



When all your favorite preachers are gone, and all their books forgotten, you will have your Bible. Master it. **MASTERIT**

- John Piper

BROKEN BREAD Page 03

DEVOTIONAL Page 05

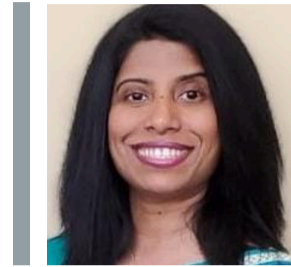
 **Corner** Page 07



THE IMAGE OF GOD IN HUMANITY AS THE FOUNDATION FOR SPIRITUALITY



IMAGINATION
- A GIFT OF GOD'S IMAGE IN US



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ILLUMINER

ISSUE 39

VOLUME 04

SEPTEMBER **2023**

DISCOVER



THE POWER OF YOUR IDENTITY

"IN CHRIST, YOU ARE FORGIVEN, LOVED, AND HAVE YOUR IDENTITY ESTABLISHED AS A CHILD OF GOD. IN ADDITION, GOD HAS SPECIFIC PLANS AND PURPOSES FOR YOUR LIFE. HE WANTS YOU TO PROSPER AND FLOURISH IN ALL AREAS, INCLUDING YOUR RELATIONSHIPS, CAREER, AND PERSONAL GROWTH."

Knowing your identity affects the way you think and behave. The word "Identity" means an individual's distinguishing character or personality. In our generation, most people are interested in discovering their identity. People seek insight to understand who they are, where they belong, and how they relate to the world. The world tells us to look within ourselves for our identity. However, the natural tendency is to search for our identity in external things. Some people try to define their identity from their reference group, friends, relationship statuses, appearance, and reputation. Others invest time and energy in their career and believe it is a defining characteristic

of who they are. Some people take personality tests to understand their identity or personality types: perfectionist, helper, achiever, creative, quiet, skeptic, visionary, controller, and peacemaker.

A new *deconstruction* movement is rising among Christians in the Western World. Deconstruction, coined by Blake Chastain, refers to unpacking, rethinking, and questioning one's identity. This has led to people dropping their Christian faith altogether or devolving into a pluralistic or weaker faith. Many are replacing biblical beliefs with culturally popular ideas for attention, status quo, and acceptance. The modern deconstruction movement is an

increasing threat to the lives of so many Christians, as it shifts individuals down a negative path – moving people away from their faith and compromising the structure of families, church, marriage, and parenting. Some turn to agnostic beliefs, atheism, pornography, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, and suicidal ideations.

Research shows that the number of Christians in America has significantly declined in the past two decades. In 2006, Christians accounted for 23% of Americans' religious identity, but by 2020, this number dropped to just 14.5%. Several influential Christian leaders have shared their spiritual struggles



DR. Thomas Idiculla
Boston, USA

Dr. Idiculla is the Director of the Mental Health Evaluation Department at a major Psychiatric Hospital and an Instructor in Psychiatry in USA. He serves as the President of Agape Partners International and Pastor of the Boston Christian Assembly. He is a certified marriage counselor, frequent speaker at family/marriage conferences, and a guest lecturer at various universities in the US, Middle East, and India.

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Goodnews
Weekly

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Publisher
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Weekly

The Vision : To illuminate God's Holy Word through Spirit-filled insightful pen.

The Mission : Provide the reader with guidance for life and godliness through inspired authors.

The Guiding Principles :

- We value Integrity and Excellence in all our work.
- We are committed and hold ourselves responsible to our readers and the Church for any information that we deliver.
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- We do all for the glory of God.
- We are part of and guided by the principles of Goodnews Publication House.

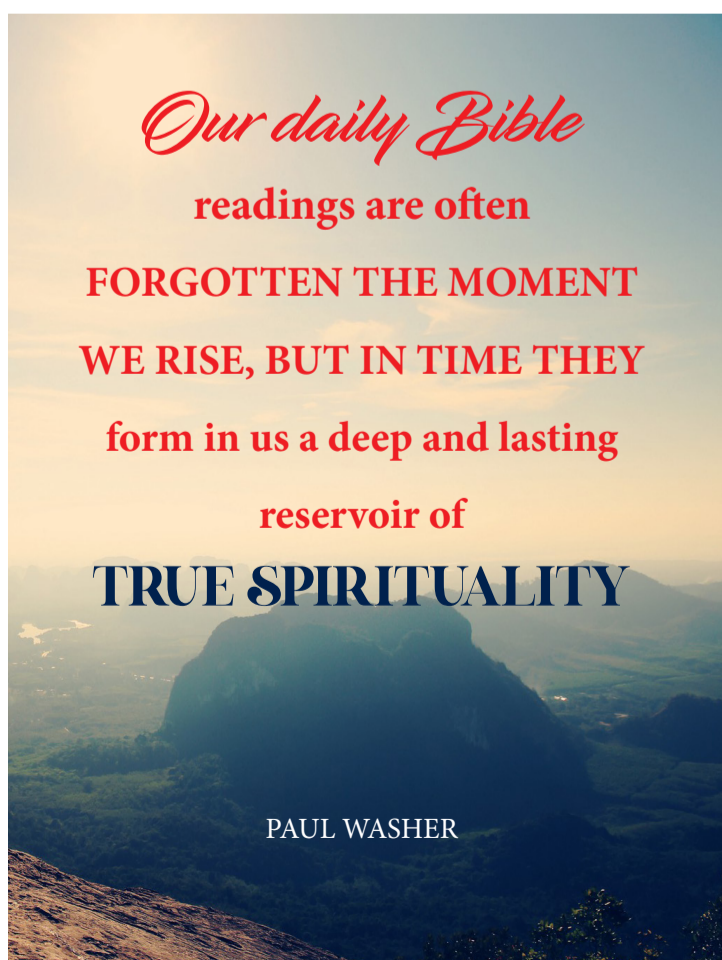
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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS (Current edition)

Dr. Binu Daniel, Elizabeth Mathew, Jossy Binz, Dr. Manoja Korada, Priya Merin Mathew, Dr. Thomas Idiculla

OCTOBER
Spirituality and Lifestyle: Leading a kingdom-driven lifestyle (Mt 6:19-34; Ro12:1-3)

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Our daily Bible
readings are often
FORGOTTEN THE MOMENT
WE RISE, BUT IN TIME THEY
form in us a deep and lasting
reservoir of
TRUE SPIRITUALITY

PAUL WASHER

FROM THE editor



Restoring Human's Impaired Image

The consciousness about the self, the more profound awareness of self-identification, is a distinctive spiritual attribute of humans.

Understanding the self is fundamental for one's place in society and interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. When the individual identity is attached to power, it becomes highly contentious from the smallest unit of society, the family, to the largest unit, the nation. History is stained with innumerable bloodsheds in the name of identity. It is the root cause of communal, ethnic, and religious stratification that casts a dark shade over many societies worldwide. The ethnic cleansing of Jews by the Nazis in Germany and the transatlantic slave trade under the British colonial regime, and the caste system in India are a few prominent examples from the past.

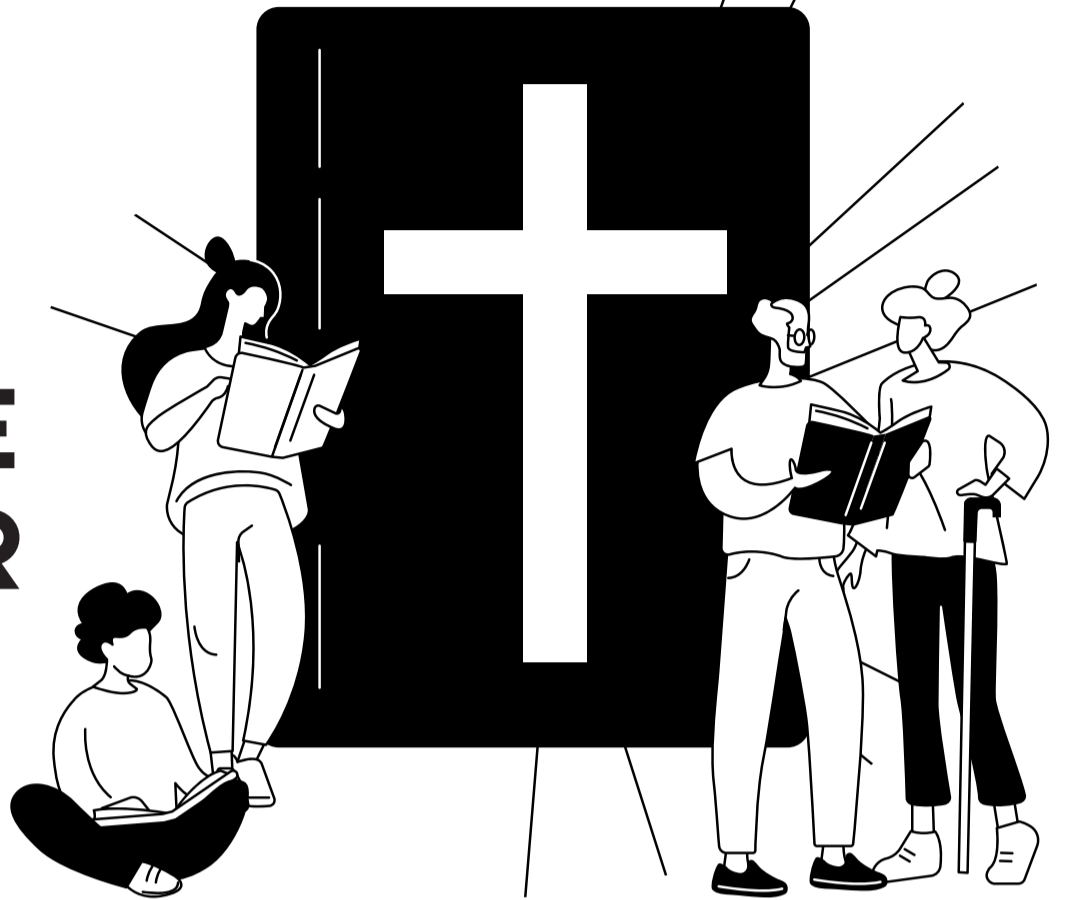
Some of the highly influential philosophical alternatives introduced as an antidote to the chaos caused by discrimination, oppression, and exploitation in the name of identity did not differ from the vices they were fighting against. They also turned out to be means of oppression and violence. For instance, Marxism, introduced in the nineteenth century, followed by other ideologies that support segments of the societies (gender, class, caste, or sexual orientation) that emerged in recent decades, could only widen the gaps between groups instead of restoring the true value of the human self.

The biblical definition of humanity presented in the book of Genesis, *imago dei* (the image of God), is par excellence compared to all other religious and philosophical definitions ever proposed. The primary account of the creation of human beings stated in Genesis 1:27: "In the image of God he created them, male and female he created them," underscores two significant implications vital for understanding the identity of the human self that are consistent with the scientific

"The best remedy to restore humanity from the distorted views about their identity today is to reaffirm their unique identity as the creator's image that explains their intelligence, creativity and moral consciousness well."

conclusions. a) Humans are far superior to all species in every respect: Intellectually, socially, morally, and spiritually. b) Every human has equal status despite color, creed, caste, or caliber. Therefore, gender, class, ethnicity, or any such differences are not meant for disparity but for diversity that contributes beauty to the world. However, the same assertions can prove harmful to human dignity and actual progress unless it is grounded on a higher purpose. Therefore, a more crucial affirmation that transcends the scientific affirmation of humanity that the Genesis account contributes is pivotal in understanding humanity today. The fundamental biological distinction of humanity, 'male' and 'female,' is neither a mere unguided, random process of natural selection as the dominant, well-accepted scientific theory of evolution suggests nor a matter of 'personal choice' proposed by the advocates of gender neutrality. Instead, it is by divine determination. This awareness will liberate the modern generation who are tempted to think, "I am a woman trapped in a man's body," or vis-a-versa. The best remedy to restore humanity from the distorted views about their identity today is to reaffirm their unique identity as the creator's image that explains their intelligence, creativity, and moral consciousness well.

THE IMAGE OF GOD IN HUMANITY AS THE FOUNDATION FOR SPIRITUALITY



The word “spirituality” denotes many things to many people, including well-meaning Christians. For some, it is about a person’s prayer life, spiritual power, and gifting; for others, it is about the godly value and deep faith in God; for some others still, it is about doing good things such as social service and ministry, etc.; for many others, it is a summation of all these. What, then, is spirituality? Can it be defined? It may be difficult to define spirituality through a straitjacketed formulae or proposition. Still, it is possible to determine the foundation of spirituality, which, we suggest, is the image of God in humanity. Put simply, spirituality comes into existence in the real meaning of its term when humanity bears the image of God or becomes like him. To explain this point briefly and generally, I shall read Moses and Paul together. I shall briefly discuss God’s image in humanity (Gen. 1-3) and relate it to Paul’s writings.

The idea of spirituality as becoming like God begs the following primary questions: Who is God, and what/who is humanity? Alternatively, what does it mean to say humanity is the image of God (Gen 1:28)? Although many proposals have been put forth since humanity began questing for its meaning, I base my discussion on Richard J. Middleton’s argument which says humanity bearing the image of God means that it functions like him: “let us make humanity in our own image and likeness and let them rule over...” For Middleton, God’s image in humanity means that it rules or becomes a co-ruler with God simply because God is portrayed as king in Genesis 1: God speaks, and it happens just as things come to pass by order of a king in Ancient West Asia.

We shall further expand Middleton’s argument and suggest that the functional dimension of God’s image (that humanity rules like God or co-rules with him) is predicated on the moral attributes of God and his life that are shared with humanity. God is not only the sovereign king in Genesis 1, as Middleton suggests, but also the

"THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEVENTH DAY IS NOT INHERENT BUT CONTINGENT UPON GOD’S SPECIAL ACT. THIS MEANS HUMANITY CAN FUNCTION LIKE GOD ONLY IF IT ANCHORS ITSELF IN THE MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD AND HIS LIFE, OR TO SAY DIFFERENTLY; HUMANITY CAN CO-RULE WITH GOD ONLY IF IT KEEPS UP WITH GOD’S GOODNESS."

source of light and life, good and holy. Therefore, he creates life and gives life to humanity, including the fruit of life; he evaluates his own command and the creation as good; he makes the seventh day holy following the six days of creation. Note that the significance of the seventh day is not inherent but contingent upon God’s special act. This means humanity can function like God only if it anchors itself in the moral attributes of God and his life, or to say differently; humanity can co-rule with God only if it keeps up with God’s goodness (his value system and moral standard) and his holiness (submitted to God as sanctified) by living out the life God has given to them. All three (the co-ruler ship, co-sharing of moral attributes, and co-sharing of life) stand or fall together. Unfortunately, all these collapses in Genesis. 3. Humanity does not act like a co-ruler. Instead of acting like the owner and master of the serpent and thus commanding it to behave under its authority, it is swayed by the value system proposed by the serpent. It thus fails to measure up to God’s standard. In other words, humanity surrenders its authority and shatters God’s moral attributes endowed upon it and thus invites death.

What does the above theological reflection mean for our spirituality? Years later, Paul returns to all these issues in Romans 5 onwards. First, he recalls Gen. 3 (although in a different language-the first Adam and the last) and then speaks of restoring ruler ship for humanity in theological-spiritual terms. According to Paul, sin ought not

to reign over our bodies; rather, as children of God, we should reign over our body and mind by the spirit of God. All these, he speaks, will culminate in the restoration of the entire creation that humanity failed to rule over (Gen. 3). In his writing to Galatians (5:16), Paul seems to recall the Genesis story, the life of God and the attribute of God, as the fruit of the spirit.

So, spirituality is all about bearing the image of God or becoming like him in his power and authority, in his nature and life. Since Jesus is said to be the image of God and the exact representation of his being (Heb.1:1-3), bearing the image of God would mean becoming like Jesus daily. All spiritual activities must be founded upon and flow from this premise and praxis.



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“So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image” (2

Corinthians 3:18, NLT)

LIKE AN ANGLED MIRROR, WE ARE MEANT TO SHOW THE WORLD THE GREATNESS AND LOVE OF OUR GOD EXHIBITED THROUGH CHRIST. FURTHERMORE, CONSIDERING EVERY OTHER PERSON AS THE IMAGE OF GOD WILL CHANGE OUR PERSPECTIVE ABOUT OTHERS AND FACILITATE A PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND HARMONIOUS LIVING ON THIS PLANET AS INTENDED BY GOD.

The classical Latin term *Imago Dei* means the Image of God. The Scripture provides ample evidence that man is created in the image of God. The typical biblical passage on this subject is Genesis 1:26: Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” The words “image” and “likeness” express the resemblance or relation of man to his Creator. These words are synonymous and are used as a parallelism to convey the same meaning. This idea is reiterated in Genesis 5:1 and emphasised in 9:6. Various passages in the New Testament also attest to the same concept (1 Cor. 11:7; James 3:9).

We understand from the Scripture that God is personal and infinite. Furthermore, we know that man is also a personal being, though finite. He is a person in the same way God is and thus has the attributes of personhood like self-consciousness, rationality, and freedom of the will. These ontological similarities between man and God facilitate him to function as God’s co-regent and representative on this planet and govern the earth on behalf of Him (Gen 1:26). In his original “state of innocence,” there was an open and uninterrupted relationship between God and man. But this relationship got severed for man as a sinner in his “fallen state.” Man’s guilt and sinfulness obstructed him from relating to God in the way he was created. Nevertheless, man is still

in the image of God (Gen. 9:6) even after the ‘fall.’

When apostle Paul talks about Christ as the image of God (Col: 1:15-17), he presents Jesus in a distinct perspective. He portrays Christ as the exact visible exemplification of the invisible God. The same idea is echoed in Hebrews 1:3, which says, “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His nature.” Hence, when we look at Christ, we are looking at God. He is God in the likeness of man (Phil. 2:7), the God-incarnate.

When a person is ‘in Christ,’ he is reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit. God reconciles that person to Himself through Christ. The relationship, once severed, would become restored, and he would become acceptable to God (2 Cor. 5:17-19). Thus, we are justified, i.e., acquitted of sin and declared blameless before God by faith through our Lord (Rom 5:1). There begins our journey of sanctification. According to the Scripture, a believer in Christ is in the process of being conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). It means that the indwelling Holy Spirit is sanctifying us to become like Christ to bear His character or image in ourselves. Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:18 says that a person in Christ can continually see and reflect the glory of the Lord. When we behold His glory and cherish Him as the most precious treasure, He will progressively

transform us into His image from one degree of glory to even more until we mature up to the measure of the fullness of Christ.

As God’s image bearers, we must reflect Christ’s characteristics to the rest of the world. The New Testament scholar NT Wright offers the analogy of an angled mirror to explain God’s image. According to him, we are like an angled mirror in this world so that God can reflect His love, care, and stewardship of the world through us so that the rest of the world can praise the Creator. Like an angled mirror, we are meant to show the world the greatness and love of our God exhibited through Christ. Furthermore, considering every other person as the image of God will change our perspective about others and facilitate a peaceful coexistence and harmonious living on this planet as intended by God.



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IMAGINATION

- A GIFT OF GOD'S IMAGE IN US

Out of all God's creations, humans alone are blessed with the unique gift of imagination- a creative power to believe in what is real, even without concrete evidence. God bestowed This remarkable gift upon humans during their creation, reflecting His image and likeness. However, this gift took a tragic turn when humans began to envision themselves as God, who is far beyond our imagination. As a result, this misuse of imagination led to the downfall of humanity into sin. Since then, sin has tarnished the genuine potential of imagination, redirecting humankind toward harmful purposes.

Humanity persistently misapplied this imaginative capability, embracing false concepts of God's will, relying excessively on the fleeting assurances of the material world, succumbing to arrogance, wickedness, disgraceful conduct, desires, unfaithfulness, and similar transgressions! Amidst this bleak scenario, there is a bright ray of hope! When we invite the Lord Jesus Christ into our lives as our Saviour, we transform and receive a new nature. This renewal empowers us to align our thoughts and actions more closely with our Creator. Colossians 3:10 explains that we should let the Holy Spirit

renew our thoughts and imaginations instead of indulging in negative and sinful thoughts. God warns us to be careful and not let our thoughts enslave us, especially when they contradict His word. *"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"* (2 Corinthians 10:5). God uses His own imagination to bless us *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you; says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope"* (Jeremiah 29:11).

The Bible records instances where the chosen ones had divine insights to confront and defeat enemies' powers. David had to imagine himself defeating Goliath. He envisioned pulling the stone in the slingshot, making the giant fall with it. Queen Esther gained power through prayer and fasting to imagine doing what God told her. David and Esther first had to see themselves trusting God and acting on what He asked them to do. Our thoughts and imaginations are the building blocks to bring about the manifestation of what we want. Identify a realm in your life where hope seems distant or a situation that requires a significant breakthrough. And invite the Holy Spirit to partner with them to imagine the involvement of God in that circumstance. Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, will open great windows of divine imagination and give you the faith to trust in the seemingly impossible. Throughout this journey, anticipate

God will guard and renew your mind with His perfect peace. As a result, what might appear unattainable will start making sense, for nothing is impossible to Him, and He accomplishes infinitely more than we can ever imagine. As citizens of the kingdom of God, we ought to pray for Heaven to manifest on Earth, so let us tirelessly work for the world God imagines, as quoted in an old Hymn-

"The Spirit of God lives among us today
To bring the world God imagines
While Jesus walks with us to guide all our ways
To bring the world God imagines".



Elizabeth Mathew
Muscat, Oman

Elizabeth Mathew, a certified educational trainer, and consultant, now thrives as an entrepreneur in the UAE. As a former Vice Principal, she continues to positively impact both spiritual and secular realms through her God-given talents and commitment. She is a devoted wife to Abraham Mathew and a loving mother to two wonderful children.

“ Our thoughts and imaginations are the building blocks to bring about the manifestation of what we want. Identify a realm in your life where hope seems distant or a situation that requires a significant breakthrough. And invite the Holy Spirit to partner with them to imagine the involvement of God in that circumstance.”

Spirituality and Self: A Biblical Perspective

Celebration of cultural diversity in Christian devotion to God



Incredibly, the truth that man created in the image of God has been unfolding more convincingly in recent years, with information technology taking center stage. This truth and its importance were deliberately hidden with time. Traditionally associated with religious contexts, this concept has expanded to encompass various perspectives, including secular and humanistic viewpoints. It resonates with people across multiple belief systems today, serving as a bridge between faith and reason. The concept of being created in the image of God signifies the mirroring of divine qualities like love, wisdom, and innovation. In an increasingly fast-paced and technologically-driven world, the quest for meaning and self-discovery has led many individuals to explore spirituality. This exploration often involves a deep understanding of oneself about the concept of being made in the image of God.

Spirituality provides a lens through which individuals can explore the depths of their inner selves. By engaging in practices such as meditation, prayer, mindfulness, and introspection, people embark on journeys of self-discovery that lead to a better understanding of their unique qualities and purpose in life. These practices encourage individuals to recognize the divine essence within themselves and, in turn, nurture a sense of interconnectedness with all living beings. Moreover, spirituality offers a holistic approach to self-discovery, acknowledging human existence's physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual dimensions. This comprehensive perspective encourages individuals to address

“ Human beings are uniquely fashioned in a way that reflects the attributes and character of their Creator. The biblical narrative doesn't end with the creation account but extends to the themes of redemption and restoration.”

their inner struggles and conflicts while striving for personal growth and enlightenment.

The biblical narrative of creation in the Book of Genesis lays the groundwork for the concept of humanity as the image of God. Genesis 1:26-27 is written: *“Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...’* So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. *“This passage reflects a profound truth – that human beings are uniquely fashioned in a way that reflects the attributes and character of their Creator. The biblical narrative doesn't end with the creation account but extends to the themes of redemption and restoration. The belief in the image of God has implications for understanding the value of every human life and the potential for transformation. The teachings of Jesus Christ emphasize the importance of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation – qualities that align with the divine image.*

A pathway to redemption and restoration is offered through Christ's life, death, and resurrection. This implies that despite human imperfections and shortcomings, individuals can work towards embodying the divine attributes more fully. Understanding humanity as God's image provides a framework for growth, humility,

and a lifelong journey toward becoming more Christ-like.

An inner transformation through a connection with God is central to the biblical perspective of spirituality and self. The Bible teaches that humans are not merely physical entities but have a spiritual dimension connecting them to the divine. This connection is portrayed as essential for fulfilling the human spirit and realizing one's true identity.

In the Old Testament, figures like Abraham, Moses, and David exemplify the transformative power of encountering God. They gained deeper insight into their purpose, strengths, and vulnerabilities through their encounters. These encounters often led to moments of self-reflection, humility, and a reorientation of their lives towards a higher calling.



Dr. Binu Daniel
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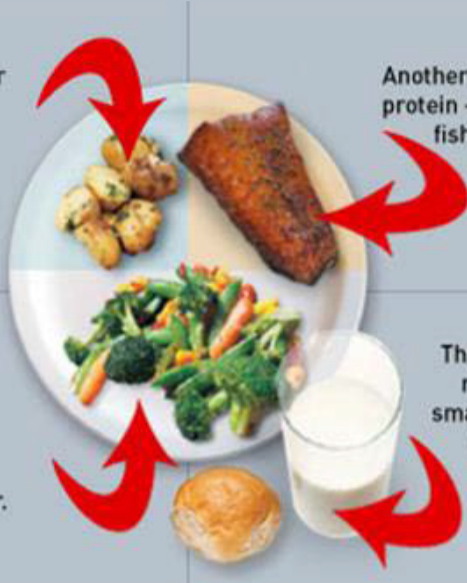
Dr. Binu Daniel is a management consultant, teacher, author, and educationist. He has written numerous articles in well-established English dailies on Economics and Management issues.



About one-fourth of your plate should be filled with grains or starchy foods (carbohydrates) such as rice, pasta, potatoes, corn, or peas.

Another fourth should be protein - foods like meat, fish, poultry, or tofu.

For the last half of your plate, you can fill it with non-starchy vegetables like broccoli, carrots, cucumbers, salad, tomatoes, or cauliflower.



Then, add a glass of nonfat milk and a small roll or piece of fruit and you are ready to eat!

HOW CAN WE EAT HEALTHY IN DIABETES?

An eating plan that helps promote health and manage weight includes a variety of healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. This will have a variety of protein foods such as seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), soy products, nuts, and seeds.

CARBOHYDRATES, PROTEINS AND FATS

The quantity of the meal matters. We need carbohydrates, protein, fat, and vegetables for our meals. We can have the protein—our meat, fish, eggs, etc.—only our palm size and deck of a card thickness. Fat comes automatically from all the foods we eat. When we buy food items from the store, read the labels. Always look for the serving size, as it is about that amount the rest of the label talks about. Look for the total carbohydrates; if more than 5 grams are listed as fiber, we could subtract it from the total as it will go out of the system. Sugar and fiber come under the total carbohydrates. 25-30 grams of fiber per day is good for us.

Also, look for the total fats. Remember that mono and polyunsaturated fats are good for us, saturated fat is bad, and trans-fat is worse. Also, if we have high blood pressure, watch for sodium. In 24 hours, our maximum sodium is <2000mg. For example, a soup can have almost 500-700 grams of sodium. So, if we have soup, we must subtract it from the 2000; that is all we can have for the rest of the day. Remember, wherever salt goes, water goes. If we watch our sodium, we could even lose the water weight we might have had all this time. Ask for the carb content of the food at the restaurants or any info on the food.

SMART SNACKING

When we choose healthy snacks at the right time, it is called smart snacking. Do not consume quick sugar snacks even if the carb amount is the same as other healthy snacks. Some examples are fresh vegetable slices with salsa, lean turkey on whole grain crackers, and celery sticks filled with peanut butter. For example, ½ cup of ice cream has 15-20gms of carbohydrates, and a packet of peanut butter crackers has almost the same carbs. Do not think we can substitute the cracker with the ice cream because the ice cream has quick sugar, and the crackers have complex sugar. We need quick sugar only when we know that our sugar is dropping and that also 15gms,

which is ½ cup, not a full cup. We drink the rest ½ cup only if the sugar does not return more than 70 or 80 in 15 minutes when we recheck it. A healthy snack always has 1 oz protein with 15-20 grams of carbohydrates, like peanut butter crackers.

LOW CARB DIET IS NOT GOOD WHEN YOU HAVE DIABETES.

We commonly misunderstand that people with diabetes must be on low-carb diets, which is wrong. They need energy like anybody else, and the calories or energy comes primarily from carbs. We should know how much carbohydrates we can eat at each meal. Our carbohydrate requirement is not per the weight but per the height. The extra carbs go to our hips and belly areas. It is advised to consume 45gms – 60gms carbs per meal for a medium to tall man and 30gms-45gms per meal for a medium to tall woman.

SWEETENERS

The moderate use of non-nutritive sweeteners is acceptable when we use Splenda, Truvia, and Stevia (the most popular ones) as long as you do not use several packets for one drink. The complications from the cumulative use of these would be another 50 years from now. Still, if we use regular sugar, we may die or develop complications from uncontrolled blood sugars within months to a few years.

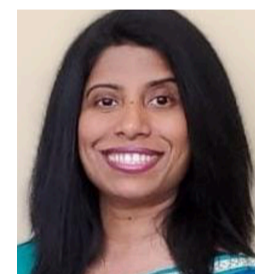
VITAMIN D

Vitamin D is active in regulating pancreatic beta cells, which make insulin. Other research has shown that vitamin D and calcium supplements slow the progression of type 2 diabetes. Vitamin D is also essential for bone health.

PLATE METHOD

We can also use this method if we need help remembering the 45-60gm carb meals. ½ of our plate is vegetables, and the other half should be our rice, potatoes, corn, etc., on one side, and proteins like meat, fish, or poultry on the other.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31). When we bring God into our healthy eating, it changes everything. Striving to honor Him in our food and drink choices will bring not only a heart change but it will also change our choices.



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FROM HISTORY

Irenaeus on the Image of God



St. Irenaeus (d. a.d. 202), who was only two generations removed from St. Paul, understood the image of God in a marvelous way, explaining that in the Incarnation the Word of God was made man in order that, since He has thus assimilated Himself to man (*sibi metipsi assimilans*), now therefore the result is that man, due to his resemblance to the Son, has become precious to the Father (*ut per eam quae est ad Filium similitudinem, pretiosus homo fiat Patri*);).

As an aside, the Latin here is from J.P. Migne, *Patrologia Graece* 7:2, 1167. Only fragments of Irenaeus' Greek are available today, but the complete copy in Migne's Latin, a very early translation, is customarily used, as here, when the Greek is not available. The English translation is a worthy read: *Against Heresies*, Book V: 16, 2, *Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1*. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1989.

What Irenaeus is saying is that Christ, by his incarnate likeness in appearance, in substance, and in physical reality to man, the eternally beloved Son has caused man to become every bit as precious to the Father as He Himself has been from eternity. Unlike all other created beings, man has possessed this marvelous feature, that he pre-figured and showed forth in advance the Incarnation of the Son of God. But now that this Incarnation has become reality, man no longer merely looks like the exemplar, but the exemplar itself has arrived, and there is a Man who is Himself God; His flesh is the flesh of God; His human attributes are the attributes of God; everything about His human nature is inseparably bound to the divine nature. Therefore, every *other* man, every other human being, possesses the attribute of being at least somewhat like the permanently incarnate, eternally beloved Son of God. Every man resembles Jesus, and for this reason alone, according to Irenaeus, man has become particularly precious, especially since the Incarnation.

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DISCOVER



THE POWER OF YOUR IDENTITY

and decline in their faith over recent years. Marty Sampson, a well-known songwriter for *Hillsong Worship*, announced that he was “genuinely losing his faith” and said, “Christianity is just another religion.”

According to Blake Chastain, *deconstruction* seems to happen for a variety of reasons, some of which include 1) Social pressure to conform to progressive social ideologies, 2) The desire to sin without guilt, 3) Poor biblical teaching, often involving extreme views, 4) Traumatic or bitter experiences in the church, and 5) A perceived satanic influence or demonic assault.

I take a progressive stance for that which empowers or challenges people in a positive direction and that promotes societal well-being. However, there is an overwhelming social pressure on young people to be cool, whether in school, college, or any progressive environment. Holding a different viewpoint than the majority culture will hurt your friendships and may even affect your career and future. Expressing Christian biblical beliefs or behavior is now problematic in schools, colleges, workplaces, and social media. However, there is no control over the growth of inappropriate social media platforms, pornography, violence, and drugs destroying young minds.

The world is trying to change the name of sinful lifestyles to make sin appealing and adaptable to accept. For instance, the word ‘pedophilia’ was changed to ‘minor-attracted people,’ sexual exploitation to adult entertainment, sex cults to music clubs, adultery to open marriages, gender mutilation to gender transitioning, fornication to intimacy, lust to love, spiritual battle of good and evil to hate speech. In the past few years, we have seen a new trend of accepting and glorifying sin rather than promoting a God-fearing lifestyle. Jesus promised that some would walk away because they did not want to hear his message (Jn 6:65-66). The Apostle Paul also warned that in the last days, people would turn away from sound teaching and have itching ears for false doctrines (2 Ti. 4:3-4). Parents, pastors, and church leaders are responsible for educating the growing generation on biblical truths.

DEAL WITH DOUBT QUICKLY AND RESIST ANY FORM OF UNBELIEF.

Sometimes, you may experience doubt or even unbelief, which can affect your faith. Doubt involves questioning what you believe, while disbelief is a determined refusal to accept. Doubt

is born out of a troubled mind and broken heart, while unbelief is an act of the will. However, when you follow Jesus and seek to know Him more through prayer, bible study, church gathering, and talking with friends, a mentor, or a Counselor, you will discern right from wrong. You will be able to recognize flawed beliefs about your identity, faith, salvation, certain behaviors, or sins that disqualify you from receiving Christ’s redemption. Believe and confess that you are created by a loving God, in His image, for a purpose. You are significant in His sight. You have authority in Jesus. You may remember your sins, making you feel unworthy to accept your true identity.

BELIEVE WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT YOUR IDENTITY?

One’s identity should be structured on Biblical truths and not based on your feelings or preferences. It ministers to the whole person: Spirit, Soul, and Body (1 Th. 5:23). According to the Bible, male and female are not determined by what we feel we are but by who we are. A biblical understanding of our identity will empower us. The Bible says you are a child of God (1 Jn 3:2); His masterpiece (Eph. 2:10); a new creation (2 Co. 5:17); a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Co. 6:19-20); you are blessed (Eph 1:3); bold (2 Co. 3:12); chosen (Co 3:12); forgiven (Act 13:38-39); free (Ga. 5:1); gifted (1 Pe. 4:10); holy (Eph. 1:4-5); justified (Ro. 5:1); loved (Ro. 8:38-39); never alone (De. 31:8); pleasing (2 Co. 2:15); redeemed (Co. 1:14); saved (Eph. 2:4-6); set apart (1 Pe. 2:9); valuable (1 Co. 6:19-20); Wonderfully made (Psa. 139:14).

KNOWING YOUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST WILL DEVELOP YOUR TRUE IDENTITY.

Our faith is rooted in our firm belief in Jesus Christ and the limitless love, acceptance, and forgiveness we receive in Him. Seeing you as Jesus sees you matters most. If you believe in Jesus, you experience a new identity in Christ. The more you know Jesus through His Word and in prayer, the more you will experience His identity in you, enabling you to grow in intimacy with Him and other believers. Paul says, “Thanks be to God who has given us the victory in Christ Jesus.” (1 Cor. 15:57). In Christ, we have total victory over sin, poverty, satanic curses, diseases, sickness, fear, etc. We should work to become more like Christ (Ro. 8:29; Ga. 4:19) and practice spiritual disciplines.

EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF YOUR IDENTITY THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The more you know Jesus, the more you can

"OUR FAITH IS ROOTED IN OUR FIRM BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST AND THE LIMITLESS LOVE, ACCEPTANCE, AND FORGIVENESS WE RECEIVE IN HIM. SEEING YOU AS JESUS SEES YOU MATTERS MOST. IF YOU BELIEVE IN JESUS, YOU EXPERIENCE A NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST. THE MORE YOU KNOW JESUS THROUGH HIS WORD AND IN PRAYER, THE MORE YOU WILL EXPERIENCE HIS IDENTITY IN YOU, ENABLING YOU TO GROW IN INTIMACY WITH HIM AND OTHER BELIEVERS."

identify the flaws in your life through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “And him that comes to me; when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (Jn. 16:13). A closer walk with Jesus will enable you to experience the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit, the Counselor to comfort you, lead into truth with wisdom and knowledge, and deliverance from demonic influence and pulling down of strongholds in life (Jn. 14:16-17; 16:13). Then you will experience inner peace and the love of God enabling you to show this love to others. You will grow to look more like Him and less like the world.

In Christ, you are forgiven, loved, and have your identity established as a child of God. In addition, God has specific plans and purposes for your life. He wants you to prosper and flourish in all areas, including your relationships, career, and personal growth. This assurance can be found in Je. 29:11. And as His handiwork, you were intentionally created in Christ Jesus for a purpose (Eph. 5:1). You have a new identity because, through Jesus, you are forgiven, your sins have been paid for, and you are aligned and restored in right standing before God.



Ancient Roman weapons captured by Jewish rebels were discovered in the Dead Sea caves



Fifty years ago, Israeli archaeologists discovered an ancient Hebrew inscription on a stalactite in a remote cave in the desert east of Jerusalem, where the land begins to slope toward the Dead Sea. In June, hoping to find additional inscriptions not visible to the naked eye, three researchers — an archaeologist, a geologist and a photographer trained in multi-spectral photography — returned to the cave. While exploring a new level of the cave, one of the researchers discovered the iron head of a Roman javelin, known as a "pilum," in a hidden

narrow crevice. The trio immediately contacted the Israel Antiquities Authority, which has been conducting a systematic search of Judean desert caves for the past six years to keep any remnants of Dead Sea scrolls or other ancient artefacts in the archaeology-rich region out of the hands of looters and off the black market. Soon after discovering the javelin, the archaeologists discovered a cache of four 1,900-year-old swords, all remarkably well-preserved. Even more remarkable were the swords' wood and leather accessories, which the desert's arid climate had prevented from decaying. Three swords were identified as Roman spatha swords, with 2-foot-long blades, and a shorter weapon, a ring-pommel sword, with an 18-inch-long blade. The weapons were most likely left in the cave by Jewish rebels involved in the 132 to 136 C.E. Bar Kokhba revolt, the Jews' final attempt to force the Romans out of the ancient land of Israel after nearly two centuries of occupation. During the revolt, bands of Jewish fighters and refugees lived in the caves that dot the forbidding Judean landscape. The uprising failed, and the Romans expelled most of the surviving Jews and changed the territory's name from "Judaea" to "Syria Palaestina." The Judean Desert has yielded thousands of ancient artefacts thanks to its extremely hot and dry climate, which enables organic materials to be preserved for thousands of years. Some 90% of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in the Judean Desert after the Second World War were written on vellum, made from processed animal hides.

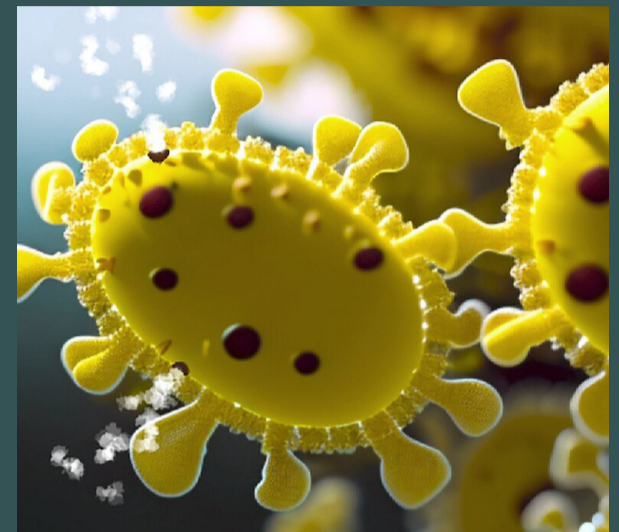
G20 declaration stops short of outright condemnation of Russia



Leaders gathered for the annual Group of 20 summit agreed on a joint statement laying out shared views on climate change and economic development. Still, they showed the fractures within the group by stopping short of explicitly condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Diplomats had been working furiously to draft a final joint statement in the lead-up to the summit but hit snags on language to describe the Ukraine war. The eventual compromise statement amounted to a coup for the summit's

host, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, but still reflected a position far softer than those the United States and its Western allies have adopted individually. US President Joe Biden hoped to convince the world's largest economies to rally behind Ukraine during his two-night stay in India for the summit. He also pressed his case for American investment in the developing world. The leaders agreed to the joint declaration, acknowledging the situation in Ukraine while not papering over the group's major divides. "All states must refrain from the threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition," the declaration read, without explicitly singling out Russia for its invasion. The document also stated opposition to the use of nuclear weapons and highlighted the economic effects of the war. In reflecting on the deep fractures among the G20 nations, the statement acknowledged "there were different views and assessments of the situation."

World News



Making milk from CO2 and electricity

A consortium comprised of Solar Foods, the University of Groningen, RWTH Aachen University and FGen AG has proposed a new project that will be capable of responding to the growing demand for sustainable dairy production, addressing the incumbent global food and resource crisis. HYDROCOW was selected to receive a total budget of €5.5 million from the European Innovation Council (EIC) to develop a biotechnology platform that stimulates new possibilities for sustainable food, materials, medicines and chemical production. The development of artificially made milk protein was selected as the first application of this platform. By employing carbon dioxide and electricity, HYDROCOW intends to genetically engineer a hydrogen oxidising bacteria (HOB) that can naturally produce beta-lactoglobulin, the fundamental whey protein in cow's milk. This bacteria will be able to generate the major milk protein while removing animals from the process. The biological tool behind its production requires no agricultural input or photosynthesis, which has been the only feasible way for humans to receive energy from the sun to feed themselves, thus not burdening natural resources in a time of growing food insecurity. Compared to traditional animal-based industries, this hydrogen technology platform offers the possibility of becoming more efficient, sustainable and ethical. This will also relieve dependence on agriculture. The effects of intensively using natural resources, removing biomass and transforming large patches of land into grazing areas for livestock are some of the most pressing issues in the relationship between the environment and the farming industry.

US Commerce Secretary Warns China-US Business' Patience Wearing thin

US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo warned China in interviews broadcast on Sunday (Sep 3) that the patience of US business was "wearing thin", saying American companies deserved a "predictable environment and a level playing field". The two biggest economies in the world used to be each other's largest trade partners, but Washington now trades more with neighbouring Canada and Mexico. In contrast, Beijing trades more with Southeast Asia. Raimondo has told US firms faced new challenges, including unexplained large fines, raids on businesses and changes to a counterespionage law. "I was clear, direct and firm in all of my conversations with my Chinese counterparts," she told media. "I didn't pull any punches. I didn't sugarcoat anything." Raimondo also said that she had told Chinese officials that her email was hacked before her late August trip to China. "They suggested that they didn't know about it, and that it wasn't intentional, but I think it was important that I put it on the table and let them know and let them know that it's hard to build trust when you



have actions like that." China is grappling with a slowdown that has rattled global markets, with the spotlight now firmly focused on troubled developer Country Garden's spiralling debt crisis in a sector that contributes to roughly a quarter of the economy. "I think there's no question that (China's economy) is slowing down. And certainly, they are having real, real significant challenges in the real estate sector," she said. Raimondo said China's economy improved when it was more transparent and market-oriented. "As they have closed down and become more arbitrary in how they administer regulations, the economy is quite challenged," she said.

World News



Modi uses Bharat for G20 nameplate amid name change row

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's placard at the opening of the G20 summit referred to India as "Bharat", raising speculation of a change of name for the South Asian nation. India is also called Bharat, Bharata, and Hindustan - its pre-colonial names - in Indian languages and these are used interchangeably by the public and officially. While the country has traditionally stuck to using India in titles such as president or prime minister while communicating in English, President Droupadi Murmu earlier this week referred to herself as the "President of Bharat" in a dinner invitation for a reception of G20 leaders, sparking controversy. As Modi declared the summit in New Delhi open, he sat behind a table nameplate that read "Bharat", while the G20 logo had both names - "Bharat" written in Hindi and "India" in English. Speaking in Hindi, the language spoken by most of the population, Modi said: "Bharat welcomes the delegates as the President of the G20." New Delhi is hosting leaders of major economies for the bloc's summit at a new, US\$300 million conch-shaped convention centre called Bharat Mandapam, opposite a 16th-century stone fort. While some supporters of the name Bharat say "India" was given by British colonisers, historians say the name predates colonial rule by centuries. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the ideological parent of the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), has always insisted on calling the country Bharat. Modi's rivals say the change has been forced by the new opposition alliance formed by 28 parties in July called INDIA or Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, to take on BJP in parliamentary elections next year.

Huge Earthquake hits Central Morocaco



The earthquake of magnitude 6.8, which has hit central Morocco, is the biggest the area has seen since before 1900. Over 2,000 people have died in the quake, which struck at 23:11 local time on Friday. The epicentre was in the High Atlas Mountains, 71km (44 miles) southwest of Marrakesh, at a depth of 18.5km, the US Geological Survey said. The main tectonic driver is the collision between the plates that carry the European and African continents. The interior ministry says more than 1,400 have serious injuries, and the heaviest casualties are in provinces just south of Marrakesh. King Mohammed VI declared three days of national mourning and ordered shelter, food, and other help for survivors. Many people are spending nights out in the open. The magnitude 6.8 quake hit

Marrakesh and many towns on Friday night. In remote mountain areas, entire villages are reported to have been flattened. The epicentre was in the High Atlas Mountains, 71km (44 miles) southwest of Marrakesh - a city with world heritage status popular with tourists. But the tremors were also felt in the capital, Rabat, some 350km away, and Casablanca, Agadir and Essaouira. The interior ministry says Al Haouz province has the highest death toll, followed by Taroudant province. There are far fewer deaths in Marrakesh, though the Unesco-protected old city has suffered considerable damage. It is believed that many simple mud brick, stone and timber homes in mountain villages will have collapsed, but the scale of devastation in remote areas will take some time to assess.