

Staff Work

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10-3-2016

## Finding Your Worth

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### Recommended Citation

De Groot, J. (2016). Finding Your Worth. Retrieved from [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/staff\\_work/45](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/staff_work/45)

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## Finding Your Worth

### Abstract

"I know in my heart of hearts that there is only one voice that gets to decide my worth."

Posting about our value in Christ from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/finding-your-worth/>

### Keywords

In All Things, values, self-perception, Christ, work

### Disciplines

Christianity

### Comments

*In All Things* is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

# Finding Your Worth

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 [inallthings.org/finding-your-worth/](http://allthings.org/finding-your-worth/)

Jonathan De Groot

October 3,  
2016

I have a group of buddies who I ride bike with about every week. We've gotten pretty close. Every once and a while when we're out on a ride, we encounter a farm dog that will chase us. Instincts kick in and we all gear down as adrenaline propels us forward, several mph faster. After we have gotten a safe distance away, someone inevitably jokes: "You don't have to be first, you just don't want to be last." We all laugh because we've been exposed: it's every man for himself. It's funny, but unfortunately I live that way a lot. When fear creeps in, so does my instincts for self-preservation.

In his book *Wholeheartedness* DeGroat says: "We're all looking for a better life to live, a prettier shell to show the world. And it's exhausting us."<sup>1</sup> I think that for many of us, our rubrics of worth are skewed because our standards are wrong. For instance, in my role, working in an academic institution I spend half my time with students and half my time with faculty, but all of the time wanting to be liked. I fear that I will sound stupid when I talk to other professors, and I have to stay "with it" enough to connect with students. But what am I measuring this by? Isn't it really just a desire for acceptance? To prove that I am valuable. Sometimes I don't even need to be first, as long as I'm not last. So I play the market of self-worth: "What do they want to see, and what should I put away in the bag?"<sup>2</sup>

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." I know in my heart of hearts that there is only one voice that gets to decide my worth. And anytime I give an improper weight to fear and the voices around me on my perceived success, market value or worth, I make another idol. Paul asks the Galatians rightly: "Am I trying to win the approval of human beings or of God?"<sup>3</sup>

I know better. On my good days, (at the risk of sounding hyper-spiritual) I sometimes tell people: "I don't work for Dordt College. I work for the Lord." Sure, I submit to my superiors out of reverence for Christ, but ultimately I look to Jesus for approval in the work that I do each day. And trust me, his standard is higher and his design is better. In fact, I don't actually work "for" him, but rather enjoy the life that he brings by living in and through me.

*Wholeheartedness* also reminds us that: "The deepest "me" is buried with Christ in God and is waiting for me at my center, where the Inner Light shines brightly."<sup>4</sup> Christ is our inheritance<sup>5</sup> and the treasure of heaven. "Is Holiness about ascent? Is it about getting our acts together and climbing the holy mountain? Is it about setting ourselves apart and banishing every blemish? Or is there a different way of telling the story?"<sup>6</sup> Is it closer than we think?

DeGroat ties it all up with this: "And so, as you close this book, take a very deep breath. Find your center. Greet yourself. Greet God in you. Remember that you are not alone. Breathe again, taking in the Spirit-life that expands your whole being, equipping you for this moment, enabling you to live in the presence, to be connected, clear, compassionate, and courageous... You will work hard, and be present in everything you do. And then you will rest, really rest because you are whole and wholehearted."<sup>7</sup> Tomorrow morning I will wake up satisfied and meet my friends for another early morning ride. I will take deep breaths of crisp fall air. We will tell jokes, race each other up hills, and maybe even out run a dog.

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## Footnotes

1. DeGroat, Chuck. "[Wholeheartedness: Busyness, Exhaustion, and Healing the Divided Self](#)" (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016) 81. ←

2. DeGroat, 112. [↩](#)
3. Galatians 1:10 [↩](#)
4. DeGroat, 174. [↩](#)
5. Ephesians 1:11-14 [↩](#)
6. DeGroat, 91 [↩](#)
7. DeGroat, 192 [↩](#)