deeply connect with others? To give of ourselves, our gifts and our presence?*