

Studies in Relationships

“Self Esteem-Part 1”

I. WHAT IS SELF IMAGE?

Self image, self worth, and self-esteem are all characterized by a quiet sense of self-respect and a feeling of satisfaction with who we are. It has taken years to firmly fix in our minds the beliefs about ourselves, either good or bad. Just because it is something you like about yourself doesn't necessarily mean that it is something God likes. He says in Romans 12:2 to avoid the world's influence. Let's read John 8:31-32 together to firmly receive the fact that we can change false beliefs rooted in our lives.

Name 3 things or desires that make you feel good about yourself:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

II. WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF A POOR SELF IMAGE?

Have you ever found yourself asking or commenting.....

- “Why in the world did I do that”?
- “Wow, that just goes to show what a dummy I am”.
- “I feel like a real loser”.
- “I will never be able to do that correctly”.
- “Nothing in my life ever turns out right”.

Example 1- An ambitious father neglects his son, who grows up to be a business executive. The very day the son starts working for the company he says, **“If I just can get the promotion I want, then I'll be happy. Success is what really counts in life!”** The man receives many promotions and raises because he is driven to perform well, but happiness always seems to elude him.

Example 2- A homemaker with three children painfully wonders, **“Why don't I feel close to my husband?”** Having grown up with an alcoholic father and a demanding mother, this woman never has felt lovable and therefore is unable to receive her husband's love. She can't go back in time to change anything but must move forward from today. Will she ever be able to love?

Example 3- A church worker speaks powerfully about God’s unconditional love, yet guilt plagues him because of past sins. He feels, “**I must succeed in my public ministry**”, but is withdrawn around his family. He never has understood how to apply his own teaching to his life and relationships.

Dysfunction in our lives causes us to figure out ways to block pain and to gain significance. How...

- ...we suppress our painful emotions
- ...we are perfectionists
- ...we drive ourselves to succeed
- ...we withdraw
- ...we say hurtful things to people who hurt us
- ...we punish ourselves when we fail
- ...we help people so they will appreciate us
- ...we try to make clever statements so people will accept us

dysfunctional family- n. a family in which alcoholism, drug abuse, divorce, absent father or mother, excessive anger, verbal, and/or physical abuse exists

III. WHAT ARE THE FOUR FALSE BELIEFS?

#	False Belief	God’s Truth	Scripture
1	I must meet certain standards to feel good about myself.	Because of <u>propitiation</u> I am deeply loved by God. I no longer have to fear punishment or punish others. Propitiation- Christ’s death on the cross in payment for our sins	Rom. 3:23-25
2	I must have the approval of certain others to feel good about myself.	Because of <u>justification</u> I am completely forgiven by and fully pleasing to God. I no longer have to fear failure. Justification- placed in right standing before God through Christ’s death on the cross, which paid for our sins	Rom. 3:23-25
3	Those who fail are unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.	Because of <u>regeneration</u> I have been made brand-new, complete in Christ. I no longer need to experience the pain of shame. Regeneration- the spiritual change made in man by the Holy Spirit, where he becomes the possessor of a new life	2 Cor. 5:17-19
4	I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.	Because of <u>reconciliation</u> I am totally accepted by God. I no longer have to fear rejection. Reconciliation- is the restoration to friendship and fellowship after estrangement	2 Cor. 5:17-19