

# **A Sober View of Self IN Christ**

— God-Given Value, Humility, and Confidence —

- God's Word Must Shape How We Think of Ourselves
- God Shows the True Value of Every Soul
- The Christian Denies Self and Lives by Faith IN Christ
- Christian Confidence Shows Itself in Love, Courage, and Hope

Some ask or contemplate, "What or How, should I think about myself?"

The Bible gives a better first question: "What has God said, and how should I live before Him?"

A Christian must not build his life on self-exaltation, self-pity, comparison with others, or the praise of men.

When one receives and considers, the whole counsel of God ([Acts 20:27](#)), They'll discover, that God's word gives a complete and balanced view of self.

- It teaches that man is created by God, known by God, and valuable to God.
- It also teaches that man must humble himself, deny himself, repent of sin, and live by faith IN Christ.

The Bible does not lead us to boast in self.

It leads us to sober thinking, thankful obedience, love for others, and confidence in the Lord.

God willing, this lesson will consider four Bible truths:

- first, God's word must shape our thinking;
- second, God shows the true value of every soul;
- third, the Christian denies self and lives by faith;
- and lastly, Christian confidence is shown in love, courage, and hope.

Before we consider how a Christian should feel about their self, we must consider, who has the right to define what is true — God's word must be first.

## I. God's Word Must Shape How We Think of Ourselves

The psalmist teaches that truth is not found by choosing only the parts of Scripture we like. God's word as a whole is truth.

- Scripture says, "**The sum of Thy word is truth; And every one of thy righteous ordinances endureth for ever.**" ([Psa.119:160](#) ASV)

Explanation:

- "**Word**" refers to — God's revealed message.
- "**Ordinances**" are — God's righteous decisions and commands.
- God's word is truth in its whole testimony, which never fades.

Paul reminds Timothy that Scripture is sufficient to equip the servant of God.

- He said, "**All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**" ([2Tim.3:16-17](#))

Explanation:

- "**Inspiration**" means — Scripture is from God (God-breathed).
- "**Doctrine**" is — teaching.
- "**Reproof**" exposes error.
- "**Correction**" sets right.
- "**Thoroughly furnished**" means — fully equipped.

Since God's word is the authority, the first place it must rule, is the heart.

## A. The Heart Must Be Directed by God

Solomon warns that outward words may sound friendly, while the heart is somewhere else. God teaches us to consider the inner man.

- The Bible says, "For as he **thinketh** in his **heart**, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee." ([Prov.23:7](#))

Explanation:

- "Thinketh" points to — inner reasoning.
- "Heart" is the — inner person: thoughts, desires, and purposes.
- The verse shows that the heart reveals the real man.

Jeremiah confesses, that man cannot safely guide himself apart from God.

- He said, "O LORD, I know that the **way** of man is NOT in himself: it is NOT in man that walketh, to **direct** his steps." ([Jer.10:23](#))

Explanation:

- "Way" means — the course of life.
- "Direct" means — to guide, and so, man needs God to guide his steps.

Wisdom tells us what to do, when our own understanding wants to lead.

- Scripture says, "**Trust** in the LORD with all thine heart; and **lean not** unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways **acknowledge** Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: **fear the LORD**, and depart from evil." ([Prov.3:5-7](#))

Explanation:

- "Trust" means — rely upon.
- "Lean not" means — do not rest the weight of life on self.
- "Acknowledge" means — recognize God in all things.
- "Fear the LORD" means — reverent obedience.

Think of the heart as the path, on which the feet walk.

- If the heart trusts self, the steps wander.
- If the heart trusts the Lord, He directs the path.
- So the Christian's view of self, begins by putting God's word over one's own feelings.

When the heart is directed by God, the Christian learns to,

## B. Think Soberly, Not Proudly

Paul speaks to every Christian, about the danger of an inflated view of self.

- He said, "through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, NOT to think of himself **more highly** than he ought to think; but to think **soberly**, according as **God hath dealt** to every man, the **measure of faith**." ([Rom.12:3](#); see also [2Cor.10:12](#))

Explanation:

- "More highly" means — lifted up beyond what is right.
- "Soberly" means — with clear, sound, humble judgment before God.
- "Measure" means — a portion, standard, or rule that is assigned.
- "Faith" is — trust in God and His word (Rom.10:17).
- "God hath dealt" shows — this measure comes from God, not from self.
- So, "the measure of faith" refers to — the standard of faith God has given through His word, by which each person is to evaluate oneself.

The mind of Christ, teaches us how to treat others, when self wants first place.

- The Bible says, "Let nothing be done through **strife** or **vainglory**; but in **lowliness of mind**, let each **esteem** other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:" ([Phil.2:3-5](#))

Explanation:

- "Strife" is — selfish rivalry.
- "Vainglory" is — empty pride.
- "Lowliness of mind" is — humility.
- "Esteem" means — to regard or count.

James shows that sorrow for sin and humility before God, come before being lifted up.

- He said, "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. **Humble yourselves** in the sight of the Lord, and He shall **lift you up**." ([Jas.4:9-10](#))

Explanation:

- "Humble yourselves" means — lower yourself before God.
- "Lift you up" means — God, not self, gives the true exaltation.

Wisdom plainly warns where pride leads.

- "**Pride** goeth before **destruction**, and an **haughty** spirit before a **fall**." ([Prov.16:18](#))

Explanation:

- "Pride" is — self-exaltation, self-ego, arrogance and confidence in self alone.
- "Haughty" means — lifted up.
- "Destruction" and "fall" show — the end of pride.

The Bible gives a balanced scale.

- On one side, do not think more highly of yourself than you ought.
- On the other side, do not reject what God says, about His care for you.
- Sober thinking, lets God set the measure.

God's word must govern the Christian's view of self.

The heart must be directed by God, and pride must yield to humility.

- The Christian does not ask, "How can I make myself great?"
- He asks, "What has God said, and how can I obey Him?"

Humility does not mean, God sees His people as worthless.

The same Bible that condemns pride, also reveals that...

## II. God Shows the True Value of Every Soul

Jesus teaches, that the soul is worth more than all earthly gain.

- He said, "For what is a man **profited**, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own **soul**? or what shall a man give in **exchange** for his soul?" ([Matt.16:26](#))

Explanation:

- "Profit" is — gain.
- "Soul" is — the person before God.
- "Exchange" means — trade.
- No earthly gain, is worth the loss of the soul.

To understand true worth, begin where the Bible begins — man is made by God and accountable to God.

## A. Made in God's Image and Remembered by God

The first chapter of Genesis, reveals that man is not an accident and not merely another creature. Man is made in God's image.

- "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion, over the fish of the sea; and over the fowl of the air; and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing, that creepeth upon the earth." ([Gen.1:26](#))

Explanation:

- "Image" and "likeness" show — man's special relation to God.
- "Dominion" means — God gave man rule and responsibility under Him.

David looks at the heavens, and marvels that God is mindful of man.

- He said, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained;

What is man, that Thou art **mindful** of him?  
and the son of man, that Thou **visitest** him?

For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,  
and hast crowned him with **glory** and **honour**." ([Psa.8:3-5](#))

Explanation:

- "Mindful" means — God remembers and regards man.
- "Visitest" means — God attends to man.
- "Glory" and "honour" show — a dignity given by God.

Jesus uses the sparrow, to teach disciples not to fear being forgotten.

- He said, "Are not five **sparrows** sold for two farthings, and **not** one of them is **forgotten** before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all **numbered**. Fear not therefore: ye are of **more value** than many sparrows." ([Lk.12:6-7](#))

Explanation:

- "Sparrows" were small and inexpensive, yet not forgotten by God.
- "Not Forgotten" means — not overlooked.
- "Numbered" shows — full knowledge.
- "More value" teaches — God knows and cares for each soul, yet all remain accountable to Him.

A sparrow may seem small to men, but it is not forgotten before God.

Even a child can understand, that If God notices a little bird, He is not careless with His children.

True worth, begins with God's knowledge and care, not with man's applause.

God's care is seen most clearly in Christ, where sinners are,

## B. Loved, Forgiven, and Blessed IN Christ

God's forgiveness IN Christ, teaches Christians how to treat one another.

- The Bible says, "be ye kind one to another, **tenderhearted**, **forgiving** one another, even as God **for Christ's sake**, hath forgiven you." ([Eph.4:32](#))

Explanation:

- "Tenderhearted" means — compassionate.
- "Forgiving" means — releasing the wrong.
- "For Christ's sake" shows — forgiveness rests on Christ.

Paul tells the Galatians, that God sent His Son, so that those under law, might be redeemed and made sons.

- He said, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To **redeem** them that were under the law, that we might receive the **adoption of sons**."

And because ye are sons,  
God hath sent forth the **Spirit of His Son** into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.  
Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son;  
and if a son, then an **heir** of God through Christ." ([Gal.4:4-7](#))

Explanation:

- "Redeem" means — to buy back or release from bondage.
- "Adoption of sons" means — being received into the standing of God's children.
- "Spirit of His Son" shows — the relationship and standing of those who belong to God, as His children. It emphasizes — sonship and fellowship with God, not a self-directed or emotional standard apart from His word.
- "Heir" means — one who receives an inheritance.

Paul shows, that the blessings that matter most, are found IN Christ.

- He said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all **spiritual blessings**, in heavenly places **IN Christ**." ([Eph.1:3](#))

Explanation:

- "Spiritual blessings" are — blessings from God, that belong to salvation and life IN Christ.
- "IN Christ" shows — where these blessings are found.

God's love is not because sinners earned it, but because God is rich in mercy.

- The Bible says, "God **commendeth** His love toward us, in that, while we were **yet sinners**, **Christ died for us**." ([Rom.5:8](#))

Explanation:

- "Commendeth" means — demonstrates or proves.
- "Yet sinners" shows — our need.
- "Christ died for us" shows — the greatness of God's love.

The gospel does not teach a Christian to say, "I am worthy because I am great."  
It teaches him to say, "God is merciful; Christ died for sinners; IN Christ I am forgiven and blessed."  
That produces gratitude, not pride.

After we see that God values the soul,  
Scripture tells us what to do with self — We do not worship self.

### III. The Christian Denies Self and Lives by Faith IN Christ

Paul explains the life of faith, as a life in which Christ lives in him.

- He said, "I am **crucified with Christ**: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the **faith** of the Son of God, Who loved me, and **gave Himself for me**." ([Gal.2:20](#))

Explanation:

- "Crucified with Christ" means — self-rule is put to death.
- "Faith" is — trusting obedience in Christ.
- "Gave himself for me" shows — Christ's sacrificial love.

Self-denial is not saying that God made a worthless person.

## A. Self-Denial Means Surrendering the Will to God

Jesus calls every disciple to a daily surrender.

- "He said to them all, If any man will **come after Me**, let him **deny** himself, and take up his **cross daily**, and **follow Me**." ([Lk.9:23](#))

### Explanation:

- "Come after Me" means — become Christ's disciple.
- "Deny" means — say no to self-rule.
- "Cross" points to — sacrifice and suffering.
- "Daily" shows — continual commitment.
- "Follow" means — obey His path.

Jesus Himself shows complete submission to the Father's will.

- He said, "I can of mine own self, do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I **seek Not Mine own will**, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me." ([Jn.5:30](#))

### Explanation:

- "Seek" means — pursue.
- "Not Mine own will" means — Not self-directed desire, apart from the Father's will.
- Jesus sought the Father's will.

James shows, that selfish desires create conflict.

- He said, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your **lusts**, that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye **ask amiss**, that ye may **consume it upon your lusts**." ([Jas.4:1-3](#))

### Explanation:

- "Lusts" are — selfish desires.
- "Ask amiss" means — asking wrongly.
- "Consume it upon your lusts" means — using things for selfish pleasure.

In Gethsemane, Jesus gives the clearest example of yielding the will, to God.

- The Bible says that Jesus, "went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this **cup** pass from Me: nevertheless **Not as I will, but as Thou wilt**." ([Matt.26:39](#))

### Explanation:

- "Cup" refers to — the suffering before Him.
- "Not as I will, but as thou wilt" shows — full submission to the Father's will.

The Scriptures do not teach us, to make self-will the master.

Jesus teaches something higher: "Follow me."

The Christian's life is not built on getting his own way, but on surrendering his will to God.

When self is surrendered, the Christian does not become weak in the sense of being helpless. He becomes strong in the Lord.

## B. Strength Comes Through Grace, Not Self-Reliance

Paul learned, that weakness can become, the place where Christ's power is seen.

- He was told, "**My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.**" ([2Cor.12:9-10](#))

### Explanation:

- "**Grace**" is — God's favor and help. When God gives what we need and not what we deserve.
- "**Sufficient**" means — enough.
- "**Weakness**" is — not trust in self, but dependence on Christ's power.

Paul's well-known statement about strength is centered in Christ, not self.

- He said, "**I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.**" ([Phil.4:13](#))

### Explanation:

- "**Through Christ**" means — Christ is the source.
- "**Strengtheneth**" means — gives ability and power to endure and obey.

Paul remembered what he had been, and he gave thanks that Christ enabled him.

- He said, "**I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord, was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is IN Christ Jesus.**

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am **chief**. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a **pattern** to them, which should hereafter believe on him, to life everlasting." ([1Tim.1:12-16](#))

### Explanation:

- "**Enabled**" means — strengthened for service.
- "**Mercy**" is — God's compassion toward the guilty.
- "**Chief**" shows — Paul's humble view of his sin.
- "**Pattern**" means — example.

Paul explains that his labor was the result of God's grace.

- He said, "**by the grace of God, I am what I am: and His grace, which was bestowed upon me, was Not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet Not I, but the grace of God, which was with me.**" ([1Cor.15:10](#))

### Explanation:

- "**Grace**" is — unmerited or unworked for, favor from God.
- "**Not in vain**" means — not empty or useless.
- "**Yet not I**" shows — Paul refused self-boasting.

Paul did not deny that he worked — He said he laboured. But he would not take the glory to himself. That is the Christian's proper confidence — work faithfully, but give God the glory.

When self is governed by God's word, valued by God's care, and surrendered to Christ, the result is not gloom or fear — The result is faithful confidence.

## IV. Christian Confidence Shows Itself in Love, Courage, and Hope

Paul reminds Timothy, that God does not give His people a cowardly spirit.

- He said, "For God hath Not given us, the spirit of **fear**; but of **power**, and of love, and of a **sound mind**." ([2Tim.1:7](#))

Explanation:

- "Fear" is — cowardice or timidity before duty.
- "Power" is — strength from God.
- "Sound mind" is — disciplined, sober thinking.

The Christian's view of self must produce love, not selfishness.

### A. Love God and Others With a Proper View of Self

Jesus teaches, that love begins with God, and reaches outward to our neighbour.

- He said, "Thou shalt **love the Lord thy God** with all thy **heart**, and with all thy **soul**, and with all thy **mind**. This is the **first** and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy **neighbour as thyself**." ([Matt.22:37-39](#))

Explanation:

- "Love" is — devoted obedience and care.
- "Heart", "soul", and "mind" show — the whole person.
- "First" shows — God's place above all.
- "Neighbour" means — the one, to whom love and duty are owed.
- "As thyself" assumes — a proper care, that becomes a measure for serving others.

Paul applies proper care of self, to the husband's love for his wife.

- He said, "So **ought** men to love their wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but **nourisheth** and **cherisheth** it, even as the Lord the church:" ([Eph.5:28-29](#))

Explanation:

- "Ought" means — duty.
- "Nourisheth" means — feeds and supports.
- "Cherisheth" means — warmly cares for.
- Proper care for self, becomes a pattern of love for others.

John teaches that love for God, must show itself in love for one's brother.

- He said, "We love him, because He **first loved us**. If a man say, I love God, and **hateth** his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this **commandment** have we from Him, That he who loveth God, love his brother also." ([1Jn.4:19-21](#))

Explanation:

- "First loved us" shows — God's love, as the beginning.
- "Hateth" is — the opposite of love.
- "Commandment" means — this is required by God.

Paul calls Christians to honor one another, above self-seeking.

- He said, "**Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour, preferring one another;**" ([Rom.12:10](#))

Explanation:

- "Kindly affectioned" is — warm family-like care.
- "Brotherly love" is — love among brethren.
- "Preferring" means — going before in showing honor.

A proper view of self, does not stop with self.

If I know God made me, cares for me, and forgave me in Christ, then I must treat others, as souls made by God and loved by God.

Love does not remove hardship,

But it gives the Christian, courage to stand with Christ and hope beyond this life.

## **B. Stand Without Shame and Look to Eternity**

Paul teaches that rejoicing, prayer, thanksgiving, and peace, belong to life IN the Lord.

- He said, "**Rejoice in the Lord** always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your **moderation** be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. **Be careful for nothing;** but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the **peace of God,** which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." ([Phil.4:4-7](#))

Explanation:

- "Rejoice in the Lord" means — joy is centered in Him.
- "Moderation" is — gentleness or forbearance.
- "Be careful for nothing" means — do not be consumed with anxiety or worry.
- "Peace of God" keeps the heart and mind through Christ.

Jesus teaches disciples, not to be ashamed, when reviled for righteousness.

- He said, "**Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.** Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets, which were before you.

Ye are the **salt of the earth:** but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the **light** of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick;

and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men,

that they may see your good works, and **glorify your Father** which is in heaven." ([Matt.5:11-16](#))

Explanation:

- "Revile" means — insult.
- "For my sake" means — because of loyalty to Christ.
- "Salt" and "light" show — influence for God.
- "Glorify your Father" shows — the purpose of good works.

Peter tells Christians how to respond, when suffering comes because they belong to Christ.

- He said, "Yet if any man suffer as a **Christian**, let him **not be ashamed**; but let him **glorify God** on this behalf." ([1Pet.4:16](#))

Explanation:

- "**Christian**" identifies — one who belongs to Christ.
- "**Not be ashamed**" means — do not hang the head in disgrace.
- "**Glorify God**" means — honor Him openly.
- "**On this behalf**" teaches that — the reason for suffering, determines whether it brings shame or glory to God.

Paul teaches Christians, to look beyond temporary affliction, to eternal glory.

- He said, "For which cause we **faint not**; but though our **outward man** perish, yet the **inward man** is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are **temporal**; but the things which are not seen are **eternal**." ([2Cor.4:16-18](#))

Explanation:

- "**Faint not**" means — do not lose heart.
- "**Outward man**" is — the physical life.
- "**Inward man**" is — the spiritual life.
- "**Temporal**" means — temporary.
- "**Eternal**" means — without end.

Paul asks, what fear can defeat the person, who stands with God.

- He said, "What shall we then say to these things? If **God be for us**, who can be against us?"  
<sup>37</sup> "Nay, in all these things we are **more than conquerors** through Him that loved us." ([Rom.8:31,37](#))

Explanation:

- "**God be for us**" means — God is on the side of His faithful people.
- "**More than conquerors**" means — victory through Christ, not through self.

Jesus called His disciples light. Light does not apologize for shining. It shines so the Father is glorified. Christian confidence is not showing off — it is standing with Christ without shame.

Christian confidence is — the result of trusting God by faith, not confidence produced by self.

It loves God, loves others, refuses shame for Christ, prays instead of being ruled by anxiety, and looks to eternal things.

The Christian's confidence is not in self as the source, but in the Lord who strengthens, saves, and keeps.

We now draw a close to the lesson with some

## V. Final Thoughts

The Bible gives a complete view of self.

- God's word must govern the heart.
- God gives true value by creation, care, and redemption.
- The Christian denies self and lives by faith IN Christ.
- Christian confidence, is shown through love, courage, and eternal hope.

### Some Lessons learned:

- Do not make self the center.
- Do not think more highly than you ought to think.
- Do not call worthless, what God made, knows, and values.
- Do not confuse humility with despair.
- Do not confuse confidence with pride.
- Be **humble** before God, **thankful** for grace, **active** in love, and **courageous** IN Christ.

Scripture says,

- Avoid comparison, as a measure of worth ([2Cor.10:12](#)).
- Seek God's approval, rather than the praise of men ([Gal.1:10](#)).
- Cast care upon God, while humbling yourself under His hand ([1Pet.5:6-7](#)).
- Remember that there is no condemnation, for those who are IN Christ and walking after the Spirit ([Rom.8:1](#)).

The Christian is committed to:

- I will not exalt myself — I will humble myself before God.
- I will not despise the soul God values — I will thank Him for His care.
- I will not live by self-rule — I will live by faith IN Christ.
- I will not be ashamed of being a Christian — I will glorify God.

### The Lesson is yours!

It is the Lord who invites, and we await to assist.

Won't you come...

- Hearing the gospel ([Rom.10:17](#)),
- Believing in Christ ([Heb.11:6](#); [Jn.8:24](#)),
- Repenting of sins ([Lk.13:3](#); [Acts 17:30](#)),
- Confessing your belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God ([Acts 8:37](#); [Rom.10:9-10](#)),
- And being baptized for the forgiveness of sins ([Acts 22:16](#); [Mk.16:16](#); [Acts 2:38](#); [1Pet.3:21](#); [Gal.3:26-27](#)).

...while we stand and while we sing.