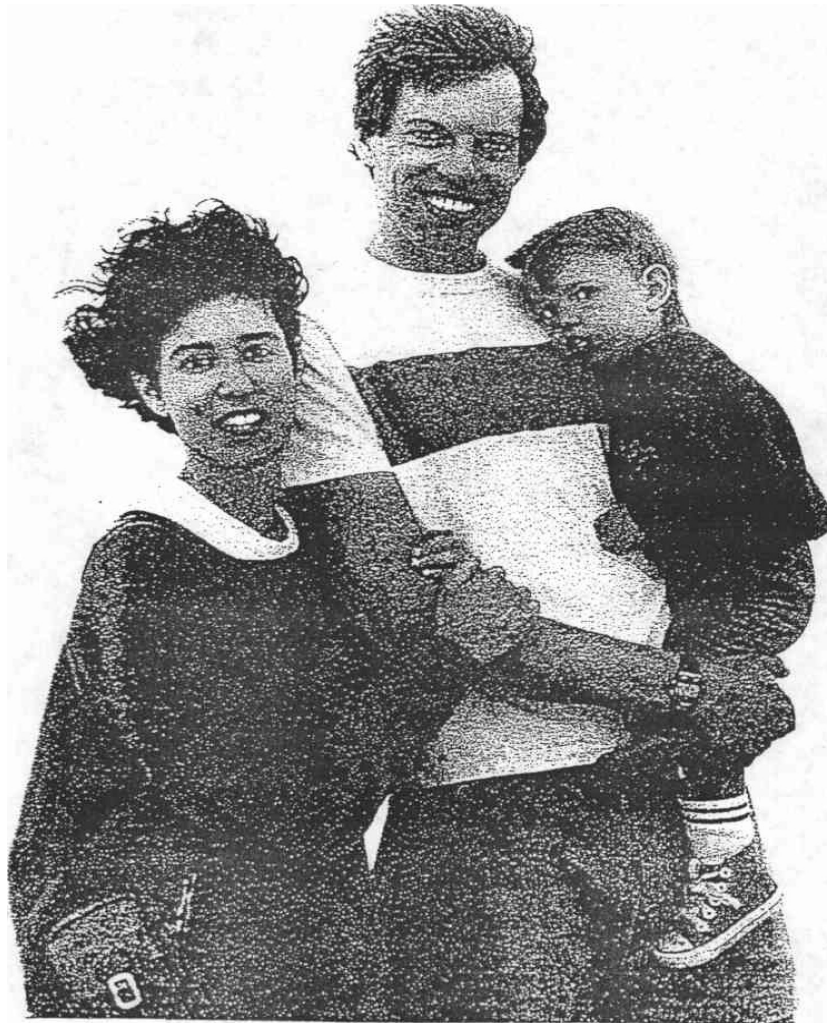




**How to like yourself...
and still be spiritual**





How to like yourself... and still be spiritual

WELCOME!

Tonight we will explore:

A Biblical View of Self-Esteem

Sources of Low Self-Esteem

Let's Look Inside the Real Me

Personal Self Image Inventory

Biblical Insights On Self Acceptance

Making Right Choices About Self-Esteem

Planning to Build Self-Esteem

Ways To Improve Self-Esteem

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A Biblical View of Self-Esteem

Criteria of Healthy Self-Esteem

(Excerpts from Counseling and Self-Esteem by D.E. Carlson)

Part of the difficulty in our developing personalities and our Spiritual life, is that we learn definitions that inadequate or distorted. This may be attributed to misinformation or misconception. In any case it is important that we understand the Biblical view of what God wants us to understand about ourselves as He sees us, and as He wants us to be conformed to the image of Christ.

Definitions of a Biblical view

1. *Humility is not the same as humiliation.*

Humiliation is to degrade, dishonor, disgrace or shame another person or myself. Humility is recognizing who we are as created by God. Being content with who we are, acknowledging that we have become one of God's children. To realize that I have worth and am loved even if I have gone astray. Humility is the experience of knowing, accepting, loving, and sharing who we are while recognizing and appreciating who others are. Humility is accepting our strengths as well as our weaknesses.

2. *Putting off the sinful nature is not the same as pulling down self.*

The Apostle Paul wrote, (Ephesians 4:20-32) about "putting off" the old man and "putting on", the new man. Notice the positive difference between the phrases, "putting off, putting on," and putting down". While scripture does not use the phrase "put self down", even through some Christian music does express itself in this way. Recognize that accepting our sinfulness is not the same as putting ourselves down. When John Newton wrote, "Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!" he was expressing an accurate statement of his slave-trading life. He was not putting himself down, rather, he was recognizing his depravity and the overwhelming grace of God that had rescued him from his sin. Describing the sinful human condition is not the same as condemning or depreciating a person. Paul warns of the problem of this kind of thinking in Colossians 2:18,23.



He commanded them to stop putting themselves down because that process leads to arrogant self-righteousness rather than to a vibrant spiritual life. We need to distinguish between, "putting oneself down", and "putting off the old man". Paul addressed the issue in Ephesians 4:23,24 "...be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." That is truly good news to those of us who desire to be what God wants us to be! With Christ's power we can put off sin, selfishness, sensuality, impurity, greediness and futility, and put on righteousness and holiness, which are God's likenesses. It is good news for us who fear we cannot be what God wants us to be, and it's good news to those of us who are being less than God wants us to be!

3. *Self-denial is not equivalent to self-degradation.*

Self-denial is a biblical concept, but self-degradation is not. Self-denial means that I am willing to put off my sinful, selfish desire and behavior. It does not mean that I am going to put myself down or psychologically annihilate myself. Self-denial does not mean that I become nothing, no one, nonexistent. It does mean that I am willing to let Christ come into my life and empower me to represent his redemption and grace. Self-denial means that I set aside my sinful, selfish desires for the benefit of myself, others, God, and His kingdom. Galatians 2:20 is instructive in understanding God's principle of self-denial. When Christ comes to live in us, He replaces the "crucified self" with a "resurrected self". We need to affirm that we still have a self, and identity, personhood that has been reclaimed, resurrected and is in the process of being renewed daily by Christ.

4. *Unworthy is not the same as worthless.*

The Bible clearly teaches that we are of immense value and worth to God. We were bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20). God willingly sacrificed His Son to redeem mankind and to restore our relationship with Him. We are unworthy of God's love, mercy, and grace. However, to confuse this teaching with worthlessness is inaccurate and emotionally damaging. (Compare Ephesians 2:8,9 and 10)



5. *Self-love is not the same as selfishness.*

Selfishness is an attitude that puts my needs before your needs and at your expense. Self-love on the other hand is an attitude and behavior that considers you and your needs to be as important as mine, but it also means that my needs and feelings are as important as yours and when I give them up, I do so voluntarily and graciously for your benefit. Christ modeled this concept in Philippians 2:4-7. If we are to nourish and cherish others, we must increase our ability to nourish and cherish ourselves. (See Ephesians 5:28)

6. *Self-affirmation is not the same as self-conceit.*

To say "I can" is affirmation. To say "I'm great" is conceit. Recognizing my abilities and spiritual gifts is necessary if I am to participate in the body of Christ. To downplay or refuse to exercise my talents is to rob others of the benefits Christ has given them through me.

When persons are great at what they do, they have no need to proclaim greatness; they recognize their achievements without needing recognition of others. They accept what God has done through them.

7. *Self-worth is not the same as self-worship.*

My value as a redeemed creation of God is a theme throughout the Bible. I have value because of Who created me and chose to redeem me, not because of who I am or what I do. I affirm my significance as a child of God. I simply recognize my importance in the kingdom of God and I do not inflate my value. I have no need to exaggerate my significance. All that I experience, all I see, hear, and feel is viewed in relation to God and His plan. I worship my Creator and Savior, valuing myself as a person made in the image of Christ. I reflect God's goodness and greatness through my obedience and service.

8. *Self-aware is not the same as self-absorbed.*

I need to be aware of who I am and what I feel, believe, value, perceive, say and act if I am to be responsible and constructive. This is called self-consciousness. To be aware of myself is self-obsession, an immature personality trait.



My awareness of my spiritual and emotional immaturity and selfishness makes it possible to me to change. Without awareness I have no chance to grow or to let you into my life. You can knock on the door, but you will get no answer or rejection.

To see ourselves as others see us may be difficult, but it is crucial to self-awareness and satisfying relationships. Self-awareness is essential to healthy Self-Esteem because we cannot esteem ourselves without awareness of who we are.

"I am not what I hoped to be, I am not what someday I will be, but Thank God! I am not what I once was." Philippians 1:6



Look Inside the Real Me

1. If I could change the way I look, what would I change?

- ☐ Size (short, tall, fat)
- ☐ Complexion
- ☐ Teeth
- ☐ Hair
- ☐ Ears
- ☐ Facial features
- ☐ Legs
- ☐ Other

2. What abilities would I desire, if I could have my choice?

- ☐ Intellectual
- ☐ Scholastic
- ☐ Athletic
- ☐ Musical Talents
- ☐ (name)
- ☐ Making friends
- ☐ Speaking
- ☐ Personality
- ☐ Other

3. Who are you unable to forgive?

- ☐ Dad
- ☐ Mom
- ☐ Step-Parent
- ☐ Sibling
- ☐ Employer
- ☐ God
- ☐ Life circumstance
- ☐ Friend who hurt you

4. Would you change about your parents if you could?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discipline; too strict | <input type="checkbox"/> Too lenient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not accepted | <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to please |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-loving | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-affectionate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No freedom | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of trust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Argumentative-strife | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of possessions | <input type="checkbox"/> Competition; sibling |

Ashamed of parents:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morally | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectually |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provision wise | <input type="checkbox"/> Home |

Parental approval of friends:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

5. What would I change about my surroundings if I could?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nationality | <input type="checkbox"/> Race |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/denomination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socially accepted | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied with friends | |



6. What have you failed at?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occupation | <input type="checkbox"/> Goals | <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sport | <input type="checkbox"/> School | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendships | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | |

7. Which of the following beliefs do you struggle with?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> You're ugly | <input type="checkbox"/> You're stupid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You're clumsy | <input type="checkbox"/> You're too short/tall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No one likes you | <input type="checkbox"/> You're not good enough |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You're not smart enough | <input type="checkbox"/> You never do anything right |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You will never make anything of yourself | <input type="checkbox"/> List others |



Questions:

#1. & #2.

1. Confess my ungratefulness for checked areas
2. Thank God for the way He has made me, especially for features I have checked.
3. Ask God to show me His purpose for each of those features. Receive them as a gift from God for His purpose.

#3. & #4.

1. Receive grace from God to forgive (Hebrews 12:15)
2. Receive cleansing by the blood of Christ.
3. Look past faults to see needs in those who hurt me. Pray for needs.

#5.

Apply Serenity Prayer

#6.

1. Own them; I John 1:9
2. Reframe it - Romans 8:28 (How's God using this for good in me?)
3. Every failure is an opportunity to learn. Write out what I have learned through this failure.

#7.

1. Reject false beliefs
2. Replace with specific truth
3. Affirm truth daily for two months



Personal Self Image Inventory

1. What, basically, do you think about myself?

2. What are the three main contributing factors that have formed my self-image?
(See "Let's Look Inside the Real Me")

3. What are the particular circumstances or incidents, failures, tragedies, or rejections that have hindered a proper self-image and that have caused me to reject myself?
Be specific! Ask the Lord to bring them to your mind and write them down.

4. What have I done about those situations listed in question #3?

5. What are some additional things I feel God might want me to do in regard to question #3?



Biblical Insights on Self-Acceptance

Personalize each scripture In your own words:

- God prescribed us before birth.
Psalms 139:13-16
Isaiah 45:9-10
- God is not finished making us yet.
Ephesians 2:10
Philippians 1:6
- The cause of inferiority is a comparison of unchangeable features.
 - Appearance
 - Aptitude
 - Parentage
 - SocialII Corinthians 10:12
- Outward beauty is not related to inward happiness.
Isaiah 53:2
- Our happiness and achievement is based on our ability to experience His inward ideal.
Matthew 6:33
- God has a universal ideal.
 - The character of Jesus ChristMatthew 5:3-12
- Self-worth is increased by reproducing Christ's character in others. "You are credentials (letters or recommendations) to be read and known by everybody.
II Corinthians 3:2
- If necessary, God sacrifices outward beauty to develop inward characteristics.
II Corinthians 4:16
- Character is reflected in countenance.
 - Correct it, if possible, when the defects distract from inward qualities
 - Exercise the "Prayer of Faith"
II Corinthians 12:6
 - Glory in unchangeable "defects"; attach new meaning to old defects, the meaning we attach to them determines their problem to us.
I Corinthians 6:20
- Differences in unchangeable features are God's special frames to highlight His unique message through us. "My strength and power made perfect, in your weaknesses."
II Corinthians 12:9



1. Fix things you don't like or accept them if they are unchangeable.

Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference ...

2. Attempt only one major change at a time.

3. Ask God for help and wisdom in receiving your identity as His child.
James 1:5



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