

GOALS FOR THE GROUP LEADER

Help the group members:

1. to believe that God wants them to have a healthy self esteem
2. to practise thinking about themselves in the way God views them

I. WORSHIP (14 min.)

1. Prayer

Pray that God will guide us through his Spirit; that we will be aware of his presence and that we will listen to what he says.

2. Meditation

Worship is to dedicate yourself.

Theme: To become a tree planted by streams of water

Read the Bible verses mentioned below and the explanation. Or explain the verses in your own words.

Psalm 1:1-6

¹ Blessed is the one
 who does not walk in step with the wicked
 or stand in the way that sinners take
 or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
 and who meditates on his law Day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
 which yields its fruit in season
 and whose leaf does not wither—
 whatever they do prospers.
⁴ Not so the wicked!
 They are like chaff
 that the wind blows away.
⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
 nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
 but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

- What is the final destiny of the righteous (verse 3) and of the wicked (verse 4-5)?
- How do the wicked (verse 1) differ from the righteous (verse 2)?
- What does a growing, blossoming and fruitful tree represent (verse 3)?

3. Worship.

Let everyone in the small group take a turn to worship (in one or two sentences) God as the One who can, will and shall make you a growing, blossoming and fruitful tree.

II. INTRODUCTION THEME (1 min.)

The theme for this meeting is: Self esteem of a Christian

Read or explain in your own words.

'Your self esteem' is determined by how you view yourself and how valuable you regard yourself. Many people think, "I do not like myself" or "My life has no value".

Just how valuable do you think you are? Do you have a positive or negative opinion about yourself? Do you tend to have inferior or superior feelings in the presence of other people? Do you sometimes think that your life is meaningless?

What does the Bible teach about self esteem? Your self esteem is determined by your focus: the person or matter on which you direct your thoughts and feelings. The study taught us how an unhealthy self esteem develops and how you could build up a healthy self esteem.

III. SHARING OF QUIET TIMES (30 min.)

Let everyone in the small group take a turn to share (or read) what he has learned from one of the assigned quiet times.

Theme: Self esteem

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| Day 1 | Psalm 139:13-18 This is how God made you |
| Day 2 | Isaiah 43:1-7 This is how God thinks and feels about you |
| Day 3 | Jeremiah 17:5-8 This is how God makes you into a blossoming tree |
| Day 4 | Jeremiah 29:11-14 This is what God says about your future |
| Day 5 ^{BS} | Colossians 3:10-17 This is how God changes you permanently (cf. Colossians 3:23-24) |
| Day 6 | Matthew 6:25-34 This is how you can stop worrying |
| Day 7 | Psalm 103:1-14 This is all that God gives to you |

- Day 8 Psalm 37:1-11
Do this and God will give you the desires of your heart
- Day 9 Romans 12:3-8
Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought
- Day 10 Romans 12:9-18
This is how you give others a healthy self esteem

IV. ADDITIONAL SHARING (15 min.)

Part IV is optional.
If after sharing quiet times there is still time left over, the following may serve as subjects for conversation.

1. Discussing the study

Discuss the study with reference to the questions mentioned below:

Theme: How you can develop a healthy self esteem

- What are the two healthy focal points for developing a healthy self esteem?
- How does an unhealthy self esteem develop?
- How do you change your focus?
- How do you develop a healthy self-esteem?

2. Commitment

Let the group members consider the following questions and record their answers:

- *Discuss with one another: How special did God create you?*

Think for example about your eyes or hands. Think about the special functions of the human spirit: e.g. to know God, your conscience through which you can distinguish between good and evil, your intuition through which you are able to detect lies or danger, and your creativity through which you are able to invent new things and produce them.

- *Share with one another: What don't you like with regard to the way God made you? How do you react upon it?*

Mistrust towards God grows when you cannot like the way God created you. But trust towards will grow when you accept the way God created you.

- *Discuss with one another: What are different ways in which people try to compensate their shortcomings?*

They flee away; cover up; exaggerate; work very hard; get enslaved; buy things; tell lies.

- *Share with one another: What do you think you lack in life? How do you react to that?*

- *Discuss with one another: What are spiritual ways to meet your shortcomings?*

Pray; thank; praise; be content; submit to God.

- *Discuss with one another: How can the following issues prevent you from serving God?*

Giving in to the pressure of so-called friends; pleasing others; compensating shortcomings in the social area by gathering material things; avoiding contact with people.

- *Share with one another: What do you do to be accepted by others?*

You cannot serve Christ when you do not love other people or when you love them for the wrong reasons. To be focussed on being accepted by others makes you fruitless.

Being genuinely interested in other people and their interests set you free to bear much fruit (cf. John 7:37-39; 15:5,7).

3. Personal sharing

Discuss eventually your personal growth and commitment. Who would like to share a difficulty or blessing in his/her personal life? What are your thoughts or feelings?

V. MEMORISATION (5 min.)

1. Review of previous Bible verses

Let pairs of group members review each other's previously memorised Bible verses (the last memorised Bible verse or the last 5 memorised Bible verses).

2. Memorisation of the new Bible verse

Explain the meaning of the new Bible verse.

SELF ESTEEM

Isaiah 43:4

Since you are precious and honoured in my sight,
and because I love you,

I will give men in exchange for you,
and people in exchange for your life.

Isaiah 43:4 (NIV)

VI. BIBLE STUDY (45 min.)

Theme: God can change your self esteem permanently

1. Bible Study

Make use of the 5 step method and study:

Colossians 3:1-17,23-24

¹ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸ But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹ Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

2. Emphasis

You can change if you want to.

3. Explanation for the group leader

3:1-4. The focus

The focus is 'Christ' and 'the things above'.

'Christ is your life'. The unveiled secret is 'Christ in the Christian' and 'the Christian in Christ' (Colossians 1:27-28). It is that 'in Christ all the treasures of wisdom and

knowledge are hidden' (Colossians 2:3) and that "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" (Colossians 2:9).

A Christian can no longer think himself apart from Christ: 'the Christian is in Christ' with respect to his position and life style (justification and sanctification). And Christ is in the Christian'. Through his Spirit Christ lives his perfect life in and through Christians (Galatians 2:20). "We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all surpassing power is from God" (2 Corinthians 4:7).

'Glory' is the final destiny for Christians. This means glory as God possesses. It means possessing the divine characteristics like love, holiness, righteousness, faithfulness, etc. (1 John 3:1-3).

3:5-9. Things that you must put off

'Put to death' means to rid yourself permanently from it.

'The old man' refers to the unregenerate nature with all its worldly (unrighteous and unholy) characteristics.

'You have taken off' is a once-for-all-time act when you died with Christ (when your old nature was crucified with Christ), i.e. when you came to faith in Jesus Christ.

3:10-15. Things that you must put on

3:16-17,23-24. Keep your focus on Christ and his Word

Let God's way of thinking (thoughts and feelings about you), which have been revealed in the Bible, live richly in your mind and heart.

Do everything you do (living, working, studying, relating, etc.) as working for the Lord. Do this consciously and deliberately for him.

Realise that you can only receive things that have eternal value from Jesus Christ.

VII. PRAYER (8 min.)

Pray with one another in response to what God said to you during this gathering. Let every group member take a turn to pray one or two sentences about what God taught him during this meeting.

Pray with one another for one another (Romans 15:30) and for other people (Colossians 4:12).

VIII. THE NEXT MEETING (2 min.)

Hand out the preparation for the next gathering.