

5 Day Devotions, "Lent 1: Why Does God Need Me?" from Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Day 1: Reflecting the Divine Image

We are not accidents of nature but intentional creations, designed with a purpose that goes beyond our physical existence. The concept of Imago Dei, the image of God, is a profound reminder that we are fashioned to reflect the divine in our capacity for relationship, creativity, and stewardship. This reflection is not limited to our appearance but extends to our essence, our ability to love, to create, and to connect with others and the world around us. As bearers of God's image, we are called to recognize our intrinsic value and to live in a way that honors the divine likeness within us. This understanding of our identity is foundational to how we interact with the world and with the divine.

"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:26-27 ESV)

Reflection: How can you honor the image of God in yourself and in others today, through your actions, words, and thoughts?

Day 2: The Shadow of Divine Presence

The story of Peter Schlemiel, who lost his shadow and with it his connection to society and love, serves as a poignant metaphor for our spiritual life. Our spiritual "shadow" can be thought of as the evidence of God's presence in our lives. When we maintain our connection with God, our shadow is a testament to that relationship. However, if we sever that connection, we risk losing our sense of purpose and fulfillment. Embracing our identity as bearers of God's image allows us to live a life that is rich in meaning and grounded in a sense of belonging to something greater than ourselves.

"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 ESV)

Reflection: In what ways might you have neglected your spiritual "shadow," and how can you reconnect with God's presence to restore it?

Day 3: Growing Faith, Growing Shadow

As our faith deepens and the light of Christ shines brighter within us, our spiritual shadows grow darker, symbolizing the impact we have on the world. This metaphor encourages us to consider how our faith journey is not static but dynamic, growing as we grow closer to God. Our shadows, then, become a visual representation of the influence we wield as we live out our faith and share God's love with others. The darker our shadow, the brighter the light that casts it, reminding us that our spiritual growth is both personal and communal, affecting not just ourselves but those around us.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10 ESV)

Reflection: What are some tangible ways your faith has grown recently, and how has this growth manifested in your interactions with others?

Day 4: Our Dependence on God

The question "Why does God need me?" can be reframed to "Why do I need God?" This shift in perspective highlights our dependence on God for our identity, purpose, and the ability to love and serve others. It is not about proving our worth to God but recognizing our need for God's guidance and presence in our lives. Understanding this dependence is crucial for living a life that is aligned with God's will and that seeks to fulfill the unique role we each have in God's grand design.

"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:36 ESV)

Reflection: What is one area of your life where you feel a strong need for God's guidance, and how can you actively seek His presence in that area today?

Day 5: Being Christ's Hands and Feet

Our role as Christians is not just a responsibility but a privilege, as it allows us to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in the world. This calling invites us to embody God's love and grace, participating in God's redemptive work and being a living testament to the transformative power of God's love. As we serve others and steward creation, we fulfill our purpose and reflect the image of God in tangible, impactful ways.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV)

Reflection: What is one specific way you can serve someone in your community this week as a reflection of Christ's love and grace?