

How do I love me?

Let me count the ways...

“*Everyone knows* that you need to love yourself before you can love others! It’s even biblical!” Statements like this, about the need we all have for self esteem, are common today because, well, *everyone knows*, right? Hey, it’s science, so it must be right. It wasn’t that long ago that the “*everyone knows*” test would have been proof positive that the earth was the center of the universe, or that a good bleeding was just the thing for nearly any illness. Both of these examples also represented cutting-edge science in their day, so our confidence in both science and what everyone knows should thus be buoyed. Anyway, who can argue when the whole world, and even the Church, agree about the need for self esteem?

Did you know:

- There’s a National Association for Self Esteem; their goal is readily found in the welcome on their web site: “The purpose of our organization is to fully integrate self-esteem into the fabric of American society...”
- According to KidsHealth: “If you have good self-esteem, you know that your are smart enough to make your own decisions.”
- According to James Dobson, of Christian Radio’s “Focus on the Family”: “The number one reason listed by women as their cause of depression was Low Self-Esteem. We’d better find out how to GET self esteem!!!” -*What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*.
- Many prisons, for example, have now introduced self-esteem programs to reduce recidivism.
- “It is well-known that lack of self-esteem is a primary cause of the world’s woes, including failure in relationships, financial problems, physical illness, teenage drugs...” - International Self-Esteem Project.

It’s obvious, then, that mankind's problems are all related to self-esteem, right? Isn’t it amazing that none of this came to light until the last hundred years or so? What were people thinking before modern science showed them what was really important? How did people get by before psychologists and psychologists started charging exorbitant sums for fifty-minute hours of their time?

Since this self-esteem teaching is obviously truth, and all truth is God’s truth, as they say, then we should be able to find a great deal of self-esteem related instruction in the Bible. After all, God has said that He supplied us with everything we need to live Godly lives:

2 Peter 1:3

...seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.—NAS

Here is a chart showing where the Bible speaks about things that the world is very interested in today:

Well, that should just about prove my point__

Wait a minute! From this chart it appears that the world and the Bible are in direct opposition on these things! How can that be? This is science, right? Let’s see what Scripture says about these things.

The <u>World</u> Shouts:	The <u>Word</u> Teaches:
You need <u>self-confidence</u>	Phil 3:3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus <u>and put no confidence in the flesh</u> —NAS
You must be <u>self-sufficient</u>	2 Cor 3:5 <u>Not</u> that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but <u>our sufficiency is of God</u> —KJV
You should <u>assert yourself</u>	Luke 9:23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, <u>he must deny himself</u> and take up his cross daily and follow me—NIV
You need to <u>accept yourself</u>	Rom 15:7 Wherefore, <u>accept one another</u> , just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God—NAS
You need to have greater <u>self-esteem</u>	Phil 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you <u>regard one another as more important than himself</u> ; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others—NAS
There are <u>self-help</u> books that can turn you around	Ps 54:4 Behold, <u>God is my helper</u> ; The Lord is the sustainer of my soul.—NAS
You can only <u>depend on yourself</u>	Gal 6:2 <u>Bear one another's burdens</u> , and thus fulfill the law of Christ.—NAS
Improve your <u>self-image</u>	Gal 6:3 For if <u>anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing</u> , he deceives himself.—NAS
It's OK to feel occasional self-pity	James 1:2 <u>Consider it all joy</u> , my brethren, when you encounter various trials—NAS
You must <u>love yourself</u> before you can love others.	1 John 4:10-11 In this is love, <u>not that we loved God, but that He loved us</u> and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, <u>if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another</u> .—NAS
<u>Trust yourself</u>	Prov 3:5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding—NAS

Matthew 16:24	Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.—NAS
Galatians 6:3	For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.— NAS
Proverbs 26:12	Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
Romans 12:3	For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.—NAS
John 15:5	"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.—NAS
Philippians 2:3-4	Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, - NAS
Luke 14:11	"For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted." - NAS
1 Corinthians 1:26-31	For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, 29 that no man should boast before God. 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 31 that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." - NAS
Psalms 36:2	For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much to detect or hate his sin. - NIV
Galatians 5:24-26	Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.—NIV

Scripture is diametrically opposed to modern psychology and psychiatry (even so-called Christian versions). There is no way to get around this without taking the Word out of context or twisting the plain language of Scripture. This “high self-esteem” that is being touted as the cure to all of the world’s social ills, is really old-fashioned pride all dressed up and made pretty by science (so-called). God says:

You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with **humility** toward one another, for **God is opposed to the proud**, but gives grace to the humble. (1 Peter 5:5)

Can anything be more clear? The only way you can miss this is if you refuse to see. Humility, not self-esteem, is what we must seek.

And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Col 3:12)

How can this be? How can the Bible and the world (and medical science!) have such different views of man and his problems?

1 John 5:19

We know that we are of God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.**—NAS

Rev 12:9

And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, **who deceives the whole world**; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.—NAS

1 Tim 6:20-21

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, **avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called**: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.—KJV

2 Tim 3:1-7

3:1 **BUT UNDERSTAND** this, that in the last days will come (set in) perilous times of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear].

2 For people will be lovers of self and [utterly] self-centered, lovers of money and aroused by an inordinate [greedy] desire for wealth, proud and arrogant and contemptuous boasters. They will be abusive (blasphemous, scoffing), disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy and profane.

3[They will be] without natural [human] affection (callous and inhuman), relentless (admitting of no truce or appeasement); [they will be] slanderers (false accusers, troublemakers), intemperate and loose in morals and conduct, uncontrolled and fierce, haters of good.

4[They will be] treacherous [betrayers], rash, [and] inflated with self-conceit. [They will be] lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God.

5 For [although] they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny and reject and are strangers to the power of it [their conduct belies the genuineness of their profession]. Avoid [all] such people [turn away from them].

6 For among them are those who worm their way into homes and captivate silly and weak-natured and spiritually dwarfed women, loaded down with [the burden of their] sins [and easily] swayed and led away by various evil desires and seductive impulses.

7[These weak women will listen to anybody who will teach them]; they are forever inquiring and getting information, but are never able to arrive at a recognition and knowledge of the Truth.
AMP

So... It would seem that the world system is controlled by satanic forces. This being so, is it surprising that, the world teaches the very opposite of Scripture when it comes to how we view ourselves? Still, there are leaders in the Church who teach the same thing as the world's psychologists.

2 Peter 2:1-3

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.—NAS

Oh.

Well, then, what does the Bible say about how we should act?

- Psalm 25:9 He leads the humble in justice,
And He teaches the humble His way.—NAS
- Proverbs 11:2 When pride comes, then comes dishonor,
But with the humble is wisdom.—NAS
- Proverbs 29:23 A man's pride will bring him low,
But a humble spirit will obtain honor.—NAS
- James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.—NAS
- 1 Peter 3:8-9 To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.—NAS
- 1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.—NAS
- Ephesians 4:1-2 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, - NAS
- Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; - NAS
- Colossians 3:12-13 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.—NAS
- James 1:21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.—NAS
- 1 Peter 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.—NAS

Really? We're to be humble, and put others before ourselves? I've heard some people call this "worm theology." (I'm a worm...) How did the prophets and apostles think of themselves?

- David (A Messianic psalm) Ps 22:6
But I am a worm, and not a man,
A reproach of men, and despised by the people.—NAS
- Isaiah Isa 6:5
Then I said,
"Woe is me, for I am ruined!,
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I live among a people of unclean lips;,
For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." - NAS
- Paul 1 Tim 1:15-17
It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.—NAS
- Peter Luke 5:8
8 But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! - NAS

Still, don't these people say we *need* self esteem?

So what can we say? That the world, and science, can be in direct opposition to Scripture? Sure, I can buy that, but what about Christian ministries? Are there any examples of Christian Psychologists contradicting the Word?

Christian Psychology	The Word
<p>“I have attempted in this book to present an <i>integration of sound theology with valid psychiatric knowledge</i> into concepts known as Christian Psychiatry.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Christian Psychiatry—Minirth</i></p>	<p>2 Tim 4:2-3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.</p> <p>2 Cor 6:14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?</p>
<p>“This theory states that all who need psychiatric treatment suffer from failing to fulfill <i>two basic needs in life—love and self-worth.</i>”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Christian Psychiatry—Minirth</i></p>	<p>Luke 10:27 And he answered and said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." (Nowhere does it say LOVE YOURSELF!)</p>
<p>“The Great Commandment given by Christ in Luke 10:25-27 includes loving God, others, and self (and expression of godly self-worth).”</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Counseling and the Nature of Man—Minirth</i></p>	<p>Eph 5:28-29 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, (Note: we're told to love our wives as we ALREADY love ourselves!!)</p>

So, what is the problem with man, if it's not a lack of self-esteem?

James 3:14-18

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.—NAS

James 1:14-15

But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.—NAS

Gen 3:6

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.—NAS

Isa 47:10

"And you felt secure in your wickedness and said,
'No one sees me,'
Your wisdom and your knowledge, they have deluded you;
For you have said in your heart,
'I am, and there is no one besides me.' - NAS

Self-centeredness and excess self-esteem are at the very root of sin. No wonder Satan would like us to think they're good for us!!!