



## God's Word--The Answer to Both 'Esteem' Problems

Editorial Comment by Warren Krug

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**W**e've heard much in recent years about a problem that many young people have with a lack of self-esteem. Depression, suicides, eating disorders—these all have been held up as, and likely are, signs that many young adults see themselves as lacking in worth.

However, parents, teachers, and others who work with young people know there can be another side—"too much self-esteem" among many of the youth.

So, it was not a big surprise to read of a comprehensive new study by five psychologists who worry that there is a real trend toward narcissism (self-love) and self-centeredness growing among college students.

Professor Jean Twenge of San Diego State U. and her crew worry that this could be harmful to personal relationships and American society unless checked.

They examined the responses of 16,475 collegians nationwide who finished an evaluation called the Narcissistic Personality Inventory between 1982 and 2006.

The NPI asks for responses to such statements as "If I ruled the world, it would be a better place," "I think I am a special person" and "I can live my life any way I want to."

The researchers have noted an increase over the years in the "narcissistic" scores with two-thirds of the students now earning that designation.

A breakdown of personal relationships, a lack of emotional warmth, dishonesty, a controlling personality, and violent behavior are all possible consequences of narcissism, the study says.

Not surprisingly, the Holy Scriptures have an answer for those suffering this disorder who wish to pay attention to the Bible.

*"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"* (Romans 3:23) and *"all our righteous acts are like filthy rags"* (Isaiah 64:6) and similar passages should help anyone having a problem with conceit.

But there are words of comfort for those of low self-esteem. *"God loved the world"* (John 3:16) and *"the very hairs of your head are numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."*

God's Word and, when helpful, medical assistance and counseling are the best ways to treat all esteem problems. *LSI*

—Warren Krug, editor