

# The Quarterly Journal



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## The Gospel of Self-Esteem

### Are We Really Better Than We Think?

by David M. Tyler

Archie, a bi-vocational pastor, sought counseling. At the first session, he gave a synopsis of his problem:

Archie said his whole life had been one problem after another. His parents divorced when he was 10 years old. His father verbally abused both him and his mother. He never had many friends in school and felt lonely. Archie thought things would get better after he got married, but said things have not changed very much. Unfortunately, Archie said, he and his wife have been having marital problems for the past six years. Archie maintained he has always felt inferior. He had no self-esteem. He asked how he could expect anyone to love him if he didn't love himself. Archie said he needed to learn to love himself so he could have normal relationships and a happy life.

Archie's account said a lot about what he believes regarding the nature of man. Archie's words convey the belief that:

- Self-esteem is a vital element of human personality.
- Self-esteem is a feeling and not a thought process.



- Self-love is a prerequisite to being loved by others and loving others, including God.

- A person must fix his poor self-image.

Archie and his wife, Edith, serve the Lord at a nearby Baptist church. They met while they were attending a Bible college in the Midwest. Archie believes in the inerrancy of God's Word and is very orthodox when it comes to his preaching and teaching ministry. However, when it comes to solving life's problems, Archie is very unorthodox.

Archie is like many believers who have no practical or "everyday" theology. Archie has taught others the doctrines of sin, salvation, and the connection between faith and works. He has preached at Bible conferences and revival meetings. Unfortunately,

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- Being mistreated by others can cause a person's self-image to deteriorate and/or not develop properly.

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