

THE IMPOSTOR WITHIN US

THE WAY WE WERE AND MAYBE STILL ARE

By Skip Elmore

The entire human race is born with emotional seeds of “fear” that may grow to become the most prevalent destructive weeds in our garden of self worth. While we are young children we acquire mental pictures of self-image qualifications we perceive we are expected to meet. Of course none of us totally meet these images. Our satanic world is continually sending the message we interpret as a report that, in our young finite minds, cause us to reason that we will never measure up. This fear of not being good enough may become the driving force in some young lives, completely taking over and causing an incessant urge to continually pretend or role play being a better person than we believe ourselves to be. The fear of failure and even the fear of success sometimes along with other weird behaviors we call sin are provoked by this concept of not being quite good enough. Even behavior that seems not to be related to fear finds its deepest roots there as it drives our passionate search for significance so common to us all. Why?

This prevailing fear had its origin in humanity’s early history when the satanically driven choice was made to abandon God and become what was thought of as becoming self directed. This eliminated the purity of God’s Holy Spirit and the incredible wisdom and counsel that accompanied it. The bad choice is described metaphorically in Genesis 3:6 as eating from “*the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*” Immediately after the choice to abandon God’s Spirit, Adam hid, the first fearful behavior described in the Bible. This free will privilege to choose was essential if we were to have a genuine relationship with our Creator, His original reason and purpose for creating humanity. Authentic relationships are not possible without an option to enjoy or avoid them. We would be mere robotic puppets to our Creator if obedience was instinctively inevitable.

So, soon after birth we may begin to speculate with the frightening thought that we are depending only on our own resources and intellect to get by in this world. We may not, though, quite understand the reason. We are born as incomplete beings, absent our Creator’s incredible wisdom and counsel. This Holy Spirit, along with the harmonious benefits, was present within each human soul prior to the Genesis choice.

Fear may become somewhat overwhelming during damaging childhood experiences. There are many subtle types of abuse we might not normally think of as destructive. We could then begin to think of ourselves as being inferior and start a process of pretending to be more worthy than we actually perceive ourselves to be. We may role-play hoping others will see us as being better than we see ourselves. It becomes the proverbial mask we wear, thinking we are fooling people. We may even develop a martyr complex, secretly wanting to be punished or abused, or perhaps very subtly desiring to manipulate, overpower or control others in our environment.

The resulting tragedy reaches beyond a defective self-worth. Sadly, fear of not measuring up significantly inhibits our ability, first, to accept God’s loving grace, then to receive love from others or project love toward God and others to the fullest measure. *1 John 4:18* reminds us, perfect love casts out fear. Fear dilutes perfect love as well. Thus, we may subliminally reject God's full measure of grace because we see ourselves as undeserving. The more we reject agape type love, a purpose driven verb, not an emotion, the more we depend on resources and intellect for survival. We search for ways to fill an empty "God shaped" void with worldly beliefs or possessions. A vicious circle is created until we mentally crash into a state of depression.

It helps to observe God as a verb as well as a noun. He is continual power, action and change agent. He “does” and He “is”. God is both a Love quotient and Father Image!

Our bodies have an incredible ability to survive the most negative of circumstances regarding food intake or tolerance of negative, unhealthy conditions, but we may be driven to self destruct if we do not overcome Fear. We naturally convert poor selections of food to allow survival, but our mind will not convert fear, animosity or self hatred into the self worth and self forgiveness essential to accept our rightful position in society and become recipients of God's grace. Scripture describes easy ways to achieve God's forgiveness; however, if we do not experience a positive worthiness we will miss God's forgiving nature as we refuse to authentically subdue our role playing to receive it.

Let's review what we are subliminally rejecting when we don't allow ourselves to receive God's love so desperately needed to be the whole and "holy" person. What is this grace we hear so much about in Christian environments? If we ask for a definition we may get answers like, "Oh, it is unmerited favor," or "It's a gift we don't deserve." These answers are both correct, but they don't satisfy the root definition or the true value of "grace." We need application handles on things we know to be able to use them effectively.

God's GRACE includes two major components, the first is a new POSITION of WORTHINESS. When we realize we are totally forgiven, blameless though never faultless, for our self-directed attitude, the sin nature we were born into (*Genesis 3:6*), we become worthy receivers enjoying a new security with a new identity. This delivers us from two inherent life destroying fears: (1) Death or physical harm and (2) Not measuring up to be the person we always thought we should have been. As we become comfortable receivers, at peace with ourselves, God becomes our Lord and draws us to Him. We then become aware and motivated toward obedience to His Holy Spirit which now dwells within us.

We are now able to exercise the second component of grace, a new SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY. We become agents to pray the release of God's power (*the power that created the universe is released through our tongue*) on behalf of our destiny as His wisdom and counsel reinvade our soul as it was intended before humanity's bad choice.

God's grace has no room for questionable self-worth because we've given up self! We have the Position and the Authority of the "Christ" Spirit renewed within us.

Now, have you truly given up self??? No, not if you refuse to accept "grace" because you still fall back on your old perceived self worth. You will continue to do this as long as you think you need an excuse or a cover-up for the fear of not experiencing success or not measuring up to that good person image you think you and everyone expects. Our human tendency becomes so used to role playing the person or multiple of persons we have pretended to be, that we actually lose our potential identity to images we portray. Perception remains the essential purpose in life. Most commercial marketing efforts are tuned to these phenomena. Credit cards are maxed and lives are controlled by pleasing people and depending on surrounding circumstances and images for survival.

Frustration as a Christian accelerates as we desperately try to respond to the call of Scriptural obedience to live right, have pure motives and be generous through self discipline. We continue role playing without the genuine passion that comes with pure love motives. We wonder why such a battle continues. It's that imposter, still within us!

WHAT OUR MOTIVES TELL US!

Young David gives us a wonderful example depicting how we can observe our motives in a right or perhaps wrong perspective as we observe his two questions in 1 Samuel 17:26: *David talked to some others standing there to verify the report. "What will a man get for killing this Philistine to put an end to his abuse of Israel?" He then asked, "Who is this pagan Philistine anyway, that he is allowed to defy the armies of the living God?"* NLT

We can observe from this Scripture that David had two motives in mind, a PRIMARY one, and a SECONDARY one. Of course, we can conclude by his bold, dramatic and miraculous success that his primary motive was to serve God and Israel by getting rid of the giant, and his secondary motive was to receive a just reward for the endeavor.

We will always be able to observe more about a person's true character by understanding "why" he or she is doing something than by just observing what is being accomplished.

We all make choices based on our motives, and there is nothing wrong with wanting to receive a just reward for our achievements. It is when a hunger for security or a fear of not surviving well causes a desperate desire for greed and guarantees that places our secondary motives ahead of primary motives. That's when we become misguided.

When this happens, we risk becoming fear driven and too dependant on resources, abilities and intellect. We may find ourselves struggling with unethical compromises to survive in a worldly fashion as we resume old self directed ways. We begin to overlook the fact that God biblically ordained SERVANTHOOD to be our PRIMARY motivation and the source of our joy and purpose. We may also fail to realize that whomever we serve usually becomes the provider of our SECONDARY motive, our needs or rewards.

This self reliance, the absence of grace, we bring from our past or have never completely purged, may seem to work for a while until our survival fear drives us to GREED, money, power and the typical hunger and desperate search for the five personal needs so essential to our survival, SIGNIFIANCE, SECURITY, INTIMACY, INNOCENCE and HOPE. Self reliance and the continual search for these five desperate needs in wrong places may even involve desires or acts of wrongful sexual behavior or the urge to incessantly control or be controlled as a subservient martyr. This behavior can become our predominant essential, our false god and our driving passion as the fear of not performing well joins forces with survival fear to DOMINATE our lives! We begin to see failure in achieving results from these driving forces we thought would keep us going.

We may begin to experience the feeling of total defeat, at which time we will either begin to "internalize" or "externalize." When we externalize, we blame the whole world for our problems, and when we internalize we blame ourselves for all that happens. Sometimes there is a combination of the two; both are very destructive.

The lesson in all of this:

We must experience a self worth that allows receiving grace. Let SERVANTHOOD be our primary motive. This will only happen when SELFWORTH is placed in our Creator's hands thereby letting us experience Christ's Spirit in our lives. We must find humility and "LET GRACE HAPPEN" rather than trying to make it happen, if we are to experience the NEW CREATION we were meant to be!!!

OUR DESPERATE NEEDS and OUR CHOICE of SOURCES:

Self-worth is revived when we accept the blameless position of GRACE through the suffering on the Cross, though we will never be completely without fault in this life!

Our Basic Human Needs

Significance
Security
Intimacy
Innocence
Hope/Purpose

Our Efforts after the fall

Power/Pride
Greed/Guarantees
Sex - selfishly motivated
Confession/Denial
Role playing/Pleasure

God's Grace through Holiness

Service/Humility
Trust/Faith applied to Hope
Worshipful love attitude to all
Accept Christ's Worthiness
God's Position and Authority

What passions and purposes would you pursue if you did not fear failure???

Self Worth as God Sees It, No Imposter

- It's never too late to be who you might have been!
- Obedience and discipline will go further than talent and ability.
- If you employ what you enjoy, your work will be your joy!
- What we view as our source will determine our course!
- Comfort is the enemy of focus and motivation.
- Failure isn't so bad if it doesn't attack the heart.
- Success is good if it doesn't attack the head.
- Through our service to others we will find ourselves.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MYSELF:

The greatest problem	Fear
The most powerful force	Love
The deadliest weapon.....	The tongue
The greatest asset.....	Faith
The most destructive habit.....	Worry
The greatest privilege.....	Choice
The greatest Joy.....	Serving
The greatest loss.....	Self-Respect
The most satisfying work.....	Helping Others
The ugliest personality trait.....	Selfishness
The most endangered species.....	Dedicated leaders
Our greatest natural resource.....	Our Youth
The greatest "shot in the arm".....	Encouragement
The most effective sleeping pill.....	Peace of Mind
The most crippling failure disease.....	Excuses
The most dangerous pariah.....	A gossip
The world's most incredible computer.....	The Brain
The worst thing to be without.....	Hope
The two most power-filled words.....	"I Can"
The most destructive emotion.....	Self-pity
The most beautiful attire.....	A Smile!
The most prized possession.....	Integrity
The most powerful communication channel.....	Prayer
The most contagious spirit.....	Enthusiasm

<< Genuine character has no imposter >>

"The character that takes command in moments of crucial choices has already been determined by a thousand other choices made earlier in seemingly unimportant moments. It has been determined by all the 'little' choices of years past – by all those times when the voice of conscience was at war with the voice of temptation...whispering the lie that 'it really doesn't matter.' It has been determined by all the day-to-day decisions made when life seemed easy and crises seemed far away – the decisions that, piece by piece, bit by bit, developed habits of discipline or of laziness; habits of self-sacrifice or self-indulgence; habits of duty and honor and integrity – or dishonor and shame."

Ronald Reagan

We all need:

- A SENSE OF WORTH. *If missing, we will feel inferior with no prestige.*
- A SENSE OF BELONGING. *If missing, we feel insecure & unprotected.*
- A SENSE OF PURPOSE/COMPETENCE. *If missing, we feel inadequate.*

What will you do with your life when the imposter disappears?

Just what would you do with your life if you had no "no fear" of failing?

Humility is not self-deprecating - it's knowing the source of your providence!!!