

## Engage Your Identity Genesis 1:26-27

Who are you? What would you tell people about yourself? Identity is such a hot topic in today's Western culture. It is a hotbed of confrontation and confusion that leads to further separation and division among humans. As much as the phrase "times are worse now than then" is true as scripture tells us it will be, "But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13), humans have always loved to cause separation.

Beginning in Genesis, we immediately find the world a battleground of worldviews. I find it interesting that God makes it a point to tell us who we are in the first two chapters of Genesis. Adam and Eve quickly forget, and we forget even quicker today the identity of all humanity. We quickly forget or ignore the simplicity of God's intention of creation. Trying to understand who we are without God will never work. The confusion comes from a failure to know where and who we come from. People can ignore, deny, and forget all they want. That doesn't negate the fact that all of us, the human race, have a singular origin identity!

Typically, we define ourselves as our name, gender, nationality, age, marital and parental status, type of work we do, state we live in, educational background, hobbies, likes and dislikes, and becoming more prominent subjective feelings. Some of these things may be facts about who you are today. However, if asked the same questions five years from now, some of your responses may be different. Our true identity and nature will stay the same.

*Genesis 1:26-27 "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." NASB*

This means we are carved from the image of God, Christ, and the Spirit. At the same time, that is a profound thought with many facets. We know from God and His word we are unique to the rest of creation. From His love, God has given us the unique capacity to intellectually and spiritually know Him. God is love (1 John 4:16). Love, by its true nature, yearns for a reciprocation of the same affection. It was God who endowed us humans with the ability to love. This gift, however, carries a particular risk, as the freedom to love inherently includes the freedom to withhold love. If the highest commandment is to love God, then it must be a conscious decision we make. This capability to love, along with our moral compass and rationality, are profound manifestations of being created in the image of God.

We live in a world right now where self-expression is everything, and acceptance is everything. People are searching for a unique identity. Remember that you Christians hold the answer to that search. If your identity is in Christ, then that means that your gender, race, background, education, and political standing are indeed factors that contribute to your being. However, they are secondary to who you are in Christ. Live that way and choose to Love God, and choose to love others by showing the unique nature they have been "made in the image of God."