

## A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT March 2008 "Loving Yourself"

Have you ever asked yourself "Who am I?" Are you the way you look, the way you act, are you a product of your past, are you who people say you are, are you what your circumstances are? If you made two lists- what you like about yourself, and what you don't like about yourself- which list would be longer?

Every one of us desires a life of significance, direction, purpose and fulfillment. All of this comes ONLY in and through Jesus Christ. He is IN YOU- ever loving, ever working, believing and desiring only the best for you.

Perhaps we need to change the way we look at and feel about ourselves. Christ is in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27 NIV) and He is called the altogether lovely one (Song of Solomon 5:16 NIV). Scripture tells us we are destined "to be molded into the image of His Son [and share inwardly His likeness...]" (Romans 8:29 AMP). HE is beautiful and HE wants to be seen in us!

There are at least eight New Testament references that all say the same thing: we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are to love ourselves- in a balanced and healthy way and respond to His love. We must love what He loves, and believe by choice (not our feelings or emotions) that He loves us. Loving yourself (because He loves you!) is a good beginning to loving others. Since it is a commandment- we would do well to examine Scriptures that declare His love for us. Everything about you is special and precious to Him. He knew you before you were formed in your mother's womb (Psalm 139:13-16) and you were separated and approved as His chosen instrument (Jeremiah 1:5 AMP). You are of great value and worth to Him. Pastor Randy Morrison said "The value of something is determined by the maker of it." He made you! We need His love to live and grow. Isaiah 62:4 NASB says "The Lord delights in you." Zephaniah 3:17 RSV reveals more of His love for you. "The Lord, your God is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will renew you in His love." The Living Bible says "He will rejoice over you in great gladness; He will love you and not accuse you. Is that a joyous choir I hear? No, it is the Lord himself exulting over you with a happy song." The Word says "for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully." (1Peter 5:7 AMP).

*"God considers all of us exquisite- not perfect, but chosen through His loving eyes- as we work hard to overcome our deficiencies. What a friend we have in Jesus, what an exquisite friend."*  
(Patsy Clairmont, in I Love Being a Woman.)

Perhaps it is hard to believe He loves you and you wonder how He could. There is a higher realm than our behavior, our past and our choices. We are His and our lives are more than what we think about ourselves and what we do. His approval is based on "whose" we are- and because He is love- He has already decided about us. He has made up His mind- we are the objects of His love- His love unfailing and everlasting. We must LET HIM LOVE US! Think about His love for you – meditate on, accept, believe and rejoice in His love. Confess His love for you over and over until your heart knows it.

We are a "work in progress". We do need to change, to cooperate with the Lord, to let go of whatever is not pleasing to Him. If we are condemned, or fearful of Him, or think He disapproves

of us or is mad at us- we need Him and a revelation of His love. He is an excellent parent! Just as we are with our children- we don't always like what they do- but we always love them- so it is with the Lord. He will correct us, and love us into wholeness. He even promises to give us beauty for the "ashes" of our lives (Isaiah 61:3).

*"Because God is love, He cannot keep from showing it, even if He sometimes opts to demonstrate it through discipline. He loves us through blessing, answered prayer, loving chastisement, constant care, intervention, and much more"* (Beth Moore in Breaking Free).

Man does look on the outward but as Scripture says God looks at the heart. There is not one of us that does not want to please God, to love and serve Him always. He looks at our heart, hears our heart cries, and is making us what He wants us to be. Our hearts are becoming His heart-sensitive, tender, and compassionate. "Take delight in the beauty of your feminine design and bask in the understanding that you are truly loved by God" (Patsy Clairmont, I Love Being a Woman).

We are created for His pleasure (Revelation 4:11 KJV). Song of Solomon 2:16 LB says "My beloved is mine and I am his." Verse 7:10 KJV in the Song of Solomon says "I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me." What a wonderful God- who loved us first and continues to love us!

Ecclesiastes 3:11 says "He has made everything beautiful in its time..." In the Song of Songs it says "Behold, YOU are beautiful my love, behold, you are beautiful!" This is the Lord talking to His beloved- us!

Beauty is more than skin deep. Although the beauty of the Lord can and is seen in us women as He shines through us (there is a "glow"), there is something inside that is also beautiful. The Word says "Be beautiful inside, in your hearts, with the lasting charm of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious to God" (1 Peter 3:4 LB). Kindness, goodness, gentleness and the other fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23) are all beautiful in us and through us as we yield to the Lord and develop them. Even our character and the things that make us US can reflect the beauty of the Lord.

All that you are- and are becoming- brings glory to the Lord. Rejoice in the One who loves you! His love never fails.

Great blessings be yours today-



Toni Quinn  
For His Glory Women's Ministry

"If you are a woman,  
rejoice at your design.  
Your image has been fashioned  
with your future in His mind."

Patsy Clairmont, I Love Being a Woman

**"And let the loveliness of our Lord,  
our God, rest on us, confirming the  
work that we do. Oh, yes.  
Affirm the work that we do!"**

Psalm 90:7 The Message