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By Jon Dewey

I do a lot of talking and listening with young people. A trend which is starting to bother me is the amount of low self-esteem which is floating around out there.

Don't believe me? Tell a bright, talented kid that he or she is just that, bright and talented, and most often the response is "if you say so" (with a shrug) or "No, not me."

The young people I talk to genuinely have a low estimate of their personal value. It's very difficult to convince them otherwise. I was very confused about this, until I realized why my opinion was so different from theirs. I knew that they had value and worth - just 'cause God said so.

Human beings are very unique creatures. While we get a certain amount of self-esteem from our achievements, the real reason we have value is because our Creator says we have it. Listen to what the biblical writers recorded as God's message for us:

Psalm 139:14, 15 - "...for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth."

Jeremiah 1:5 - "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

We are not here because of an accident. We are created in the image of God, through processes which are too marvelous for us to even comprehend. We are not set adrift on the earth, but we have been given life for a specific purpose. All this means one thing - we have actual value which has been ascribed to us by our Creator.

This value we do not ever have to earn, but is simply given to us. No one has to find personal value through relationships, possessions, money or achievements.

It is already there. Just 'cause.

Dewey is an active duty soldier and an independent evangelist who recently arrived in the Leesville/Fort Polk area. He is the author of the booklet "Being a Christian in the Military."

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<http://www.pilgrimswaymin.org>
pilgrimswaymin@yahoo.com***