

Self Esteem (4)

Ponder: How does my behavior relate to my self esteem?

Scripture: “Go, and sin no more” (John 8:11, NKJV).

Healthy self esteem is rooted in the fact that we are made in the image of God. When we sin, we damage that image, and self esteem suffers as a result. Being forgiven and renewed to His image brings improved self esteem. Now, after being forgiven, we can build healthy self esteem by behaving in ways that harmonize with the revealed will of God.

Think of the sinful woman who moistened Jesus’ feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair (Luke 7:36-50). If she had reverted to the sinful behavior of her past, her self esteem would have plummeted.

The same is true of the woman taken in the act of adultery, which is why Jesus told her to “go, and sin no more” (John 8:11).

Add to the list the formerly incestuous man in Corinth (1 Corinthians 5). When he had repented, Paul urged the Christians to comfort him and reaffirm their love, lest he be swallowed up with excessive sorrow (2 Corinthians 2:7, 8). While their support and love would boost his self esteem, slipping back into his old, sinful ways would bring back the guilt and send his self esteem crashing downward.

Years ago, while I was involved in prison ministry, I knew an inmate we called “Big John.” His name really was John, and he really was BIG! Big John used to get into fights and cuss people out (other inmates as well as officers). Like most of us, he was his own worst enemy. But the more he learned about Jesus and the word of God, the more he wanted to live a better way. When he held his tongue and his temper for several days, he would show up for Bible class with greatly improved self esteem.

Have you put your confident trust in Jesus and obeyed His gospel, thus being renewed to the image of God? If not, do that today – do it NOW! If you have, then grow in your obedience to His will. Enjoy the healthy self esteem that comes as a result.