

I will assume that you have gone through a few previous lessons on our identity and especially the last lesson on spiritual inventory where I asked you some key questions. If you feel you are missing anything, go back and fill in the blanks. Study it in God's Word and wrestle it out in prayer. If necessary confess to Jesus what is still needed. It is very important foundation for the following! Your partner who will think and search with you can be of great help here; or someone more mature, more experienced. You can move on with confidence and joy.

In various seminars I usually ask: In what ways is consciousness of our self-worth formed in us? What shapes us that someone knows and accepts his/her identity with confidence and gratitude, while someone else – perhaps more gifted, educated, and even experienced – lives in long held self-doubts and insecurity? People are usually very aware that our childhood shapes us! We derive our value or identity from the attitude we perceived from our parents. Other authority figures and their attitudes towards us certainly play a significant role. This includes grandparents, teachers, later bosses at work, of course authorities in the church if we grew up there, even some neighbors, and so on. We are also influenced by our own comparisons with peers. When we are better at something, we try to maintain a little bit of superiority, and that builds a sense of worth. If we feel that everyone is better than us, we have a hard time in the world.

You've probably noticed with a number of people (and maybe even yourself) that our fathers play very specific and significant role in our self-concept! Affirmation or, on the contrary, humiliation, or disinterest or absence of our fathers is remembered by some people even decades after their death. (Often only subconsciously; or it is part of their thinking even unconsciously...)

It seems that even Jesus needed to hear out loud the great and clear fatherly, „*You are my beloved Son, in you I have found my delight.*“ Down here on earth, the Heavenly Father says this statement to His Son for the first time just before His public appearance. (Matthew 3:17) Jesus hasn't done anything visible yet, and in front of everyone the heavenly Father says to Him, „You are my beloved Son, in you I am well pleased.“ From here it is clear that Jesus identity is not about His performance, a merit or a job well done. Simply, „*My delight is in YOU!*“ – not primarily in your ministry. And the same affirming statement Jesus hears

from His Heavenly Father just before the very climax of His work, on the Mount of Transfiguration, where He chats with Moses and Elijah about His coming suffering, *„This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;“* and the Heavenly Father adds strong instruction, *„obey Him.“* (Matthew 17:5)

When our fathers and perhaps other co-creators of our lives have totally failed, or when some couldn't be present, are we destined to undervalue ourselves? I hear the question of whether, or how, we can correct warped or even vague perception of our worth. Some even ask me sometimes how have I myself dealt with my dad's absence in my life, when he tragically died less than three months after I was born...

I want to assure you that there is a solution! And it's extremely important that we embrace that solution! As soon as possible! I'm not promising you a quick and easy fix that of everything immediately. On the other hand, our inner healing doesn't have to take years, nor even months...

Very briefly, I will present you the main steps that have already helped many people to grasp their own identity. I will definitely recommend you to watch it all several times, together with your partner. Involve him/her in your thinking, pray with them! And if necessary, involve someone more experienced...

*Lord Jesus, You alone bring true healing to our souls, and precious fulfillment to our lives and all of our needs...*