

Self-acceptance

How much do you love yourself?

Jesus said, "Love your neighbour as **yourself**."

Love is choosing the very best for someone, including yourself.

How can you tell if you don't love yourself?

There is a part of you that you wish you could change; a part of you that you wish could be different.

Think about:

1. Is there anything you would like to change about yourself?
2. Is there a person you would like to be?
3. What gives you a sense of personal reward?

Be careful about hiding behind a super-spiritual front – saying you are OK when you are not.

Major symptoms of self-rejection:

- Inability to trust God – You think God has made a mistake in the way he has made you. You therefore can't trust Him for other things. Ephesians 2:10 – we are His workmanship.
- Excessive shyness; fear of man. We are afraid that others won't accept us. We can't be ourselves. We are always thinking about self – what do they think of me? Psalm 118:5,9
- Problems making deep friendships and genuine relationships. The beginning of any relationship is unselfishness
- Concerned about your own needs and not concerned about the needs of others. It leaves you with nothing to talk about.
- Difficulty in loving others and receiving love from others.
- Excessive self-criticism – "I can't" – Isaiah 45:9-10
"Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker,
those who are nothing but potsherds
among the potsherds on the ground.
Does the clay say to the potter,
'What are you making?'
Does your work say,
'The potter has no hands?'
¹⁰Woe to the one who says to a father,
'What have you begotten?'
or to a mother,
'What have you brought to birth?'
- Attitude of superiority. This reflects deep inferiority, covered up with a big noise and an over-reaction.

- Self-consciousness – always concerned about what others think. You think others are talking about you or laughing at you.
- Fashion consciousness – to draw attention to yourself; Over-emphasis on material things and how you look.
- Self-conscious with those of the opposite sex.

Self-acceptance is a process. Accept yourself, and others will follow in accepting you.

Insights concerning self-acceptance

1. God prescribed us before birth Psalm 139:16; Isaiah 45:9-10
2. God is not finished with us yet: Eph 2:10; Phil 1:6
3. The cause of inferiority is comparison – 2 Cor 10:12
4. Outward beauty is not related to inward happiness – Is 53:2
5. God has a universal inward ideal for all of us, (to be like Christ). Matt 5: 3-12
6. Our happiness and achievements are based on our ability to experience His inward ideal - Matt. 6:33
7. If necessary, God sacrifices outward beauty to develop inward character: 2 Cor 4:16

Why do we reject ourselves?

- Physical disability or abnormality
- Inner hurts from the past
- Deep hurts from relationships

Symptoms of people who have hurts:

- Fears – of water, heights, dark, spiders, people
- Resentment – hatred, bitterness, especially towards those who have hurt you.
- Jealousy, temper, anger – people will explode for no apparent reason
- Feelings of rejection
- Wanting to run away
- Attention seeking
- Perfectionism
- Anti-authority

How to gain release:

1. Accept the way God has made you. Psalm 139:13-16
2. The work is not finished. The Lord within you makes you more beautiful, like the honing of a rough diamond.
3. Stop comparing yourself with others, especially your physical appearance. Inward beauty is not related to outward appearance. Do not be influenced by advertising and the world. Happiness comes from thanking God for the way He made you.

Inner healing

Proverbs 20:30

God is interested in the entire person. Deep scars need healing.

Song of Solomon 1:3 – His name is as ointment.

God knows you

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Part of his creation is you. Because God made you, God knows you.

Read Psalm 139:1-18.

There are times in life when you wonder if anyone cares that you are here. Who notices me? How can I be in the middle of a group of people and feel like no one sees me? Do I matter?

Have you ever felt that way? Do you ever wonder if anyone would ever love you if they really knew what went on inside you?

God knows what people are like. He knows that we have these feelings. He knows about our habits and quirks. We don't need to pretend that we are perfect because God knows what we are really like. He loves us completely, including all of the not-so-perfect stuff inside us.

If God really knows us, all of us, how can he still love us? This is a great mystery. His love is unconditional! We don't have to wait until we are better or older or thinner or smarter to talk to God. God knows and loves you today.