

9-12-2023

## **Identity Crises**

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*“For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things,” Romans 1:21-23. ESV*

### **Identity Crisis**

The story of Adam and Eve exemplifies a paradoxical world full of promise and expectation, and full of tragic brokenness. Initially they were like children knowing exactly who they were and where they belonged – free to be themselves and free to live as God created them. Until the enemy struck.

[Satan] offered [Eve] an alternative identity. In his version, God is not good; He is lying to you. He is threatened by you because you have the power to be like God yourself. You don't have to be an image bearer; you can be the *Image*. Countering God's warning of death, the serpent assured her, 'You will not surely die . . . [but] when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' The tragic irony is that the serpent tempted the woman with something that was already true—made in God's image, she *already was like Him!* She already radiated His majesty and glory; she already existed in perfection. But it was not good enough. It was not enough to have His light pulsating through her; she wanted to be light itself.”<sup>1</sup>

You've probably been offered an alternative identity. Perhaps it was offered by a family member or a friend, a supervisor or a colleague, or promoted someplace on social media or television. An alternative identity that invited you to be something you're not – physically, spiritually, or in any other sense. Something that, as Paul says in Romans 1:21-23 reflects a “lesser glory.” God's Word, even more specifically His Law, is intended to guide us back to our true identity as a child of God created in His image. Jesus, “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” leads us back to a place where we belong – free to be ourselves and free to live as the Father created us.

This week, as you make The Main Thing, the main thing in your life, may you experience Jesus lovingly and patiently guiding you away from any alternative identities and lead you back to who you were made to be!

### **Reflection**

1. When have you been tempted to “be light itself” or to take the place of God in your life?

2. What comes to mind when you hear the words “God’s Law”? Do you see “God’s Law” as a goal to meet? a heavy burden? Something else?
3. Journal and talk with a friend or mentor.

### **News and Resources**

- Join us for Vespers in Iles PE Center this Friday - doors open at 7pm!
- Find a meaningful sense of belonging by joining a student or faculty/staff LifeGroup today: [click here](#).
- If you are feeling anxious or have recently experienced loss or grief, call 423.236.2782 to talk to a counselor on campus! (This is a free service for Southern students.)
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Anderson, Hannah. 2014. *Made for More: An Invitation to Live in God’s Image*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 47.