

Believing in Yourself for the Right Reason because God has made you who you are

By and Based on the Books of Robert J. Cormier (www.thefaithkit.org)
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Most people have no idea how airplanes fly. And most of those who think they do know have it wrong.

Common sense tells them that the plane goes up because, as it goes forward, the rush of air under its wings pushes it up.

In fact, the plane goes up because of the rush of air *over* its wings. A plane flies because the top of its wings is shaped like a “bump” which, as it moves through the air, scatters the air-pressure over the wing. (Of course, the absolute truth is a little more complicated.)

Thus, a plane goes up not because of the higher air pressure under its wings but because of the lower air pressure over its wings.

In plain English, planes are not pushed up; they are sucked up.

Most people have it backwards.

We can say the same about most people’s idea of the love of God. Even those people who believe in God, and believe that He loves them, believe that He loves them despite them. God is good; they are bad; but, being so good, God loves them anyway.

But it is not possible to love people *despite* who they are. You cannot love what is not lovable. You cannot love a chair!

No, God loves you because of you—because of the beautiful soul He sees when He looks at you.

And when you hear that God loves you with His whole heart—and you know that it’s true because God can do nothing half-way—the reason is that He has put His whole self into making you someone He can love with all His heart, and, therefore, no less than He has put into the making of anyone else.

Now, as clear as this may be, people have a hard time accepting it. There are several reasons:

For one, they judge themselves backwards. This is what happens: We are born. We can do little more than nothing. We know nothing, and we are utterly self-centered. Yet, in seven short years, we get to the point where we

can hear the word “perfect” and have some idea of what it means. So, how does this make us feel? Do we rejoice because we have come so far? No, immediately we begin to get down on ourselves because we are not perfect.

As if we *could* be perfect. As if we know what perfect is. The fact is: We cannot know what perfect is. Perfect is what God will make us when we die. Right now, this is more than we could ever imagine. (And the more we grow, the better we know this.) In any case, on the road to perfection we do not know how much farther we have to go.

But we do know how far we have come. All of us were born as babies. Now we are so much more. It is this that should get our attention. After all, it is growth that is remarkable. Grow is what we have actually done. And we should be happy about it rather than miserable about the growth that has yet to come.

But this is not how we see things. We judge ourselves backwards. And there are other reasons people are rarely happy with who they are.

Here’s one: All of us were raised by constantly being corrected. This, of course, was necessary. Babies have to be told if they are too close to something hot or something they could break, and being corrected is how we learn to speak. But if correction was all we ever heard, it seemed that we were always wrong.

Here’s another reason people are rarely happy with who they are: Almost everyone around us has the same problem. Thus, we are surrounded by people who have difficulty acknowledging the goodness in others and act as if there’s none to see.

Here’s the biggest reason people are rarely happy with who they are: They are not trying to believe in themselves for the right reason: because God has made us who we are.

If we do not believe in ourselves because we believe that God has made us who we are, we are bound to get our idea of ourselves in two wrong ways:

- 1) From the opinions of others.
- 2) Comparing ourselves to others.

Either of these ways will lead us into trouble.

If we get our idea of ourselves from the opinions of others, we live at the mercy of their opinions right *or wrong*. We will be getting our idea of

ourselves from people who do not see our soul, do not understand our part in God's plan, do not see the person we are going to be in heaven, and often have their own self-centered reasons to like someone or not. Even if they seem to like us—and, of course, we never know—we will still feel insecure. After all, they like us only while we please them.

If we get our idea of ourselves by comparing ourselves to others, we are sure to put us down. This happens for one or more of the following four reasons:

First of all, we compare our insides with other people's outsides. In other words, we are all too aware of our own imperfection. What we do not see is the inner struggle of others.

Secondly, we compare our-selves to other people's *things*. We think of ourselves as less if someone else has more things, money, talent at something, fame, or power. It does not occur to us that nothing is more important than who we are in terms of our hearts.

Thirdly, we compare ourselves with the people we see on television. It does not occur to us that what we see has been carefully staged to make the people we see look good. We even compare ourselves with fictional characters whose abilities or adventures are really had by no one. (Who has a new adventure every week?)

Finally, we make no allowances. We rarely take into consideration differences in ability or opportunity which no one brought upon themselves. (When you consider how little some people were given, it's amazing how far they've come.)

God, however, always makes allowances. He judges us rightly because everything that has ever happened to us has followed His plan.

This has to be true because God is God. God is behind all things. Nothing happens apart from His will. He made us to love us, and certainly He has not left our destiny in the hands of fortune, or other people's badness, or anything else. No, when He made the world He put into action a plan for everything that would ever happen, including all the events of all of our lives. He did this knowing how we would respond to these events. In this way, we become people He can love with all His heart, while, in the process, each of us still becomes our own person.

Actually, what we become is the seed, just the seed of the person God needs us to be, a seed that He transforms when we die and brings to the full life of heaven.

It was to form this seed that God gave us our starting point in life, and the struggles which have made us who we are so far.

What is more, into the making of this seed, God has put just as much love as He has put into the making of the seed of anyone else.

This has to be true because God is not like us. We are only human, limited in every way. We have only so much time, energy, and money. If we give, we have less to give to someone else. Therefore, we must divide up what we give, and frequently we give more to one than to another. God, however, is not like us. God is infinite. He could put His whole self into the making of each and every one of us. We know that He did so because He is God, because He is good, and because He had no reason not to.

God has put His whole self into the making of each and every one of us. He has made each of us absolutely and no less special than anyone else. He loves each of us with all His heart. Indeed, *God could not love you more if you were the only person He ever made.*

If we believe this, that we are so loved, that God sees goodness within us, our goodness comes out.

If we believe that we are good, we feel good. If we feel good, we do good; we love. This is how our goodness resembles God's. His goodness had to be expressed; He made us. If we feel good, we too will care about more than just ourselves.

If we care about others, we will feel better; we will do better, and we will feel better still. This is how love grows.

If we do not see the goodness in ourselves, however, we cannot afford to see the goodness in others. The goodness in others will make us feel bad about who we are. We cannot love. (We can be nice to those from whom we want something, but this is not love and it does not last. We can do good in order to feel that we are good—that we are not bad—but we will not feel good doing it.) Not loving, we will feel worse about who we are, and so it goes.

Not loving, being insecure, we will be unhappy.

Not loving, being insecure, we will easily fall prey to manipulation of all sorts. We will waste our time and money on things that cannot give us worth or make us happy, suffer desperately over relationships, and make lots of mistakes looking for love or maybe just power.

But, we can also know this: Since everything that happens follows God's plan, we cannot lose His love. No matter what we do, no matter why we say we do it, God had His reasons we had to go through it.

Knowing this never inspires evil. Rather, if we really believe that God loves us for who we are—not for what we do—we will feel the need to love God back. And we will not be satisfied unless we believe we are doing the best we can.

This is God's way of bringing about holiness, not by fear—how would that bring about holiness?—but by love which, by His design of our nature, inspires love.

Accept God's love! Believe in yourself for the right reason: because God has made you who you are! Be yourself, and please be happy you are you!

No2C's

How We Practice the Love of Self

The two c's are comparing ourselves to others and criticizing ourselves for what we cannot do, or have done and cannot change. We say "no" to this on account of our faith.

Clearly and absolutely, our faith proclaims to us that God's plan for everything is also God's plan for us, and that He has put His whole self into making us, and no less than He has put into the making of anyone else.

Yes, our life is a struggle, but it's a special struggle that is meant to form us into the seed of a special person who will have a place in heaven no one else can fill.

And it does not matter that the world cannot see this—now.

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