

Changing the Way You Think

Church and Culture (Part 9):

Identity (Part 2)

Identity * Purpose * Success * Beauty * Love * Hope

Last Week Summary

- “Me” Is Catastrophically Corrupted and Distorted
- My Deep and Primal Feelings Are Untrustworthy
- God and His Word Will Be Increasingly Seen as an Enemy to Self
- My Self (“Me”) Will Fight to the Death to Survive and Thrive

The Funhouse Mirror

“Do not be deceived, my beloved brother and sisters...”



James 1:14-17, 22-25

¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death. ¹⁶ **Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers and sisters.** ¹⁷ Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵ **But one who has looked intently at the perfect law, the law of freedom, and has continued in it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an active doer, this person will be blessed in what he does.**

Looking into God’s Mirror of Truth & Freedom

- **True Reflection**

“But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of freedom and continue in it...will be blessed in whatever he does...”

- **This Mirror Isn’t “Fun”**

- *“Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, who’s the fairest one of all...”* (fickle)
- God’s Mirror reveals all of our imperfections
- But it’s real, and it leads to freedom and blessing.

Hebrews 4:12-13

The word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword.. able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom we must answer.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

- **An Image of Becoming**

“Every Good and Perfect Gift is from Above, Coming Down from the Father...”

- You Are His Treasured Child (John 1:12-13; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:17; Isaiah 43:1)
- You Are a Work in Progress that Will Bloom to Completeness and Perfection (Phil. 1:6)
- You are Forgiven and Protected (1 John 1:9; Isaiah 54:17; Psalm 3:3; 91:1-16)
- You Are Made for a Great Purpose and Future (Ephesians 2:10)

- **Thinking & Living in the Identity My Creator Has Designed for Me**

“Prove yourselves doers of the world, not just hearers who deceive themselves...”

“If God is the Creator of all things, and if the Bible has His seal of truth and power, then the Bible has the right to interrogate my life and culture, and not the other way around...”

Rosaria Butterfield

Ephesians 5:1-17

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love...But sexual immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be mentioned among you... For this you know with certainty, that no sexually immoral or impure or greedy person, **which amounts to an idolater**, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

When we reject the Identity God has chosen for us (gender, sexuality, circumstances, station, etc.), we choose instead to worship the mirror that tells us what we want to hear...that shows us distorted images of reality we desire to believe...in the end we will hate it and ourselves...because we will have chosen against the essence of ourselves.

⁶ See that no one deceives you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.⁷ Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸ for you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light *consists* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ as you try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Do not participate in the useless deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; ¹² for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. ¹³ But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.¹⁴ For this reason it says,

“Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵ So then, be careful how you walk, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of your time, because the days are evil.¹⁷ **Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.**