

Psalm 139:13–16 (NIV) - <sup>13</sup> For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

We all have a self-image. Each of us has a perception of ourselves and that perception will be either positive or negative. Either favorable or critical.

So, here's a question for you. Two really, what is the image God has of you? And two, does any other image really matter?

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV) - <sup>18</sup> And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

It's as if while looking into mirror, we're transformed into the same image that we're seeing.

But what if the "mirror" we're looking in isn't accurate, isn't showing us the true nature of God.

Lauren Daigle sings the song You say and the lyrics say, "I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough. Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up. . ."

And here's the thing church whatever you spend the most time focusing on, that is what you give power to in your life. Or if you prefer you could say it this way, what you feed grows, what you starve dies.

If I feed the lies that people tell me, if I feed the voice in my mind that says, I don't measure up, I'm not enough, it will grow to a place that it will begin to hinder my relationship with the Father.

I mean think about it, if I am having a bad day, it seems like nothing is going right, my tendency is to get depressed, shut down and avoid everything and everyone. But if I push through those thoughts and focus on what is good I will be able to overcome the obstacle placed before me. If I feed the bad day I can make everyone around me miserable, however if I starve that thought it will die, and I can let the good grow.

Proverbs 26:20 (NIV): 20 Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down.

Here's something you need to understand. You don't become a new person by changing your behavior. You focus on the person you already are in Christ and then behave accordingly!

The next part of Lauren's song says, "Remind me once again just who I am, because I need to know. You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing. You say I am strong when I think I am weak. You say I am held when I am falling short when I don't belong, you say I am Yours."

There is a pick-up line that single men sometimes use on the single ladies. It goes like this. "Girl, I'm so tired. . .because you've been running through my mind all day."

I know cheesy right?

But here's the thing church you are the bride of Christ and you are running through His mind all day. He never gets tired of thinking about you. He knows the number of hairs on your head.

You need to see yourself as He sees you.

Do you remember ever going through the carnival fun house?

The house filled with mirrors and you would walk around and see yourself all different shapes and sizes. Some of those made you look skinny and tall, others would make you look short and extremely wide (that word sounds better than fat). Others would give you what seemed like really long legs. Remember that?

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NIV) - <sup>12</sup> For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

So, what do you do when what you look at doesn't look like the master piece God created you as.

It's a lot like a puzzle

Which reminds me of a joke. . . Why did the women get so excited after she finished the puzzle after 6 months? Because it said 2 to 4 years on the box. I know that was so bad. . .that it was good.

Sorry about that, Back to the Message.

When you're trying to solve a puzzle, what do you need? You've got to have the box top, because that ... helps us make sense of all of pieces in the box...

Philippians 1:6 (NLT) - <sup>6</sup> And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

Each of us is a work in process. But God has promised that He will continue the work in you until He returns.

Sometimes we get pieces of the puzzle that just don't seem to fit.

Have you ever tried to make that piece fit? It looks like it could so we study it, we try to pound it in place just to make sure it doesn't fit there.

And when we do that when we try on our own to make something fit that God never intended to fit, it can cause us to lose heart. Cause us to think God doesn't care, doesn't love us, isn't concerned about us and we begin to see Him in a distorted mirror.

Here's something else church, Satan realizes that if he can warp the image of God that you see, you will believe what you are looking at is the true image of what you see. And that will be a misrepresentation of who He is.

And that will rob you of your freedom, liberty, and understanding of who you are, who He is, what He has in store, the plans He has for you, and what He has done for you.

Our perception of God's true identity impacts our understanding of who He made us to truly be.

If our image of Him is not accurate, then our image of ourselves will not be accurate either.

And we will, keep fighting voices in our mind that say we're not enough and that we will never measure up.

But Lauren goes on to say, "The only thing that matters now is everything You think of me. In You I find my worth, in You I find my identity. You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing, You say I am strong when I think I am weak. You say I am held, when I am falling short. When I don't belong, You say I am Yours. And I believe.

We too need to believe. The only thing that matters is everything that He thinks of you. In Him only will you find worth, in Him only will you find your identity.

He sees the truth of who He created you to be and that's what He wants to talk to you about, even if it seems currently that it doesn't

seem to be true in your daily experience. . .remember we are being transformed, this is a journey.

He will come to you with who He is... and as you experience His true identity, your own image of who He says you are will become clearer.

Here's another question to ponder: "who has defined your image of God?" If it's anything less than His true nature than it is a misrepresentation of who He is.

You are in the mirrored house seeing Him distorted and its time to break some of those mirrors. Break out of the misrepresentation of who He is.

He is not mad at you, He is not holding your sins against you.

2 Corinthians 5:17–21 (NIV): 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

If the enemy can distort your image of God, and have you question how God sees you. Then he can rob you of your identity.

God's promises reflect His nature, and His nature cannot change, His promises can be depended upon always. They aren't something He has, but rather they reveal who He is.

I love this story:

One day, as a small child, Thomas Edison came home from school and gave a paper to his mother. He said to her, "Mom, my teacher gave this paper to me and told me only you are to read it. What does it say?" Her eyes welled with tears as she read the letter out loud to her child. . .

"Your son is a genius. This school is too small for him and doesn't have good enough teachers to train him. Please teach him yourself."

Many years after Edison's mother had died, he became one of the greatest inventors of the century. One day he was going through a closet and he found the folded letter that his old teacher had wrote to his mother that day. He opened it. . .

The message written on the letter was, "your son is mentally deficient. We cannot let him attend our school anymore. He is expelled."

Edison became emotional reading it and then wrote in his diary. . .

"Thomas A. Edison was a mentally deficient child whose mother turned him into the genius of the century."

His mother understood what it meant to see the value in her son. And our Heavenly Father understands your value. It speaks nothing but good over you.

Too many believe in the person they wanted you to be. Not the person God called you be.

And truth be told the most important is to be the person God called you to be.

So why is it we try to conform to what others think we should be, rather than be transformed into the person He created us to be?

In Matthew chapter 4

Twice the enemy comes to Him and tries to get Jesus to question His identity. Tries to get Jesus to forget who he is.

Remember Jesus was just baptized, heard the Father say this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Then in the desert, hungry and tired the enemy comes and says, “if you are the Son of God. . .”

And he will attack us the same way. He will try to get you to question who God says you are. In the storms of life, he will get you to question does God really care.

Do you know what an Eagle does when a storm is approaching?

The eagle will fly to some high spot and wait for the storm to come. When the storm hits, it sets its wings so that the wind will pick it up and lift it above the storm.

While the storm rages below, the eagle is soaring above it.

The eagle does not escape the storm. Doesn't run or hide from the storm, isn't scared because of the storm. It simply uses the storm to lift it higher. It rises on the winds that bring the storm.

Hear this church, you can either use your circumstances to challenge the promise or you can use your promise to challenge the circumstances. The choice is yours.

Brennan Manning has said, “Define yourself radically as one beloved by God. This is the true self. Every other identity is illusion.”

If the way you are thinking doesn't make you feel good about yourself, it's time to have another thought because all the Jesus thinks about you is good.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (KJV) - <sup>5</sup> Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

There is a reason why the Father wants us to take every thought captive. And that is because every action is rooted in the thought that produced it.

(Give examples) wrong thinking, makes a way for negative behavior.

There is only one thought to have in any situation, and that is the one that Jesus is having about the situation.

Sure pastor, but I'm not Jesus.

1 Corinthians 2:16 (NIV) - <sup>16</sup> for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Jesus sleeping in the boat, disciples wake Him there thought we are about to die, His thought peace be still.

Here's a few more truths for you church. The Lord says that you are his prized possession. He takes great delight and rejoices over you with singing. He has loved you with an everlasting love. You are free and a new creation.

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You say – Lauren Daigle

I keep fighting voices in my mind that say I'm not enough  
Every single lie that tells me I will never measure up  
Am I more than just the sum of every high and every low?  
Remind me once again just who I am, because I need to know  
(ooh oh)

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing  
You say I am strong when I think I am weak



You say I am held when I am falling short  
When I don't belong, oh You say that I am Yours  
And I believe (I), oh I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I)  
I believe

The only thing that matters now is everything You think of me  
In You I find my worth, in You I find my identity, (ooh oh)

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing  
You say I am strong when I think I am weak  
And You say I am held when I am falling short  
When I don't belong, oh You say that I am Yours  
And I believe (I), oh I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I)  
Oh, I believe

Taking all I have and now I'm laying it at Your feet  
You have every failure God, and You'll have every victory, (ooh oh)

You say I am loved when I can't feel a thing  
You say I am strong when I think I am weak  
You say I am held when I am falling short  
When I don't belong, oh You say that I am Yours  
And I believe (I), oh I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I)  
I believe

Oh I believe (I), yes I believe (I)  
What You say of me (I)  
Oh I believe (oh)

