

# Practicing Affirmation

## Practicing Affirmation: Chapter Five

1. What stood out from this chapter? Any particular reason why?
2. In this chapter, he talks about what affirmation is not and mistakes he's made along the way. The first mistake he's made is in thinking that affirmation is optional. What verse does he use to support his argument? Did this challenge your thinking in any way?
3. What does he describe as holy emulation on page 92? Describe a person who has been a healthy hero for you?
4. Other mistakes he mentions are: Thinking that Affirmation is the Chief Thing, Aiming for Greater Self-Esteem, Confusing Glimmers of Character with Guilt Removal, Intimidation, Thinking all Blessings are Affirmations, Failing to Grasp the Connection between Lack of Affirmation and One's Reputation, Overlooking the Connection between Affirmation and Soul-Winning, Abandoned on the way to Hell, Confusing Affirmation with Flattery, Letting the Moment Pass, Failing to Give the Benefit of the Doubt, Squandering the Hearing Once Gained, Blindness to My Own Hypocrisy. Did any of these resonate with you more than the others & if so, why?
5. In the last few chapters, he really distinguishes between affirmation and correction, emphasizing that by affirming someone, we are not condoning all their lifestyle choices. He says on page 93: "...Don't commend what God condemns but commend what God commends." Perhaps he addresses this because we fear that if we affirm someone who makes decisions we don't agree with, we are condoning other things in their life as well. Have you ever withheld affirmation for fear of condoning other areas? How does this stem from a wrong view of ourselves with power/control?
6. What does the author say on p. 96 is the difference between self-esteem and self-acceptance? How have you experienced the difference?
7. In this chapter, he talks about the difference between encouragement (looks ahead) and affirmation (looks back). Since reading the book, have you noticed any growth in your ability to look back and affirm others?
8. Crabtree also talks about the realism of good affirmation (p. 101). Why is this important?

9. On pp. 102-106, he talks about affirmation as it relates to our reputation to the outside world and others' salvation. Have you ever met a believer who was frugal with their praise toward non-believers? Have you experienced a believer who was winsome with words toward non-believers? How did you see the effects of either/both?

10. Another mistake we can make is to confuse affirmation with flattery. Read Proverbs 26:28 and 29:5. Read the last paragraph on p. 107. Whereas affirmation is a free gift with no strings attached, what is the primary motive of the flatterer?

11. Has there ever been a time in which you were affirmed "behind your back" (p. 109) and found out about it later somehow? How did that make you feel?

12. Read the second to last paragraph on the last page of this chapter (Blindness to My Own Hypocrisy). Why is it that we are reluctant to show the grace of affirmation to others when we need it so badly ourselves? How does thinking of ourselves more accurately (becoming aware of our own hypocrisies and shortcomings) free us to affirm more generously?

