

See Yourself Rightly

Before you can really see yourself as God sees you, you must gain a clearer understanding of who He is. If He isn't that great, who cares what He thinks about you? If He is truly beautiful and wonderful and you are beginning to really grasp that at a heart level, then what He thinks of you is all that matters. (If you haven't done the first study in this series "Seeing God Rightly", spend some time with that one first) Then, enter this study with a prayerful heart asking God to reveal to you, in the depth of your soul, who you are and who He created you to be.

What do we really want as humans? I believe it all simply boils down to the fact that we want to feel good about ourselves. That may seem too trivial of a statement, but think about it. Think about what motivates you in life to do the things you do; Relationships, school, sports, family, really everything that you are involved in. Even things that seem to be for the good of others, somewhere in the scheme of those things, we really just want to feel good about who we are. Why is there so much divorce in our society? People's needs are not met in the relationship; it hasn't made them feel good enough about themselves. Why is suicide the leading cause of death among teenagers? Why is depression such an epidemic in our culture? Why is the media obsessed with outward beauty? Why do people become work-a-holics? On some level, it all has to do with feeling good about ourselves.

God knew when He created us that we would have this need. In fact He designed us this way. He also created the solution to this need though and it is to be in soul satisfying relationship with Him. With the God of the universe in deep love with you, how could you need anything else to feel good about yourself?? The "Fall" of humanity came through Adam though. Ever since then, we have missed the completeness of that relationship with God. We experience it in part, but it is in restoration, not in fullness. We need salvation from God which in Hebrew means "Healing". We need our hearts and souls healed from the need to feel good about ourselves on our own, without the satisfier of our souls. We go through life trying to make external things fill this need, friends, social status, job, sports, relationships, but they never make us feel like we really want to, or at least not permanently.

We will only feel good about ourselves when salvation, healing comes from God. The way He heals or saves us is by drawing us into an ever increasing knowledge of Him. Then once we know how great He is, the facts of how He sees us are overwhelming, satisfying and healing! He thinks you are incredible, He calls you a friend, He knew you before the beginning of time and loves you passionately. This is who you are and that is reason to feel good about yourself!

- *When we first realize that God did not need to create us and does not need us for anything, we could conclude that our lives have no importance at all. But scripture tells us that we were created to glorify God, indicating that we are important to God himself. This is the final definition of genuine importance or significance to our lives: If we are truly important to God for all eternity, then what greater measure of importance or significance could we want?*

Wayne Grudem (Systematic Theology pg 440)

- *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Gen 1:26 Out of all the creatures God made, only one creature, man is said to be made "in the image of God". What does that mean? The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like God and represents God.....It would be good for us to reflect on our likeness to God more often. It will probably amaze us to realize that when the Creator of the universe wanted to create something "in his image", something more like himself than all the rest of creation, he made us. This realization will give us profound sense of dignity and significance as we reflect on the excellence of all the rest of God's creation: the starry universe, the abundant earth, the world of plants and animals, and the angelic kingdoms are remarkable, even magnificent. But we are more like our Creator than any of these things. We are the culmination of God's infinitely wise and skillful work or creation. Even though sin has marred that likeness, we nonetheless now reflect much of it and shall even more as we grown in likeness to Christ.*

- Before you begin working through these sections. Reflect on these questions. Jot some things down that come to your mind for each of these.
 - Why am I here?
 - Who are we?
 - What is our purpose?

I. Our Value in Identity

Ephesians 1:3-24

- Read this passage three times in one sitting, the first time just read, the second write down things that stand out to you about your identity, the third time begin to process the questions below from the text
1. Write down a list of all the Spiritual Blessings in this section. Which are the main blessings (circle them). Which ones modify the main blessings (underline them).
 2. Which of them do you get the most excited about? (Put a star next to it) Which of them do you have the hardest time believing? (Write a short paragraph why you have a hard time believing it, pray and ask God to help you believe this part of your identity).
 3. “In Him” is a major theme in this section. Why does Paul use this phrase? What does it communicate?
 4. For a moment, forget about the confusing ideas that are presented in the verses talking about us being “chosen” and “predestined”. If you truly are chosen before the beginning of time, what significance does that idea make to you and how you feel about yourself?
 5. “In accordance with His pleasure and will”. Do you view your adoption into His family, your salvation, your inclusion “In Him”, as for His pleasure? How do you tend to think He thinks of you?
 6. What does “He lavished grace on us” mean?
 7. What significance does it have that we were saved “For the praise of His glory”? Do you feel that God is glorified by your unity with Him? What difference does it make to know that indeed He is glorified by your relationship to Him?
 8. What is a “seal”? What is this communicating about our security in our relationship to God?

9. What are the two things he asks for and why? Make an outline with main headings and sub headings of his prayer for you in vs 17-19. Do you sense the profundity of these things that we have in increasing measure? *Our close friend is head over all for all time!*
10. What are the things about how God views you that mean the most? Choose an area to repeat and remind your self of throughout this day.
11. According to this passage what is your purpose in life?
12. As Christians where does meaning and value come from in life? Consider memorizing all or part of this section and constantly run it through your mind and heart throughout the day.

Questions to consider:

1. What do you really think that God thinks of you?
2. Do you believe He really loves you?
3. How about like you? Do you think He just loves you because He is loving, but when it comes to liking you, do you really believe He actually likes you like a friend?
4. If you really knew that God does like you and wants to spend time with you like a friend, what does that do to your confidence in life....your security?

➤ Read these additional verses and sections and write down notes of your responses to how God views us.
John 15:9-13

Isaiah 43:1-4

Luke 15:11-32

Isaiah 40

II. Our Value in Purpose

Not only do we have great significance because of who God created us to be, but also for the role He created us to take in this world. Examine the passages below and reflect on the important role that God has given you and how that adds meaning and value to life.

1. Purposed to be like Him:

Romans 8:28-29

2 Corinthians 3:18

2 Corinthians 5:17

How do these verses affect your significance in life?

2. Purposed to be used by Him

Ephesians 2:10

Romans 12:3-8

1 Peter 4:10

2 Corinthians 5:18-21

1 Corinthians 12:4-5

How do these verses affect your significance in life?

3. Purposed to Belong

Ephesians 1:5

1 Peter 1:3

Romans 12:5

How do these verses affect your significance in life?

- How would you answer these questions now? Are they different than before?
 - Why am I here?
 - Who am I?
 - What is my purpose?

Suggested Reading:

Abba's Child by Brennan Manning

Destined for the Throne by Billheimer