

BREAKING

THE CHAINS

OF THE

*Past*

B E N N Y   H I N N



BREAKING THE CHAINS OF THE PAST  
Copyright © 2008 by Bookmark Publishing

Published by Bookmark Publishing  
Dallas, Texas

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without prior permission of the publisher.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the *New King James Version*. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV®*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (KJV) are taken from the *King James Version*.

ISBN: 1-59024-334-X

[www.BennyHinn.org](http://www.BennyHinn.org)

Printed in the United States of America.

2008—First Edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# CONTENTS

Introduction . . . . .	1
1 A Self-Portrait. . . . .	3
2 Seeds of Insecurity. . . . .	9
3 Searching for Encouragement . . . . .	17
4 Five Keys to a Healthy Self-Image. . . . .	23
Prayer Guide . . . . .	35



## INTRODUCTION

The road to achievement is not a scenic drive through the countryside. Instead it's a ladder that must be climbed by carefully placing your foot on each rung.

Instead of presenting "secrets" to success, God's Word is filled with principles, precepts, and divine laws that are the foundation for a life of abundance. The rules are not for framing on the wall; they're for engraving on our hearts. And they must be obeyed.

Here is the promise God makes to you: *"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand"* (Psalm 37:23-24).

Don't worry about your own strength and stamina as you begin your ascent. Even if your steps are unsteady and you

have a fear of heights, your Father will not allow you to fall. He will reach down and secure you with His strong hand. What does the Lord say about the righteous? *“The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide”* (Psalm 37:31).

In this book we will discuss your self-image, how it is formed, how it is developed, and what God says about you.

One of the great messages of the Bible is that through Christ old things are passed away and everything becomes new. As you will discover, it starts on the inside and transforms your life.

—BENNY HINN

# 1

## A SELF-

# Portrait

Those of you who are familiar with the story of my life know that I was healed of stuttering when God touched my tongue as I preached my first sermon in Oshawa, Ontario, on December 7, 1974.

As a young boy growing up in Jaffa, Israel, my self-image was so shattered that I continually wanted to run and hide. The humiliation and shame I experienced because of my stuttering began when I was sent to preschool at the age of three. As members of my family will tell you, it took what seemed like forever for me to complete one simple sentence.

My speech was so halting that my teachers, kind Catholic nuns, avoided asking me questions in class, attempting to spare me from embarrassment. At playtime I was shunned. The boys and girls didn't want to talk to me because I

had such a difficult time responding. As a result, I had few friends.

By the time I reached my fifth birthday, I began withdrawing from anyone who came near. Many nights I buried my head in my pillow and cried myself to sleep. When people came to visit our home, I would run to my room and crawl under the bed, hoping no one would find me. I said to myself, "If they see me, they're just going to make fun of my stuttering."

People can be cruel to someone with a disability. Even those who loved me said, "Benny, with your speech problem, you probably won't amount to much in life." Those words, repeated in so many subtle ways, became indelibly etched on my young mind.

My mother once sent me to a neighbor's home to deliver something the woman had requested. I haven't a clue what I took, but I will never forget what she said. The woman looked at me and began to laugh. She remarked, "Why did your mother send someone who can't talk?"

Repeatedly, the picture I had of myself was being weakened. The restoration would take a miracle.



## **Importance of Self-Image**

Why are so many people failing? Why are they crying in the night for their desires to be fulfilled, yet nothing is happening?

And why can't they seem to take the first step necessary to reverse their plight? The answer is that they are crippled by a poor self-concept.

What we are examining is the portrait that was developed inside us by a variety of sources when we were a child. Unfortunately, far too many people enter adulthood with negative self-esteem, a pessimistic outlook, and—even worse—an eroded self-perception.

Let's look at our inner image. When is it formed? Who paints the picture? How is it developed?

From the moment we enter this world and the doctor places us in our mother's arms, a picture is being painted in our mind. Slowly during the next few years, the image begins to develop until it becomes a mental mirror of the real me—the way we see, feel, and think about ourselves.

Without question, the picture of the way we view ourselves is determined

chiefly by the authority figures in our life—our parents, grandparents, our teachers, aunts, and uncles. We revere these people, these artists wielding a paintbrush. Oh, we can't see it, but with every word, action, and deed they are indelibly coloring our minds with subtle strokes.

These mental impressions are formed in a rather short period of time. Most experts agree that our self-portrait is virtually completed before we reach our sixth birthday.

### **Authority Figures Shape Self-Image**

According to research, our self-concept is the result of how authority figures in our life react to three critical factors: appearance, performance, and importance.

#### *1. Their View of Our Appearance*

If a child often hears authority figures say, "Oh, she's not a very pretty girl, but we sure do love her," what is the result? Regardless of any words of affection, the little girl will soon look into the mirror and say to herself, "It is true; I am ugly!"

It's also sad when a young boy hears,

“Oh, he’ll look much better when he grows up!” Every time such words are spoken, another brushstroke is destroying that child’s self-esteem. By the time he is a teen, the harm has already been done.

Once at a youth rally I complimented a young man, telling him, “I really like your tie.”

Instead of saying, “Thank you,” he looked down and muttered, “But my shoes don’t look good!” The fellow obviously had an image problem that made it difficult for him to accept praise.

It is essential that we reaffirm children as often as possible on their best, most positive qualities.

## *2. Their View of Our Performance*

Many authority figures fail to understand the difference between correcting children and damaging their self-worth. Critical comments stick:

“Did you spill that again? Oh, you are so stupid!”

“Can’t you do anything right?”

“Look at the way your shoes are tied! Won’t you ever learn?”

What happens to children who are raised under a constant barrage of

scolding and criticism? They simply fulfill the image created for them by their authority figures. The child concludes, "I guess I really can't do anything right." It affects their grades, their relationships, and their future.

There is definitely a place for discipline and a stern "No," but correction must also include compassion. A child longs to hear words of praise and commendation: "I know you can do it. Let's try this again!"

### *3. Their View of Our Importance*

Many children receive countless hidden messages that communicate they have little value when they hear:

"You're not supposed to be sitting here. This seat's reserved for someone else."

"Who do you think you are, somebody special?"

A constant bombardment of such words leads a child to only one conclusion: "I guess I don't belong. I'm unimportant."

Unless something miraculous takes place, those thoughts may rob a young person of his or her future.

## 2

## SEEDS OF

*Insecurity*

**W**e often hear people complain about the corruption our culture inflicts on teens. In most cases it isn't true. Society simply presents temptations that are either accepted or rejected by young people based on the strength of their character. Remember, by the time we reach the teen years, our strongest traits are already set in concrete. They were formed much earlier, during those first five pivotal years.

What decision making should we expect from someone who grew up believing "I'm ugly. I can't do anything right. I'm not important"? The injury has occurred, and the wounds are deep. And these same negative views are likely to be held when the person is forty-five or fifty years old. People continue to fail because of the portrait that was painted long ago. They say, "Since I'm not important, I'll