

FUSION Devo: Friday, February 20, 2009

Title: Image of God

Text: Genesis 1:27

²⁷ So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

This morning as I rolled out of the bed and stumbled into the bathroom to take a shower, I turned the water on and as I passed by the mirror I caught a glimpse of something. So, I turned and glared back into the reflection of none other than ME! My eyes were still half shut from a hard night of sleep. I needed to shave the stubble off my face, fix my hair and several other things that I probably shouldn't get into in this devotional. I began to examine everything I could see in the image in the mirror. Quickly I began to recall times growing up and even some lately when people have said some not-so-nice things about my appearance. I can vividly recall and even sometimes still hear those childhood voices calling me "Fat Boy" and other hurtful things. It is no secret that I was a large child. Hold on! Who am I kidding? I'm a large dude now too. Anyway, there are times when I just wanted why God didn't make me skinner, taller, give me better looks and so on. I have often caught myself wishing I was just a little taller or a little thinner, so I didn't look so big. These things could go on forever.

Well in the fall, during one of the Tsunami Ministries Fall Retreats I put on, we had a group of guys get up for a time of entertainment as they performed their rendition of a classic Back Street Boys song. It was hilarious. These guys were all adults and one of them was one of my original youth from the early 1990's. I will not reveal his name, but towards the end of the song it was evident that he was feeling the moment. So, he jumped out in front of the pseudo Tsunami Boy Band and began breaking it down with some pretty fancy moves as he sang at the top of his lungs. Now this is a very large guy who is amazingly secure with himself. All of a sudden he pulls up the Carolina Panthers football jersey he was wearing, thus revealing his belly. He placed his hands on both sides of the before named belly and began slinging it up and down, up and down. The room, of more than 300 youth scream so loud that the people driving by had to have heard the ruckus. They cheered and some even covered their eyes. I sat in stunned silence for about 10 seconds before finally laughing uncontrollably and running in front of him before he could continue his 1-man show. He put his arm around me and simply said "Steve, when you're a big guy, you just got to own it." The room continued to cheer and call him back for an encore. But we tried to get crowd calmed down in the midst of our laughter. This was certainly one of the memorable and fun things that have ever happened at these events.

As I continued to reflect on this event and rerun the images in my head, I couldn't help but hear the words that the guy said to me and the crowd. "When you're a big guy, you got to own it." Wow, for a guy who just showed his belly to the world, it was a pretty profound statement. It was testimony to the fact that he understands who he is and that God has made him special and he embraces the fact that he is unique and he owns that.

We live in a world that is so image-driven. A person's appearance is often what gets them included or excluded by the crowd. How a person talks, walks, dresses is often the main factor for whether or not they are respected and welcomed. The old saying of "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me" is simply not a true statement. And because of this type of action and reaction, most of us become our own critics as we look into the mirror and find every flaw. But the fact of the matter is that we are not a people created on some cookie-cutter assembly line. We have been crafted and molded in the hands of the same one who placed the stars in the sky, carved the Grand Canyon, paints the most magnificent sunrises and sunsets. The one who formed us is greater than the most famous fashion designer and placed the talent and inspiration in the minds of the world's greatest artists. We have not only been created by the God of the Universe, but we have been created in the image of that same God. When I think of the passage from Genesis 1:27 and then I look at myself in the mirror, not only do I realize that God has an amazing sense of humor, but God also created me special and unique. And more importantly, God loves me just the way I am. God loves me from the inside out and that makes all the difference in the world.

So when this world begins to point out all of the flaws they can find, pick on you for being too tall, too short, too big or too thin. When they let you know that you may not look, talk, walk and act like the rest of the world. Understand that

you are not like the rest of the world. You are you and you are special, and the best part is that you are God's. And when we are God's, we should own it.

Something to Think About:

- How does the Genesis 1:27 text speak to you?
- Think about how God has made you special and unique.
- Have others ever been mean to you because of your appearance? How did that make you feel?
- Have you ever been mean to others because of their appearance? How do you think it made them feel?
- How can you now "Own " the fact that you are God's?
- How can you use that to impact this world for God?

A Few Minutes with God:

God, help me to own the fact that you have placed your hands on me and I am created in your image. All of the things that may have been said about me, please help me to release the pain from those times and if I have ever been on the critical side with others, I pray for forgiveness of those times. Help me to see the beauty in all your people. Help me to see the Image of God every time I look at another. Amen.