

Self-Acceptance

Here I am looking at the interplay between the imperfections of nature and our ability to accept them because we live in a fallen world. And I am looking at the love of God towards us despite our imperfections - which can lift us up emotionally, and help us accept ourselves. Finally I am looking at the hope we have in the promise of God to restore creation, as evidenced by the resurrection.

Our Fallen Nature

We all struggle with various habits and character weaknesses that are longstanding. But more common is our struggle with our acceptance of our physical selves. Nature has undergone a decline with the accumulation of mutations with each generation. So we have become physically imperfect with shortened lifespans, and with reduced abilities.

See <https://howbad.info/lifespan-nations.pdf>

The Mercy and Love of God

The mercy of God is expressed through His acceptance of us as we are – through His saving grace. The love of God pardons us for our weaknesses, then sanctifies us through the work of the Holy Spirit. So we are nurtured in God's love as we grow into Christ's likeness.

The Biblical view is that -

1. We are imperfect physically and morally
2. That God loves us none the less
3. That God is Creator and therefore is able to recreate us spiritually - sanctification
4. That God is Creator and therefore is able to recreate us physically
5. That each of us will be transformed physically through the resurrection

The promised transformation of each of us, spiritually and physically, is assured by the resurrection of Jesus- for which I have provided some evidence below.

See <https://howbad.info/stripes4.pdf> & <https://howbad.info/resurrection.pdf>

The Power of Self Acceptance

The process of acceptance and transformation is a process of healing that is very healthy. Self-acceptance is a powerful mental state / emotional state that can impact our happiness and our relations with others. Self-acceptance begins with justification, but does not mean we neglect physical or ethical goals – because we grow in sanctification.

There is another side to this. Lack of acceptance of ourselves can drive us to extreme effort to be acceptable. We may seek to excel , but always end up punishing ourselves because perfection is impossible. We will also impose these requirements upon others- so our attitude towards them will become severe and conditional . When they fail to meet our imposed standard we will feel hostility to them or blank rejection. So lack of self-acceptance creates an attitude of conditional acceptance that exerts a tyranny over ourselves and over how we treat others.

My Attitude to the Faults of Others

I was upset with the bad behaviour of some young people in a village near me, and complained about it to my African friend Yahiya.

He was surprised at my attitude, and said that **I should expect people to misbehave** - that it is natural and **will occur every day**. This sounds almost like the idea of innate sinfulness.

I realized the importance of his words. My anger was due to me expecting them to be good, and getting overly angry with them when they were not.

I find it hard to accept that people may easily slip into bad behaviour, in the same way that I found it hard to accept that people pushed the jab. But this is mainly due to a false expectation, and an intolerance. The Bible idea is that we are all sinners, so we should expect people to sin. It is our fallen state - physical, mental and behavioral imperfection. We should expect people to behave badly.

The Bible also indicates that I should not respond with anger , but with forgiveness, helping them improve – in a spirit of love.

