

## Assuming Airs

‘A story is told of a grandmother who proudly presenter her two young grandchildren to her friend. “Oh”, remarked the friend, “They’re so cute. How old are they?” The question brought a definite response: “The lawyer is two and the doctor is four”.’

Wonder if the grandmother correctly prophesied the future identity of those grandkids. While this anecdote depicts a harmless pronouncement, it’s also points to a real and foundational problem in the world: identity. To think of it, most, if not all, of our societal problems, our personal interaction snafus and worse, all the way up to conflicts between people groups, governmental authorities, even nation states themselves, can be laid at the feet of warped identities, on everyone’s part. Identity is a beastly proposition. So very hard to nail down. For there is perceived identity, actual identity, and projected identity. Now, my statements here are not scholarly in the least. I’ve not studied the subject of identity at all. I’m only sharing my own perceptions, observations and life experiences. While as imprecise they are, in a general sense, they’re probably true. All because, the issue of identity is at the very root of the Bible’s teachings and instruction.

In God’s Word, there are two all-encompassing identities. There is the identity of God; namely not only Who He is, but what

He is. He is God, the prime mover, the origin of everything else. He is the prime identity, from which, literally everything else derives its identity. It is essential to know Who God is, in order to accurately know who we are. That this is true is no more obvious than in the chaos of so many of the godless in the world today, particularly America, where thousands of human beings are so confused about themselves that they imagine themselves as any sort of human, of any gender or no gender at all, or fluid, meaning they are whatever they feel like at any given moment. There are garments being sold today, even underwear, that are “genderless”. Frankly, I don’t know how that can work, but then again, I’ve never undergone any kind of gender reassignment surgery or procedures. Far too many people not only don’t know who they are, but, as a result, can not even perceive the actual reality of the world in which they live and breathe.

How did we get this way? Let me tell you. We had “help”. But if we didn’t already have a tiny dark impulse within us that chafed at the limits our Creator placed upon us, that outside “help” would not have gotten any traction to “assist” us on our way toward chaos. Chaos, disorder, is the result of sin. As seemingly the first ever created being who allowed a tiny impulse of self-aggrandizement to grow into a malignant, fatal tumor of pride, Lucifer, later known by the title, “the adversary”, “satan”, he took the perfect opportunity to play on Eve’s naiveté to plant within her the desire for something that seemed like a good thing—to become

more like God—but which required direct disobedience of God’s gracious instructions. We can easily see in retrospect that nothing, no matter how good its aim appears to be, can not ever be good if it requires sinning against God. Adam and Eve knew who they were already. Though they did not realize it. Living in perfect harmony with Father God, everything, literally, was perfect bliss. They literally had no idea how good they had it. For it was all they had ever known. But the serpent tempted Eve that there existed something supposedly better, and all it required to attain that betterness was to eat a forbidden fruit. She fell for it, as did her husband, Adam, who had seemingly been with her the whole time, who had not corrected her thinking, nor warned her, but instead followed right along with her as soon as he saw that nothing appeared to happen to her when she took the first bite.

In this, Adam is responsible as being a coward. If he had stood up for what he innately knew was right—that is, to obey God—even after Eve had eaten the fruit, he could have taken it out of her hand and thrown it to the ground, the whole Fall of the human race could have been avoided. But that is not what happened. And so, suddenly, they realized they were naked. They no longer knew who they were. Their perfect self-knowledge and eternal life-giving relationship with Father God was now replaced with a perverted self-identity. And “thanks” to Adam, we all live with a perverted self-identity that we’re born with and are unaware of, until Holy Spirit comes into us when we give our lives to the

Savior of our souls, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Once upon a time, Adam and Eve knew God. They knew Who He is, and they knew who they themselves were. They were not so much conscious of it, for it was just the state of being in which they existed, abundantly, perfectly, beautifully. But after tasting that fruit, after they had made that fateful choice, after they had exercised their “so-called right to choose”, they suddenly became aware of another state of being—the state of inexorably descending toward death. Eternal life was no longer on the table. Perfect fellowship with God disappeared from the table. Spiritual death happened the instant the fruit touched their lips. The resulting and subsequent physical death would happen years later, as the now-inevitable deterioration, decay, and decomposition would overtake them, as their physical bodies returned to the dust from which they had been made. The entire earth, from which they had been made, in concert now began dying as well.

In the beginning, God had made mankind male and female, man and woman. Only two genders from the beginning. Not one, not three, not over 72 as some “scientists” now postulate, while still others theorize that gender identity exists on a spectrum on which there are an infinite number of gender identities. Seems confusing doesn't it? If only to avoid headaches, it seems it would behoove us to just narrow it down to two, as the Bible declares.

But gender identity is only a part of identity. People assume airs all the time, altering and changing their projected persona

depending on the circumstances in which they find themselves, on the people around them, what they perceive is required to succeed and strengthen their position, power and influence in each and every situation that comes along. Politicians are often experts at this, but all people, to one degree or other, practice this, ultimately, self-deception. Not only do we deceive ourselves, but purposely deceive those around us. Sometimes, we don't even realize we're doing this. It's just how we grew up. It's just how we learned to interact and survive in this world. But it's all lies. And lies always end in destruction and death. Just as the devil intended! His "ulterior" motive in the Garden of Eden was always to harm us to the point that humanity will be annihilated.

Without Holy Spirit, it's simply impossible to know who we really are. With Him, we begin to understand that we are nothing we think we are, but that God gave us each a unique and perfect identity from even before we were conceived within our mother's womb. We begin to realize that we are not our own. We do not belong to ourselves, but are literally God's property, and once we accept Lord Jesus' offer of salvation, we transform from being God's "property" to being His children, members of His family, with all the rights, responsibilities, riches and blessings therein.

Consider President Donald Trump. He mastered the art of the deal. He perfected assuming certain airs as he maneuvered people, monies and materials as he built a real estate empire that largely created the skyline of Manhattan. Part of his persona was

a gruff, brash, immoral, cussing SOB, who often left inflammatory words on airwaves, in social and print media. He used it to get things done. Could he have achieved the same in different ways? Probably. But he didn't know different or possibly never considered acting or speaking in other ways. Yet, now, after God miraculously spared his life from assassin's bullets (and maybe more times in the future), his demeanor has changed. Did you notice how changed, almost subdued, his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention was? He even directly mentioned the letter that the Rev. Franklin Graham recently wrote him, asking him to be more careful of his language, to avoid using foul language as many people found it offensive. Not only did he mention it, he also tried valiantly to follow Graham's advice!

Cleaning up one's language may be relatively easy. But seeking to identify one's true identity is a much longer and complicated process because so many people have been so sinned against as young children, even before birth, and have spent all their lives living lies about who they are, that only Holy Spirit is up to the task of revealing and restoring our true identities. But once we begin to catch sight of who we really are, always in relation to Who God is, the perfect lover of our souls, hope blossoms within us as we know that Lord Jesus has promised to complete the work of faith that He's begun in us. For with Him there will no longer be any lies, no more "airs". Only perfect love and peace with God our Father, Lord Jesus Christ, and life-giving Holy Spirit.

