

The Me I Want to Be:
becoming God's best version of you

Overview: “New and improved!” We hear these words all the time; but there’s a sense in which that’s exactly what God wants for each one of us and for the world in which we live. God longs for you and the world around us to become a “new creation.” But that doesn’t mean that you become someone else. It doesn’t mean you have to become like your preacher or elder, a monk or nun, or the guy with the plastic hair on TV. The good news is that when God redeems and restores your life, you become more you. You become the best “version” of yourself, a kind of you 2.0. Like a vintage motorcycle that gets restored or a priceless piece of jewelry rescued from the ravages of time, God intends to personally handcraft you and this world to recapture the original wonder and beauty he intended.

Week One: *The (Re)born Identity* – 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

When we look into the mirror, there is a sense all of us have that the person we see there is not fully the person we long to be. The promise of the Gospel is twofold: first, in Christ God assures us that we can change, that God will redeem and restore us. But importantly, the new person God promises we will be will not be someone else, God will make us to be more ourselves – he will restore us to “the me we want to be,” God’s best version of ourselves.

1. Ortberg describes flourishing as becoming more what God made you to be. God made us to flourish. (Ps. 92:12-13) If someone were to ask you how your spiritual life is going – what factors would you consider in your response? Ortberg says that he heard a wise man once say that the factors he uses are two questions to himself –
 - Am I growing more easily discouraged these days?
 - Am I growing more easily irritated these days?“At the core of a flourishing soul are the love of God and the peace of God. If peace is growing in me, I am less easily discouraged. If love is growing, I am less easily irritated.”
How would you answer these questions today?
2. Which of the “false self” examples do you most gravitate toward? Why do you believe this is so?
 - The “me” I pretend to be – I try to convince people I am important while secretly fearing I am not
 - The “me” I think I should be – I have a need to try to be someone I’m not, often motivated by comparison.
 - The “me” other people want me to be – I don’t feel free to be myself; I follow other’s agendas.
 - The “me” I am afraid God wants me to be – I lack trust in God’s love and plan; I equate spiritual maturity with trying hard to follow the Bible’s rule.
3. We flourish when our spirits are rooted in and shaped by the Spirit of God – and God wants to do that in a way that uniquely fits us. What are some ways God gives life and vitality to you? How can you build these into your life and schedule?