

Self worth!

A DRIVING PASSION OF ALL HUMANITY IS TO FEEL THAT THEY HAVE VALUE AND MEANING IN THIS LIFE.

The great tragedy is when we feel worthless and our life has little or no meaning.

As I look around our community and observe the people working with me I see a microcosm of humanity. Observing what makes us tick can be interesting to say the least.

Of all the attributes God has bestowed on humanity that is in His likeness the issue of self worth is an all consuming part of our life. All people want to feel loved, accepted, honored for what they are and be needed. No one wants to live unloved, rejected, disgraced and worthless. When God created man he gave him a sense of purpose. When man rebelled against God he lost the God given sense of value.

There is nothing more personal than self worth and it is frightening to admit we have been basing our value on the wrong things. Our tendency is to use our natural abilities to have significance with those around us. Our beauty, musical talents, intelligence or abilities with our hands. The supreme goal of some is to be famous and accepted for their talents or appearance. A politician feels inner satisfaction in wielding power over others. And there are the majority who just want to feel they are important in their own way with peers and those around them.

Serious problems arise when those who are working for acceptance and self worth fail in their endeavor because of a serious mistake, accident or moral failing. Their world falls apart and they become depressed, worried and lonely. They see their self as being a failure and having no value. This has brought about self-destructive acts as alcoholism, drugs, moral depravation and suicide. Why, because they feel that their life has no value as they have failed in impressing those around them and they have failed in themselves. We see this horribly in the entertainment industry as many find only sadness, depression and eventually lead to vices that kill them. They were looking for the feeling of having value in this life through entertainment, art and theatrical talent but discovered only loneliness, depression and in the end death.

Are we a total of all our past performances both good and bad? Are we what we have done? This belief leads to a sense of shame. It is a very false belief and our self worth will suffer greatly if we take in this lie.

There are those in the church who feel they must become a pastor and have a fellowship of their own. Or they must be accepted in the fellowship as a real valuable part of the group and their abilities used to bring them spiritual satisfaction and self worth. When they fail the spiritual man is beaten down and they feel there is little or no hope as they are worthless and others are the truly valued people in the fellowship. They go from bad to worse as they feel they are a failure even to God. There is the attitude that I am worthless so why have restraints and fall deeper and deeper in sin. The farther they go the more they feel hopelessness and death is the eventual result if they continue in this lie.

We must start by understanding that this life of abundance we are looking for in being significant is also in this real life we live an existence full of pain, rejection and failure. By realizing this we can start to understand even why we have this desire to have value in this life. Life is not a journey free of problems. On the contrary as life itself is a series of problems that frustrates us in our search for self-value. This is played out daily in the life of most people.

The man or women who lives only for the love and attention of others is never satisfied at least not for long. Despite our efforts we will never find lasting, fulfilling peace if we must continually prove ourselves to others. Our deep desire to be loved and accepted is a symptom of a deeper need. It is our self-need of worth and this conditions our behavior. On the other hand the feeling of self worth is crucial to mans emotional, spiritual and social stability. It is the driving nature in the human spirit. By understanding this need we can better understand why we have the attitudes that drive us closer or farther from God.

Adam lived in intimate fellowship with God. He was secure and free. Adam was complete and perfect as the image of God. Adam had a purpose. Ps. 99: 3-5 Adam was a demonstration of God's glorious character.

In a perfect environment God supplied their physical needs. And their spiritual needs as God visited them. They rebelled and lost their perfection and authority. Man was also filled with shame and the feeling of being now worthless as he had now failed in his life's purpose. From that time man has been trying once again to feel like a creature of significance and having self worth. From that time until today man has attempted to use anything created by God to give him the self worth he is looking for. But mankind became slaves of Satan and self-esteem became an endless and frustrating quest always looking in the wrong place and the story goes on today in Hollywood, on TV in the boardroom and even in our fellowships.

When we are separated from God and His Word we have only our abilities and the opinions of others on which to base our self worth. The circumstances around us will ultimately control how we feel about our selves if we let this lie predominate our life.

People who have the desire to control every thing are trying to feel they have value. They feel they need to be perfectionists. They must feel like they are the best and they work hard to achieve this. They are those trying to find self worth by his or her performance. The main problem in this type of scenario is that the person involved is not motivated by love but by fulfilling his or her feeling of self worth. And because of this, satisfaction in what ever is accomplished is hollow. One can become a pastor, leader or materially successful but the feeling of self-esteem is always just the next accomplishment or goal achieved.

The person who depends on his personality and charm will find that human acceptance is very brief and fades quickly. There becomes a shallow feeling in the soul and a loneliness that comes over the spirit when we seek self worth in our charisma. Mistrust usually follows when our peers delude us. What was at one point a reason for our self worth now just feels like a very empty game we are playing with our self and life itself. An emptiness, depression and loneliness follows as we wake up and nobody is there to be flattered or charmed.

The person who finds himself seeking self-worth by his labors and accomplishments in his creativity follows the same pattern. To feel self worth there must be something to create so that others will say you are so gifted and make great stuff. This can turn into a mania and escape from having to think about anything but the present project and live for its completion. Then of course there is the next project. As time passes the satisfaction becomes less and mens praise of our accomplishments become void of meaning. Depending on performance and feeling it equals self worth. But it is very brief and a fleeting moment and a deception.

There are many other types of efforts to feel important and accepted. To be in a motorcycle gang and act tough. There is also the world of perversity and becoming a part of people who try to feel self worth by exploiting their bodies to feel desired and loved. We have seen many come through our team that experimented in this and found out the hard way it was a dead end street to death.

In all these things the end of the story is feeling little or no self-esteem as you throw your self into works that can make you worthy of having self-esteem.

When we base our security on success and others opinions we become dependant. We feel we must use our abilities to perform and please others. When we feel that I cannot cope with that person's disapproval we become their puppets and the feeling of worthlessness follows if we do not deal with it. I see this in the team at times and mere words normally does little to repair the damage done.

We do not have to have to be successful or pleasing to others to have a healthy sense of self-esteem and worth. But also we must not feel we can be a thorn in every bodies side and it means little as I am so important. Either extreme is dangerous to the health of our significance.

Pride comes when we base or self worth on performance. Depression comes when we feel a deep sense of loss and failure. The fear of it happening again can hog-tie us emotionally. Low motivation and laziness comes when we let hopelessness consume us and we meditate solely on our selves. Our identity many times revolves around success or failure in our lives and dictates our self worth to our inner man. We must take a step forward spiritually by understanding it is satan who brings condemnation and the feeling of being worthless not Jesus.

No emotion is more destructive than guilt. It causes a loss of self-respect. It causes our human spirit to wither and it eats away at our personal significance. Guilt fills us with fear of failure and rejection. It can never help us be encouraged or inspire us on in our desire to live for Christ. Maybe we feel guilt because of a moral failing or sinful act. We feel unacceptable to God. Do not let guilt destroy your self-esteem but fall upon God in repentance and He will restore your understanding of your self worth. At its root guilt is the condition of being separated from God. Return to your faith in God and do not feel condemned any longer as Jesus has paid the price for your sin.

Let us start by understanding and recognizing life is not our expectations of ourselves but Gods. We can be nothing or do nothing without Him working in our lives. Therefore our value is based on what He is doing in us. We need to know we are very valuable to Him, each of us. Only Gods love and acceptance of us ultimately will meet our need of significance and self worth in this life and the next. Love conveys the message we are significant! That is why to give and receive love is so important to the well being of our inner man. Also when someone does not feel loved by those around them it is easy to feel that God also doesn't love them either. This makes people feel worthless and they have no value to no one including themselves. If we recognize this and reach out to those we see this happening to, God will enrich us with the understanding of the great value we are to Him also in a greater way.

Your beliefs, true or false dictate your emotions, actions and ultimately your life.

God made man like no other creature. Even the angels, animals and creation itself is secondary to mankind. Man is very valuable to God only for the fact that He chose it this way. He did not choose us because of our abilities looks or talents. Also not because of our goodness and perfection. The Hebrew nation is a good example as in all their inconsistencies and great defects they were the love of Gods heart.

"Just as He choose us in Him before the foundation of the world; that we would be holy and blameless before Him, in love: Having predestinated us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise and glory of His grace which He freely bestowed on us in the beloved in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace."
Eph 1:4 - 7

Why? Because He chose it that way. Solomon who was born out of a marriage that was far from righteous. But the bible says that Nathan gave him the name Jedidiah that means "beloved of the Lord." It is not because of our breeding, hereditary or good works that God looks at us with much value. No it is His divine choosing of mankind in the beginning to be His special creation. This should be the reason we have self worth and no other reason. God and His purposes alone can give us a profound, lasting sense of significance.

It has been said that our biggest enemy is not Satan but our self and how we observe our self. Let God look at us through His blood.

It is important that we nurture love, gentleness, kindness, generosity and patience. As these things become more and more prominent in our lives the divine understanding of personal significance and self-worth to God and man will become greater and greater as we walk in this truth. If we focus on our flesh and it's desires, selfishness and pride we will finish our brief life here in emptiness, loneliness feeling no self worth no matter what we accomplish here in our brief stay.

This is not a fight we do alone, but with Christ and those who love us. God is on our side, if He is our first love.

Much love, Clark