

## See Yourself Here, Do You See What I See?

By: Bobby Sullivan

I live in a semi rural area.

We recently had a new neighbour call the local city council office to request the removal of the DEER CROSSING sign on our road.

The reason: 'Too many deer are being hit by cars out here! I don't think this is a good place for them to be crossing anymore.'

Judges 6: 12 When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said,  
“**The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.**”

### TITLE: DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE

Hebrews 11:3 “**Through faith** we understand that worlds were framed by the word of God so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

Sometimes it is only through faith that we understand what God has been doing behind the scenes because things don't always appear as they seem.

Do you remember growing up and going to the fair and in the fun house they have these crazy wavy mirrors. When you look at those funhouse mirrors as you look at the image of yourself, is the image clear or distorted? It's distorted because it's not perfect mirror, it's an imperfect mirror.

#### **FUN HOUSE PICTURES**

When you were growing up the people around you were the mirrors of your life. They reflected back to you how you began to see yourself. The problem is there are no perfect people so as a result all the images that you got of yourself, even from people who loved you, were distorted. We all grow up with an inaccurate picture of ourselves

#### **We have to start seeing from God's point of view.**

How many of you would agree that maybe your life isn't what you thought it would look like? That life handed you a whopper that didn't look like the commercial? How many of you have got something that you ordered and it was nothing like you ordered from the picture?

It is very difficult to adjust your perspective when you pictured it one way and the product turned out to be another.

Some people have walked in here and left saying, “that wasn’t what I pictured! It wasn’t what I was hoped for!” That’s right! ITS MORE!

Are you living in a scene that you didn’t picture in this season?  
That’s why in Hebrews there is a contrast from what God sees now that you could not see earlier.

Everyone has a picture that was given to you as a kid that your parents made you tattoo in your brain of what life was supposed to look like through their eyes.

How many of you are not living the life that your parents pictured for you?  
How many of you don’t look like what your parents pictured you were gonna look like?  
How many are not doing what your parents pictured?

Question is, “Where did you or they get the picture from?”

Let the picture be built around your piece of the puzzle. STORY
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The way we think determines the way we act. And what we see comes out in our lifestyle. Our beliefs determine our behaviour. Often, we’re acting on false or inaccurate information about ourselves.

### **Seeing yourself through the lens of Jesus:**

If you got it from the imaginary world of Instagram or FaceBook then your believing in a fantasy. Not everything is what it seems.  
How many of you like “THIS IS US”? That show is not real! Ain’t no family that’s perfect! And Jack isn’t the perfect dad because perfection doesn’t exist except in your imagination.

God works from an invisible picture that we can’t see until it is made visible that I can see.

Gideon had no idea what God saw until it was revealed.

A lot of people back then pictured the Messiah coming in a different way. They were shocked, appalled, and blinded by how he came.

REVELATION: THERE ARE NO PICTURES OF JESUS!! Is he white? Black? Olive? What are his physical traits?

What if Jesus is not what you pictured? What if the devil isn’t what you pictured? What if he doesn’t have a pitched fork a red suit.

He isn’t grotesque and some hideous creature that Hollywood portrays?

“And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light”

2 Corinthians 11:14

Heaven isn't even gonna be like you pictured!! Why? Because there will be people there you thought never would be there and the people you thought would be there may not be!

**The problem isn't your situation its your picture!!  
Your Perception is causing you way to much pain.  
YOUR Perspective Is Essential To Progress**

Some people are doing things that God NEVER wanted you to do! How do I know? Because how many people do you know that HATE THEIR JOBS? There are kids including mine that will graduate university with a degree that they hate!

Judges 6-8 New International Version (NIV)

Gideon

**6 The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites. 2 Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds. 3 Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. 4 They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. 5 They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count them or their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it.**

**6 Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the Lord for help.7 When the Israelites cried out to the Lord because of Midian, 8 he sent them a prophet, who said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 9 I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians. And I delivered you from the hand of all your oppressors; I drove them out before you and gave you their land. 10 I said to you, 'I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not listened to me."**

**11 The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezerite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. 12 When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, “The Lord is with you, **mighty warrior**.”**

**NOTES: HE did not acknowledge the Lords declaration. He didn't know his identity through the eyes of someone else**

When the angel calls Gideon a 'Mighty man of valour,' he is calling him by his God-given identity.

In the Bible, a given name is often synonymous with a God-ordained identity or destiny. [1]

The name Gideon means 'cutter down' or 'destroyer', and Gideon is destined to be a leader who, with God's help, overthrows Israel's powerful enemy.

**Gideon, however, sees himself differently—as insignificant and powerless. As a result, he is living in fear and weakness.**

**God Himself Initiates our Identity.**

***'For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.'* (Eph 2:10)**

***'Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.'* (1 Cor 1:26-27)**

When God calls Gideon, the young man does not comprehend his purpose or his identity—in fact, he is currently being and behaving the very opposite of what God has called him to be. He is about to come out of hiding and step into history

Gideon is fearful; however his God-given identity is to be bold. He feels himself to be the smallest and least significant, but God is calling him to be someone to transform a nation.

**13 “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors**

told us about when they said, 'Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

14 The Lord turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"

15 "Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? **My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.**"

16 The Lord answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive."

17 Gideon replied, "If now I have found favour in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. 18 Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you."

And the Lord said, "I will wait until you return."

### **Gideon had a distorted picture of Gods original picture**

The truth in this message is one of the most important truths you can learn in your entire life. If you really grasp what it means to see yourself as God sees you, it will change your life.

Jesus said, "You know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32). So when we learn to see ourselves the way God sees us it makes all the difference in the world.

Five ways that God pictures you: See yourself here

#### **1. God says I see you as acceptable.**

Titus 3:7 (CEV) says this

"Jesus treated us much better than we deserve. He made us acceptable to God and He gave us the hope of eternal life."

One of the most hurtful things in life is rejection. "Rejection doesn't extinguish boldness it ignites it to a new level of fervency for the Lord." Danny Duval

Gideons own heritage held him in hostage. As a result we spend most of our lives doing everything we can to avoid rejection. We want acceptance more than anything else in life.. Sometimes we even want acceptance from people we don't even like! We buy things we don't need with money we don't have to impress

people we don't even know. Why? Because The need to be accepted is so profound it drives most everything in your life. It drives the kind of clothes you wear, the kind of car you drive, the kind of house you buy, the career you choose. So many of our decisions in life are really based on this desire for approval, the desire to be accepted. To be recognized, to be significant.

People will do the craziest things just to be accepted.

Gideon had nothing to lose because God was going to be with him. His confidence and courage came from someone who cared. For the first time in Gideon's life he was connected!!

Do you remember when you were a kid, and somebody would dare you? "I dare you to do ..." and you did it because you wanted to be accepted in the crowd. You wanted to be accepted as cool, as hip, " And you wanted everybody to like you so you did some really stupid stuff – just in order to be accepted.

There's a myth about acceptance and it's this: if I can just get everybody to think I'm perfect they will all accept me. So we put on this mask **MASK SLIDE** and we walk around like we've got it all together, that everything's in fine condition and we're really totally balanced, that we are perfect and we think everybody's going to accept us.

The Bible says Jesus was perfect and yet it says He was despised and rejected by men. Even Jesus was not accepted by everybody. And He was perfect. So even if you were perfect, and you're never going to be, you would not ever be accepted by everybody.

The one-minute you get Crowd A happy with you Crowd B gets upset with you. You just can't please everybody. Even God can't please everybody. Somebody's praying for rain. Somebody else is praying for sunshine. Who's He going to listen to? Only a fool would try to do what even God can't do.

But we want to be accepted and we want to be loved, we want people to see our value. God says I settled this a long time ago.

Look who's chosen you.

1 Peter 2:9 (LB) "You have been chosen by God Himself."

For some No matter what you did you just couldn't get your parents approval. You just knew it. You saw it in your dad's eyes, your mom's eyes and by what they said to you. If you got C's on your report card they expected B's. If you got B's they expected A's. No matter how hard you tried you just couldn't do it right. It always just felt like this little bit of shame, this little bit of put down – never measuring up to my mom or dad. Today, even still, subconsciously you're trying to earn your parents' approval. "I'm going to prove that I'm worth something!"

**God not only sees you as acceptable,**

**2. God sees you as valuable.**

If you're going to learn to see yourself the way God sees you, you're going to have to see your value. You're not just acceptable. You're worth something. You're worth a lot.  
Gideon went from whining to winning with a word from God.

Gideon needed a personal encounter with God. God met him right where he was, giving him a sense of peace and purpose by His promised presence. It was said among Napoleon's soldiers, "When Napoleon takes our hands and looks at us, we feel like conquerors."

There's something that changes in us when we listen to His voice and look "full in His wonderful face." Suddenly, His priorities become the most important thing on earth.

So let me ask you a question. How much do you think you're worth? .

What is it that creates value? What makes something valuable?

Two things: one, who owns it? The owner creates value. If somebody's famous and they own something, something very common can be worth a whole lot. You go to these auctions and they offer stuff that celebrities have had and it's worth a lot. Which is more valuable your tennis shoes or Michael Jordan's tennis shoes? No question. Your car or the Queen of England's car? No question. Who owns it determines its value.

Whatever your value is depends on whom you belong to. So who do you belong to?

1 John 4:4 (NIV) says, "You belong to God."

. A couple of years ago there was a famous Kuwaiti oil sheik whose daughter was kidnapped. He put an announcement over the Internet that said he'd pay any price. She's the daughter of the king.

You are a daughter or son of the King. You are a child of God. And He will pay anything including going to the cross to get you back. Jesus loves you so much that He was willing to die than to live without you." He not only owns you but the second thing that creates value is...

. How much is it worth? It's worth whatever somebody's willing to pay for it. If you've got a piece of art in your house, how much is it worth? Whatever somebody's willing to pay for it.

Look at how much was paid for you.

1 Cor. 7:23 (LB) - "You have been bought and paid for by Christ, [with His life.] so you belong to Him."

In Isaiah 43:4 God says "You are precious to Me."

God says in His eyes you are valuable and you are acceptable and...

### **3. You are lovable.**

God sees me not just as acceptable and valuable but lovable.

God says in Isaiah 54:10 "The mountains and hills may crumble but my love for you will never end," so says the Lord who loves you."

There are two characteristics of God's love you need to never, ever forget.

**1. It is consistent.** God is not fickle. He is not erratic. God is consistent in His loving. He never stops loving.

**2. His love is unconditional.** God doesn't say, I love you if... and here are the conditions." "I love you because... and here are the conditions." He just says, "I love you. Period" because it's not based on your performance. It's based on His character. He just says, "I love you. You're Mine. I made you. I saved you. I bought you. I want you with Me for eternity." You wouldn't exist if it weren't for God's love. You never need to ask yourself, Is God going to love me today? Did I pray enough today? Did I do all the right things? Did I cross the T's and dot the I's. God will never love you more than He does right now. He will never love you any less than He does right now. Because His love is consistent and unconditional.

There's a fourth way that God sees you.

### **4. God sees you as forgivable.**

That word – "forgive" – it's easy, we're in church so we hear it all the time." It's very easy to pass right by it. We do not realize how forgiven we really are.

Ephesians 1:4 says, "Long ago, even before He made the world, God chose us to be His very own through what Christ would do for us. He decided then to make us holy in His eyes, without a single fault. We who stand before Him covered by His love."

**Gideon was chosen long before Gideon knew he was**



## He was another case of mistaken identity

What an incredible verse that tells us how forgiven we are by God's love and what He's willing to do in us. Before God made you He knew everything you were going to do in your life. He knew all the mistakes, all the sins. He knew the worst thing you were going to do. There is one thing you will never hear God say, **"I didn't see that one coming."**

For those who do not know Jesus, **you need to see yourself SAVED.**

Isaiah 43:25 (GN) - "I am the God who forgives your sins. I do this because of who I am. I will not hold your sins against you."

God doesn't carry grudges. You might. I might. But God does not hold grudges.

Romans 8:1 says, "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Then there's a fifth way that God sees you ...

### **5. God sees you as capable.**

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 (TEV) talks about this, "The capacity that we have comes from God. It is He who made us capable of serving the new covenant."

There is an epidemic of low self-esteem in North America. One study shows that it is the number one problem among women in America. Why is that? Why can't we escape that sense of insecurity?

We replay what people have said about us in our minds over and over again. As we continue to replay those old tapes in our memory of what people said a long time ago about us, we still live by those words 10-20 years later. Studies show that the younger you were when you were rejected, the greater an impact it has on your life. And in a sense for some of you, you had people in your life that cursed you. They cursed you with words like, "You don't matter. You're a failure. You'll never amount to anything. You can't do anything right."

So here's the question. How do you release the curse? You don't do it by focusing on the curse. You don't do it by thinking about what they said all the time. And you don't even do it by thinking, "I'm going to prove them wrong." You're still trying to build your life on a negative.

You begin to focus instead on the truth. You start affirming the truth. You start believing what God says about you and God says you're capable. I don't care what anybody else says. I don't care what you think. God says you are capable. He has created you for a purpose. He has a purpose for your life. In fact there are two reasons why every one of us is capable.

## **1. We are all capable because we have God's word for insight and wisdom.**

2 Timothy 3:17 (NCV) "Using the scriptures, the person who serves God will be capable having all that is needed to do every good work."

What a gift God has given us in this book, the Bible. It's given to help us live the kind of life He wants us to live, to make us capable to live that life. That's an incredible gift but He's given us an even bigger gift than that. Not only has He given us His word, the Bible says...

## **2. He's given us Himself to make us capable.**

Maybe you've heard people talk about how God sends His Spirit to us when we trust Him. What does that mean? That means that God sends Himself. He gives us His strength, His ability, His insight. He is willing to come into our lives. That's how much He loves us.

**Philippians 4:13 says, "I have strength for all things in Christ who empowers me. I am ready for anything and equal to anything though Him who infuses inner strength into me. That is I am self sufficient through Christ's sufficiency."**

It really doesn't matter what anybody else thinks about you. Who are you going to believe? God? Or that fun house mirror? That imperfect person?

And the bigger question is: Who are you going to live for? The approval of other people? Who aren't going to give it, or they'll be inconsistent. **Or will you live the rest of your life for a God who says you're lovable, valuable, capable, forgivable and acceptable?**

This story is told by a man named Fred Craddick. I found this online and it helps to illustrate what I'm talking about here. Mr. Craddick tells about the time he was vacationing in Tennessee. Fred and his wife were seated at a table in a restaurant when an old man came up to them and asked, "Are you folks on vacation?" "Yes," said Fred, "and we're having a good time." "What do you do for a living?" the old man said. Fred was trying to get rid of the guy and he said, "I'm a preacher." "Oh," the old man said. "Then let me tell you a preacher story." He pulled up a chair and sat down. "I was born an illegitimate child. I never knew who my father was. That was very hard for me. The kids at school made fun of me and they called me names. When I walked around our little town I always felt that people were staring at me and asking that terrible question, 'I wonder who is the father of that little boy.' I spent a lot of time by myself and growing up I didn't have any friends. One day a new pastor came to town and everybody was talking about how good he was. I'd never gone to church but one Sunday I decided I'd go hear him speak. He was good. So I kept coming back. But each time I went to

church I'd come in late and I'd leave early [so I wouldn't have to talk to anybody. Then one Sunday I got so caught up in listening to the sermon I forgot to leave early. The service ended, people stood up and I couldn't get out the door. Suddenly I felt a hand on my shoulder. When I turned that big tall pastor was looking down at me. He asked, 'What's your name boy? Whose son are you?' When I heard that question I just shook. But before I could say anything the preacher said, 'I know who your family is. There's a distinct family resemblance. Why, you're the child of God.' You know, mister, those words changed my life," he said. The old man got up and left. The waitress came over and asked me, "Do you know who that was?" "No," said Fred. "That's Ben Hooper, two term governor of Tennessee."

A man learned he was the child of God and it changed his life. All the depression and all the wounds and hurts and rejection he'd had through his life was eliminated by the power of God's love. And no longer could people diminish his sense of dignity because he was a child of God.

**“Because of Jesus, I am acceptable, and I am valuable and I am lovable and I am forgivable and I am capable. Jesus, help me to see myself through Your eyes of love. Amen.”**

**Extra notes:**

God confirms His priorities with His presence (6:13-24)

Can you imagine how Gideon felt? Chapter 8 tells us that the Midianite army numbered 135,000 men. That's 450 Midianites to every one Israeli soldier. When it was over, 120,000 Midianites had killed one another and the other 15,000 fled. It was over. God had answered Israel's prayers. He used a common man who believed God.

Jeremiah 29:11:

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”*