

January 31, 2010 AM
#1392

Identity Theft
I'm Just Not Good Enough

One of the great mysteries of materialistic evolution is, where is the missing link? If there was actually a gradual change from hominids to homo sapiens over a period of several million years, where are the fossil intermediaries?

The link shouldn't be missing at all. There should be hundreds of thousands of fossil intermediaries.

Because of the obvious problem there have been some creative solutions offered by the scientific community.

In 1912, lawyer and amateur archeologist Charles Dawson claimed that he had discovered an ape-like human's remains near Piltdown, England. The cranium was human-like but the jaw was very much like an orangutan. The Piltdown Man was instantly proclaimed as the definitive proof of our ape-like ancestry.

It took 41 years to show Piltdown Man to be an outrageous fraud. Radioactive dating showed that the cranium came from the skull of a modern man. The jaw belonged to an orangutan. The teeth had been artificially filed down and the bones chemically stained to give the impression of age.

The whole world was taken in. Museums worldwide proudly displayed copies and photographs of the Piltdown remains. Books and periodicals also spread the news across the globe.

Then, in 1922 we had Nebraska Man. A single tooth grew an entire evolutionary link between man and monkey, until another identical tooth was found which was protruding from the jawbone of a wild pig.

In 1892 Eugene Dubois was exploring Indonesia when he found a skullcap, three teeth and a femur. The femur was found 50 feet away from the original skullcap a full year later. 'Java man' was trumpeted around the world as indisputable proof of human evolution. Textbooks and magazines were filled with supposed reconstructions of 'Java man', who had been given the impressive-sounding scientific name of *Pithecanthropus erectus* ('erect ape-man').

But wait, there's more. In 1982 we had Orce man, found in southern Spain. The discovery was hailed as the oldest fossilized human remains ever found in Europe. Scientists said the skull belonged to a young man who lived 900,000 to 1.6 million years ago, and even had very detail drawings done to represent what he would have looked like.

One year later officials admitted the skull fragment could not be definitively identified but probably came from a donkey.

The first remains of Neanderthal man were found in France in 1908. Neanderthals were considered to be ignorant, ape-like, stooped and knuckle-dragging. By the 1970's we began to realize that Neanderthal was just as human as us, and his stooped appearance was because of arthritis and rickets.

Then, of course, there's Haeckel's faked embryonic drawings purportedly proving ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny and we even had a DNA hybridization scandal at Yale in the 1980s where researchers intentional altered of hybridization data which was used to support the theory that humans are more closely related to chimpanzees.

We could go on, but you get the idea. We tend to believe that if something comes out of the scientific community then it must be factual. Usually it is, unless someone lets their agenda get in the way of the truth.

The problem is the lie still gets told as truth. In fact, a few highschool and college textbooks still include Haeckel's bogus drawings and present Pithecanthropus erectus as fact.

In spite of the evidence to the contrary, if a scientist dares to question the idea of macroevolution (change from one species into another) they run the risk of being completely ostracised from the scientific community.

A lie believed as truth will affect you as if it were true.

We're in week 3 of a series were calling Identity Theft. What were seeing from the Bible is, we have a unique identity, first of all as made in the image of God, unlike the animals, and then, as those who have inherited a new life by faith in Jesus Christ.

We have a new power, a new position, and a new life.

All that comes through Jesus Christ, His cross where He conquered sin, and His empty tomb, where He rose to give us new life.

That's all true if we've trusted Christ as personal Savior, but we don't always live like it's true. For whatever reason we buy into a lie and then let it affect our life as if it were true.

So far we've dispelled Satan's lies on two fronts. On the 10th we unpacked the lie that I Just Have To Be Strong. I just have to be able to shoulder life no matter how tough it gets. We saw that to really deal with life, to succeed, we have to acknowledge our weakness and then tap into God's strength.

Then last week we approached the lie, That's Just The Way I Am. I can't change. We saw that the truth is we have a new life, a new power, and live in a new kingdom. We can change.

This week we want to unravel a lie that can completely immobilize us if we believe it. It's the lie that says, I'm Just Not Good Enough. I'm just average. In fact, I'm below average.

I. We Are Often Affected By Past Experiences and Other People's Opinions

Turn to Exodus 3 page 52

The fledgling nation of Jewish people had been protected from a famine by the generosity of the Egyptians. Over time though, they wore out their welcome and a new Pharaoh made them slaves.

The Jews cried out to God year after year for deliverance. Finally, when the time was right God calls Moses to lead them out.

Now Moses had been raised by Pharaoh's daughter and trained as an Egyptian, but he had to make a quick exit when he killed an Egyptian.

By Exodus 3 Moses has been out in the desert living as a sheep herder for decades. Suddenly something totally unexpected happens.

Read chapter 3:1-10

Moses was content to herd sheep and stay out of the limelight. Suddenly his whole world is turned upside down.

God says, "Moses you're going to lead my people out."

Remember, Moses had no army or weapons. The Jews were slaves with no power, and the Egypt was the most advanced, powerful nation that had ever existed. We might have a few doubts about our ability to get the job done ourselves.

Read verse 11

“Who am I? It’s just me down here. I can’t do it God. I’m not the one. I’m just not good enough.”

Then Moses works his way through a series of reasons why he isn’t the man for the job.

Read 13

They’re not going to believe me. God says, “tell them I Am sent you.” I am the self-existent one who doesn’t need you to get the job done. But I want to use you.

God goes on to say, “I’ll do miracles, I’ll even give the people favor with the Egyptians. I’ll take care of things.”

Read 4:1

They’re going to say, “Sure Moses, God spoke to you. We know you. You’re nothing special.” God takes care of that excuse too.

Read verse 10

Slow of speech and slow of tongue, means Moses had a speech impediment. He probably stuttered.

Again, God has an answer. **Read verse 11-12**

You would think that Moses would say, “Okay, that settles it. God's in on it. God's going to deliver. Nothing to worry about.” But, watch what he says.

Read verse 13

“Oh, Lord, help me out, please send someone else. You don't get it, God, I'm just not good enough. Please send someone else.”

So many of us, because we've wrongly believed that lie, have been led us to some dangerous conclusions about our life.

They go like this: "Since I'm not good enough, I can't make a difference. Why even try? I'm just below average. I fail at most everything I do. I'm not good looking enough. I'm not talented enough. I'm not gifted or smart enough. I'm inadequate in every way. I'm really not even worthy to be loved, so why bother? I'm not good enough."

Moses killed an Egyptian who was beating a Jewish slave and he had to run. The Egyptians put a bounty on his life. They were tired of this Jew getting all the privileges like he was an Egyptian.

The Jews, on the other hand, said, *Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?* (Exodus 2:14)

Everybody was rejecting him. Everybody was angry at him. He had blown it and he knew it.

Ever been there? Ever been at the mercy of your past mistakes and of what other people thought of you? It can be so powerful that we feel immobilized. We can't function.

I'll never amount to anything because I failed so many times in the past. My parents, my teachers, my friends, my spouse, my employer has told me loud and clear, I'm nothing but a loser.

A lie believed as truth will affect you as if it were true.

I. We Are Often Affected By Past Experiences and Other People's Opinions

II. The Person Whose Opinion Really Counts Is God

Moses said, "They won't listen." God said "I'll do miracles through you." Moses said, "I can't speak. I'm not up to the job."

Read 4:14a

The Hebrew there literally says, "The nostrils of the Lord glowed like a hot coal!" I love Hebrew imagery. We would say someone was "hot under the collar," the Jews would say "his nostrils flared and his nose got red."

You can just picture God getting steamed here at Moses. Why? Because He didn't like Moses and thought he was a loser? No. Because here God is trying to point Moses

back to the divine source of ability and all Moses can do is get caught up with himself.

God says, “Look at Me Moses. I’m really big. I created everything. I can handle this.”
And Moses says, “Sorry, I can’t see you God because all I can see is myself.”

So God say, “OK. Your brother Aaron will do the speaking but, **Read verse 17**

Take that old piece of dead wood you use for a walking stick because I’m going to do miracles through it.

Read verse 20

Did you catch that? It was just an old stick but in God’s hand it became the rod of God.

And when it came time to confront Pharaoh Moses stretched out his walking stick and the waters became blood, locusts filled the land, hail and fire rained on Egypt, and the Red Sea parted.

And the more Moses stepped back and let God work the less he thought about his own inabilities.

I. We Are Often Affected By Past Experiences and Other People’s Opinions

II. The Person Whose Opinion Really Counts Is God

III. We Play A Very Significant Part In The Plan Of God

The truth is we are inferior and inadequate. Most of us grow up programmed that way.

We come into the world as helpless, little people who are totally dependent on others. Even as we start to grow, we’re not in charge. Our parents are bigger, more powerful, and have the authority.

We start off inferior to everyone else. No wonder most of us have an inferiority complex.

The problem is, Satan tries to convince us that we’ll always be stuck in that realm of inferiority. That we’re just nobody with no importance in the big scheme of things.

Satan wants us to believe that our needs for love and significance are the most important factors in our life. We can end up doing a lot of hurtful and destructive things to try and grab onto what we perceive as love and significance.

Turn to Ephesians 3 page 1039

God used an apostle of Jesus named Paul to write a number of books of the New Testament. At times Paul spelled out his prayer for others. Here's his prayer for the church at Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

Read verses 14-19

It's not up to us to look for love in all the wrong places and fight to be recognized as significant or demand that others approve us.

God wants to fill us with His fullness.

Notice, Paul didn't pray, "God please make all those Ephesians happy." He didn't say, "Please God, make them feel better about themselves."

He prayed, "God, fill them with You. Fill them with Yourself. Fill them with a love that can't be contained."

Read verses 20-21

God's the all powerful one and He'll do way beyond what we can think or even imagine, because He's got a goal. God's goal is that His own glory would radiate out to the world through the church.

We're part of something huge. We play a very significant part in the plan of God. And that plan isn't to make us famous so we'll feel significant, or to have everybody love us so we'll be filled with their love.

God's plan is to fill us with *His* love so we can become reflectors of His glory to a shallow, self-absorbed world.

He doesn't want us to join in with the culture, He wants us to reflect His truth to the culture. He wants us to realize the meaningful, notable position we hold in His Kingdom.

Turn with me now to 2 Corinthians 3 page 1026

When God gave Israel the 10 commandments He called it making a covenant. This was an agreement that God was making with His people.

But that agreement had limitations. It was temporary and couldn't make anyone part of God's family.

The prophet Jeremiah foretold the coming of a New Covenant. Jesus said the cup at the last supper represented the New Covenant in His blood.

Read verses 4-9

None of us are good enough for God. That's why the commandments were referred to as a ministry of death. The commandments are good but no one can keep them so they condemn us.

Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the 3rd day. If the commandments were glorious but they brought death, then how much more glorious is the ministry of the Spirit.

And we're ministers of the New Covenant.

We're part of an amazing world-wide move of God that has a goal of introducing people to Jesus Christ and equipping them to be His devoted followers.

When we get depressed, discouraged, or despondent because life's not going the way we wanted it to, it's time to snap out of our self-focused delusion. It's time to pray that prayer of Ephesians 3 for ourselves. It's time to try to wrap our minds around the totality of God's love.

Here's the real question, why do we so often settle for so little? Why in light of God making us ministers of the New Covenant and reflectors of His glory do we get all down about life as if there wasn't anything important that God's asked us to do?

Why do we get so caught up with our own limitations instead of being enamored with our God who is *able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us?*

I. We Are Often Affected By Past Experiences and Other People's Opinions

II. The Person Whose Opinion Really Counts Is God

III. We Play A Very Significant Part In The Plan Of God

IV. We Are Complete In Christ

Turn to Colossians 2 page 1046

The Epistle to the Colossians is probably the most Christ-centered book in the Bible. God calls us to recognize that Jesus can't just be prominent in our lives.

If I said to my wife, "Sandy, I just want you to know that you play a prominent part in my life," she wouldn't be to happy. That would mean she plays an important part in my life.

That's not what she wants to hear. She wants to hear that she plays the preeminent part in my life. She's not one of several things that are important to me, she surpasses all others.

When it comes to spiritual truth and what's really significant Jesus Christ isn't one important factor among many.

Therefore... **(Read verse 8)**

There's no end to the barrage of philosophies and ideas that come at us about how we should live our life. Everybody from Reader's Digest to Oprah is invading our lives and trying to tell us how to be really happy and fulfilled.

When it comes to the important stuff of life don't let anyone cheat you by substituting anything or anyone for Jesus. Why?

Read verses 9-10

The verb that's translated "complete" is *pleroo*. It's used 90 times in the New Testament, 60 of those times it describes Old Testament prophecies being fulfilled in Jesus. The prediction was made, and in Jesus there's the completion.

So we are complete in Him. God's purposes for us which He planned out in eternity past find their culmination in Jesus.

We're not complete because we worked a successful job. We're not complete because we have the model family. We're not complete because we have the house or the car to show for it.

Those things are fine to use but they don't define who we are. Jesus Christ does.

We're born into the world as sinners. No wonder, we're incomplete. We lack the capacity to process and understand life.

People won't complete us. They can't. Your own spouse can't complete you in the fullest sense of the word. It's unfair to even expect them to.

What are you missing? Find it in Christ.

Need peace? In Jesus Christ, you'll find a peace that the world doesn't even know anything about. Need assurance? He is your assurance. Strength? His strength is made perfect in your weakness.

How about blessing? Blessings that are eternal far outweigh the things of this world. Comfort? A comfort like a mother comforts her child. In Christ.

Remember, a lie believed as truth will effect you as if it were true. There are no missing links in evolutionary science but that doesn't matter to some people. They believe what they believe regardless of the evidence.

Start believing the facts today. The truth is, you're not good enough. You never measure up. You are completely inadequate. But not in the way that Satan wants you to think.

You are capable through Jesus Christ. Whatever He calls you to do, you can accomplish, not by your power, but by His.

Colossians 2:9-10. Read it with me. *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.*