

YOUTH FEMININE CIRCLE

THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN AND FEMINISM: BUILDING CONFIDENCE & SELF ESTEEM

Self Confidence is probably one of the biggest struggles women have today. Many women suffer from approval addiction, have a poor self image, don't like themselves as a person or simply don't value themselves as a woman. Also, self-esteem is one of those tricky phrases we hear a lot about. We are told it is the mark of a healthy person and we usually will see articles and write ups about self-confidence and self-esteem everywhere we look.



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Low-self esteem and an acute lack of self confidence has become the number one issue plaguing Christian women. It's so funny that despite God's copious assurance that he is delighted over us, most of us can't believe that he really does mean it.

WHAT IS SELF-ESTEEM?

The dictionary defines self-esteem to mean "a feeling of pride or confidence in yourself or in your ability". It could also mean "the quality of being worthy of esteem or respect". It is essentially holding every aspect of yourself in high appreciation.

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CAUSES OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM AND LACK OF CONFIDENCE AMONGST WOMEN?

The reality of the situation is that in the most subtle ways, our culture, family, friends and even our thought process all conspire to undermine our confidence and self-esteem.

- a. Lack of affirmation, encouragement and respect-which are the building blocks of confidence in any human being.
- b. Obsession about weight and physical appearance. We then find ourselves in a world where the motto inadvertently is-"the thinner, the finer", which further causes us to lose confidence and respect for ourselves when we try to meet up with these unrealistic sizes.
- c. Comparing ourselves to others-this is a trap many women fall into and when you do this, you come out after the

comparison, feeling inept and like a failure.

- d. Putting yourself down constantly-some women do not even know how to receive a compliment graciously without thinking that the person complimenting is making a mistake and the compliment cannot be genuine.
- e. Giving in to self-doubt and not believing that you are right and you deserve a thing even when you know you are the most qualified.
- f. Abuse in their childhood or marriage-this is what causes some women to perpetually see themselves as victims and helpless.

IS IT RIGHT TO TAKE PRIDE IN YOURSELF?

Some would argue that it is indeed wrong to take pride in one's self, after all the Bible said in **Proverbs 3:34** that ***"God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble"***

However, we must note that self-confidence and a high sense of self-esteem and self-worth is not the same as pride. A proud person is essentially a vain person. But a person with a high sense of self-esteem is not necessarily proud but is one

YOUTH FEMININE CIRCLE

that appreciates the unwavering love of God and that they are special.

Furthermore, a proud person might base his sense of self worth and confidence in the works of her hands, her achievements, her physical features, appearance and sense of style, her talents, relationship, family, social connection or financial status. However, a woman with a healthy self-esteem and self confidence does not base her sense of self worth on any or all of these things above but on the unwavering love of Christ and how he has demonstrated his love through His death and resurrection.

Why is this? Because she recognizes that all things come from God and she rejoices and takes pride in all the wonderful things he has blessed her with.

HOW DO YOU RECLAIM YOUR SELF CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM?

You have been passive all this while and accepted whatever people say about you. Well, it's time to go on the offensive and regain the confidence God wants for you. Here are a few tips to get started –

Name the Lies and Give Them to God

To do this, you must recognize the falsehoods that have been spoken concerning you and the false names you have been called or that you have believed about yourself. Have you accepted that you are a failure? Have you been called fat, ugly and clumsy by people in the past? Well, people will talk.

Now, make a list of all these negativity. Be very specific. Then, agree with God that this is not how he sees you. Tell Him, "God, I know you made me-and you don't make junk. These lies have got to go. I want to see

myself the way you see me. Please begin the process of changing my mind"

Don't forget that the Holy Bible tells us in **Romans 12: 2** that ***"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will"***. So, dear woman, so what if the world says that size "8" is the in thing, believe me, God made each and every other size just as beautiful as size "8".

Being seen as beautiful starts with seeing yourself as beautiful. Same goes for being seen as smart, intelligent, capable, attractive, and the list goes on and on. Don't forget, it is a woman's confidence in knowing who she is in Christ that makes her stand out.

Replace the Lies with the Truth

Now that you have identified these lies, you need to replace them with the truth. Dear woman, God's word is full of information about your identity and your position as a believer. Do you really know what it means when God says you are:

- ✓ Fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139: 14)
- ✓ Precious to God (Isaiah 43:4)
- ✓ Cared about since your inception (Isaiah 46:3)
- ✓ God's child (John 1:12)
- ✓ Jesus' friend (John 15:15)
- ✓ Chosen by Jesus (John 15:16)
- ✓ Loved dearly by God (John 16:27)
- ✓ Free from condemnation (Romans 8:1)
- ✓ A temple-a dwelling place of God's spirit (1st Corinthians 3:16)
- ✓ Redeemed and forgiven of all your sins (Colossians 1:14)

YOUTH FEMININE CIRCLE

God is delighted over you. You were made in his own image after all, what is there not to love!

Love and Celebrate Yourself

The truth is, God is the only one that can love you unconditionally. The only other person that can do that for you is YOU! No one will appreciate you the way you appreciate yourself or more than you appreciate yourself.

Take time out every day, look in the mirror and appreciate yourself. Reinforce everything good about yourself and in time, you will get to not only believe it, but begin to live it. And never ever compare yourself with anyone. Nobody is like you and no one can ever be like you!

Dear Woman, let God's opinion of you become the only one that really matters because He loves you unconditionally and he desires that you love yourself too.