

<b>Who does the Bible say we are?</b>	
<p><b>Psalm 100:3 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>3</sup> Acknowledge that the Lord is God!  He made us, and we are his.  We are his people, the sheep of his pasture.</p>	<p>To know who we are, we need to know who God is.  God is our Creator!!!  AND.....we belong to Him!!!</p>
<p><b>Genesis 1:26-27 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make human beings<sup>[a]</sup> in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."  <sup>27</sup> So God created human beings<sup>[b]</sup> in his own image.  In the image of God he created them;  male and female he created them.</p>	<p>God created us in HIS image.   What does it mean to have been created in His image? God knows how to accept compliments, i.e., praises.</p>
<p><b>Revelation 4:11 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>11</sup> "You are worthy, O Lord our God,  to receive glory and honor and power.  For you created all things,  and they exist because you created what you pleased."</p>	<p>God created ALL things.</p>
<p><b>Acts 17:24-25 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>24</sup> "He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples,<sup>25</sup> and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need.</p>	<p>In fact, God is the Creator of EVERYTHING on heaven and earth and because of Him there is life.</p>
<p><b>Remember who you are! As Christians we have every reason to celebrate the value that God places on us.</b></p>	
<p><b>Matthew 22:39 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>39</sup> A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.</p>	<p>We are to love ourselves?!!!   Yes, in fact, I would say we are to love everyone unconditionally – the way God loves us - AND....I would also venture to say we deserve to be loved unconditionally, by ourselves and by those around us. God loves us unconditionally....he accepts us just as we are....faults and all....and I think we should teach our kids that they deserve to be loved just like they are...(see the story of the Two Pots*).</p>

<p><b>What has God's goal been all along?</b></p>	
<p><b>Acts 17:27-28 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>27</sup> "His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. <sup>28</sup> For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your<sup>[b]</sup> own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'</p>	<p>His goal has always been that we all seek after Him.</p>
<p><b>Revelation 21:3</b>  <sup>3</sup> I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them.</p>	<p>All because God wants us to ultimately be with Him!!!</p> <p>If you don't like/want something do you keep it?  If you don't like/want something, do you make a huge effort to salvage it?</p>
<p><b>We know inflated self-esteem is not good, but I say more people suffer from low self-esteem than inflated self-esteem.</b>  <b>What is low self esteem?</b>  <b>Where does it come from?</b>  <b>Is low self-esteem from God?</b>  <b>Is low self-esteem conducive to declaring the praises of Him who called us out of darkness?</b></p>	
	<p>Indications of Low Self-Esteem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feeling overwhelmed by the pace of life (not trusting)</li> <li>● Feeling like a failure relative to everyone else (comparing yourself comes from judging yourself – God says we are not to judge....)</li> <li>● Constantly doubting if you can achieve anything (lack of faith)</li> <li>● Playing it safe, not trying anything new (hidden talent)</li> <li>● Behaving timidly and cannot assert yourself (not Jesus)</li> <li>● Being overly dependent on others to look after you (10 virgins)</li> <li>● Escaping unpleasant realities,(not wanting to give bad news..which is unrealistic and unavoidable...and often leads to lying)</li> <li>● Putting little effort into things because you doubt you can be successful, i.e., not doing your best (not God)</li> <li>● Putting yourself down <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Negative self-talk (not Scriptural – we are to encourage))</li> <li>○ Not accepting compliments/"rolling over" compliments (is anyone</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p style="text-align: center;">perfect?!) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disliking your looks ( like God made a mistake....)</li> </ul> <p>Did you know that feeling angry or wanting to get even are also indications of low self-esteem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Losing your temper at the drop of a hat</li> <li>Being quick to pick a fight</li> <li>Blaming others or circumstances for setbacks</li> <li>Constantly finding fault with the world</li> <li>Being negative, nothing is good, everything is horrible</li> <li>Taking pleasure in stories about the troubles of others</li> <li>Taking things out on others</li> <li>Constantly arguing about petty issues</li> </ul> <p>Can you even fathom a scenario like this? “An athlete just won and gets congratulated on winning the race.....would it make ANY sense for him to say, “thanks, but my room is a mess...I just can’t keep it picked up!” That would be like us saying, “Yes, I’m good at that, but I’m bad at this”.</p> <p>Or what about:  “Wow, you have a really beautiful house!”  “Come in we’re in the back.”  “I had no idea you lived in such a nice house....”  “You want a soda?”  “And you have a pool, Jacuzzi and sauna?!!!”  “Here, have some chips”  Some of us dodge compliments like that.</p> </p></p>
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**What is good self-esteem?**  
**How is it different from humility?**  
**How is it different from pride?**  
**What is an inflated self-esteem? i.e., Arrogance**

<p><b>1 Corinthians 4:7 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>7</sup> For what gives you the right to make such a judgment? What do you have that God hasn’t given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?</p>	<p>Everything is from God...  Someone with an inflated self-esteem is going to think that what they have is because of all their hard work.</p> <p>How to? The secret is to stay humble is and to acknowledge that everything we have is from God.....everything is a gift from God.</p>
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<p><b>1 Peter 2:9 (New Living Translation)</b>  <sup>9</sup> But you are not like that, for you are a chosen</p>	<p>“that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light”</p>
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<p>people. You are royal priests,<sup>a</sup> a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.</p>	
<p><b>Romans 12</b></p> <p>..... <sup>2</sup> Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.....</p> <p>..... Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us..... We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other (we all have different functions/ we are interdependent/ need to learn to accept help).</p> <p><sup>6</sup> In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. .... If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. <sup>8</sup> If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them (love them unconditionally). .... <sup>10</sup> Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. <sup>11</sup> Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. <sup>f</sup> <sup>12</sup> Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying (not easily defeated by setbacks) ..... <sup>13</sup> When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality..... Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! <sup>17</sup> Never pay back evil with more evil (wanting to get even – an indication of low self-esteem). Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. <sup>18</sup> Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone..... never take revenge..... For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. .... Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.</p>	<p>People with healthy levels of self-esteem are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Confident without being overbearing</li> <li>● Not devastated by criticism</li> <li>● Not overly defensive when questioned</li> <li>● Active and achievement-oriented without being driven</li> <li>● Not easily defeated by setbacks and obstacles</li> </ul> <p>They are also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Able to accept and learn from mistakes</li> <li>● Unlikely to feel a need to put others down, they encourage</li> <li>● Open and assertive in communicating their needs (love yourself)</li> <li>● Self-reliant and resourceful without refusing help</li> <li>● Not overly worried about failing or looking foolish</li> </ul>

**Should we be embarrassed of what we have? No....we “should wear our blessings well” it provides, after all, an opportunity for us to declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness!!! You think people knew Abraham was rich?**

**Romans 12:3 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>3</sup> Because of the privilege and authority<sup>[a]</sup> God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.<sup>[b]</sup>

But don't think that having this or that adds any value to who you are. Most societies tend to place excessive value in outward, observable features and/or materials. Do those things influence God's perception of us?

Everything is from God....  
Someone with an inflated self-esteem is going to think that what they have is because of all their hard work.

How to? The secret is to stay humble is and to acknowledge that everything we have is from God.....everything is a gift from God.

**Philippians 2:3 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>3</sup> Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.

There should be a healthy pride in things well done, in well-accomplished tasks, and in the good traits and characteristics one may possess. There is an expected attitude of self-protection and caring for oneself. The problem comes when someone does not give credit to God, the Creator of all good things in us.

**1 Peter 1:18**

<sup>18</sup> For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver.

**Eph 4: 30**

<sup>30</sup> And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own,<sup>[b]</sup> guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.

What value does God place on us?  
How important are we to God?  
How important are we?  
If someone is important/valuable, would it be OK for them to be dressed in rags? Would it be OK for others to mistreat them? Would it be OK for them

If you don't like/want something do you keep it?  
If you don't like/want something, do you make a huge effort to salvage it?

He created us to be saved so we can be his friends forever.  
Lost sheep, lost coin.....went looking for ONE!!!!

**What effect do we have on the self-esteem of others?**

**Ephesians 4:23-32 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>23</sup> Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. <sup>24</sup> Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

<sup>25</sup> So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. <sup>26</sup> And

Let EVERYTHING you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. The Christian community needs people who are interested in building others up rather than destroying them.

Notice, too, that all of the new self's attributes have

"don't sin by letting anger control you."<sup>[a]</sup> Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry,<sup>27</sup> for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

<sup>28</sup> If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need.<sup>29</sup> Don't use foul or abusive language. **Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.**

<sup>30</sup> And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own,<sup>[b]</sup> guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.

<sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior.<sup>32</sup> Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

to do with good character and interpersonal relationships, and these can be tied directly to questions of self-esteem. The adverse behaviors mentioned in [Ephesians 4](#), such as lying, anger, and bitterness, leave the person with a diminished sense of value.

Parents...we have so much power over our kids. What we say, they will "play back" all their lives....

The only way to re-program ourselves i.e., re-record over all the negative things we might have heard as children or from other people by reading (and hearing) the Word of God.

**Why is it that helping somebody enhances your own self-esteem? Make a list of small things that you can do for your neighbor, partner, or family member. Do them; you may be surprised at how well you feel about yourself.**

A Water Bearer in China had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole, which he carried across his neck.

One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years, this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After 2 years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes my water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, we would not have such beauty."

***Each of us has our own unique flaw. Accept yourself with your all your flaws and accept your children with their flaws. In fact, let's learn to love our flaws. I don't know about you, but I would rather be the cracked pot who watered all those seeds that became flowers!***