

## Self image

*God loves us and wants to work through us, even when we think that...*

- We are a failure (**Moses**)

Moses was a failure. He was a failure as an Egyptian Prince, because he murdered an Egyptian, and he was a failure as an Israelite, because his fellow Israelites didn't respect him, maybe because he had murdered someone, maybe because he had been brought up as an Egyptian, maybe because he was arrogant.

He was a murderer. He spoke awkwardly and he was afraid. In his eyes, he saw himself as a failure.

*God loves us and wants to work through us, even when we think that...*

- We're not good or special enough (**Gideon**)

Gideon was the *least* important in his family. His family was the *least* important in the tribe of Manasseh. And Manasseh was the *least* important tribe amongst all the Israelite tribes.

In his eyes, Gideon thought he was a nobody who would never amount to anything, because he wasn't good enough or special enough.

*God loves us and wants to work through us, even when we think that...*

- We are unforgivable (**Peter**)

Peter screwed up royally; he screwed up big time, because when the chips were down for Jesus, he left Jesus in the lurch. He ran away when Jesus was arrested, and three times he told people that he didn't even know Jesus.

Peter had done something that was terrible and awful, because essentially, he had actually helped to crucify Jesus, and so in his eyes, he couldn't be forgiven; he was unforgivable.

But...

After Jesus came back to life, he met Peter on a beach, gave him breakfast and then forgave him. Completely. 100%! And then Jesus gave Peter responsibility for looking after people and for growing his church.

In Peter's eyes, Peter was unforgivable, but Jesus saw something else in him, something that was good and strong and dependable.

God chose Gideon, the least in his family, from the most unimportant family in his tribe, and from the most rubbish and weediest tribe in all Israel, to free Israel from thousands of Midianite invaders, and God did this using Gideon and just 300 soldiers.

In Gideon's eyes, Gideon wasn't good enough or special enough to amount to anything, But God saw something else in him, something that was good and courageous and loyal.

And then God chose Moses, to lead over a hundred thousand people out of slavery, to land that God had promised them.

In Moses' eyes, Moses was a complete failure deserving only people's contempt. But God saw something else in him, something that was good persistent and reliable.

And tonight, regardless of how you might see yourself, and regardless of how little you might think of yourself, God loves you and sees something in you that is good, and that he wants to work with and through. God challenges us to look again in the mirror, and this time try and see what he sees in us.

## Choices talk

A British Prime Minister spent a weekend at the estate, owned by the very, very wealthy Rothschild family.

This is a part of conversation between the butler of the house and the Prime Minister.

"Tea, or coffee, sir?"

"Tea, please,"

"China, India, or Ceylon, sir?"

"China, please."

"Lemon, milk, or cream, sir?"

"Milk, please,"

"Milk from a Jersey cow, from a Hereford cow, or milk from a Shorthorn cow, sir?"

And the conversation went on...

Aren't you glad that for most of us life is not that complicated!!

Yet we all have plenty of choices to make every day.

In our life time we will make lots of choices. We will choose, who we marry, how many children to have, where we live, what job we do, who are friends will be. And then there's the everyday choices of what we eat, and the clothes we wear...

We need to make wise choices...

And it is the same thing when we are dealing with God stuff - we need to choose wisely.

We need to remember that; "Faith is a choice. Compassion is a choice. Attitude is a choice. Happiness is a choice. Positive thinking is a choice. Kindness, giving, and respect is a choice."

We need to remember that whatever choice we make, makes us who we are, and who we will be.

**(Dramatic voice)** So choose wisely!

**(Pause)**

God told Jonah to preach at Nineveh, but Jonah chose not to go. Instead, Jonah ran away from God. He caught a nice comfortable ship going the opposite way.

However, there was a terrible, violent storm, which threatened to sink the ship. Jonah's disobedience and his bad choices had put himself and the shipload of sailors at risk.

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But this is where Jonah took responsibility for his actions and for the storm – he told the sailors to throw him overboard, so that the storm would stop.

God scooped up Jonah when he was thrown into the sea and delivered him – not first class or second class – but Whale class and vomited him up on the beach at Nineveh.

**(Pause)**

Every choice has consequences, just as Jonah found out. A good choice has good consequences, and a poor choice has poor consequences.

But thankfully, even when we mess up like Jonah God can turn things around and make something good when we choose to listen.

Whatever choice we make, makes us who we are, and who we will be.

But the biggest choice of all, happens when Jesus says, “Come and follow Me! Come and let me into your life, so that I can be your friend and your Saviour”

So, whatever you do, choose wisely!

## **Individual priorities**

Love

**Family**

Friends



Money

Accommodation

Job

Health

Jesus

Job

Social-

Media

Happiness



Me

## Mood management talk

Robert Raikes was concerned about the effect that the Industrial Revolution had upon children, especially boys. He became enraged by their treatment, because he saw that because of a six-out-of-seven day working week, they had no means of moral, religious or educational development.

He thought that a day-long school session held on Sundays and using the Bible as the textbook would teach the boys how to read and introduce them to Christianity. Good students would then have the educational skills – like reading and writing – to help them out of the grind of poverty as well as equipping them with good morals and biblical knowledge.

The children were to come after ten in the morning, and stay till twelve; they were then to go home and return at one; and after reading a lesson, they were to be conducted to Church.

In 1780 he started a Sunday school in his own parish of St Mary de Crypt, hearing the children's reading and awarding prizes.

The idea spread. **By 1786, 200,000 children were said to be involved.**

It is thought that Raikes' idea was the beginning of the modern State education system.

He died in 1811.

Mother Teresa took her vows as a nun in 1931, and began teaching history and geography in Calcutta at St. Mary's, a high school for the daughters of the wealthy. She remained there for 15 years and enjoyed the work, but was distressed by the poverty she saw all around her.

In 1946, Teresa traveled to Darjeeling for a retreat. It was on that journey that she realized what her true calling was: "I heard the call to give up all and follow Christ into the slums to serve him among the poorest of the poor."

In 1948, Teresa set aside her nun's habit – adopting instead the simple sari and sandals worn by the women she would be living among – and moved to a small rented hovel in the slums to begin her work.

One of her first projects was to teach the children of the poor – drawing on her experience with teaching the children of the rich. She didn't have any equipment or supplies this time, but she taught them to read and write by writing in the dirt with sticks.

In addition to promoting literacy, Teresa taught the children basic hygiene. She visited their families, inquiring about their needs and helping provide for them when she could.

Word began to spread about Teresa's good works, and soon she had other volunteers wanting to help. By 1950, she was able to start the Mission of Charity – a congregation dedicated to caring for "the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted,

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unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone.”

She went on to open a hospice for the poor, a home for sufferers of leprosy, and a home for orphans and homeless youths.

She died in 1997.

**Micah 6:8** And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God

**Matthew 21:13** My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers.

## Six tips for managing anger

### **No. 1: Take a timeout**

Breathe deeply and count to 10.  
It really can help!

### **No. 2: Get some exercise**

Go for a brisk walk or run,  
to help yourself calm down..

### **No. 3: Don't hold a grudge**

Try to forgive instead of holding a grudge.  
Consider asking God for help.

### **No. 4: Use humor to release tension**

Lightening up can help diffuse tension,  
but don't use sarcasm!

### **No. 5: Practice relaxation skills**

Practice deep-breathing exercises,  
or imagine a relaxing scene.

### **No. 6: Know when to seek help**

Consider getting help if your anger seems  
out of control, causes you to do things  
you regret or hurts those around you.

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## Proverbs

An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.

**24:26**

Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs. **10:12**

The wages of the righteous is life, but the earnings of the wicked are sin and death.

**10:16**

Whoever conceals hatred with lying lips and spreads slander is a fool. **10:18**

A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret. **11:13**

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. **11:25**

Good people obtain favor from the Lord, but he condemns those who devise wicked schemes. **12:2**

Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up. **12:25**

Dishonest money dwindles away, but whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow. **13:11**

A fool's mouth lashes out with pride, but the lips of the wise protect them. **14:3**

It is a sin to despise one's neighbor, but blessed is the one who is kind to the needy.

**14:21**

A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones. **14:30**

Better a small serving of vegetables with love than a fattened calf with hatred. **15:17**

The greedy stir up conflict, but those who trust in the Lord will prosper. **28:25**

Better a dry crust of bread with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with arguments. **17:1**

Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a disagreement breaks out. **17:14**

To answer before listening — that is silly and shameful. **18:13**

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done. **19:17**

Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise. **19:20**

Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise. **20:1**

Those who give to the poor will lack nothing, but those who close their eyes to them will receive many curses. **28:27**

A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid anyone who talks too much. **20:19**

Rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all. **22:2**

If you falter in a time of trouble, how small is your strength! **24:10**

## Modern proverbs

- A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.
- A change is as good as a rest.
- A dog is a man's best friend.
- A fool and his money are soon parted.
- A friend in need is a friend indeed.
- A house divided against itself cannot stand.
- A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.
- A leopard cannot change its spots.
- A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.
- A little of what you fancy does you good.
- A man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client.
- A new broom sweeps clean.
- A picture paints a thousand words.
- A place for everything and everything in its place.
- A poor workman always blames his tools.
- A problem shared is a problem halved.
- A rolling stone gathers no moss.
- A stitch in time saves nine.
- A trouble shared is a trouble halved.
- A volunteer is worth twenty pressed men.