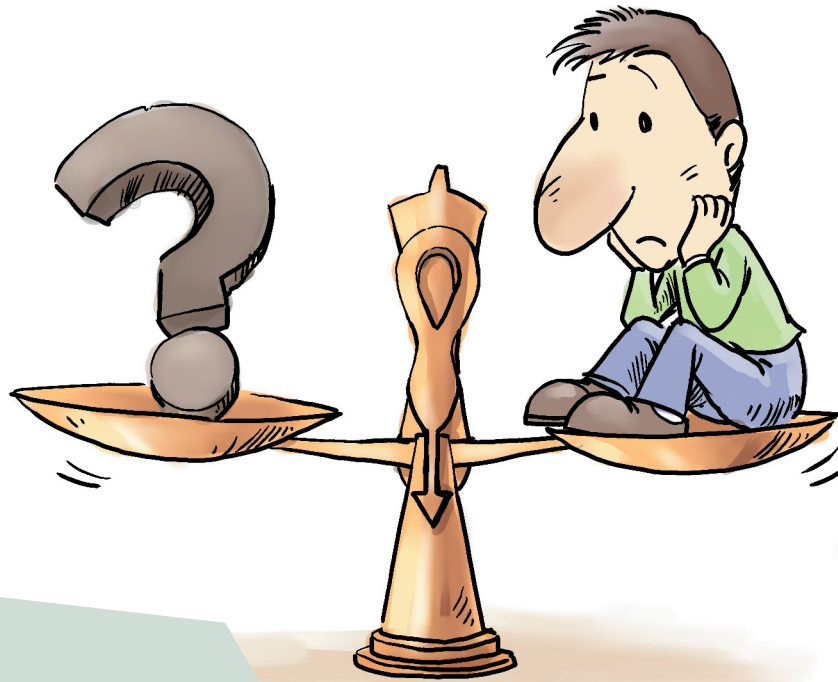


Knowing Your Worth



Getting Started

How high is your self-esteem? How do you measure your self-worth?

Even beautiful, talented, intelligent people can have low self-esteem. Sometimes famous people may be able to shine in front of a crowd, but they may be very insecure. We cannot measure our self-worth by how beautiful, talented, or intelligent we are. If we do, we might feel inferior, because there will always be someone more beautiful, or talented, or intelligent. On the other hand, we can usually find someone less beautiful, less talented, or less intelligent than we are, and this can make us proud. How should we measure our self-worth?

Improving Your Vocabulary

self-esteem (n) - the value you place on yourself

insecure (adj) - not sure of yourself; having no strong sense of value; without strong support

inferior (adj) - less important or worthy than others

clan (n) - a large family group

tribe (n) - a social group of many different families

torch (n) - a burning stick used to give light

trumpet (n) - a musical instrument

descendant (n) - your children's children, and their children, and so on

Reading God's Word

The Midianites were a very strong, powerful group of people. They controlled the Lord's people, the Israelites. When the Israelites tried to plant crops, the Midianites would come and destroy the crops. The Lord chose a man named Gideon to help free his people from the Midianites.

Judges 6:14-16

14 Then the Lord ordered him, "Go with all your great strength and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I myself am sending you." **15** Gideon replied, "But Lord, how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least important member of my family." **16** The Lord answered, "You can do it because I will help you. You will crush the Midianites as easily as if they were only one man."

Then the Lord helped Gideon to build an army. More than 30,000 men came to help fight the Midianites. But God then showed Gideon that victory would not come from the strength of his army.

Judges 7:2-8

2 The Lord said to Gideon, "The men you have are too many for me to give them victory over the Midianites. They might think that they had won by themselves, and so give me no credit." **3** Announce to the people, "Anyone who is afraid should go back home, and we will stay here at Mount Gilead." So twenty-two thousand went back, but ten thousand stayed. **4** Then the Lord said to Gideon, "You still have too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will separate them for you there. If I tell you a man should go with you, he will go. If I tell you a man should not go with you, he will not go."

The Lord continued to send men home until there were only 300 men left. Gideon divided them into three groups of 100 and they went to fight the Midianites. The Lord told them to carry trumpets, and jars with torches inside.

Judges 7:19-22

19 Gideon and his one hundred men came to the edge of the camp a while before midnight, just after the guard had been changed. Then they blew the trumpets and broke the jars they were holding, **20** and the other two groups did the same. They all held the torches in their left hands, the trumpets in their right, and shouted, “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!” **21** Every man stood in his place around the camp, and the whole enemy army ran away yelling. **22** While Gideon's men were blowing their trumpets, the Lord made the enemy troops attack each other with their swords.

Judges 8:22-23

22 After that, the Israelites said to Gideon, “Be our ruler—you and your descendants after you. You have saved us from the Midianites.” **23** Gideon answered, “I will not be your ruler, nor will my son. The Lord will be your ruler.”

For further study, see Exodus 3 and Isaiah 43:4.

Taking a Closer Look

1. Why was Gideon so surprised when the Lord chose him? (6:15)

2. Why did the Lord think there were too many men? (7:2)

3. How did the Lord tell Gideon to win the battle? (7:19-20) Why do you think the Lord gave him such strange orders?

4. How did the Lord defeat the Midianites? (7:22)

5. Why did Gideon refuse to be the Israelites' ruler? (8:23)

6. Where did Gideon find the confidence to attack such a large army?

7. How does God want us to measure our self-worth?

Taking Action

1. Although Gideon was concerned with his own weaknesses, he trusted God could still use him in a powerful way. How can we get better at relying on God, instead of relying on our own abilities?
2. God sees us in a different way than the rest of the world sees us. In God's eyes, we are all beautiful and precious. How can we learn to value his opinion more than anyone else's?

Memory Verse: Psalm 139:14

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Review the Vocabulary

Discuss your answers with a classmate.

1. What causes you to feel **insecure**?
2. Have you ever felt **inferior** to anyone?
3. Do you think most people have high or low **self-esteem**?
4. What kind of world do you imagine your **descendants** living in?



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