

Just Who are You? Produce Your ID!

‘A young father and his boy who lived in New York regularly jogged together through the city early in the morning. Their normal course took them by a statue of General William Tecumseh Sherman [on horseback]. One of their regular rituals was to pause for a breather at the foot of familiar old Sherman. Then the father took a job on the West Coast and the day came for their last jog and their last rest at the foot of the famous Civil War general. The father pointed out the significance of this last stop before Sherman. The next day they[d] be gone. “Take one good long last look at old Sherman”, he said to his son. Then, as they stood and were about to resume their morning run, the boy said, “By the way, Dad, who is that fellow sitting up on the back of old Sherman?”’

So for all his life, this boy thought his dad had been talking about the horse, calling it “Sherman”! Mistaken identity indeed. Actually, worse. The human man, gleaming in gold leaf, the famous general was totally unknown to this boy. But this is a most apt metaphor for us. Yes, us! Not just us, really for all humanity! Consider, do you know who you are? Really? Beyond head knowledge. Do you really know you? If you think you do, then do you actually *live* your real self? Or are you actually play-acting, that is, living your life on the great stage of life, playing a part

you've been assigned, the best you can, or perhaps sloughing off from time to time? If God sent a mighty angel policeman to your house, who demanded you produce your ID card, license, passport, or other identity papers, or an app on your cell phone, could you? Would you? And what would they say? Would they confirm who you say you are? Or, do you actually have any ID?

These questions can also be asked of every human on earth, every person who has ever lived, and will ever live. But today, these questions are more pertinent, relevant and vitally important than perhaps ever in history. Well, expect for the days Noah was building the Ark, and the days before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. On that note, we could justifiably add to that short list, Pompeii, Italy in 79 AD, and Jerusalem in AD 70. Still others, too, could be added, as all are historic examples of God's judgement falling on depraved peoples whose only inclination was violence always. Today, what do you think is happening? Is not violence spreading across our country? The world? Why just yesterday, another 9 people died in a shooting in a shopping mall in Dallas. Another 2 people died, with 4 more wounded during multiple shootings on Cherokee Street in south St. Louis city, Friday night and last night, just hours before its big annual celebration of Cinco de Mayo. Quoted in news reports, local employee Edwin Campos said, "We understand that it happens, but we can move past it. Having a whole festival shows we're creating love, hospitality in the whole community". I'd say in response,

“Good luck with that!” For, as Christians, we should already know that the only answer to this mess, and all messes, is Christ Jesus.

Think now of all the people, young and old, who have no inclination of ever worshipping in a church, let alone believe in God at all? Who do they think they are? They have even less of a clue as to who they are than we do! How else do you explain the identity crisis? People can’t decide if they’re male or female, a combination of the two, neither, both, or it varies depending on the time or circumstances. Worse even than these pitiful fellow human beings are those who don’t even think they’re human, but rather some animal, or other fanciful, imaginary creature. Statistics reveal that this identity problem is getting worse and worse. Oddly, the people it’s affecting the most in this country are affluent, white people. One sociologist theorizes that this can be explained by the currently popular notion that white people are inherently privileged and therefore are oppressors. Thus they become a despised group in our society, and in order to find a way to belong and be accepted, our younger people convince themselves that they are transgender, transsexual, etc., which then puts them into an “oppressed” category, and thus worthy then of inclusion into the so-called good, “woke” people. I don’t think I need to point out to you that it’s all one big delusion! It’s all a lie!

But this lie is only the latest version of an entire construct of deception put together by the sharpest minds of demons and fallen angels, orchestrated by the devil himself. Truly, we’re living in

a “matrix”, to the extent that we believe what it tells us we are. To varying degrees all of us, all of us, have been affected. But to the degree that we know God’s Word, the Bible; to the degree that we immerse ourselves in it, by simply reading it, whether we understand it or not, by just spending time in it, and praying to God, He’s working in us, loosening the bonds of deception that the devil has cast upon us from the moment we each were born on earth. Precious few human beings have ever been totally delivered of the “matrix”. Meaning, precious few humans have ever lived to come to know who they truly are, who God made them to be. I surmise that both Enoch and Elijah were two people who came to know themselves so correctly and consequently Who God is, that they could join the Father in Heaven without having physically died on this earth! Close to them in coming to understand who they are and Who God is are Abraham, Moses, David, all the prophets and saints of the Old and New Testaments. These people were used by God to perform great and mighty deeds, many of which were considered to be as nothing in the eyes of the world, but in the eyes of God, great and mighty to be praised.

Look at today’s example. Stephen Protomartyr. “Protomartyr” he’s called because he is the first known martyr to Christ Jesus after Christ Himself was crucified. Stephen became the prototype of all those who die for the truth, the faith in the glorious Gospel of Christ Jesus, rather than consider their physical, earthly lives as holding even an inkling of value compared to the eternal

riches of our forever mansions in the everlasting New Jerusalem all contained with God's Heavenly House! For what did Stephen say just before the deceived Jewish folks dragged him out of the city? Acts 7:56 quotes him, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at God's right hand!" At this, the crowd was enraged. We can imagine the glinting of the demons and unclean spirits in the eyes of those people. They got so worked up and exerted themselves in such a frenzy (like our current screaming, hysterical hordes clamoring for abortion "rights", insane gender identities and perversions), that those folks had to take off their coats and left them with a brilliant, young man named Saul. This same Saul later came face to face with His Majesty the King, Jesus, while on the road to Damascus to arrest more Christians and throw them into jail. After "bumping into" the Lord, Saul came to understand his own, true identity, and thereafter he only used his Greek name, Paul, which signified that he truly was a new person in Christ, the person he had always been created and destined to be by Father God! That old Saul was just a doppelgänger, an imposter, who'd taken over Paul's life for all those many years. And now, finally, his eyes were open and he began to know, to understand, more and more the older he grew, who he truly was, what his real ID actually stated!

And this is exactly where we all stand. We don't know who we are. Yet. But if we are in Him, if we have been saved, if we know Him as our Savior and our Lord, then we are truly getting to

know Him better and better, *and*, getting to know ourselves better and better in the process. For we begin to see through the deception, the delusions, the lies that have been spun by the devil around our lives from the moment of our birth, because the devil simply can't stand who we are. We are made in God's very image! The devil, as gloriously beautiful as he is/was, reflecting the very glory of God, nevertheless was distinct from God, not made in God's image. But we are. And the devil can't stand us. He can't stand to look at us. Every time it's another slap in his face that we are here. We were created because he rebelled against God! So he devised a way to trick Adam and Eve to lose sight of their true identity in God, and live a fake, counterfeit "life" of constant sin against our loving Father. All so he could take over the authority God had given to us in the beginning. But! Christ Jesus intervened at the perfect time. And as the aging Peter had come to understand, himself and all believers, that is, we, are, as he writes down for us in I Peter 2, we are "living stones", "holy *royal* priests", "chosen people", "a holy nation". God says in verse 10: "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people". The whole rest of our lives, regardless of how long or short it will be, is to discover and live into who we really are. Our physical circumstances don't matter—our pains are only temporary. What awaited Stephen awaits us! I don't know how you think, but I am hardly living the life of a holy, royal priest of God. What about you? We must pray and seek Him to find our true identity!

