

Bible Study  
FEAR OF SELF  
(Rupert – 11/07/10)

The only way for these studies to have an impact on us is if we are willing to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal our inner fears, engage with them and risk vulnerability. It is important to **listen well** to each other and respect people's sharing and confidentiality. Most importantly be open to the fact that we have a MIGHTY COUNSELLOR who wants to work in our lives and transform us to become more like HIM. May God move amongst you and bless you richly!

Title of a book “*Why am I afraid to tell you who I am?*”

“I am afraid to tell you who I am because if I tell you, you may not like who I am and it's all I have!”

Fear affects every aspect of our lives – relationships being one.

We may feel we have to / or experience:

- put on a good show
- prove I am OK
- Perfectionism – (puts immense pressure on us to get everything right and perfect)
- Fear of failure = (often) avoidance
- Rupert found that preparing for this talk on fear brought every fear of his to the surface
- Wanting to impress
- Lauren gave her example of when she did her dance and the process she went through.
- We may say in a holy voice “It's not for me but for the Lord” but underneath we are saying “but please like it and tell me I'm good!”

**Does anyone relate to these things? Can anyone share a past testimony or present situation?**

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We are made in God's image. Imagine being in the garden of Eden with God like Adam and Eve were. The incredible sense of having complete security, self image directly reflecting God, intimate perfect relationship with both God and each other. No fear, insecurity, doubt/ When the fall happened we lost all of that.

As humans we all know that life isn't meant to be like this and we yearn for something better. We try to find ways to fill the gaps (substances / relationships etc.) we have messed up behaviour. We have a collective memory of something more. **Discuss what this means**

God's image in us has been broken. If you break a mirror we can still see ourselves in it but in a distorted way. A broken image means a broken life.

- Relationships
- unfulfilled longings
- insecurity
- lack of trust
- shame
- guilt
- fear
- anger
- loneliness
- bad choices
- destructive behaviour

## Romans 7:15 Discuss

### The power of false thinking – 'negative messages I believe about myself'

These can be like tapes running our head and playing and replaying things which we have taken on board in our lives.

Read Romans 12:2 +  
2 Corinthians 3:18

### Where do the messages come from?

- Parental voices
- significant others
- demonic voices
- Our responses to our deepest hurts
- traumatic life events
- Negative experiences of church

Any personal examples for any of these?

(Read the opening page of “What's so amazing about grace? Philip Yancey if you have it) look at the story of the young prostitute who says “ why would I want to go to church? I already feel bad enough about myself and church would just make me feel even worse about myself.

Why does she feel this about church?

Can anyone share an experience?

How would we rate OTCC ?

What can we do as followers of Jesus to address this “negative Church” issue?

Does anyone remember the “3 B's”? ( BELONG, BELIEVE, BEHAVE) this is the correct order but quite often it is thought that “The Church” (generally meaning most Christians) gives the impression that people should “first **behave** (meaning people must change their behaviour in order to become acceptable) then you **belong** (once you alter your behaviour we are able to become “part of”), then we believe.

This is not the right way round! People need to feel they first belong – just as they are and they are acceptable and welcome and loved. Then people believe and as a result of their belief their behaviour will start to change. This is a supernatural work of God – not a set of “should” rules.

### The power to change

- Look at Saul's transformation to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:7)
- Believe change is possible (I'm special – God can heal everyone else not me...)
- Wanting to change
- Willingness to face the pain – Jesus Would ask those he encountered “What do you want me to do?”
- The healing on the inside is as or more important than the healing of the outside
- Being real with God, ourselves, & others (taking the risk to share)
- By Loving the wounded part of ourselves (how do our wounds affect how we relate to others?)

- By waging war on self hatred
- DYING TO SELF – THIS IS HUGELY IMPORTANT – DISCUSS AND FIND BIBLE VERSES

ALL PEOPLE NEED TO BE LISTENED TO, TAKEN SERIOUSLY, UNDERSTOOD

- We need to give up our old tired survival strategies
- seek out a counsellor or trusted friend
- by making a conscious effort to rewrite our negative scripts (LOOK AT THE SHEET RUPERT GAVE OUT)
- Through being part of a loving church community
- Through the power of the Holy Spirit
- Through holding fast to what is true.