OK, I am going to nerd out on Harry Potter for a minute. Ha! Are we good with that? I know I am 32 years old. But I have no shame and make no apologies! So the basic gist of the story is that Harry’s mother and father were killed by an evil wizard when he was a baby, but he survived. The boy-who-lived, they called him. The only one to ever survive the killing curse. The wizard world all knew who he was. He was like a celebrity in a way. But to protect him, he was placed in his uncle and aunt’s home to live until he was old enough to attend the school for Wizards.

But Harry had no clue how valuable he was.

His aunt and uncle treated him horribly. They spoiled their son, but Harry was made to stay in a small cupboard under the stairs the majority of the time. He did not have a room. He was punished with no food and oversized hand-me-down clothes.

They abused him and neglected him and made him believe that he was nothing.

When in fact he was the boy-who-lived, the one who had gifts beyond his understanding, the Chosen One, the one meant to defeat the evil wizard in the end.

It took him many years to undo the damage done by his aunt and uncle. He was confused at how people were obsessed with him and how people would put themselves in danger over and over to protect him. He had never been shown that his life mattered until he went to school with a people who knew how special he was.

What he was made for.

Was it possible for him to be who they said he was? The same boy whose birthday was never acknowledged before. The same boy who had to sleep in a tiny cupboard.

Did he really have worth?

I’ve heard this same story with different characters many times in the counseling room.

When people treat you like you are worthless, you believe that you are worthless.

We’ve been hearing that we matter all our lives if we have grown up in the church. That we are special. Hand-made. Unique. Loved.

But like Harry, we can hear it all day long and still not believe it. These words lose meaning after a while.

We are like, “Sure. That may be true about you, but it’s not true about me.”

One of my clients that I’ve worked with off and on for the past few years did not always follow Jesus. She had to grow up too quickly because of some family dysfunction and addiction. She had to take on the role of mom to her younger siblings. She also felt shame for many things, like hurting another’s feelings, saying “no” to her addict mom, and some other things she had struggled with in the past. There has always been an underlying feeling that she is nothing. Now as she is a Christian and active in her church community, she looks around at all the “good” people, thinking that they have more worth than her because they do the right things and read their bibles when they are supposed to and seem to have it together. She hears what others say about her intrinsic value as one created in the very image of God. She hears it, but she does not believe it.

She believes that she is nothing.

Just like Harry did.

Just like you and me.

And I wish there were some easy quick solution to this problem, this lack of true heart knowledge of our worth. But there isn’t.

It takes years sometimes to unravel the hurt that led to a belief that we are nothing. The abuse. The neglect. The abandonment. The bullying. The rejection.

But we must start somewhere. When Harry finally began to see his worth and role in the bigger picture, he could walk into a room and know he belonged there. He was afraid and brave at the same time. And he fulfilled his calling because he believed he was meant to.

We think we are only bullying ourselves when we believe bad things about ourselves, but we are hurting others, too.

Because they miss out when we do not live as a person who has an immense amount of worth.

They miss out on our gifts and talents and strengths.

They do not get to participate in the mission we are called to.

They do not get the see the imago Dei, the image of God, that we represent.

I think we start back where it all began.

Genesis 1: 26-27 (ESV) says, “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’

So God created man in his own image,

    in the image of God he created him;

    male and female he created them.”

To know our worth we must be aware of a few things:

1. Our worth does not come from others.

 Though everyone kept telling Harry who he was and how valuable he was, their words did not create more value. Though it is super nice to hear affirmation from other people, especially our people, those words are just words. Our worth is not dependent on how others feel about us. It goes much deeper than that. I want you to stop right now and consider this: When do you feel most valued? If all you can think of is when you are being affirmed by others, then you know that you only believe you have worth when others are happy with you.

2. We are made in the image of God.

 This is it. Right here. Humans are created in the image of God, and though sin messed up that image, we are constantly being renewed into the image of God. We could do a deep dive into what this means, being created in the image of God. But we won’t do that here. We will simply choose to continue to tell ourselves that we only have worth because we are made with love By love, for love. We cannot conjure up our own worth. We can’t do anything to have more worth. Our worth is solid, unbreakable. It is who we are at the core. A people made to reflect the Maker. He wanted us to be like Him so that we could be in relationship with Him. We are the chosen ones. Do you believe this? Do you believe your worth began long before you were born, back in a garden with a man and a woman who had no shame?

3. We have greater worth than the other created things.

 No other created being was created in the image of the triune God. They were “good,” but not created in the image of God. And God even says this in Genesis 1, that we are above the created things. We were left in charge. This is simply to remind us that God views us as very important in his world and his kingdom. He chose us when he could have chosen another created thing.

Knowing our worth starts here. It starts with knowing who created us, who picked us, who loves us. And then letting that sink in day after day. Writing and memorizing affirming scriptures. Reading our bibles and letting the words be an anchor for our soul. Because knowing our worth really isn’t about us at all. It’s about the one who made us. The one whom we reflect.

To end our time today, I wanted to read this amazing manifesto that is in the beginning of All Worthington’s new book, S*tanding Strong. T*hough it is meant for women, I hope our male listeners will hear themselves in it, too. Because it’s that good.

It is written by Rachel Marie King. Here it is:

“A strong woman is a surrounded woman. Not a got-it-all-together woman but a got-my-God-around-me woman. SHe’s not just a gifted woman; she’s a giving woman. A wonder woman. She steps in stride without striving because she’s a learning, loving, letting go woman. She holds her heap up high, even though life hits hard and swings low. She knows in her soul that she’s never been alone- never left out, never ever put on hold. She lifts her hands, raising praise for endless days no matter the pain, no matter how the path gives way before her. A serving woman, born with palms up and hands stretched out toward others. She knows standing strong is standing long together- looks likes locking arms and hearts together. She stands strong in the strength of the Holy One, the only one able to heal and hold her. Behold her bold, behold her brave, behold her. Standing strong- living and leading right where she belongs.”

Thanks for sitting a while with me. I trust that \_\_\_\_knowing your worth\_\_\_ will help you make one more step toward wholeness so that you can finally see what good relationships are made of.

You can find me on instagram @kerrahfabacher or at my website, [www.kerrahfabacher.com](http://www.kerrahfabacher.com).

If you do not get the monday minute, our weekly email with practical next steps that I teach my counseling and coaching clients, you can sign up at the link in my instagram bio or under “monday minute” on my website.

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And a big thanks to my friend, Robert Hargrove, for creating the music for our podcast, and fellow hope\*writer, Alana Dawson for editing the show.

Until next time, friend.

I’ll see you soon!