

January 15, 2023

Who Defines Us?

by Rickie Jenkins

God said, "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

When we are little and growing up, we get our sense of identity from our parents, friends, teachers, coaches, and employers. Truthfully, children receive their identity from their fathers. The greatest One who gives us our identity is our Heavenly father. We draw our identity from Him. He made us with wisdom and love. No matter what anyone else says about us, we are not accidents of nature, and we are not mistakes. God made us and He has imprinted His image on us. Yes, sin has tarnished that image, but God has not given up on us. We still possess His image. He has provided a path for us to be reconciled and transformed into His image.

When we look in a mirror, what do we see? We must see a person created in God's image. We must see someone who is a descendant of royalty. We must see a person of infinite worth. When we see ourselves in that way, we realize it is not of our own making. We see ourselves that way because of God's grace to forgive us and glorify us. We see

ourselves that way because we are being transformed into His image. This is significant. We need to be serious about who we are.

We, who were nobody, are now somebody (1 Peter 2:9-10). God makes us part of His royal family. We are chosen! We are children of God! That makes us somebody! We must not let anyone ever tell us that, as God's children, we are nobody. That is Satan's lie. Too many have believed him. When we have a Father who tells us the truth about who we are, why would we listen to a liar? Would we listen to a liar in any other area of our lives? No! Then why do we let a liar define who we are?

Yes, we sin. Yes, we make mistakes. Yes, sometimes we blow it! But listen, we aren't nobody! We are somebody special. We are His special creation ordained for good works (Eph. 2:10). He has forgiven us. His grace makes us whole.

How would it affect our attitude and choices today if we saw ourselves as someone who has been skillfully crafted by Almighty God?

"If God exists and we are made in His image we can have real meaning, and we can have real knowledge through he has communicated to us" (Francis A Schaeffer).

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Our Gospel Meeting with Bubba Garner - April 2-5

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

Pilgrims, March On

By George Slover

“Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, Whose heart is set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, They make it a spring; The rain also covers it with pools.” (Psalms 84:5-6)

The superscription ascribes Psalm 84 to the sons of Korah. Under the law of Moses they were chosen to be the keepers of the temple. The general tenor of Psalm 84 is stated from the outset: “It is lovely to dwell in God’s tabernacle.”

The above verse seems to focus on the hazards and challenges of those pilgrims who are making their way to the house of God. “The Valley of Baca” symbolizes a time of grief and sorrow. The imagery is of a company of pilgrims passing through difficult and desolate places, but pressing on to their destination. Consider two important lessons here.

First, these spiritual pilgrims must persevere. There are a number of challenges that may hinder us in our pursuit of godliness and fellowship with God. Only the determined and courageous will persevere through the valleys. Our daily persistent efforts will get us closer to Zion. By patient continuance in doing good, (Romans 2:7) we will arrive!

Second, God can strengthen the faithful ones who find themselves in the valleys. The Valley of Sorrow is turned into a spring. The rain also covers it with pools. (Psalms 84:6) Perowne says. “the pilgrim-band, rich in hope, forget the trials and difficulties of the way; hope changes the rugged and stony waste into living fountains.” Paul says, Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. (2 Corinthians 4:16)

Those in pursuit of the sweet fellowship

of God must overlook the obstacles and press on to the goal. “Sing on ye joyful pilgrims, the time will not be long, till in our Father’s kingdom we swell a nobler song, Where those we love are waiting to greet us on the shore, We’ll meet beyond the river where surges roll no more.”

Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing treatments to strengthen his immune system. He is having some tests run for his lungs.

Karen Hallmark has improved but continues to struggle and could use our prayers.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues.

Don Simmons is home and still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

Randall Vanaman is having difficulties with his feet.

Baby Valor went home but will require more care.

Doug Adair is preparing to have surgery on his back.

Robert Moore’s brother recently passed away. He is also leaving for Mexico this week.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord’s body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord’s will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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