TOPIC: A TRUE LOVE FOR SELF

A true love for self, based on God's view of you, is an image worth capturing.

KEY POINTS

- Your true self or inner self tells the real story that no photographer can capture. They may capture you in action but they cannot get to the root of who you are, just who you make yourself out to be.
- A true love for self is recognizing where images of you come from; both the image that the world sees, and the one that only you and God know.
- Your outer self represents the group with which you want to affiliate. It's not the entire package.
- Your inner self represents your values, beliefs, ideals, personality, your divine essence, your true nature, and your soul.
- These outer images distort the minds of some individuals and cause them to physically abuse themselves, and/or become addicts to various drugs or promiscuous lifestyles.
- If you present yourself in one way, but actually feel and think in some other way you have a dual personality. When our inner and outer selves contradict each other, our mental peace is disturbed.
- Focusing on what you dislike about yourself creates a distortion of self. This is a false image of who you were made to be.
- The only person who has a perfect image of you is the One who created you…God.
- If you are at odds with God, or have a problem with the image you see when you look in the mirror, take it up with Him. When you do, you will realize that God's image of you reflects an abundance of love.
- God loves us because he created us. You need to love yourself because God created you. God's love for you is unfailing and reaches deeper than anything or anyone else.
- We must love ourselves to the point where we have a sense of identity, a sense of worth and a sense of competence or ability.
- Those who know who they are know that their lives are in God's hands. They rely heavily on God for their very existence. These are individuals who trade self-centered love for Agape love.
- You are so special in God's eyes that Jesus went to Calvary just for you! That's LOVE!
- Someone with a true love for self seeks wisdom (Proverbs 19:8 – to acquire wisdom is to love oneself).
- Loving ourselves means:
  - Not labelling ourselves based on others' opinion of us.
  - Owning our inner and outer beauty and complimenting ourselves without feeling guilty, arrogant, or entitled.
  - Accepting ourselves with the good, the bad and the indifferent.
  - Nurturing ourselves with sufficient rest, exercise, healthy living.
- A person with a true love for self is compassionate, kind, forgiving, confident, purposeful, spiritually open, aware, connected, receptive and growing.
- You cannot value yourself based on the external world, because the world passes away.
- You have a reason for loving yourself and it is rooted in God and His view of you.
- All that we are, all that we have or ever hope to be is because of the LOVE OF CHRIST FOR US.

Key Scriptures:
Psalm139; Matthew 22:39

Discussion Tools

1. If you had the power to change anything about your appearance would you make any changes?
2. It's said that blood is thicker than water. But if you had the power to change anything about your family , would you?
3. Review Psalm 139 together to remind you of how God sees you. What in this scripture do you really like?
4. The Bible tells us we should love our neighbours as ourselves. Do you love yourself enough, or as much as God desires of you?
5. The Bible says: "Be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." What practical steps can we take to stop focussing on the negative, and actually destroy the false images we hold of ourselves?

Discipleship Project Family Connection

In a family devotion this week, discuss:

- What are spiritual gifts? How can they be used (within and without the church)?
- Can you identify your spiritual gift? If so, what is it?
- Why might someone be afraid to use her/his gift?
- How can we support one another to use our gifts effectively?

Notes

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Prayer Time

Lord, I thank You for your unconditional love for me. Help me to develop true self love based on Your view of me, and in turn, love others.

Life Group icebreaker: What do you like most about your physical appearance and personality, respectively?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2016
PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS/COMMENTS:

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