

Developing A Healthy Self-Concept

Part 2

Introduction.

1. Last week we studied the fact that the second greatest commandment to love neighbor as self means we must have a love for self.
 - a. If we hate and despise ourselves, our love for others will be weak, if it exists at all.
 - b. If we hate or dislike ourselves, it will keep us from loving God as we should.
2. We stressed the fact it is vital that we develop a healthy self-concept and **not believe God created a piece of junk when He made you or me.**
 - a. One might be surprised by the great number of people in the world who have a very low self image.
 - b. It might come as a shock to some to learn this is a serious problem in the church.
 - c. A number of members of the church suffer with low self-esteem that keeps them from reaching their potential in God's service.
3. We studied and emphasized the fact that **every human is made in the image of God.**
4. **Jesus died for all and every human being has great value to God!**
 - a. A lot of people, with or without a healthy self-image, do not believe this awesome fact.
 - b. Their disbelief, coming from the devil, does not change the value of every human in the sight of God.
5. It is urgent that we study some additional truths that help us develop a healthy self-concept.
6. Developing a healthy self-concept will make us happier and more productive in God's service.
 - a. It will motivate us to draw near to God and love Him with all our being.
 - b. When one dislikes or hates self, he/she will find it hard to love God or man.

Replace Negative Self-Talk With Positive Self-Talk

1. In order to develop a healthy self-concept, we must replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk.
 - a. We may not admit it, but we all talk to ourselves!
 - 1) We carry on an inner dialogue with ourselves at an astounding rate of hundreds of words per minute.
 - 2) What we say to ourselves influences our self-concept and everything else we do.

b. Solomon said. (Prov. 23:7)

Prov 23:7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is...”

1) If we think negatively, we will be a negative person.

2) If we think we are a failure, we will fail.

3) If we think we are successful, we will be a success.

2. It is sad that many people have negative, self-defeating and irrational thoughts about life and themselves.

3. **Here are some irrational thoughts that some people have:**

“I need to be loved by everyone.”	“If I am not perfect, then people will think less of me.”
“I must be totally competent in every situation.”	“When I sin, God does not love me anymore.”
“Others can do it better than me.”	“I might fail.”

4. When people buy into these irrational beliefs or lies they will get down on themselves and develop a low self-esteem.

5. **How do we change our negative self-talk to positive self-talk?**

a. We need to replace our irrational negative thoughts, with positive truthful thoughts.

“I’m a failure...I’m successful.”	“I don’t deserve to be happy...I deserve to be happy.” See Ps.144:15
“God doesn’t love me because of my sins...God loves me even though I am a sinner." (Rom. 5:8)	“I’ll never be able to change...I can change.” (Phil. 4:13).

b. Paul wrote. (Phil. 4:8).

Phil 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

1) Observe Paul exhorted his Christian readers to “dwell on these things.”

2) The NIV has “think.” The Greek word “logizomai” means to “think, consider, take into account, meditate.”

3) The word “dwell” is very significant and is vital in developing a healthy self-concept.

Must Believe In Ourselves

1. To develop a healthy self-concept, we must believe in ourselves and what Christ can do through us.

2. Paul wrote this verse to the Christians at Philippi. (Phil. 4:13).

Phil 4:13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me

a. Although Paul was not an eloquent speaker, nor an attractive man, nor a wealthy man, he became one of the

greatest and most loved and respected Christians of all times.

- b. He became successful because he believed and loved Jesus Christ with all of his heart and because he believed in himself and what he could accomplish through the power of Christ.
3. Likewise, we must believe in ourselves as well.
- a. **Young people** need to believe in themselves.
 - 1) If they believe in themselves, and are willing to work hard, they can achieve almost anything they want to do in this life.
 - 2) No matter what other people say they can and cannot do, they can do it.
 - 3) Why? Because the Bible teaches this great truth.
 - 4) Countless people, with limited talent, have accomplished marvelous things and have been a real blessing to others.
 - b. **Older people** need to believe in themselves.
 - 1) Older people can achieve great things in life.
 - 2) No matter how old one might be, there is still time to make a difference in the world!
- **Galileo** discovered the monthly and daily phases of the moon when he was seventy-three years old.
 - **Cyrus Vanderbilt** did not become a great railroad king until he was seventy; at eighty-eight he was the most active railroad man of his day.
 - The **apostle John** was likely in his nineties when God used him to write an inspired book of the Bible.
 - **Moses** was 80 years old and **Abraham** was 75 years old when they began their greatest works.(Exod. 7:7; Gen. 12:4
 - **Joshua** was between 85 and 100 years old when he led the Israelites into their God-given homeland.
- 3) **No matter how old we might be, God can use us and wants to use us.**
 - 4) **He never intended that older Christians bury their talents.**
 - 5) When we start believing in ourselves, we will feel good about ourselves and we will have confidence to achieve our dreams.

Focus More On Jesus And His Will Than On Ourselves

1. In order to develop a healthy self-concept, we should focus more on Jesus and His will than on ourselves.
2. Even though we need to love ourselves and believe in ourselves, we must not spend all of our time focusing on our own desires..
3. The prevalent self-esteem approaches today teach that in order to build up our self-esteem we must focus totally or

mostly on ourselves.

4. The Bible teaches that if we want a good self-esteem we must not focus totally on self, but on Jesus and His will.

a. Jesus said. (Lk. 14:26).

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.

1) We know from Matthew 10:37 that "hate" is not a literal "hate."

Matt 10:37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

2) "Hate" means we must love self and others **less** than Jesus.

3) It does not mean we are not to love self and others.

4) Jesus and His kingdom must be first. (Matt. 6:33).

Matt 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

b. Jesus said. (Matt.16:24-26).

Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

Matt 16:25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Matt 16:26 "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

1) Jesus is saying that if we want to be His disciples, we must deny ourselves which in the Greek means "to lose sight of ourselves."

2) The Greek word "aparneomai" has 2 meanings: (1) To deny acquaintance or connection with someone (2) To deny one's self and interest for something greater and more important.

3) It likely has both meanings in Matthew 16:24 as this text reveals.

- We must not deny our allegiance to Jesus.
- We must be devoted to Jesus and be willing to totally surrender our lives to Him.
- The words "I surrender all" should be our attitude and constant goal.

4) We must focus on ourselves less and on Jesus more and more.

c. Every day, instead of asking, "What can I do for myself today," we should ask "What can I do for Jesus today?"

1) "How can I serve the Lord today?"

2) "What can I do for the kingdom?"

d. This will make us feel good about ourselves when we focus on Jesus and serve His people and others.

e. Jesus emphasized we are to be humble servants.(Matt. 20:27, 28; Lk. 14:11).

Matt 20:27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;

Matt 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Luke 14:11 "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

f. Jesus came into this world to serve mankind and die that mankind can be saved. (Phil. 2:5-8).

Phil 2:5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

Phil 2:6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

Phil 2:7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, {and} being made in the likeness of men.

Phil 2:8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

1) We are to "have this attitude" that Jesus manifested.

2) We are to be servants.

Conclusion.

1. The Bible teaches that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. (Matt. 22:39).

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

2. But before we can love our neighbor, we must learn to love ourselves.

a. We love ourselves because God loves us.

b. We love ourselves because we have great value to God.

3. Loving ourselves does not mean that we become self-centered.

4. Neither does it mean we become arrogant and prideful; nor we think that we are better than others.

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

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

5. To love ourselves, we need to develop a healthy self-concept.

a. To develop a healthy self-concept, we should embrace the value we have in God's sight.

b. We need to replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk.

c. We need to believe in ourselves.

d. Focus more on Jesus and less on ourselves.

6. As children of God, we can have great self-worth and confidence.

7. We are important to God and He desires we feel good about ourselves and recognize together we can do great things. (Rom. 8:31).

Rom 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God {is} for us, who {is} against us?

- a. The answer is no one can defeat us in regard to our salvation.
- b. We alone can separate ourselves from God's love and salvation.

Rom 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God {is} for us, who {is} against us?

Rom 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

Rom 8:33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;

Rom 8:34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Rom 8:35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."

Rom 8:37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

Rom 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

Rom 8:39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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