Christ-Centered Self-Worth
Part 2 of 3

This article on Christ-Centered self-worth will focus on how our view of others impacts self-worth. The goal will be for us to look at how God instructs us to view others and how that instruction can impact how we view ourselves. It is important not to have a view of others that is higher or lower than what the Bible instructs us to have. Scripture gives us clear instruction not to look down on others in Philippians 2:3, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” We also know that scripture clearly encourages us to know and understand that men are not to be worshiped or valued because of their possessions. (Acts 14:12-15, James 2:2-4)

The graphic below illustrates three ways to view others.

Men and women have always struggled with how to appropriately view their fellow man and we can easily fall into viewing others higher or lower than we ought. To help us rightly view others we must rightly understand that we all sin (make mistakes, disappoint God) from time to time and do not live perfect lives. We are all in need of a savior. When we remember this truth, we can conclude that we all need God. We are also then in a much better position to humbly acknowledge that the source of our worth comes from Jesus Christ, alone, and the Lord working in us. It is far too easy to look at others’ sin and measure ourselves against them. This leads to either concluding we are much better or much worse than they are. When we do this, we have begun the journey of viewing others wrongly and will inevitably come to unbiblical conclusions about how to view others. The Bible clearly warns us not to compare ourselves with others in II Corinthians 10:12 “For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.”

When we become overly focused on what others say or think about us, this can quickly lead to either fear or pride. Consider the following questions:

• How much importance do you place on others opinions of you?
• What do you desire from others?
• How do you receive counsel from others?
• How much is your interaction with someone affected by their position/status?
• What is your first thought when someone who looks different than you walks in the door?

When we elevate others too high, their opinions or what we think their opinion might be begins to rule our thoughts and behaviors. This shifts our focus from what the scripture says about how God views us as His people and how He desires us to conduct our lives to focusing on what others think or want from us. When others think highly of us, we feel good about who we are and when others think negatively of us, we see ourselves negatively. This then causes us to constantly seek approval from others rather than looking to God for instruction in daily
living. Proverbs 29:25 tells us, “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.” Ultimately, when we elevate man’s opinion too high, we become more fearful of man than God.

When we devalue others, we elevate ourselves over others. This inevitably leads to pride. Consider the following passage from Luke 18:10-14, “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” As we can read from this passage, pride leads to finding faults in others, denying faults in ourselves, and an inflated view of self. These are clearly not scriptural. Viewing others lower than self will result in our self-worth being built upon decreasing other’s value and worth so that you are elevated above them. This is clearly not biblical and will inevitably collapse.

To rightly view others means to acknowledge that none of us are perfect and to acknowledge that God has placed great worth on those whom are His own. Others like you have worth because God has given us worth. This is not because we are worthy but because God is gracious and helps us see that others have worth and value because of God and not because of what they have accomplished or how we view them. Romans 12:3 helps summarize how to rightly view self and therefore how we are to view others. “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

To rightly view others, consider the following:
1. See God as the creator of man.
2. See others as equally needful of a savior as yourself.
3. See the redemptive work of Christ as complete through faith.
4. Walk in the freedom and hope that forgiveness brings.
5. Have confidence in Christ working in others.

What others have been given by God is not something to diminish or worship. Rightly viewing others means to acknowledge others’ strengths and weaknesses and using our own strengths and weaknesses to sharpen each other.