



SERIES: MY LIFE WITH GOD

True Self-Esteem Comes from God

Life Reference: Exodus 3:1-14

Focus Verse:

***"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"*
(Philippians 4:13).**

Do you frequently feel inadequate, anxious, or fearful of trying new things? Do you compare yourself with others and find yourself lacking? Do you often beg off doing something because you know it just won't be good enough? Is your self-esteem a bit battered?

Everyone, almost without exception, experiences such moments of self-doubt. Each of us has some areas in which we feel inadequate and unfit for the task. It's a common problem.

Life Reflection:

Can you remember a time when you felt you did not have the necessary skills to fulfill a job? Briefly describe it.

Did you still attempt the undertaking? Or did you allow fear of failure to stop you from even trying?



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How did your decision make you feel?

Many notable names in Scripture also suffered from low self-esteem. Remember Moses at the burning bush? He spent quite a while arguing with God about what a poor choice the Lord had made for His spokesman. Read the story of his encounter with God in Exodus 3 and 4. Moses protested:

"I am not eloquent ... I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Exodus 4:10).

Gideon also proved skeptical of God's calling. Even though God put His approval on his mission and promised to go with him, Gideon used the excuse of his family's lowly standing and his own inferior position within that poor family.

"Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house" (Judges 6:15).

This is the same man whose lack of faith gave us the term "fleeing God" for a means of proving His will. (See Judges 6:36-40.)

God exercises His divine sovereignty by choosing whom He will to perform particular tasks or callings. If we were screening candidates, we would be apt to look for speaking ability, intelligence, a charismatic personality, or even wealth and appearance. God uses different criteria and specializes in on-the-job training. He thought nothing of calling a shepherd (David), a herdsman and gatherer of sycamore fruit (Amos), a fisherman (Peter), and even a woman of questionable character (Rahab). God often uses unusual methods and unusual people.

The opposite of low self-esteem is faith in God. He does not call us without enabling us. Rather than focus on our perceived lack of ability, God asks us to step out in faith.

The apostle Paul knew that it was the Lord who had equipped him to fulfill his calling, even though his background would disqualify him in the minds of many.



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“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man” (I Timothy 1:12, New King James Version).

The woman of Canaan realized that she was nothing of herself, even referring to herself as a dog, but this same woman also demonstrated faith that Jesus’ power was sufficient for her needs. (Read Matthew 15:21-28). Her boldness came not from confidence in who she was but in who God was.

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (II Corinthians 3:5).

Life Reflection:

Think of other examples from the Bible that illustrate how God’s power enabled that person to achieve great things because He gave him or her needed abilities to complete the task?

Can you think of modern day examples of ordinary people who accomplished extraordinary things because God enabled them to fulfill their mission?

Self-esteem is not to be confused with pride; they are different. Self-esteem is an awareness of qualities and abilities that God has built into our lives. Any worth we have comes from Him, for He created us (Psalm 139:13-17). If Satan can rob us of our self-esteem, he can paralyze us so that we do not attempt things for God. His tactic is to convince us our efforts will be worthless, that others will belittle what we do, that we will be embarrassed. Instead of listening to his putdowns, we must claim the promise of II Corinthians 12:9.

“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Also read Isaiah 40:28-31.



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Life Reflection:

Is there a special responsibility or task to which you feel God has called you, but which you feel unqualified to complete?

Have you stepped forward to accept the assignment? Or have you offered excuses?

Life Response:

There are steps we can take to build our self-esteem. We must:

- Acknowledge that our strength comes for God. He enables us.
- Face our problems head-on and stretch beyond our comfort zone by accepting the challenge of new tasks.
- Concentrate on our strengths rather than our weaknesses.
- Surround ourselves with those who are encouragers. Their positive words will cheer us on to keep trying.

Your task in life may be very different from that of others. For some, God's highest calling is to be a good mother, nurturing your children in the ways of God. For others, He may want you to be a beacon of light in the workplace, demonstrating honesty and integrity. Or, your place may be one of relative obscurity, doing behind the scenes organizing of projects at church. He may place you in a neighborhood where you can show love to a lonely widow or give guidance to a troubled teen. Of course, we realize that we each have multiple tasks to perform. God is constantly leading us to different areas of service, most of which are outside the physical church building.

Are you standing at the burning bush, arguing that God has called the wrong person? Or will you have the boldness of the woman of Canaan who recognized her own inabilities but demonstrated faith in God's power to meet her needs? Accept the challenge. Step out in faith to attempt great things for God.

My Prayer:

Dear Lord, there are many times when I do not feel capable of doing the things that I would like to do for You. Often I allow my fears and insecurities to stop me from



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even trying. Help me to realize that if You place a calling upon my life, You will also equip me to fulfill that calling. Let me never forget that Your grace is sufficient for each task that You call me to do. I can do all things through You because You strengthen me.

More Life with God References:

Exodus 3,4
Judges 6
Psalm 139:13-17
Isaiah 40:28-31
Matthew 15:21-28
II Corinthians 12:9-10
Philippians 4:13

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