



## **“YOU ARE WHO HE SAYS YOU ARE” (A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE)**

### **OVERVIEW:**

WHEN YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR, WHO DO YOU SEE? DO YOU SEE A WINNER OR DO YOU SEE A LOSER? DO YOU SEE A VICTOR OR DO YOU SEE A VICTIM? DO YOU SEE YOURSELF ABOVE YOUR CIRCUMSTANCE OR BENEATH IT? DO YOU SEE A FUTURE AND A HOPE OR DO YOU SEE FEAR AND HOPLESSNESS?

HAVE YOU EVER ASKED YOURSELF, “HOW DID I GET HERE?” YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCES ARE WHAT HAS BROUGHT YOU TO THIS PLACE AND TIME. DID YOU EXPERIENCE ABANDONMENT? VERBAL, PHYSICAL, SEXUAL OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE? HOW DO YOU VIEW YOUR SELF IMAGE TODAY? DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TOO DARK, TOO SHORT, TOO FAT, NOT SMART ENOUGH, NOT ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH? DID YOU GROW UP IN A BROKEN HOME? OR PERHAPS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARE HAVING TO ADJUST TO A DIFFERENT LIFESTYLE RIGHT NOW. WERE YOU BULLIED IN SCHOOL? HAVE YOU EVER DEALT WITH BETRAYAL BY SOMEONE YOU TRUSTED VERY MUCH? ARE YOU LIVING WITH SHATTERED DREAMS? WELL, IF YOU ANSWERD “**YES**” TO ANY OF THESE SCENARIOS, I WANT YOU TO KNOW . . . **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

A MAJOR PROBLEM OF OUR TIME IS AN EPIDEMIC OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM EXPRESSED IN THE FORM OF SELF-DOUBT AND SELF-HATE. A SENSE OF BEING WITHOUT WORTH LIES AT THE ROOT OF ALMOST ALL OUR PERSONAL, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS. OUR ACTIONS, FEELINGS AND EVEN ABILITIES ARE CONSISTENT WITH THIS SELF-IMAGE.



WE ACT LIKE THE PERSON WE PERCEIVE OURSELVES TO BE. OUR SELF-IMAGE IS THE KEY TO OUR DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR—SETTING BOUNDARIES OF OUR INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. MANY OF OUR PAST AND PRESENT PROBLEMS STEM FROM A LOW SELF-ESTEEM. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT, WITH GOD’S INSTRUCTIONS AND ENABLEMENT, OUR MENTAL BLUEPRINT CAN BE REDRAWN.

ALL OF US, AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER HAS EXPERIENCED SOME TYPE OF PAIN AND SADNESS FROM AN UNFRIENDLY ENCOUNTER IN OUR LIFETIME WHICH HAS LEFT US WITH A LOW SELF-IMAGE AND SELF-WORTH. I PRAY THAT THIS WORKSHOP WILL EQUIP YOU WITH TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES TO REAFFIRM YOUR SELF-IMAGE, YOUR SELF-WORTH, AND YOUR SELF-LOVE!

#### **SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:**

Proverbs 31  
Psalm 139:14  
Romans 5:8  
1 John 3:1-2  
Romans 5:7-8, 11  
Philippians 4:19  
Ephesians 1:3-5  
Ephesians 1:6  
Romans 8:1  
Proverbs 29:18  
Proverbs 23:7  
Ephesians 2:8-9

Romans 8:5-14  
2 Corinthians 5:17  
Genesis 1:27  
Psalm 139:16  
Ephesians 4:7  
2 Cor. 5:16-18  
Philippians 3:13  
Ephesians 5:20  
1 Timothy 4:14-15  
2 Timothy 4:7  
Matthew 10:8



—**Teaching point one: SOME BASIC PROBLEMS THAT COME FROM LOW SELF-ESTEEM**

- **INSECURITY**—A SENSE OF WORTHLESSNESS FOSTERS INSECURITY AND HOPELESSNESS.
- **JEALOUSY**—DOUBTING YOUR OWN WORTH AND ARE JEALOUS OF THOSE WHO APPEAR BETTER OFF THAN YOU.
- **ANGER**—COMPARING YOURSELF WITH OTHERS, YOU CAN BECOME ANGRY AND RESENTFUL.
- **FEAR**—YOU HAVE HIDDEN FEARS THAT OTHERS MAY DISCOVER HOW YOU REALLY FEEL ABOUT YOUR TRUE SELF.
- **SELFISHNESS**—A LACK OF SELF-ESTEEM PRODUCES TOTAL ABSORPTION IN MEETING YOUR OWN NEEDS.
- **GUILT**—BY FOCUSING ON FAILURE RATHER THAN FORGIVENESS, YOU ARE DEFEATED AND FEEL GUILTY.

THE REALITY IS THAT AS WOMEN OF GOD, YOU ARE CALLED TO DEVELOP THE PICTURE OF YOUR WORTH AND VALUE FROM GOD, NOT FROM OTHERS. THE HEALING OF YOUR LOW SELF-ESTEEM HINGES ON THE CHOICE YOU MUST MAKE. WILL YOU LISTEN TO THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL OR WILL YOU LISTEN TO GOD IN HIS WORD? LET'S LOOK AT THE WORD AND NOTICE HOW GOD SEES YOU!

1. GOD LOVES YOU SO DEEPLY - (**ROMANS 5:8**)
2. GOD HONORS YOU SO HIGHLY? - (**1 JOHN 3:1- 2**)
3. GOD VALUES SO HIGHLY - (**ROMANS 5:7-8, 11**)
4. GOD HAS PROVIDED FOR YOU SO FULLY - (**PHILIPPIANS 4:19**)
5. GOD HAS PLANNED FOR YOU SO CAREFULLY - (**EPHESIANS 1:3-5**)
6. GOD DELIGHTS IN YOU - (**EPHESIANS 1:6**)
7. GOD DOES NOT CONDEMN YOU - (**ROMANS 8:1**)



WHAT SITUATION(S) IN YOUR LIFE HAS CAUSED YOU INSECURITY, JEALOUSY, ANGER, FEAR, SELFISHNESS AND GUILT?

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**—Teaching point two:. POWERFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL WEAPONS OF SATAN**

FEAR IS ONE. DOUBT IS ANOTHER. ANGER, HOSTILITY, WORRY AND, OF COURSE, GUILT TOP THE LIST. LONG STANDING GUILT IS HARD TO SHAKE FOR SOME. AN UNEASY SENSE OF SELF-CONDEMNATION SEEMS TO HANG LIKE A FOG OVER TOO MANY CHRISTIANS. PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST DEADLY WEAPONS IN SATAN’S ARSENAL IS LOW-SELF ESTEEM SINCE IT HAS SUCH A PERVASIVE EFFECT ON EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES. WE’RE TALKING ABOUT A GUT LEVEL FEELING OF INFERIORITY, A SENSE OF PERSONAL INADEQUACY AND A LACK OF SELF-WORTH.

THERE ARE FOUR WAYS THAT SATAN USES THIS DEVASTATING PSYCHOLOGICAL WEAPON: LOW SELF-ESTEEM:

**1. LOW SELF-ESTEEM PARALYZES YOUR POTENTIAL.**

LOW SELF-ESTEEM RESULTS IN A TRAGIC LOSS OF HUMAN POTENTIAL, WATERED DOWN LIVING, WASTED GIFTS AND BROKEN DREAMS. ACCORDING TO DR. JAMES DOBSON, LOW SELF-ESTEEM IS A KEY CONTRIBUTOR TO DEPRESSION, ESPECIALLY AMONG WOMEN. ACCORDING TO DOBSON’S STUDY, 51% OF THE CHRISTIAN WOMEN SURVEYED RATED LOW SELF-ESTEEM AS THE CHIEF CONTRIBUTOR.



ACCORDING TO JESUS IN THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS, THE MAN WITH ONE TALENT WAS IMMOBILIZED BY FEAR AND FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY AND HE TRIED TO PLAY IT SAFE BY BURYING HIS TALENT IN THE GROUND. HIS LIFE WAS A FROZEN ASSET. HE DID EXACTLY WHAT A LOT OF PEOPLE WITH LOW SELF-ESTEEM DO—NOTHING. THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT SATAN WANTS US TO DO.

**2. *LOW SELF-ESTEEM DESTROYS YOUR DREAMS.***

YOU CAN’T LIVE IN YOUR DREAMS OR ON YOUR DREAMS BUT YOU CAN LIVE BY THEM. **PROVERBS 29:18** SAYS, “WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH.” LOW SELF-ESTEEM WILL DESTROY ANY HOPE OF REALIZING GOD’S GREAT PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE. YOU NEED THE HOPE OF A BETTER TOMORROW. “*HOPE DEFERRED MAKES THE HEART SICK.*” YOU MAY BE ABLE TO EXIST WITHOUT HOPE BUT WE CANNOT LIVE AS GOD INTENDS WITHOUT IT.

IF YOU DON’T THINK YOU CAN, YOU CAN’T. WHEN THE ISRAELITES CAME OUT OF EGYPT, THE PROMISED LAND THAT GOD HAD PROMISED WAS READY BUT THE PEOPLE WERE NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR LOW SELF-ESTEEM THAT HAD TRANSLATED INTO A LACK OF FAITH. THEY FORGOT WHO THEY WERE BECAUSE THEY FORGOT WHOSE THEY WERE. EXPECTING GREAT THINGS FROM GOD AND ATTEMPTING GREAT THINGS FOR HIM CAN BE DESTROYED BY LOW SELF-ESTEEM.

**3. *LOW SELF-ESTEEM RUINS YOUR RELATIONSHIPS.***

LOW SELF-ESTEEM CAN KEEP YOU FROM BELIEVING THAT GOD REALLY LOVES AND CARES ABOUT YOU. SUCH THINKING LEADS TO INNER QUESTIONS AND RESENTMENTS WHICH CAN SERIOUSLY UNDERMINE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. IF YOU DON’T REALLY BELIEVE THAT GOD WANTS THE BEST FOR YOU, HOW CAN YOU REALLY TRUST HIM? YOU BECOME CRITICAL OF GOD’S DESIGN AND BEGIN TO RESENT THE DESIGNER. YOUR PERCEPTION OF GOD BECOMES CONTAMINATED BY YOUR MISPERCEPTION OF YOURSELF. ONE OF THE MOST



COMMON WAYS OF DEALING WITH FEELINGS OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM IS WITHDRAWING FROM YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS. IF YOU DON'T LOVE YOURSELF, HOW CAN YOU LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR? LOW SELF-ESTEEM WRECKS INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE THAT I KNOW. HERE AGAIN, SATAN HAS YOU JUST WHERE HE WANTS YOU—ISOLATED FROM GOD AND OTHERS.

**4. LOW SELF-ESTEEM SABOTAGES YOUR MINISTRY.**

IF LOW SELF-ESTEEM RESULTS IN ISOLATION FROM OTHERS, HOW CAN THE BODY OF CHRIST FUNCTION IN A HEALTHY MANNER? IF THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY ARE NOT FUNCTIONING AS MEMBERS OF THE BODY THEN CHRIST'S MINISTRY IS HINDERED. PASTORS HEAR MORE EXCUSES FOR MEMBERS NOT DOING GOD'S WORK THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE AND MANY OF THE EXCUSES CENTER AROUND FEELINGS OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM. "I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THIS... I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THAT." LOW SELF-ESTEEM ROBS GOD OF THE MARVELOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR HIM TO SHOW HIS STRENGTH THROUGH ORDINARY PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME. NOTHING SABOTAGES CHRISTIAN SERVICE MORE THAN THINKING SO LITTLE OF YOUR SELF; GOD ISN'T EVEN GIVEN A CHANCE.

What does low self-esteem do to you?

Paralyzes your

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Destroys your

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Ruins your

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Sabotages your

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**—Teaching point three: THERE ARE DIFFERENT TERMS RELATED TO “SELF” AND WHAT THEY MEAN**

- *SELF-IMAGE* IS MUCH LIKE A SELF-PORTRAIT—WHAT YOU PICTURE YOURSELF TO BE—IT INCLUDES HOW YOU THINK AND FEEL.
- *SELF-ESTEEM* IS HOW YOU FEEL DEEP DOWN ABOUT YOURSELF. IT IS USUALLY BASED ON HOW OTHERS REGARD YOU.
- *SELF-CONCEPT* IS THE PERSON ONE CONCEIVES ONESELF TO BE BASED ON WHAT GOD OR OTHERS THINK ABOUT YOU.
- *SELF-WORTH*—ONE’S SENSE OF WORTH WILL BE BASED ON ONE’S APPEARANCE, PERFORMANCE AND APPROVAL.
- *SELF-RESPECT*—PROPER REGARD OR RESPECT FOR ONESELF BASED UPON CONFORMITY TO ACCEPTED MORAL STANDARDS.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A HEALTHY SELF-CONCEPT. HOW YOU SEE YOURSELF AND HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF WILL AFFECT JUST ABOUT EVERY ASPECT OF YOUR LIFE. YOU WILL PROBABLY THINK, SPEAK, ACT AND REACT AS THE PERSON YOU THINK YOU ARE. THE WRITER OF PROVERBS SAYS, “AS A MAN THINKS IN HIS HEART, SO IS HE.” THE REAL YOU IS THE PERSON GOD SEES, NOT THE IMAGE YOU PROJECT (**PROV. 23:7**). THE TRUTH IS—YOU WILL NEVER RISE ABOVE THE IMAGE YOU HAVE OF YOURSELF IN YOUR OWN MIND. IN DEVELOPING A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE, WE MUST BASE OUR SELF-IMAGE ON WHAT GOD’S WORD SAYS ABOUT US, RATHER THAN THE FALSE, FICKLE STANDARDS OF SOCIETY.



THREE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE

1. *AFFECTION*—A SENSE OF BELONGING, OF BEING WANTED, ACCEPTED, CARED FOR, ENJOYED, AND LOVED.
2. *ACCEPTANCE*—A SENSE OF WORTH AND VALUE—AN INNER FEELING THAT I COUNT, I'M VALUED, I HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER.
3. *APPROVAL*—A SENSE OF BEING COMPETENT—CONFIDENT THAT I CAN PERFORM A TASK, MEET A CHALLENGE, AND COPE WITH LIFE.

What are the five different terms related to “self”?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

What are the three essential components of a healthy self-image?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_





**—Teaching point four: PRIMARY SOURCES OF YOUR SELF-IMAGE.**

THERE ARE FOUR FACTORS THAT HELP YOU CONSTRUCT YOUR SELF-IMAGE:

1. THE OUTER WORLD (SOCIAL) INCLUDES ALL THE EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT HAVE GONE INTO YOUR MAKEUP—PARENTAGE, UPBRINGING, HOW YOU WERE TRAINED, TREATED, LOVED AND CARED FOR, A REFLECTION OF THE REACTIONS OF THE IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE AND ALL YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCES UP TO THE PRESENT.
2. THE INNER WORLD (PSYCHOLOGICAL) —THIS INCLUDES THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL EQUIPMENT YOU NEED TO COPE WITH LIFE. IT INCLUDES YOUR SENSES, YOUR NERVES, YOUR CAPACITY TO LEARN, REGISTER AND RESPOND. THIS ALSO INCLUDES THE FACT THAT EVERY HUMAN BEING HAS A SINFUL, SELFISH HUMAN NATURE WHICH AFFECTS EVERYTHING THAT WE DO.
3. SATAN AND HIS CUNNING WILES USES YOUR LOW SELF-ESTEEM AS A WEAPON AGAINST YOU. HE USES INFERIORITY, INADEQUACY AND SELF-BELITTLING TO DEFEAT CHRISTIANS AND PREVENT THEM FROM REALIZING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL AS GOD’S CHILDREN. HE HAS THE ABILITY TO PUT THOUGHTS IN YOUR MIND THAT DO NOT ORIGINATE WITH YOU.
4. GOD AND HIS TRUTHFUL WORD IS THE KEY TO STRAIGHTENING OUT YOUR FALSE BELIEFS ABOUT YOURSELF. GOD IS THE KEY TO MOVING FROM THE PROBLEM OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM TOWARD A POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT. HE IS THE KEY FOR TURNING AWAY FROM THE DISEASE TO THE CURE OF THE DISEASE OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM.



What are the four factors that help you construct your self-image?

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—**Teaching point five: TWO BIGGEST LIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO LOW SELF-ESTEEM.**

**THE FIRST LIE** IS THAT YOU CAN HAVE SENSE OF PERSONAL WORTH APART FROM ESTABLISHING A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. THE UNREGENERATE PERSON IS DECEIVED INTO THINKING THAT ONE NEED NOT BE SAVED OR THAT SALVATION IS BY WORKS AND THAT SALVATION CAN BE PUT OFF TO SOME LATER DAY. ALL THE WORLD RELIGIONS EXCEPT CHRISTIANITY BELIEVE IN A WORKS BASED FAITH AND THEY ARE ALL DECEIVED. GOD’S WORD TEACHES THAT SALVATION IS BY GRACE ALONE (**EPH. 2:8-9**).

**THE SECOND LIE** INVOLVES REGENERATE PEOPLE FAILING TO UNDERSTAND, ACCEPT AND AFFIRM WHO THEY ARE IN CHRIST. THE REGENERATE PEOPLE ARE MOST FREQUENTLY DECEIVED BY THINKING OF THEMSELVES IN TERMS OF THEIR OLD NATURE (**ROM. 8:5-14**) RATHER THAN THEIR NEW NATURE—FAILING TO REALIZE WHO THEY ARE IN CHRIST. HOW CAN ANYONE FEEL GOOD ABOUT BEING A SLAVE OF SIN AS A RESULT OF HAVING A SINFUL NATURE?

WHEN AN UNBELIEVER BECOMES A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST, THAT CONVERSION EXPERIENCE DOES NOT HELP HIS SELF-CONCEPT IF HE STILL THINKS THAT THE REAL PERSON IS HIS SINFUL NATURE INSTEAD OF HIS NEW ONE (**2 COR. 5:17**).

How many lies contribute to low-self esteem and what are they?

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—**Teaching point six: THE KEY TO DEVELOPING A HEALTHY SELF-CONCEPT.**

THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR ESTABLISHING YOUR SELF-WORTH IS GOD! PERSONAL WORTH IS A GIFT OF GOD. IT IS NOT EARNED OR ACHIEVED, CANNOT BE ADDED TO OR TAKEN FROM, NEED NOT BE PROVED AND MUST NOT BE DENIED. YOU DO NOTHING TO QUALIFY FOR IT. IT IS YOURS AT BIRTH. AS WITH ANY GIFT, IT MUST BE ACCEPTED, CONSCIOUSLY WITH THANKSGIVING.

**CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FACTS:**

- *GOD CREATED ME*—IN HIS IMAGE AS A UNIQUE PERSON. HIS CREATION GIVES ME WORTH. (**GEN. 1:27**)
- *GOD PLANNED FOR ME*—GOD WANTS MY HEART TO BE HIS THRONE. HIS PLAN GIVES ME SIGNIFICANCE. (**PSA. 139:16**)
- *GOD GIFTED ME*—GOD GAVE ME NATURAL ABILITIES AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS. HIS GIFTS GIVE ME COMPETENCE. (**EPH. 4:7**)
- *GOD’S SON DIED FOR ME*—JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS FOR MY SINS. HIS DEATH MAKES ME ACCEPTABLE. (**2 COR. 5:16-18**)

What is the biblical basis for establishing your self-worth?

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Personal worth is a gift from whom?

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Who created you, planned for you, and gifted you?

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## **THINGS TO PONDER . . .**

### **SOME IMPLICATIONS OF GOD'S TRUTH CONCERNING YOUR SELF-CONCEPT:**

- MY PAST—FORGET IT! GOD IS MORE INTERESTED IN WHERE YOU ARE GOING THAN WHERE YOU HAVE BEEN. (**PHIL. 3:13**)
- MY PRESENT—THANK GOD FOR IT! I WILL THANK GOD IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR ALL THINGS. (**EPH. 5:20**)
- MY POTENTIAL—DISCOVER IT! MY POTENTIAL IS GOD'S GIFT TO ME. WHAT I MAKE OF IT IS MY GIFT TO HIM. (**1 TIM. 4:14-15**)
- MY PERFORMANCE—AFFIRM IT! I WILL GIVE GOD THE CREDIT FOR ALL HE ENABLES ME TO DO. (**2 TIM. 4: 7**)
- MY POSSESSIONS—SHARE THEM! THE POOREST PERSON HAS SOMETHING TO GIVE THAT RICHES CANNOT BUY. (**MATT. 10:8**)





## ACTIVITY PAGE

### MATCH THE COMPONENT WITH THE DEFINITION FOR A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE

[DRAW A LINE TO CONNECT]

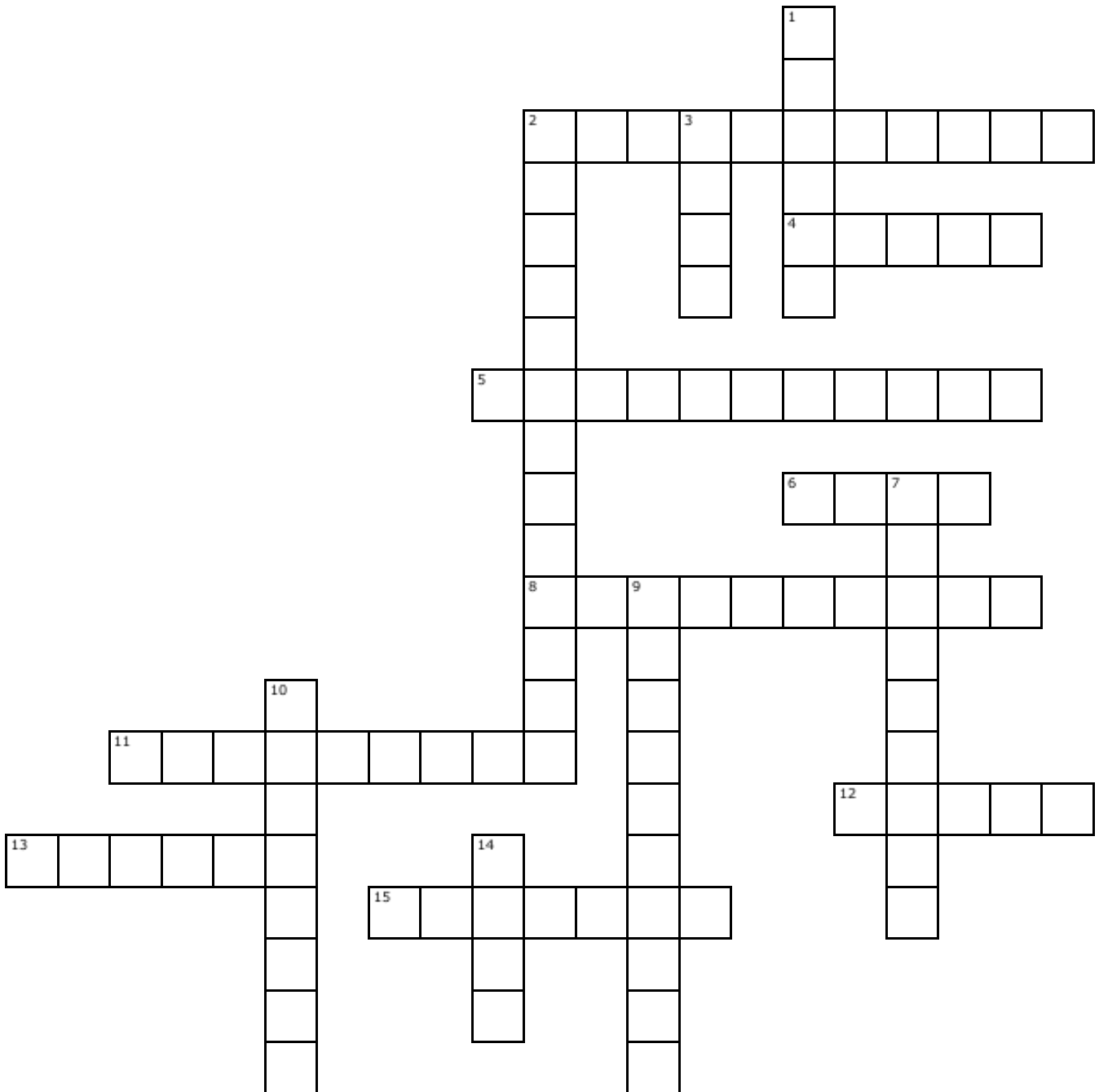
COMPONENT	DEFINITION
ACCEPTANCE	SENSE OF BEING COMPETENT
APPROVAL	SENSE OF BELONGING
AFFECTION	SENSE OF WORTH AND VALUE

### MATCH THE FACT WITH THE STATED THEORY

[DRAW A LINE TO CONNECT]

FACT	THEORY
GOD GIFTED ME	HIS PLAN GIVES ME SIGNIFICANCE
GOD CREATED ME	HIS CREATION GIVES ME WORTH
GOD'S SON DIED FOR ME	HIS GIFTS GIVE ME COMPETENCE
GOD PLANNED FOR ME	HIS DEATH MAKES ME ACCEPTABLE

# Developing A Biblically-Based Self-Image



## Across

- 2. affirm it
- 4. resentful
- 5. share them
- 6. forget it
- 8. a sense of worthlessness
- 11. discover it
- 12. focusing on failure rather than forgiveness
- 13. outer world
- 15. thank God for it

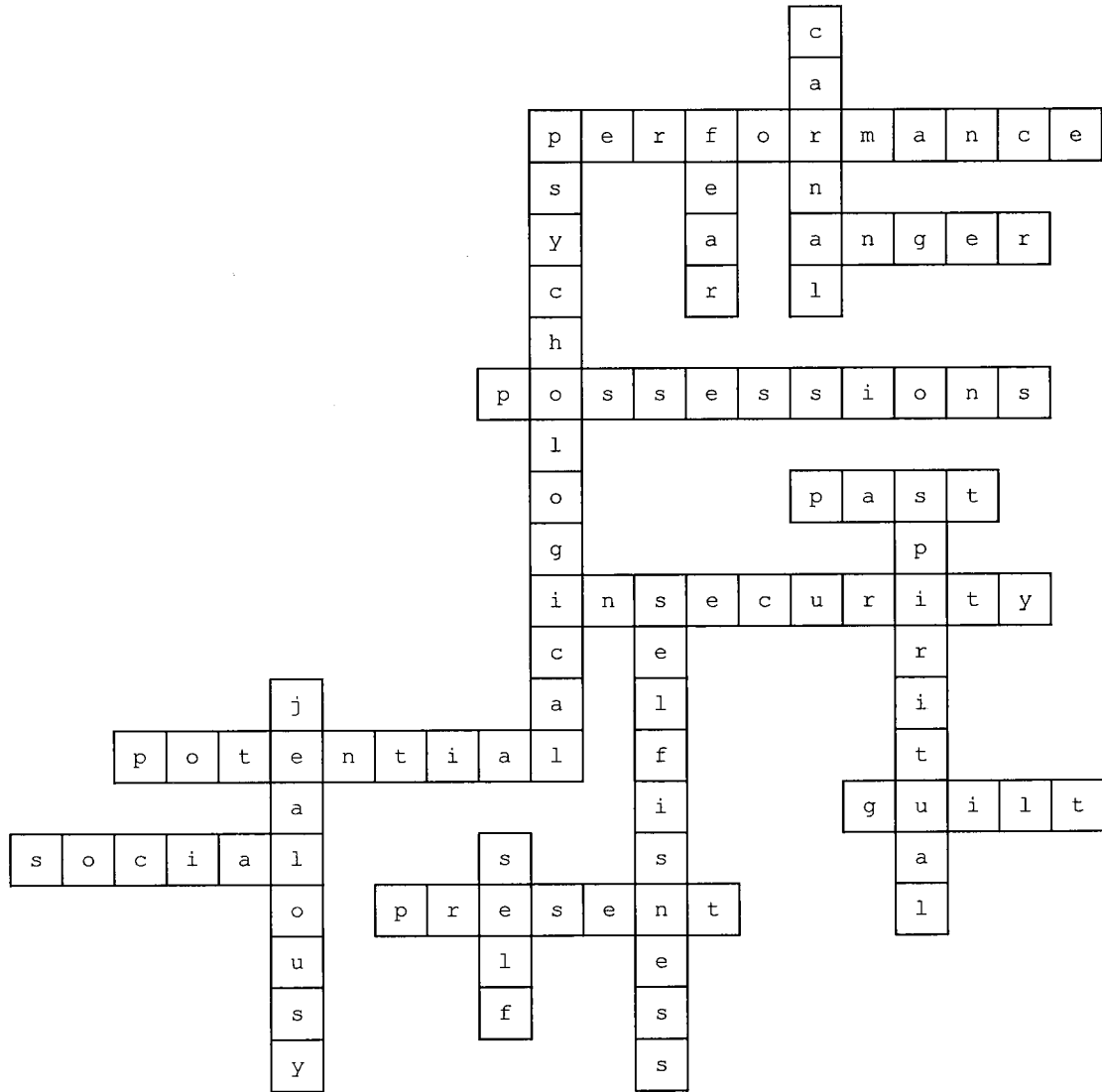
## Down

- 1. worldly thoughts in your mind that do not originate with God
- 2. inner world
- 3. false expectations appearing real
- 7. God and His truthful Word
- 9. total absorption in meeting our own needs
- 10. negative feelings towards those who appear better off than us
- 14. RESPECT proper regard or respect for oneself



# Developing A Biblically-Based Self-Image

## Answer Key



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4. resentful
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