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## But Do You Really Like Yourself?

**Romans 7:24: (NASB) *Wretched man that I am!  
Who will set me free from the body of this death?***



Most of us really don't like ourselves. We are too tall or short, too fat or thin, too reserved or too lazy. We don't like ourselves because we don't think before we act or we think too much and don't act at all. We don't like ourselves because we are not attractive enough or we don't have enough charisma or we are too lonely or we run away from our problems. Maybe we think we are too forward and forceful or too confrontational, or maybe we think we are too analytical, too self-conscious or just plain wimpy! Whatever the case, we seem to be unhappy with ourselves, which brings us to the question - as a Christian aren't we supposed to not like ourselves so we can be more like Jesus? So, shouldn't we be happy in our unhappiness? Let's stop already! Too many questions - let's find some answers!

So, why wouldn't we like ourselves? Plenty of reasons - here are just five, and they are all scriptural.

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #1: I am flawed! Psalm 51:5**

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #2: I have made many bad choices based upon my sinful flesh and desires! Ephesians 2:1-3**

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #3: I don't always do what is right, even when I know better! Romans 7:14-15**

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #4: Even when I do what is right, it seems to end up bad anyway! Isaiah 64:6-7**

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #5: I cannot escape from the mire of this pit of my own sin! Romans 3:9-13**

The only thing we can do now is try and see our dilemma from a different perspective. Here again we often run into trouble, as the alternate perspectives we are likely to search out and choose from are just as messed up as we already are! We need to think bigger and think higher!

John 3:16-17: This is one of the most often-quoted Scriptures of the Bible. It very specifically says that God loves His human creation, so much so that He sent His son, Jesus. That should tell us something - He loves us anyway. We know that, but do we really KNOW that? Why not begin to look at ourselves through God's own eyes?

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #1: I am flawed! Psalm 51:5**

God sees our sin much more fully than we do but recognizes our sin in the context of His love. He not only provides us needed accountability, He provides us a pathway back to Him:

Psalm 51:6-13: David spoke these words after he had committed some pretty terrible sins and brought his guilt before God. But in these verses he began to realize his sins were being viewed through the eyes of love, compassion and mercy - as well as justice.

*Make me know wisdom* - he is capable of knowing it if God helps him.

*Purify me, and I shall be clean* - he is capable of being clean if he relies on God.

David showed us all the potential within him, even after committing awful sins. The key about David and those sins is he was running away from them. He decided he was in the wrong place and started to see his own life through God's eyes.

*Do not cast me away from Your presence...Restore to me the joy of Your salvation* - To paraphrase David's prayer: "God, I love you and know I am valuable in Your eyes, but I lost that value because of my actions. Help me get the value back that I know you see in me. Help me grow from my mistakes. I am flawed and know it, but I know you see beyond the flaw."

This is a brilliant way to begin to address the issues of our lives. God sees our potential and encourages us to come up higher.

**When we do bring our flawed selves back to God, it is a glorious time, as we can learn to live in His love: Psalm 103:1-5: David found a way to see from God's perspective and it was a**



cause for praise. David understood it is that perspective that could rule his life. This is a huge attitude change!

How can I better see myself through the eyes of God? How can I see what He sees? We can consciously work to make an attitude change, but if we do not keep it changed, it will reverse. This is a challenge.

What gives us the right to not like ourselves if God loves us? Remember, God sees our flaws much more clearly than we do, yet He loves us anyway.

**“LEARNING TO LIKE MYSELF” PRINCIPLE #1: My communication doesn’t necessarily define me but it does reveal how I am willing to be defined.**

When we communicate with others, we can speak in glowing terms or be insulting or harsh. Most of the time, because we do not like ourselves, we say, “I am a terrible communicator. I say negative things. I am bad.” We do not have to have that communication define our lives. But unless we do something about it, it will - we have a choice. Our communication reveals what we are leaning on.

**Here is what to lean on for positive, strong communication:** Colossians 3:12-17: *Whatever you do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.* - If we have the Lord Jesus in our hearts and minds, it will elevate our communication even when we are not talking about spiritual things.

**Do you think that God is not aware of your bad choices? How does He see you in spite of them?** James 1:17-18: God is the Father and Father knows best! He is trustworthy. He gives us truth for the benefit of all. (Why would He give you truth for the benefit of all if you are just trash? Give God credit in His love for you.)

When you are not liking yourself, which voice in your head do you listen to - the gnawing, nagging, ragged voice of your own person that says you are just worthless? Or, do you hear the voice of God saying, “I love you, my child. I know you are broken, but that is why I am here in your life.”

**“I Don’t Like Me” Reason #2: I have made many bad choices based upon my sinful flesh and desires!** Ephesians 2:1-3

Regarding our bad choices, we cannot take away what has already happened - our personal history is there to stay. Our personal history can be destructive, especially if we view it as our personal present and personal future.

Every time we use a Scripture that talks about how bad we are, we will go to the context to find out how good God is in correcting that.

**So, how does God view our personal history?** Ephesians 2:4-10: God loved us *even when we were dead in our transgressions.*

Whose opinion, whose observation, whose assessment of your personal history is most reliable? God’s, of course. Do we believe it intellectually or actually trust it is true?

It is okay to not like parts of ourselves - this is appropriate when we are not doing things right, kind or loving. But God sees our character as potential ground for goodness and godliness, so we need to learn to love ourselves in spite of not liking what we do. That is part of the balance. We have to rely on God’s eyes and not our own.

Psalms 103:6-11: We cannot comprehend the size and scope of God’s love. God’s grace, benevolence and plan are bigger than you or I can imagine! Why *wouldn’t* we trust His view of our broken selves?

**“LEARNING TO LIKE MYSELF” PRINCIPLE #2: My desires do not necessarily define me but they do reveal what I look to to drive me.**

Philippians 4:4-7: Drive your desires towards God’s mind and God’s way. He knows it is difficult which is why He gives us so many things we can rely on.

Comparing ourselves to others (and never measuring up) is one of Satan’s greatest tools of lies. Our comparisons should encourage us, for example: “The Apostle Peter made a lot of mistakes but look how strong he became. I can learn from his experiences.”



We do not want to let the mess of our lives override the love of God in our lives. God loves us in spite of our sin and in spite of our difficulties.

Would the God of the Universe not understand us? We need to rethink the eyes we see ourselves with and the voice we listen to.

**God appreciates our frailty and has made allowance for it. Do you do the same for yourself?** 1 Corinthians 12:20-23: There is great wisdom in the structure of the body of Christ. Different members do different things, and some have more honor than others. But so what? They all have value and are a part of something bigger.

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #3: I don't always do what is right, even when I know better!**  
Romans 7:14-15

We are walking contradictions! We see, we know and we want God's will but we so often do less, or act contrary or even defy it.

**We see this as a reason to beat ourselves down, but how does God see it?** Romans 7:21-25  
**God sees our flaming contradictions through the covering of Jesus. What is His reaction?**  
Psalms 103:12-14: The depth of God's compassion is immeasurable! Shouldn't we love those who He loves? He loves YOU.

**"LEARNING TO LIKE MYSELF" PRINCIPLE #3: My actions do not necessarily define me but they do reveal my direction in life.**

1 Corinthians 6:9,11: God sees us as being made right through Jesus. Surely we could begin to see what He sees!

We are weak and lack in discipline and focus. We even hold onto things that may not be right in God's eyes, yet He sees the depth of our heart above and beyond all of these things!

Romans 14:5-8

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #4: Even when I do what is right, it seems to end up bad anyway!**  
Isaiah 64:6-7

**God sees value, He sees worth, He sees potential - He sees what we can be in His hands:**  
Isaiah 64:8: (NASB) *But now, O LORD, You are our Father, we are the clay, and You our potter; And all of us are the work of Your hand.* The way we see ourselves dictates in whose hands we place our lives.

**Do you place your life in God's hands or Satan's?** Psalms 103:15-18: God's thoughts and plans are based on eternity - shouldn't we rely on His judgment of us? Temporary vs. eternity? Flawed thinking vs. perfect thinking? Creator vs. created?

**"LEARNING TO LIKE MYSELF" PRINCIPLE #4: My works - my accomplishments do not define me but they do reveal how much I have let Christ live in me.**

**Are we making accomplishments in lifting others to higher spiritual levels?**  
Galatians 2:16, 19-21

The Law served a great purpose, but its real purpose was to bring us to the next step. Our lives have to be in Christ so we can become acceptable to God. We are acceptable not because of our own doing; rather, because Christ "covers" us with his righteousness. God does not call us in order to cover a piece of dirt with Christ, but He calls us because of the "you" He wants to draw out.

*It is no longer I who live* - my little human life has been redirected away from myself and to Christ alone.

What if we look at this from a child's perspective? The introduction to this program was inspired by the children's book, "Old Hat New Hat," by Stan and Jan Berenstain. It is a simple story. A little bear wants a new hat because his old hat is broken down. His old hat represents himself - who he is. So, he goes to the hat store to try hats on:

*"This one is too flat. Too tall. Too loose. Too tight. Too heavy. Too light. Too red. Too dotted. Too blue. Too spotty. Too fancy. Too frilly. Too shiny. Too silly. Too beady. Too bumpy. Too leafy. Too lumpy. Too twisty. Too twirly. Too wrinkly. Too curly..."*



Then he says, "Wait!" And he puts his old hat on and says, "Just right." He was trying to look like something he was not.

The lesson is not to change the way you look, because God is not interested in the hat you put on; rather, He looks at the heart you have within you. Be the best "you" as God sees you.

**So, are we doomed to trudge through life - trying, failing and then finally dying?**

**Doomed? No! Privileged? Yes! God absolutely loves us and absolutely has our highest welfare in mind - after all, He IS our Father! Hebrews 12:4-7**

**"I Don't Like Me" Reason #5: I cannot escape from the mire of this pit of my own sin! Romans 3:9-13**

It is not the mire of our own sinful nature that keeps us captive; it is the mire of our old habits of not finishing a thought properly that holds us back.

Jesus has released us from sin so what we need to do is trust in that release as we see the WHOLE picture in Scripture of how God sees us!

**Jesus can lift us out of the mire of sin: Romans 3:23-28: The justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus** - when you are justified, you are made right in God's eyes. We are not actually "right" while still in our sinful state, which is why we need the "covering" of Christ's righteousness. When God sees us through the covering of Jesus, He sees our potential. This is just how we look at our own children when they make mistakes - we look at their potential.

Think of the reasons why you do not like yourself and replace those reasons with how God views you. God's hands can mold us into something of incredible value. We start out as a lump of clay and end up a beautiful vessel.

**To live above our dislike for ourselves is to FINALLY breathe the fresh air of God's mighty plan! Psalms 103:19-22**

**"LEARNING TO LIKE MYSELF" PRINCIPLE #5: Our thoughts do not necessarily define us but they do reveal where our default thinking goes.**

We choose what we set our minds upon.

Philippians 4:8-9: We must get out of the routine of, "I don't like myself; I'm a failure," and change that thinking to, "I love myself because I know unequivocally that God not only loves me, but He works with me and cares for me and has a plan for me. I can be an asset in the hands of God." A lump of clay is not an asset, but the finished vessel is. We need to review Psalms 103 often! God wants you to develop into something bigger and better - your potential. That is how we need to see ourselves. God has provided many inspirations for us to grab hold of. Learn to see ourselves through God's eyes and put ourselves in God's hands so His plan can be accomplished.

***So, but do you really like yourself?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!***