

Scriptures and Doctrine :: John 3:30

John 3:30 - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/11/8 22:02

D.L. Moody once quoted Dr. Bonar, saying, "Dr. Bonar once said that he could tell when a Christian was growing. In proportion to his growth in grace he would elevate his Master, talk less of what he himself was doing, and become smaller and smaller in his own esteem, until, like the morning star, he faded away before the rising sun."

John 3:30 says, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

The world has many self-help books out and places so much value on the self. The world values high self-esteem and confidence, high self-worth and self-image. Pride is paramount, and you can only be successful in the world if you are confident and ambitious and believe in yourself. You must believe in yourself to be successful in the world. How many times have we seen or heard the "motivating" phrase, "Believe in yourself!" How has it slipped by our radar as a concept that is obviously against God?

I have also noticed many Christians trying to differentiate between self-image and self-worth and self-esteem. I've been told it's okay to have high self-esteem, but not self-worth or a good self-image. Or it's okay to be confident in yourself, but just don't get prideful.

I've heard Christians say you need to have a lot of confidence and self-esteem, but just make sure you're very humble. What is this compromise? Can we sincerely lie to ourselves? What subtle conformity with the world are we buying into? we are nothing. Absolutely nothing. Our confidence should be in Christ and we should esteem Him and Him alone. Have we forgotten that we are worthless and wretched sinners, unable to do a single solitary miniscule thing for ourselves?

What worth can you put on a useless pile of flesh? What worth is there to something that CAN'T be independent because not only do we physically need nourishment to survive, but we are still dead until we are spiritually fed as well?

HE must increase...why would I want to raise myself at all to any level above nothing? Even being nothing is too much compared to the everything that He is.

For shame that we let Satan slowly and subtly affect our thinking, placing value on ourselves AT ALL.

Isn't that what made him fall? Pride and self-worth?

Re: John 3:30 - posted by todd, on: 2003/11/9 0:04

Mary,

I think that in a sense you are right. But you make it sound as if Jesus died for nothing.

We are but dust (at least our flesh is), but in God's eyes we are extremely valuable and precious. Our soul is worth more than everything in the world. I think that realizing the truth about how God sees you will give you more self-worth than anything else can. And I think that this kind of self-worth, flowing from this source, is very healthy.

God didn't die for nothing, and we are not nothing. God did not send His only Son to die a torturous death for nothing. For eternity Jesus will bear the scars He took for us. We were worth it to God.

John the Baptist told the people, "One is coming who is mightier than I," obviously implying that he himself was very mighty, and he knew it. John knew who he was. He was confident but not arrogant. Meek but not weak.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/11/9 0:43

Quote:

-----What is this compromise? Can we sincerely lie to ourselves? What subtle conformity with the world are we buying into?  
-----

Mary, I have to agree with you. I thought once that I was something without Christ. I acted with pride and arrogance having haughty looks. When I used to live in my past life as a drug dealer and wanna be gangster, I acted as if I owned the road I walked on (*\*I am praying about possibly sharing my full-testimony on the forums in the near future!*). But it was not reality, God is reality and walking humbly before him is the road to reality.

I really feel that the closer people get to Christ the more humble they are! I really enjoy reading Robert Murray M'Cheyne

who in his short life came very close to the daily presence of Christ. He said: A man is what he is on his knees before God, and *nothing more*. All of creation (angels, animals, humans) are nothing before God, God is life and sustains all creation by His own Spirit.

**Isaiah 40:6-8 (kjv)** - The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodliness thereof *is* as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne also once said: 'For every look at self, take ten looks at Christ.' I think that is proper self-esteem, put the emphasis on Christ, 'be followers of God.'

**Ephesians 4:1-2 (kjv)** - I Therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

**Psalms 37:11 (kjv)** - But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

**Matthew 5:5 (kjv)** - Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth

"O for true unfeigned humility," cried M'Cheyne. "I do not know half of my pride." So M'Cheyne commented of one particular Sunday—"a day of much danger from flattery and pride."

Quote:  
-----God didn't die for nothing, and we are not nothing. God did not send His only Son to die a torturous death for nothing. For eternity Jesus will bear the scars He took for us. We were worth it to God.  
-----

Todd, that is a great emphasis that we can never cease to meditate on, Jesus did pay a price for us and he bears those marks for eternity! What an amazing thought.

Quote:  
-----John the Baptist told the people, "One is coming who is mightier than I," obviously implying that he himself was very mighty, and he knew it. John knew who he was. He was confident but not arrogant. Meek but not weak.  
-----

Our confidence needs to be in the Lord not in ourselves, If we are meek and allow God to control and protect us we will inherit the land. Our strength needs to be in God.

**Matthew 11:11 (kjv)** - Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is great than he.

I don't fully understand what Jesus means here but one thing I do know is that we have to look at ourselves from God's perspective from kingdom perspectives. 'the humble will be exalted and the exalted humbled'.

This is a personal favorite:

**Micah 6:8 (kjv)** - He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

**Re: - posted by Chosen7Stone (), on: 2003/11/9 14:55**

Todd, I agree with a lot of what you said, but I guess what I'm trying to say is that it's a matter of perspective. You said...

Quote:  
-----I think that in a sense you are right. But you make it sound as if Jesus died for nothing.  
-----

and then continued, explaining...

Quote:  
-----We are but dust (at least our flesh is), but in God's eyes we are extremely valuable and precious.  
-----

I definitely know that I am valuable to God, precious to Him, and loved enormously by Him. But in terms of perspective, I believe as Christians we must realize and keep in mind how incredibly undeserved all of this is. We are valued by God, but should not value ourselves. I still don't think I'm doing a good job explaining myself... God has made the useless u

seful, He has made the unworthy worthy, He has made the unrighteous righteous. My righteousness is not mine at all, but that of Christ shining through me.

I pray that we would be like the moon, not giving off any light of its own, but reflecting that of the Son for all to see.

You also said,

Quote:  
-----John the Baptist told the people, "One is coming who is mightier than I," obviously implying that he himself was very mighty, and he knew it. John knew who he was. He was confident but not arrogant. Meek but not weak.  
-----

John was speaking to his followers when he said this. They had not met Christ yet, so John was "the man" to them. In saying that there is one who is coming who is "mightier than I," he was using himself as a benchmark so that they would understand better. He wasn't saying that he was mighty, but he knew that he was held in very high regard by his followers.

A family preparing to vacation in New York during Christmas time might tell their very small child that the Christmas tree they're going to see in New York is bigger than the one they have in their home. To the child, the Christmas tree in their home is huge! Does it mean it's necessarily a big tree? Not really.

**Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2003/11/9 16:47**

Quote:  
-----(\*I am praying about possibly sharing my full-testimony on the forums in the near future!)

Let me add my prayers brother. If the Lord leads you to do so. It is a powerful living example of what Jesus can, will and has done. To show others the power of the gospel. Living epistles.

Being that I just lost my cousin Friday and had given witness to him a month prior, told him of my own testimony being here as well as others...It may be the one thing that saved his soul. I don't know for sure and that bothers me, yet I have a very strange assurance (and a scripture the Lord gave me) that he is in His care. Hopefully more will be revealed in the coming days as the process unfolds.

I also hope this is taken in the right way.

Only the Lord and you know what is necessary or expedient. But personally, I would love to hear it as I also love to hear everyone's testimony's past and present. What greater thing to behold than a transformed life?!

**Re: this poor man prayed and the LORD heard him. - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/11/10 10:29**

As others have already commented, God did not send His Son for us because we were 'worth it' but because He 'loved us'. Paul's testimony has the same note 'Jesus Christ, who loved me and gave Himself for me'.

I like to force modern idioms into Bible language. Perhaps someone will do the translations for me? Could someone please translate 'self-worth' into Bible-ese? And how about 'self-image'. I don't want to pre-judge but I think it will be difficult, simply because there is no Bible equivalent. That ought to sound the warning bells for us, (if all those 'selves' didn't already have them ringing).

These perceptions, including, 'self' itself come from modern psychology. Psychology diagnoses the condition with words of its own invention and then presents itself as the remedy. A neat bit of marketing, isn't it? If we ask Bible questions we will get Bible answers. If we ask psychological questions we will get psychological answers. I know where I shall put my trust.

But behind the psychological format of the question I can see the genuine problem. How should we regard ourselves? There is a verse which often comes to my mind... Isaiah 41:14 "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel". I originated in dust and much of my life is spent in dust, but the Creator has addressed me by name and declared Himself to be my Redeemer; that alone makes me significant.

I must keep both of these complementary truths in view at the same time. If I focus on the 'worm theology' I shall live my life without purpose or hope. If I concentrate on the 'Israel theology' (God's Man) I may too quickly forget my ori

gins.  
This is, at one and the same time, my confession and my boast... "this poor man prayed, and the Lord heard him". (Ps 34)

**Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/9 15:36**

Hi Chosen7Stone,

Just my thoughts. As the Lord leads me and I follow, stumbling along the way, I die a little more each day. He consumes more and more of my thoughts during the day. As I see Him carrying on His work around and in me, I have less time to think about me. I meditate more on Him.

I do not have to be reminded that God is real and that He loves me, because His Holy Spirit is at work. The sealing of the Holy Spirit is not only doctrinal or an intellectual thought, I experience Him, through His word, through the commands that He speaks to me, and through the people and the situations I find myself in.

I know of a treasure that surpasses anything the world has to offer. He is turning me into His bondservant.

abiding in Christ  
Jeff

**Re: - posted by almondBranch (), on: 2003/12/9 22:19**

Quote:  
-----Could someone please translate 'self-worth' into Bible-ese?  
-----

I am happy enough to go along with John; "the disciple whom Jesus loved"

*I am so glad that Jesus loved me, Jesus loved even me*

That is what we are so aware of when we first are apprehended by God, "wow, God loves me" a bit later on perhaps we get the feeling that he is fond of us for our good theology or our great compassion.

But to know that God loves me as I love my children is enough self image for me. To know that his love, coming from the One who is love, far surpasses that which I have for my children is mind boggling (or as Paul would say, it passeth knowledge) :-D

**Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/10 13:24**

My Lord and Savior enables me to love Him.

in Christ,  
Jeff

**Re: spiritual midgets - posted by pfr94 (), on: 2004/2/3 19:19**

Mary, I think that we have messed up the idea of he must increase and I must decrease. We call great men and women of the faith 'spiritual giants.' But are they truly that? I think that our perspective is all wrong. I think that we need to look at great men and women of the faith as spiritual midgets. When God is great and He is seen, no longer the person, he has increased and they have decreased. They are midgets. They are infinitesimally small and God has become huge. I want it to be said of me one day that I was a spiritual midget.

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2004/2/3 20:15**

Quote:

-----i want it to be said of me one day that i was a spiritual midget.  
-----

I feel our stature may be only be considered that of a midget because we are found on our knees. Thats where we derive our strength from.

"You must GO forward on your knees."

-J. Hudson Taylor

"Let us advance upon our knees."

-Joseph Neesima

**Re: - posted by Alexis (), on: 2004/2/4 3:11**

I always find it hard to understand how God's 'reward system' works in heaven.

Since anything I do through the flesh whether good works or bad works is enmity to God and everything I do through the Spirit is of His doing then what will I receive reward for?

To put it differently, everything I do which is of any use to God, it's Him who does it anyway.

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2004/2/4 3:32**

Quote:

-----I always find it hard to understand how God's 'reward system' works in heaven.  
-----

just listen to this complimation:

(<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid3639>) Crowns (compilation)

**Re: - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/2/4 5:00**

pfr24,

I heartily agree with you. I have spoken about "spiritual giants" before. I suppose those are ones who God has raised up to point to HIM- without their knowledge of it really being done. We can only be used of Him when we are bringing attention to Him only and not ourselves and our abilities.

I really believe those who were "quiet" and humble in their ways are probably the ones who bring the most glory to the Lord because there is nothing of themselves showing. If any good thing comes about from them- it is only by God's good grace and strength.

If we are really becoming less of ourselves and more of Him- which is our/His whole goal- then we must let Him lead us in any way He sees fit. If this is being brought into hiding for some reason, or being brought low, or whatever- it will be pointing to Christ and not our "selves". It is very hard for someone who is in the "spotlight" or loud and boisterous, to be pointing to Jesus alone and not bring attention to "self".

This really makes me think.

In Him, Chanin

**Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2004/2/4 5:15**

On the issue of self-image, I find the books by some Christian teachers/counsellors quite helpful:

"How People Grow" by Cloud and Townsend

"Inside Out" by Larry Crabb

In my view, a healthy self-image from a Christian perspective means on the one hand, recognising that we are nothing but dust apart from God (John 15:5); and on the other hand, that we are God's beloved and chosen one, precious in his eyes (Psalms 8:4-8). It also means that we should derive our worth and value not from any other human (including ourselves), but from God only. In God the father, there is full acceptance and affirmation.

**Re: John 3:30 - posted by eagleswings (), on: 2004/2/4 5:22**

by Chosen7Stone on 2003/11/8

"D.L. Moody once quoted Dr. Bonar, saying, "Dr. Bonar once said that he could tell when a Christian was growing. In proportion to his growth in grace he would elevate his Master, talk less of what he himself was doing, and become smaller and smaller in his own esteem, until, like the morning star, he faded away before the rising sun."

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"....I've heard Christians say you need to have a lot of confidence and self-esteem, but just make sure you're very humble."

What is this compromise? Can we sincerely lie to ourselves? What subtle conformity with the world are we buying into?"

Mary,

I just saw your original post. "Amen", sister.

Roger

**Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/2/4 5:25**

This might be timely:

*Heb 6:10 For God is not unrighteous, so as to forget your work and the labor of love which you showed toward his name, in that you served the saints, and still do serve them. Heb 6:11 We desire that each one of you may show the same diligence to the fullness of hope even to the end, Heb 6:12 that you won't be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherited the promises.*

**Re: - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/2/4 5:40**

I have come from a background of self-help book (Christian and non) and my Mom is still very caught up in that. I have come away from that where as my mom has not, and refuses to because it makes her feel better about herself and her "stuff". Because of this- she is at a place where she refuses to "Surrender" completely to God everything in her life. She is still hanging on to those "rights". Consequently she is very depressed and in denial of much that is wrong in her life.

I think that the John 3:30 verse and the subject of Surrender and Obedience all go hand in hand- which is why I like to discuss, talk about, and focus on them. In essence they all mean to be obedient to God and lay everything of ourselves at His feet. Our rights, our dreams, our wants, our bodies, our minds.

Those are all things of our "selves" which should decrease- and in turn they will be replaced by more of Himself-His right

to do with us as He wishes, His desires, His wants, His will.

I will never get tired of going over this because it is so vital to the Christian life. That is the Christian life and many people fail to recognize it.

It's not about us in any way- it's all about Him. We are just His vessels to be used for His glory - and we get the privilege of going along for the ride. :-D

In Him, Chanin

**Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/2/4 7:02**

:oops:

**Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2004/2/4 7:08**

For those who follow Christ, He will replace us with His life. As Paris Reidhead declared in Ten Shekels sermon, Our hearts should cry out, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessings!" Revelation 5:12

We who cry out are His reward. We won't have any desire to think about anything else.

Also, Thankyou Gregg for the compilations, ie Revival Hymn. I have started to share them with others in the church. I gave one to a new family in the church that just moved from Texas. I found out that they attended the prayer meetings held by Leonard Ravenhill. God's at work.

In Christ

Jeff

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2004/2/4 7:21**

Quote:  
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Thats awesome! Praise God. :-D