

His Workmanship

Christine Vander Wielen, MSW, LCSW

In 1943, Abraham Maslow's paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" was first published in which he outlined what he considered to be the "hierarchy of needs". Maslow asserted human behavior is motivated by physiological, safety, love and sense of belonging, esteem, and finally by self actualization needs. Although Maslow never used the pyramid himself, his "hierarchy of needs" is most often depicted in the shape of a pyramid with physiological needs forming the base and self actualization forming the top.

Later on, Maslow theorized there were two versions of esteem. The "lower version" of esteem focused on the need for respect from others. It included need for recognition, status, and attention from others. Whereas, the "higher version" of esteem focused on the need for self respect. This hierarchy of needs has greatly influenced the educational system, the business community, and even parenting styles.

This theory leaves much to be desired. Working to obtain the approval by others is also called co-dependence and is clearly unhealthy. So what does a healthy esteem look like?

In Ephesians 2:10, God's Word says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

The word for workmanship is the same word for poem, meaning His masterpiece or His handiwork.

According to Maslow, self actualization was the highest need in the hierarchy. In contrast to God's Word, self actualization focuses on what the individual does or accomplishes. As God's masterpiece, we were created for good works of love, compassion, mercy, service and help to one another. God's focus is on who we are in Christ versus what we do or accomplish.

When we internalize His truth that we are His masterpiece, created with a kingdom purpose a positive, healthy self esteem follows.

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P.O. Box 1676, Appleton, WI 54912 (920) 720-8920

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