

Developing A Healthy Self-Concept

Part 1

Introduction.

1. The title of this lesson is "Developing A Healthy Self-Concept" [image]and it is in part based on the second greatest commandment. (Matt. 22:39).

Matt 22:39 "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

- a. This commandment was binding under the Old Covenant. (Lk. 19:18)

Lev 19:18 'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD. This stops theft, murder, false witness, adultery, etc.

- b. It is clear this is the way man is to love neighbor today. (Rom 13:8-10; Gal. 5:4; Jas. 2:8).

Rom 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled {the} law.

Rom 13:9 For this, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, YOU SHALL NOT STEAL, YOU SHALL NOT COVET," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Rom 13:10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of {the} law.

Gal 5:14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the {statement,} "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

James 2:8 If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," you are doing well. See also James 2:9

2. Jesus clearly teaches that the second greatest commandment is to **love neighbors as self**.

- a. The love of self is normally a powerful love.

- b. I do not know if we have ever thought about this, but before we can love our neighbor we must first love ourselves.

- c. **Without question the Bible teaches us that we are to love ourselves.**

- 1) We are not to love ourselves more than God

- 2) We are not to love ourselves more than others, but love others as self.

- 3) We are not to despise and hate self.

- d. Paul also taught a man is to love his wife as himself. (Eph. 5:23).

Eph 5:33 Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must {see to it} that she respects her husband.

- 1) This certainly teaches a husband is to love himself.
- 2) The above verse would be a meaningless mandate if a man is to despise and hate self.
- 3) The one who despises self is unlikely to manifest much love to his wife.

d. Titus 2:3-4 stresses that women are to love their husbands.

Titus 2:3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,

Titus 2:4 so that they may **encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,**

- 1) There is a big difference between loving husband and staying with him.
- 2) There is a big difference between loving husband and merely tolerating him.

e. It is clear that we are to love ourselves with these limitations.

- 1) Loving ourselves does not mean we become self-centered.
- 2) It does not mean we become arrogant and prideful.
- 3) It does not mean we think that we are better than others.
- 4) It does not mean we love self more than God. (Matt. 22:37-38).
- 5) It does not mean loving self justifies hurting others, that is, to be mean and neglectful.
- 6) It does not mean we are to ignore or be indifferent to others.

f. Loving ourselves means that instead of having a poor self-image, we have a good self-image.

- 1) We recognize God loves us
- 2) We recognize we have great worth to God and believe God gave Son that we might be saved.

g. We think positively about ourselves because God created us, and **He doesn't create junk**

3. But although we are to have a good self-image, many of us, at times, fall into the trap of belittling and condemning ourselves.

4. We may say negative things like:

a. "I am a failure"	d. "I am unattractive"	g. "I am a terrible mother or father"	j. "I am not very good at that" and then developing self image from that.
b. "No one likes me"	e. "I am not important"	h. "I am too fat or too tall or too short"	j. "I am handicapped."
c. 'I am stupid'	f. "I have no talent"	i. "I mess up a lot"	k. "I am poor"

5. When we feed our minds with these harmful and condemning thoughts, after a while, we start believing them.
6. And before you know it [feeding ourselves with negative talk], we experience:

Low self-confidence	Depression
Social withdrawal	An inability to accept compliments or expressions of love
A lack of inner peace and security	A feeling of worthlessness
Lack of purpose	Lack of love and no real desire to love others

7. In this lesson let us lift up our spirits and our self esteem by considering several principles on how we can develop a healthy self-concept.

Value We Have In God's Sight

1. In order to develop a healthy self-concept, we must embrace the value we have in God's sight.
2. God loves us so much that He created us in His own image. (Gen. 1:26, 27).

Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all th

Gen 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- a. Since we are created in the image of God, we are precious and valuable in His eyes.
- b. He put man over His creation and man alone can have fellowship with God now and in eternity.
- c. As already stated, we are not junk. (Psa. 8:4, 5).

Ps 8:4 What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him?

Ps 8:5 Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty!

- 1) The Hebrew writer reveals that the words "a little lower than God" [KJV, ASV] is not the correct translation in Psalms 8:5.
- 2) He wrote these words in Hebrews 2:7.

Heb 2:7 "YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

- 3) He used the Greek word "aggelos" [angel] and affirmed that man has great value being created a little lower than the angels who are also created beings.
- 4) The NIV has "a little lower than the angels" in Psalms 8:5.
- 5) The Hebrew word "elohim" can be translated either "God" or "angels" and the Hebrew writer shows us that "elohim" means "angels" in Psalms 8:5.

6) Finite man is not even close to the infinite God!

c. The eighth psalm powerfully affirms the esteem and love God has for man.

1) God placed man over His creation.

2) He gave His precious, perfect Son for man - not the lower creation or even angels. (Heb. 2:16).

Heb 2:16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham.

3) The true descendant of Abraham was not one who was only a fleshly descendant of Abraham, but one who trusted in Jesus for salvation. (Gal. 3:26,27, 29).

3. **Jesus expressed our worth in this manner.** (Matt. 10:29-31).

Matt 10:29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And {yet} not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

Matt 10:30 "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Matt 10:31 "So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

a. Sparrows have little, if any value, to most people, but they have value to God.

b. No one knows the number of hairs on his/her head, but God knows this about every person.

c. This was Jesus' way of teaching man's great worth to God.

4. We are so valuable to God that He gave His son, Jesus, to die for us. (Jn. 3:16).

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

a. The "us" is not a mere generalization meaning some, many or most.

b. It literally means "all, every." (Heb. 2:9).

Heb 2:9 But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, {namely,} Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God **He might taste death for everyone.**

c. Jesus became flesh and died for all.

d. He died for you! He died for me!

e. He died even for the chief of sinners. (1 Tim. 1:15, 16).

1 Tim 1:15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost {of all.}

1 Tim 1:16 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

1) Paul looked upon himself as the "foremost" [chief] of sinners.

2) Since the Lord manifested undeserved mercy to him, he vigorously contended all can be saved.

5. Here is what amazes me about God! He values us even when we make mistakes and sin against Him.

a. Sometimes we think that God loves and values us only if we are perfect or near perfect.

1) When we sin or make a mistake, we think He dislikes us.

2) He values us one day, but He doesn't the next.

b. This is the way the devil wants us to think.

c. God values us even though we are not perfect.

d. Despite what some think, no one is even close to perfection.

1) Paul wrote this about mankind. (Rom. 3:10-12, 23).

Rom 3:10 as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

Rom 3:11 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

Rom 3:12 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

2) John wrote these words to Christians. (1 Jn. 1:8, 10).

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

3) The above words were written to those who could be confident of their salvation. (1 Jn. 5:13).

1 John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

6. God has an unshakable delight in man whom He created.

a. He thinks each person is wonderful and wants to save all. (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9).

1 Tim 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2 Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

b. A person may or may not be a "hit" in the eyes of others, but each one is wonderful to God and He wants to save every person.

c. He does not want anyone to be lost.

d. God is not a respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 10:12,13).

Acts 10:34 Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand {now} that God is not one to show partiality,

Acts 10:35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same {Lord} is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;

Rom 10:13 for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

e. Jews, Gentiles, men, women, free, slaves can all be saved.

1) The educated or uneducated, rich or poor, powerful or weak, many talents or having only one talent are all loved by God.

2) God gave His Son for all!

7. We have immense value to God! We need to value ourselves!

a. Knowing that we are made in God's image should provide us with a solid basis for self-worth.

1) Our human worth is not based on family, race, nationality, possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness, or public acclaim.

2) Instead it is based on being made and created by God.

b. Because we bear God's image, we can feel positive about ourselves.

c. When we criticize or downgrade ourselves, we criticize God who made us!

1) We are saying God did not know what He was doing.

2) We are saying He made a big mistake when He made me.

d. Knowing that we are a people of immense worth helps us to love ourselves, which in turn will help us love others as self.

e. It makes us more loving because we feel loved.

Conclusion

1. Next week we will emphasize we need to replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk.

a. All of us talk to ourselves even though we may not admit it.

b. How we talk to ourselves greatly influences what we say and do.

c. How we talk to ourselves has great impact on how we interact with others.

2. We will also emphasize we must believe in ourselves and focus more on Jesus and His will than ourselves.

3. It is vital that we develop a positive self-image.

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