



“God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1,27).

Self-Worth

Central Truth: Each person is of highest value because he bears the image and likeness of God.

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How much is a person worth? If a 150-pound man were reduced to his chemical components, what would be his value on the open market? His body would have enough iron to make a ten-penny nail and enough salt to fill a small shaker; it would also contain some other minerals, plus water. He would be worth a little over two dollars in the market place!

But how much is that person worth to God? He is of infinite value. He is of such high estimate that God gave His only begotten Son to die just for him. Think of that! That is how God evaluates you. Do you value yourself by the world's standards or by God's standards?

God says you are not to think of yourself by a “sub” standard (“I am worthless”) or by a super standard (“I am more important than anyone else”), but by a sane standard (Romans 12:3). Here is what that sane standard is like.

You Are Lowly

Don't be filled with pride in yourself. You had a lowly beginning and will have a fatal end. In fact, you might ask with the psalmist, *“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”* (Psalm 8:4).

You are made of dust. Genesis 2:7 tells how God fashioned a form of the dust of the earth, breathed into its nostrils the breath of life, and that form became a living man. You are lower than the angels who are before God in

heaven this very hour (Psalm 8:5).

You are beset by troubles. In fact, you were born to troubles as surely as the sparks fly upward (Job 5:7). You are here on earth but a few days, and those days are filled with troubles (Job 14:1). Your flesh has pain and your soul mourns while you are here (Job 14:22). On what basis could you boast in self-importance?

You have a brief life span. Your life is so short and uncertain that it is like the mist that rises from the water and is gone at the puff of the wind (James 4:14). Like a wind that passes away and does not return, so is the life of every person (Psalm 78:39). Why should the spirit of any mortal be proud? You are weaker than many of the animals. The leopard is swifter; the ox is stronger; the birds fly higher. You can domesticate the animals, but you cannot surpass them in their God-given abilities.

You will return to dust. That is to say, a part of you will return to dust. Ecclesiastes 12:7 reads, *“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”* That is according to the judgment God pronounced on human sin. *“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”* (Genesis 3:19).

Realizing that you are made of dust, are beset by troubles, have only a brief life span, are weaker than animals, and will return to dust hardly gives you a reason to boast with pride. Be humble.

You Are Noble

Yes, you are lowly, but you are noble at the same time. There are six Bible principles which show your nobility.

You were created by the hand of God himself. Genesis 1:26, 27 and 2:7, 21, 22 describe the creation of the original man and woman. The text says, *“God formed man”* and *“made . . . a woman.”* Psalm 139:13-16 describes God weaving us together in the womb — an act of personal creation! That makes you of infinite value.

You bear the image of God (Genesis 1:26, 27; 5:1). You are a threefold person (spirit, soul, and body) as God is threefold (Father, Son, Spirit). You are immortal as God is immortal. You can receive the divine nature (II Peter 1:4) because you are like God. You are unique.

You are given dominion by God (Genesis 1:28). All the birds of the air, the beasts of the fields, and the creatures of the sea are subject to your dominion. You are important.

You are highly valued by God (Luke 12:7). You are of more value to

him than the birds or the animals. Jesus died for you, not for birds or animals. You can receive eternal life and become a child of God. You are His treasured inheritance in His only begotten Son (Ephesians 1:18).

You can be a child of God (Galatians 4:4-7). To be a child of God means to be born of the Spirit and have His nature. It means to be a legal heir to all He is and all He has. Think about what it means to be “*heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*” (Romans 8:17). And that is what you are now because you are a child of God through Christ.

You will go to be with God (Ecclesiastes 12:7). You are not headed for the grave, if you are a Christian. The body returns to the dust from where it came, but the spirit returns to God who gave it. With that confidence you can face death saying, “*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*” (Acts 7:59). What a blessed prospect! That indicates your great nobility before God. Do not degrade yourself. You are noble!

You Are Responsible

You are responsible for your life and the lives of those over whom you have authority. Jesus warned against spending your life for those things which are of lesser value. “*What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*” (Mark 8:36). What are you doing with your life, investing it or wasting it?

You are responsible for the lives of those under your control. Parents are responsible for birthing, not aborting, their children. They are responsible for training them in the things of God. What a responsibility!

You are responsible in spite of your problems. Have you ever sympathized with Timothy? He was Paul's companion in missionary work, but he had great problems. He had serious health problems which caused repeated sickness (I Timothy 5:23). He was despised by some because he was a young man (I Timothy 4:12). He faced serious spiritual problems brought on by strong opponents (I Timothy 3, 4). And he had a serious problem with inferiority (II Timothy 1:8). Yet he was responsible to live nobly and serve faithfully.

You are responsible because of divine enabling. God has given you opportunity to be “*strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*” (Ephesians 6:10). His limitless power is already working in you (Ephesians 3:20). You are accountable to God for what you do with what you have.

God has given you at least one spiritual gift — a divinely conferred capacity to serve effectively in some area of spiritual ministry. Read Romans 12:6-8 and II Corinthians 12 for a list of the gifts. Discern with which gift

God has endowed you. Develop your exercise of that gift. Devote the rest of your life to serving Him in that area. You are responsible and will account to God for what you do with what you have.

Do not compare yourself with other people. You will be superior in one thing and inferior in another. Look at yourself through God's eyes. Respect yourself as a child of God. Set your attention on becoming all you can be in Him. You are of highest value to God.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is meant by “self-worth”?
2. How is self-worth to be measured?
3. What indicates your worth before God?
4. What is there about your nature that should keep you humble?
5. How does creation show you are of value to God?
6. How is your value to God seen in a Christian's death?
7. What does it mean to say that you are the image of God?
8. How can you be a good steward of your life?
9. How can you recognize your true self-worth without pride?
10. How can you show the worth of every person you meet?