



Fall 2007

The Truth about Me...

I've been blind, for most of my life, to a most essential truth...the truth about me! Sadly, for most of my life I've lived in the dark, haunting shadow of my belief that I was a failure, no good, and a disappointment to God—unless I could find a way to demonstrate the opposite. Looking to the world for a more hopeful basis for my identity, I was informed that I am what I *have*, what I *do*, and what others *say about me*. The problem with these abominably erroneous conclusions is that they constantly lead me into the noxious trap of self-rejection.

The most deadly trap in our life is self-rejection. Although success, approval and power pose their own threats, their alluring quality often comes from the way they lead to the much larger and more lethal temptation to self-rejection. When we conclude that we are good-for-nothing and in some peculiar way unlovable, then success, approval and power are easily seen as appealing solutions. However, the most fatal trap of all is self-rejection.

I can't help wondering... "How often do you give in to this temptation?" I am amazed at how quickly and how often I fall prey to its lure. Immediately, upon hearing of someone's criticism or displeasure with me, as soon as I am snubbed, left out or left feeling alone, I find myself thinking, "Well, there's further proof that I am a nobody, a total loser." The power of one criticism has oftentimes proven to be far greater

than a hundred recognitions of approval.

Perhaps you think that arrogance is a bigger problem than self-rejection. But isn't self-promotion just the other side of self-rejection? Isn't arrogance putting yourself above others in order to avoid being seen by others as you see yourself? Bottom line, isn't arrogance simply another way of coping with feelings of worthlessness?

I make my confession with Henri Nouwen; "I know too well that beneath my arrogance there lies much self-doubt, just as there is a great amount of pride hidden in my self-rejection."

Therefore whether I am inflated or deflated, I have lost sight of the truth and become blind to reality.

Yes, self-rejection is the most formidable foe we face in life because it blinds us to the truth that God wishes for us to see regarding ourselves.

So, who does God say I am? What is the core truth of our existence?

For quite some time now, I've been riveted by an occasion reported in the Gospels, when the audible voice of God was witnessed.

It occurred at Jesus' baptism: "And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased'" (Luke 3:22 NIV). As I ponder this declaration, I find God's timing its most intriguing aspect. How much more sensible and appropriate for the Father of Jesus to affirm his delight

following the Sermon on the Mount or another extraordinary moment in Jesus' ministry that had left crowds reeling with astonishment. However he deliberately chose to declare his pleasure when Jesus had yet to preach a sermon or heal anyone! How much clearer could it be that God's love for us isn't contingent on our performance?

If you and I are to ever see clearly, we must always be looking for people and places where the truth is spoken and where we are reminded of our deepest identity as the beloved and chosen one.

Jesus is constantly assisting me to see the essential value of these people and places. He is helping me recognize that without them I remain blind to essential truths about myself.

People who show and tell us these truths not only show and tell us we are loved, but they also name what we remain unable to name—the positive ways we express our faith.

If there's anything about myself that I see clearly, it's that I'm an expert at pointing out what I do wrong or could do better. Yet, I'm equally blind to what I do well or good or right. I simply can't see it. Therefore, I desperately need friends who can speak the truth to me about who I am.

Here's a simple suggestion: Take a few minutes, right now, and consider this vitally important question:

"Who are the people who speak the truth to me about who I am?"

Investing in Journey Resources

From its inception, Journey Resources' mission has remained simple and clear:

Journey Resources offers the message of God's love, grace and mercy for all people found through Jesus Christ. Providing thoughtful and creative opportunities to discover God's loving care, our mission extends as far as God leads and reaches through us.

Following are several distinctive elements of our mission:

- It is our earnest intent to be as self-sustained as possible. Approximately one half of our essential funds are covered by fees for speaking engagements and proceeds from the publication and sale of books.
- We charge no fee for spiritual direction. In addition, we regularly consult with individuals and groups and accept invitations to speak with no associated fee.
- We believe that the services we provide globally are enhanced and preserved by being well-grounded and involved locally. Therefore we deliberately attempt to place limits on out of town travel.

Please, if you are not already doing so, would you prayerfully consider assisting us? We are approaching the end of our fiscal year and we are greatly in need of additional support.

No level of support is too small to be considered insignificant.

You may make a donation by returning your gift in the enclosed envelope, by visiting our web site at www.journeyresources.com and using an existing Paypal account or credit card. Or, if you wish to establish a monthly draft, please notify us and we'll gladly provide you with the needed information.

Mere words cannot express how grateful we are for the privilege of being engaged in this mission. It's our

desire to continue offering the message of God's relentless love, grace and mercy for years to come. Please accept our heartfelt thanks for partnering with us in whatever way you have in the past and are led again.

Welcome Tom!

Journey Resources is thrilled to announce the recent addition of Tom Wilson to its Board of Directors.

In 2001, Tom began serving as the President and CEO of Leadership Network. Prior to joining Leadership Network, Tom was on staff with Young Life for 31 years until he retired from the position of Senior Vice President of Field Operations for the Central and Southern part of the US as well as Central and South America.

Tom and his wife, Linda, a marriage and family therapist, have three adult children and five grandchildren. They live in Ft. Worth, TX.

Fall Reading Recommendations:

Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging by Brennan Manning

The Ragamuffin Gospel: Good News for the Bedraggled, Beat-Up, and Burnt Out by Brennan Manning

A Glimpse of Jesus: The Stranger to Self-Hatred by Brennan Manning

Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World by Henri Nouwen

The Gift of Being Yourself: The Sacred Call to Self-Discovery by David G. Benner

Surrender to Love: Discovering the Heart of Christian Spirituality by David G. Benner

Messy Spirituality by Mike Yaconelli

What's So Amazing About Grace? By Philip Yancey

Fil's Fall Schedule

September

12 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC, *The Transformation of A Man's Heart*

14-17 Rapid City, SD Young Life Conference

19 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC, *The Transformation of A Man's Heart*

21-25 Barranquilla, Colombia, S A Medical Ministry International Conference

26 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC, *The Transformation of A Man's Heart*

29-30 *Running on Empty* Conference, Springfield Friends Meeting, High Point, NC

October

3 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC, *The Transformation of A Man's Heart*

10 Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, NC, *The Transformation of A Man's Heart*

16 Student group, Chapel Hill, NC

18-20 Western PA Pastor's Family Camp

22-31 Spiritual Director in Residence, George Fox Seminary Residency, Canon Beach, OR

November

1-2 Spiritual Director in Residence, George Fox Seminary Residency, Canon Beach, OR

December

11-13 GA/SC Young Life Staff Silent Retreat