

Identity

Grace and peace to you of like precious faith – who hear the voice of the King of kings calling His sons into divine order ... calling those who yearn for the restoration of His Kingdom in the earth! Since we desire a transformation, we are being changed into the same image of His Son ... and the Word becoming flesh in us manifests His Body!

We were birthed into a new spiritual dimension ... yet how many of us do not know who we are in Christ or what we shall become? If we question our identity then we also frustrate our ability to function and never achieve godly purpose. The children's fairytale of the "Ugly Duckling" is a delightful allegory contrasting the desolation of trying to be somebody we are not destined to be ... and the exhilaration of finally knowing who we really are. It's a familiar parable illustrating some important spiritual principles:

“A very large and ugly duckling was hatched to a mother duck who's only hope was for another pretty little duckling in the image of its natural father. He walked like a duck, swam like a duck ... she thought he was a duck! But because he was so ugly compared to the other little ducklings, he was driven about by every one; his brothers and sisters were unkind to him and his mother wished he had never been born! At last he ran away and was thankful he was so ugly that the dogs left him alone.

“One evening there came a large flock of beautiful birds out of the bushes. They uttered a singular cry, as they spread their glorious wings and flew away from those cold regions to warmer countries across the sea. As they mounted higher and higher in the air, the ugly little duckling felt quite a strange sensation and uttered a cry so extraordinary that it frightened him ... he didn't know the names of these birds, nor where they had flown, but he felt towards them as he had never felt for any other bird in the world! He was not envious of these beautiful creatures, he just wished to be as lovely as they were.

“It would be very sad, were I to relate all the misery and privations which the poor little duckling endured during the hard winter ... but one morning in spring he saw these beautiful birds again and said, 'I will fly to those royal swans and they will kill me, because I am so ugly and dare to approach them; but it does not

matter; better to be killed by them than pecked by the ducks, beaten by the hens, pushed about by the maiden who feeds the poultry, or starved with hunger in the winter.' Then he flew to the water, and swam towards the beautiful swans. The moment they beheld the stranger, they rushed to meet him with outstretched wings. He bent his head down to the surface of the water and awaited death ... but what he saw in the clear stream below was his own image; no longer a dark, gray bird, ugly and disagreeable to look at ... but a graceful and beautiful swan.

"He concluded; to be born in a duck's nest in a farmyard is of no consequence to a bird if it is hatched from a swan's egg."

Truncated version of the "Ugly Duckling" by Hans Christian Andersen.

Likewise, to be born in a denominational church in a religious system is of no real consequence to a son birthed from Royal Seed once he knows he *bears the image of the heavenly Man!* Many of us were birthed from an old religious system that may have been a shadow of things to come but certainly not the image of Christ. Religion makes what they 'do' their identity. Those under the Law focus on circumcision, dietary laws, Sabbath keeping or how they dress as their visible image or identity. 'If it can quack like a duck and walk like a duck then it must be a duck!' If we do not know our identity, then we try to classify ourselves by duplicating the gifting or ministry of someone else.

If we are trying to be something we're not, everything we do looks awkward and out of place. If we look at 'gifting' as who we are, we will always appear as the ugly duckling– out of step and backward to those around us. But if we are courageous enough to hide away for a season ... not looking for identity in our gifting but rather letting God work out our purpose through the process of maturity ... we will emerge from our wilderness with a desire to fulfill our divine destiny. If the image of Christ is formed in us, ultimately and in due time we will spread our wings as a glorious swan.

Jesus is our prototype made in the image of man– the entire mode of His appearance, language, manner of life and shape of existence was human ... yet He is the heavenly pattern and the express image of God. It is only through having an intimate personal relationship with Jesus that our knowledge of 'who we are' in Christ is revealed. When we see 'Who He is' a love relationship so pure and holy emanates from the very depth of our being and we let out an extraordinary cry ... *because we are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, and we cry out,*

'Abba, Father!' God looks at us and sees a mirror image manifesting His Son in the earth – His Word written in our hearts and minds becomes the express image of His Son. *And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man ... a life-giving spirit!*

Our spiritual endowments are for something bigger than merely what we do. If we are to be the express image of His Son then He produces a pathway in our life that leads us to fulfilling Kingdom responsibilities. Our determination is to fulfill the plan that He established for His Body ... *beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, being transformed into the same image from glory to glory!* We stop looking for who we are in our gifting and find our identity in Christ, His plan for the Ages!

If we are comparing or fashioning ourselves after someone else, we will look like the ugly duckling to our brethren. The pattern or model of perfection is in Jesus, and our life experiences establish His image or pattern in our lives. We must be willing to be hidden in the barn for a season that we may become mature, qualified and identified ... emerging as a graceful swan able to soar to new heights of grace and beauty in His Body.

Many want to be a 'somebody' but the only way to really be successful is to become part of Christ's Body. Unless we are one with Him in identity and purpose, we are an outcast and a 'nobody' – since our destiny is totally wrapped up in His Christ. We need a relationship with Jesus to be part of the corporate man – His Body. 'Who He is' becomes our identity and we are strengthened with purpose in the Body of His Christ.

Our meager beginnings and wanderings into truth are of no consequence when it is compared to the knowledge of who we are in Christ ... we bear the image of Christ from glory to glory. We caught sight of what we shall become in glory ... and it is so compelling that it does not matter what happens to us. Better to die for the vision than to be pecked by the religious system, beaten by the Law, pushed about by every wind of doctrine or starved with hunger in the winter season of our lives. For the joy that is set before us, we willingly break out of our shells and surrender our lives. Sons come to a rebirth not only pregnant with possibility for spiritual restoration and moral beauty but also with an understanding of the heavenly vision in its divine expression. And a new day dawns as the light of His presence illuminates the Kingdom in majestic wonder and glory ... we rise to meet our destiny!

God, who at various times and various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds ... being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person ... upholding all things by the word of His power.

In recent years there has been a tremendous quest to know our spiritual heritage— men searching to find the land of their origin. Seeking the language of our forefathers has awakened a spiritual desire in the sons of destiny to journey into the land of promise. God has revealed His legacy ... and from generation to generation sons retrace His footsteps making the long journey to the Kingdom ... discovering the unsearchable riches of Christ is a treasure map to spiritual possibility!

Sons learn the language, government and culture of the Kingdom of God to rule and reign with His Christ. Our journey and process in the wilderness places has enabled us to recognize who we are in the Kingdom because we humbly bear the same image of His Son! The King speaks to us face to face and we understand His spiritual language and as loyal sons of the King, we train ourselves to live in the Principles of His Kingdom and manifest His glory in the earth.

All through the Ages, spiritual men and women have heard and seen things of the heavenly realm but were unable to personally interpret the phenomena simply because it was not the proper time. But today we boldly rejoice – for what has been hidden for centuries now is revealed to us! Jesus prophesied, *“the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly.* What we see and know hereafter is in His awesome throne room ... in the presence of God Almighty!

The time has fully come, a new day has dawned in history, an open door is set before us ... *and the Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come!’* It is a strange yet extraordinary cry to those who sense the same holy connection ... and we likewise cry out, *‘Come!’* *And the song of the Lord also began ...* echoing the wisdom of the Ages in the Words of Christ!

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