

His Image, My Image

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I. Introduction.

- A. One of the biggest barriers after coming to Christ is self-perception.
- B. Our image determines everything that we do. That image can either be God honoring or dishonoring.

II. A healthy Biblical self-image.

- A. This is neither a good self-image or a bad self-image.
- B. So often our emotions misguide us.
 - 1. Pilots are trained to know that the truest thing about them is their instruments, not their emotions. Sometimes they cannot tell whether or not they are right side up or not by themselves.
- C. So many people are putting their self-image together with the wrong idea.
 - 1. The best way to put a puzzle together is to look at the box top - the design by the designer.
- D. The right image. (Romans 12:3)
 - 1. One is not to think more highly of himself than he ought, but according to sound judgment.
 - 2. Sound judgment means that the truest thing about you is what God says about you.
 - 3. We know how God sees us through the Bible.
 - 4. Our image affects all our relationships.
- E. What is true of you and me?
 - 1. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ (Romans 8:1), despite what one's feelings might say.
 - 2. The Bible says that you are special.
 - a. This is so because the image of God is within us.
 - 1) It was placed there so that we could relate to Him in a special way.
 - 2) Humans uniquely have the image of God.

3) It is the ability to love, to think, to make moral decisions.

4) You are more special than any beautiful thing you see.

b. This is so because God loves us.

1) As shown through the cross. (John 3:16)

2) As shown through God's initiative. (Jeremiah 31; 1 John 4)

3) It is extensive - everlasting. (John 15:9)

4) It is knowledgeable. (Psalm 139:1-12)

c. This is so because you were created of great value.

1) You are not "nothing". God cares for you greatly. (Matthew 6:36)

2) You are of more value than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-31)

3) Your value is not something you created, but a value derived from God.

4) A buyer determines the value of an item - God exchanged His own Son for us demonstrating our value.

5) Your value to God is Jesus. This leads us to a tremendous humility.

6) The love of God brings us to Him beyond the evidence. The evidence just gets our attention.

d. This is so because you are unique.

1) Out of everyone alive, there is no one like you. Only you could be you.

2) Illustration: a woman who bought herself flowers because she loved who God made her to be.

3. Study Romans 12:3 for sound judgment - the truest thing about you is what God says about you.

4. Sin destroys our self perception.

5. As a consequence of seeing ourselves rightly, we can also see others rightly.

III. Conclusion.

1. Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but according to sound judgment.

2. The truest thing about you is what God has to say about you.

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STUDY GUIDE

Part 1: What do you see?

1. What is sound judgment? What are some poor ways to determine what is sound? Explain.

2. What are the four things that the Scripture says are special about you? Give an illustration of each.

3. Examine two of the following Scripture passages: Jeremiah 31, John 15:9, 1 John 4, Psalm 139:1-12. What aspects of God's love do these passages represent? Are there others outside those that the speaker grouped them with? Make a list.

Part 2: What do you think?

1. Why is the Bible so important in determining our self-perception?

2. How can self-perception be a barrier to your relationship with God and with others?

3. How is Jesus' sacrifice on the cross important in displaying your personal worth? What are the consequences of this?

Part 3: What will you do?

1. What false perceptions about yourself do you carry? How should you respond biblically to these perceptions?

2. How are you unique among God's creation? How are you unique among people? List some of those traits and thank God for creating you as He did.

3. How should understanding God's perception of you shape your perception of others? Are there some specific people whom you need to change your perception of? List some positive qualities about them that exhibit God's goodness.
