

Personhood and Sanctification

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Personhood and Identity

Left to ourselves, we cannot “discover” our *identity*. Nor can we find meaning, purpose, hope, or satisfaction by trying to discover something about *ourselves*.

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Personhood and Identity

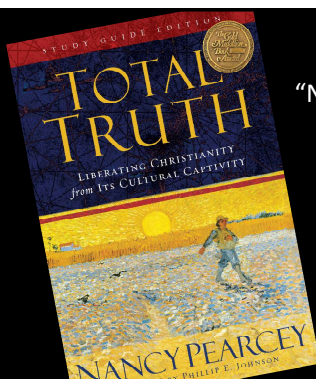
Meaning, purpose, hope, and satisfaction come when God *in His Word* reveals something about *Himself* and about *His actions towards us*.

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God's Awe-Inspiring Actions Towards Us reveal something about His character.	My Identity is what God calls me as a result of His actions.
Creation —I am a <i>created</i> image-bearer of God made to display His glory.	His creation, His image-bearer, Co-Ruler
Condemnation —I am a <i>fallen</i> image-bearer of God under His judgment.	Sinner, Rebel, Enemy, Child of Wrath, Child of Disobedience
Union w/Christ, Justification, Reconciliation, Salvation, Adoption, etc. —I am a <i>forgiven</i> image-bearer of God reconciled to Himself.	His child, a saint, His Bride, His sheep, His New Creation, His Branch, His Church, His Son, Child of Light
Sanctification —I am becoming a <i>Christlike and useful</i> image-bearer of God to reflect His glory.	His disciple, His servant, salt, light, disciple-maker, ambassador
Glorification and Reward —I will be a <i>fully restored and rewarded</i> image-bearer of God worshipping Him and serving Him in the new heaven and earth.	His glorified Bride, Co-Ruler with Him in new heaven and new earth

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“Not Just Academic”
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“As the concept of *worldview* becomes common currency, it can all too easily be misunderstood. Some treat it as merely another academic subject to master—a mental exercise or ‘how to’ strategy. Others handle worldview as if it were a weapon in the culture war, a tool for more effective activism. Still others, alas, treat it as little more than a new buzzword or marketing gimmick to dazzle the public and attract donors.

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"Genuine worldview thinking is far more than a mental strategy or a new spin on current events. **At the core, it is a deepening of our spiritual character and the character of our lives.** It begins with the submission of our minds to the Lord of the universe—a willingness to be taught by Him. The driving force in worldview studies should be a commitment to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind" (see Luke 10:27).

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"That's why the crucial condition for intellectual growth is *spiritual growth* [sanctification], asking God for the grace to 'take every thought captive to obey Christ' (2 Cor. 10:5)."

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Chapter 13—True Spirituality and the Christian Worldview

"Genuine sanctification begins with suffering and dying with Christ. . . . Ultimately, this experience is the goal of developing a Christian worldview—not just studying and debating ideas, but dying and rising again in union with Christ.

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"Without this **inner spiritual reality**, everything we have said about worldviews can become little more than a mental exercise—a way to solve intellectual puzzles, or, worse, a way to impress others by sounding smart and well-educated. Virtually anyone can learn to parrot high-sounding phrases, pronounce certain shibboleths, repeat a few punchy quotations, in order to craft an image of being cultured and sophisticated.

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"Even worldview studies can become a seedbed for pride instead of a process of submitting our minds to the Lordship of Christ.

In fact, I would go even further and say that the first step in conforming our intellect to God's truth is to die to our vanity, pride, and craving for respect from colleagues and the public." (354)

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"In every age, the most persuasive evidence for the gospel is not words or arguments but a living demonstration of God's character through Christians' love for one another. . . .

The spiritual reality of [Jesus's having been] *rejected, slain, raised* lies at the heart of everything in the Christian life, including the work of developing a Christian mind. Only as we cooperate with God in dying to sin and self, are we open to receiving "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16)." (378)

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Personhood and Sanctification

A believer's worldview will be tragically incomplete if it does not center-piece the redeeming work of Jesus Christ and the transforming power of His Spirit as He uses the Word of God to progressively develop Christlikeness in himself and others.

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Personhood and Sanctification

Without the transformation of his character, the believer corrupts his co-rulership on the earth as he builds his own kingdom and advances his own glory.

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God's Mission

*God is on a mission
to redeem and restore fallen people
to the likeness of His Son
to the praise of His glory.*

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Two Questions to Answer

1. What does it mean that believers are to live "to the praise of His glory?"
2. How does God "restore fallen people to the likeness of His Son?"

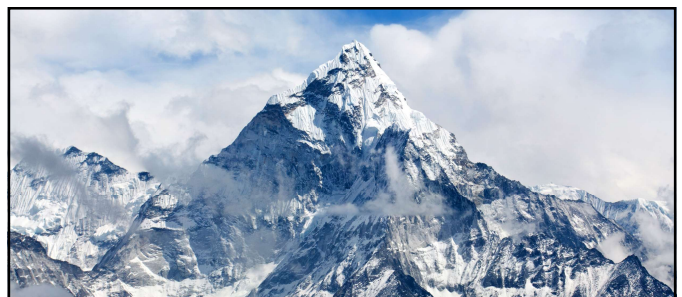
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What is the Glory of God?

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The glory of anything is the excellence that makes it first in its category, and therefore, unique.

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The glory of God is that unique excellence that makes Him supreme—towering over everything else.

Uniquely the source and sustainer of all things
 Unique in His eternal existence
 Unique in His infinitude
 Unique in His unblemished purity
 Unique in His infinite knowledge and wisdom
 Unique in His infinite power

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His unique “set-apartness” from His creation and His “set-apartness” from evil is called His holiness.

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¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is **holy**, you also be **holy** in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, “You shall be **holy**, for I am **holy**.” 1 Peter 1:14-16

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¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his **holiness**. ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of **righteousness** to those who have been trained by it. Hebrews 12:10-11

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¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

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¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,

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²² to **put off** [the ways of] your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to **be renewed** in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to **put on** [the ways of] the new self, created after the likeness of God in true **righteousness** and **holiness**.
Ephesians 4:17-24

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⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the **excellencies** of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
1 Peter 2:9

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How Do We Glorify God?

We show that God is first in our lives by cooperating with Him to develop and display the character of Jesus Christ so that we become "living advertisements" that God has "called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."

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What is Sanctification?

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Mature Personhood (Christlikeness)

Personhood is progressively matured only through the work of God in the soul of a redeemed human intentionally and actively cooperating with God in the sanctification process.

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“Sanctification is that process whereby the **Spirit of God** uses the **Word of God** to make us like the **Son of God** [amidst the circumstances we face in the **providence of God**].”

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The Holy Spirit's Role in Sanctification

- His **conviction** of sin in the believer's heart
- His **illumination** of truth from God's Word
- His **assurance** of our security in Christ
- His **intercession** for us before the Father
- His **empowerment** (grace) for change/service
- His concern—our **grieving** and **quenching** Him
- His commands—**walk**; be **controlled**

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The Use of the Word of God in Sanctification

2 Timothy 3:16 teaches that the Word is useful for...

- **Doctrine**—teaches us what is right
- **Reproof**—teaches us where we are wrong
- **Correction**—teaches us how to make wrongs right
- **Instruction in Righteousness**—teaches us how to keep our walk right

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Christ's Example of Mature Personhood as the Target of Sanctification

- We are to mature “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).
- Mature character is measured in virtues and illustrated in Jesus's life in the gospels.
 - Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5)
 - Essential virtues (2 Pet. 1)
 - Qualities of wisdom (Ja. 3)
 - Characteristics of love (1 Cor. 13)

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God's Use of Trials in Sanctification

- Christian growth happens within the **milieu** of life—the challenges of our circumstances.
- Trials occur in the **providence** of God.
- Trials have an intended end—our **maturity**.
- Trials require a certain **response** for sanctification toward maturity to take place.

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Trials

are the *hurts and hardships* we face because we live in a broken, fallen world with our own sinful natures and we live among others who sin against us because they have sinful natures.



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Temptations

are the enticements from the world around us and from our sinful hearts inside us to ignore God's love for us and to violate His laws to get what we want.



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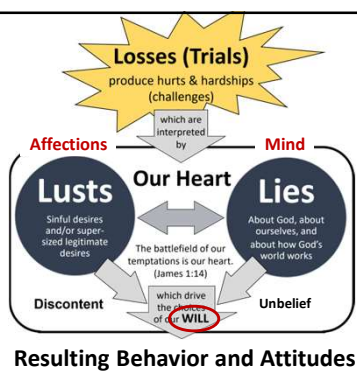
Dis-Integration of Personhood

¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is **lured and enticed** by his own **desire**. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

James 1:14-15

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Components of a Flourishing Life

The Bible provides the only accurate description of the nature of man's soul and its problems, the goal of change, and the nature of the remedies to help the soul of man flourish through his trials. Mankind can flourish as the Creator intended only when...

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Components of a Flourishing Life

1. He is *reconciled* to God through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:1-6).
2. He *cultivates* a daily, fruit-bearing *relationship* with His Savior (John 15:1-16).
3. His *mind* is governed by God's Word (Isa. 55:6-12; Rom. 8; 12:1-2).

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Components of a Flourishing Life

4. His *emotions/affections* reflect that he desires the same things God desires for him (Rom. 15:1-13; Phil. 4:4-13).
5. His *will* makes choices that reflect a commitment to put God first in all things for God's glory and not his own (Matt. 7:24-27; Rom. 6; Gal. 6:7-9; Col. 3:1-25).

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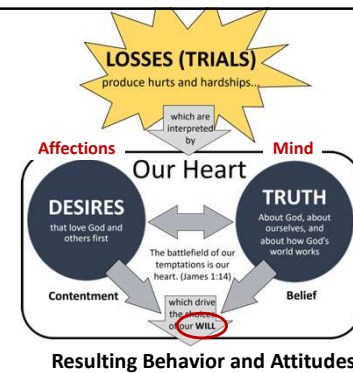
The Sanctification of Personhood

But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

Romans 6:17-18

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Right Response in a Fire

If your clothes catch on fire...



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Right Response in a Trial or a Temptation



Bow



Trust

**Yes,
Lord.**

Obey

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God's Mission: Mature Personhood

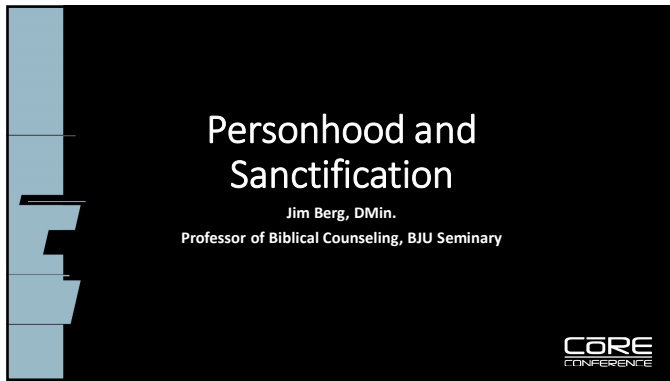
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¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Titus 2:11-14

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