

Intro: Stefan Duerksen, Lead Pastor **PRAY FOR OFFERING**

1. **Church-Wide Prayer: Church Renewal:** Abide, Set Free, Empower, Prayer Summit – holiness, prayer, Scripture & the Spirit to renew the Church
 - **PRAISE:** 600 new pastors added since Spring!
 - **NEEDS:** Increased funding to further expansion and help pastors renew their churches
 - **NEEDS:** Director for India – the right person, called, prepared, unified
 - **NEEDS:** Coaches to mentor the 400 new Pastors in Africa!
 - **Report from CRI ASIA: Pray for two pastors who were beaten and detained**

Additional Requests for ME 😊: (THANK YOU FOR PRAYING)

- Stefan – knee surgery tomorrow. Quick healing. I want to be here for the 22nd! 😊
- Stefan – waiting on shoulder surgery & hip. Prayer for speed through med system.
- Stefan – family doctor – long waiting list. Would speed up the process through the med system.
- Stefan – wisdom, humility, strength, favor to lead well!
- FAMILY – pray for my fam! As the Spirit leads! Unity, health, protection, LOVE JESUS!

INTRO: who am I? this is a question that EVERYONE asks. And it is a question that is hotly debated in our culture today! The ULTIMATE SIN in our culture is to DENY THEM TO BE THEIR AUTHENTIC SELF

- **Meaning:** to deny someone from living based on what they determine as right and wrong for themselves.
- **REMEMBER:** Laptop – it can be a frisbee – but it's actually a data processor! You start with what something is FOR – BEFORE – asking what can it DO.

Last week we looked how the Image of God gives ALL human life → Conception to natural death → Inherent value and that all human life has inalienable rights because they are image bearers! Including the unborn humans.

Christianity has BY FAR, the best view on what it means to be HUMAN – the IMAGE OF GOD and the BEST view on how VALUABLE ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE!! No other belief system so lavishly bestows value, dignity, respect, purpose, and care to ALL humans equally.

Sermon Title: What went wrong?

A. The Fall: The Lie that broke humanity

In part 1 I introduced two terms:

1. **Expressive Individualism:** The term “expressive individualism” was coined by the American scholar Robert Bellah, who defines it as follows: **Expressive individualism holds that each person has a unique core of feeling and intuition that should unfold or be expressed if individuality is to be realized. (strange new world: Carl Truman)**
2. **Self-authorship:** the belief that your authentic self can only be found by looking inside yourself – your feelings, thoughts, desires and discovering your identity there.

People want to BE their authentic SELF.

I would argue they are RIGHT! But what is our authentic self?

Here are the top slogans behind the movement of self-authorship: Creating your own IDENTITY:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/expressive-individualism-what-is-it/>

- You do you.
- Be true to yourself.
- Follow your heart.
- Find yourself.
- Love is love.
- Live your best life.

Three TOP prophets of Self-Authorship! Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Alfred Kinsey (1894-1956)

- **Alfred Kinsey is known as the father of the sexual revolution:** sex was WHO we are rather than something we DO. The current pornography industry, LGBTQ ideology owes it success to Kinsey.
 - **“The only unnatural sex act is that which you cannot perform.” With mantras such as this – you can see society REFLECTING HIS IMAGE.**
 - **How did his life go?** He was married – him and his wife both agreed to having sex with other people outside their marriage. Kinsey had sex with other men, one of which was on of his students.
- **Jean- Jacques Rousseau:** His ideas that people are born free and innocent, but society distorts their moral senses, were influential in political and educational theory.
 - **Identity and the inner life: Confessions – autobiography** *the particular object of my confessions is to make known my inner self, exactly as it was in every circumstance of my life. It is the history of my soul that I promised, and to relate it faithfully I require no other memorandum; all I need do, as I have done up until now is to look inside myself.”*
 - **How did his life go?** “Rousseau believed people are basically good and blamed social structures for evil. With an eye toward his own freedom and self expression, he abandoned his 5 children to early deaths in an orphanage.” (Don’t follow your heart – Thaddeus Williams)
- **Fredrich Nietzsche:** championed the MAN IS MASTER. Each person decides for themselves what is right and wrong.
 - **How did his life go?** “after a deeply lonesome life, N spent his last decade in an asylum, known for dancing naked, fantasizing about shooting the kaiser and believing himself to be Jesus Christ, Napoleon, Buddha and other historical figures” (Don’t follow your heart – Thaddeus Williams)

These prophets lived long ago and yet their reach is still impacting us today! Many in society are REFLECTING THEIR IMAGE. We should be careful to look at their END. Not just their IDEAS.

But their ideas were NOT original!

Genesis 3:1-7 (ESV) Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, **“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’**” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest

you die.” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

LIE: Did God really say? This is at the core of expressive individualism and self-authorship –

For example: I drive a Ford Edge. My manual tells me what my vehicle is FOR. And how it operates. As well, we have LAWS on how to operate the vehicle on the road so that people are SAFE. What if I challenged both the LAWS and Manufacturer and said, “Did Ford really say GAS only?” “you can use Diesel!”

DANGER: Eve heard the LIE – that she could determine RIGHT over WRONG based on HER ASSUMPTIONS OF WHAT SEEMED GOOD. It was good, a delight and to be desired! This is exactly what the false prophets of today have been championing as “THE GOOD LIFE”.

LIE: YOU decide what is GOOD. What is a DELIGHT. What is to be DESIRED. And the ultimate SIN is to deny yourself!

B. Redemption: Jesus fixed what was broken

The PROBLEM: Sin – failure to miss the mark – of what? Reflecting God’s glory on the earth!

In other words: sin describes a malfunction in how we operate. We were designed perfectly. But sin has corrupted us. We no longer reflect God’s character and likeness on the earth – not as we should!

Example: car – if I got into an accident – I’d go to Autopac to get an assessment of damage – WHY? Because they would want to determine if the cost of fixing the car was MORE than the cost of replacing the car. No one would want to pay MORE to fix than replace NEW?

- Sentimental value – ok! What would the limit be? 30k car. 40k repair? 50K? 150k? 1M?
- At some point the cost would be FAR greater than even the sentimental value!

MY POINT: we are ALL like that broken car! **Romans 3:23-28 (ESV)** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

- ALL have sinned – every human being is broken. PROBLEM. Our sense of self is distorted. We malfunction daily.
- We are ALL like that broken car! We have smashed panels, broken parts, some of us don’t run at all anymore and others are in ‘limp in’ mode trying to get home.
- **God is like that Autopac adjuster – checking each car that comes in. And he has found ALL OF US BROKEN BEYOND REPAIR!**

Romans 3:10 (BSB) “There is no one righteous, not even one.

- **And when we look at the world, we know He’s right:** a world filled with wars, genocide, oppression, sex trafficking, slavery, rape, murder, injustice, greed, persecution, lies, theft, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, apathy, neglect, broken marriages, families, slander, lust, false accusations, judging, false motives, cursing or rejecting God, etc.

- **The prophets of today say that we are essentially GOOD. But what does that mean?**
 - If the car is so broken its dangerous to drive, it's BAD.
 - What if it isn't that broken... but still is smashed up, clunking, and leaking everywhere? Do we say it is GOOD? NO! its still BAD.
 - Unless it lines up with the manufacturers specs – we say its BAD.
- When God, our Creator, looks at the damage done to us, he says, "IT'S BAD" the COST of fixing is more than new! And as such we were headed for DESTRUCTION.
- **Romans 6:23 (BSB)** *For the wages of sin is death*

But here's the Good News (Gospel). Instead of condemning ALL of us – because the COST OF FIXING was too high! Jesus PAID the ULTIMATE PRICE.

- **Romans 5:8(ESV)** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

When the cost of fixing was so high – we deserved DEATH. Jesus took that DEATH for us! He died our death so that we could SAVED and become NEW CREATIONS.

- **First, REPENT or turn from our sins.** ACKNOWLEDGE that we have SINNED – we have tried to DEFINE OURSELVES – what is GOOD, DELIGHTFUL and DESIRABLE!
 - **Acts 3:19 (BSB)** *Repent, then, and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped away.*
- **Second, receive His forgiveness and righteous life by FAITH!**
 - **Philippians 3:8-9 (NIV)** ... not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--

You are worth THAT MUCH TO HIM! He is willing to SPEND WAY MORE THAN YOU ARE WORTH!! I don't care how much self-hatred you have and how much of a failure you are – apparently neither did JESUS! He said, "ILL PAY TOP DOLLAR – I'LL GIVE MY LIFE FOR HIM/HER"

QUESTION: We are ALL looking to fix what is broken inside of us. Will you trust Jesus? Or, culture?

C. REDEMPTION: Jesus offers us a NEW identity!

Romans 8:29 (BSB) For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son,

2 Corinthians 3:18 (BSB) And we, ..., are being transformed into His (Jesus') image with intensifying glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

In the NT the phrase Image of God – is replaced with "Image of Christ" we who have faith are being renewed to become the IMAGE OF CHRIST – to reflect JESUS on the earth!

Ephesians 1:3-14 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he

set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

1. I am **BLESSED** with every spiritual blessing & grace to do God's will! (KEYS START PLAYING)
2. I am **CHOSEN** – JESUS PICKED ME
3. I am declared **HOLY & BLAMELESS** – when I stand before Jesus
4. I am **ADOPTED** – God wanted ME in his family!
5. I am **REDEEMED** – Jesus paid what I couldn't – so I could be saved!
6. I am **FORGIVEN**- ALL of my sin is washed away in Christ!
7. I am an **HEIR** with Christ – I am a legitimate **FAMILY MEMBER OF GOD'S**
8. I have a **NEW SPIRIT** – the **HOLY SPIRIT**!
9. I have tremendous **VAUE & WORTH** because I am made in God's image (Gen 1:27)
10. I am God's **WORKMANSHIP**, His **MASTERPIECE** and His **HANDIWORK**(Eph. 2:10)
11. I am not an accident. I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Ps 139:14,16; Eph 1:4)
12. I have been bought at an expensive price (Jesus' blood);
13. I belong to Christ. (1 Cor. 6:19-20)

All you need do is **REJECT** the **LIES** of **SELF-AUTHORSHIP** that Satan and the false prophets of our day are telling you! And receive, through faith, your **NEW Identity IN CHRIST**.

Only when you begin **LIVING** as your **AUTHENTIC SELF** – reflecting the image of Christ on the earth – will you understand **TRUE FREEDOM, JOY & LIFE!**

You will never know **WHO YOU ARE** until you know **WHOSE YOU ARE**

LAST SONG: Made for More

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9AM and 11AM

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2024

Cruise ship → → → → Battleship

1. **Life on Mission** (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus
2. **Next Gen** (Ps 78:7-8): Encounters with Jesus, strong mental health, boldness & belonging
3. **Israel & Persecuted Church** (Lk 21:13): Faith, fortitude & wisdom “to not waste the opportunity to share the Gospel”
4. **Heart of Prayer** (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer
5. **Church Renewal**: Directors for India and other new countries & many global disciple makers