



BIBLE TALK

Mike King

Question: In the context of Prov. 23:7, how can I increase my child's self-esteem?

Answer: The passage in question states, "As a man thinks in his heart so is he." Regardless of the age, our thoughts pretty much control the person. The Bible speaks frequently of the need for improving self-image or attitude. Consider the following:

- **Provide a secure environment.** This involves hugging, patting, and giving loving reassurance. Verbal expression of affection is not enough. The old rocking chair started many a child off right. Eph. 6:1-6 is helpful reading as well.
- **Try to understand them.** Know them well enough to see the world through their eyes, think with their brain and feel with their feelings so your child can't say, "But, you don't understand."
- **Be patient.** Is this one a tough one or what? We are able to endure troubles only when patient, even if prolonged. This will protect us from blow ups, rudeness or even harshness.
- **Have faith in them.** Our faith in them is a testimony to our trust in them. Faith creates more faith and usually their faith is created out of borrowed materials from the parents. Constant questioning and doubting create self-doubt in them. Jesus referred to Peter as "rock" when he was but a grain of sand...allowing him motivation to become "rock."
- **Be open and transparent.** An honest atmosphere is developed when parents are truthful and open with their children. This provides security as well. Suspicion develops when we are not open with feelings. Psychologists say, we reveal ourselves in our feelings more than in our words.
- **Praise and compliment them.** Try to keep criticism to a minimum. Children will live **up** to what you think of the as well as **down**. It takes 32 compliments to overcome one criticism!
- **Avoid labeling.** Avoid use of derogatory names like, stupid, dumb, etc. Replace such words with positive labels.

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