
A View of Yourself

John 15:5-6

“Nobody special

With his retirement approaching, Joe became pensive. He had worked 30 years now for this supermarket chain. Many times he had wanted to quit, but he had stuck with it, knowing that his grit would pay in the end. He waited with anticipation for the dinner where he would be honored. Finally he would make them proud. But, make who proud?

His wife Mary would be there for his great moment. The bitterness of that tightened his jaw, though, as Joe was keenly aware that Mary never liked his job. Even though he'd been a store manager for the last 16 years, she always thought he could do better. And although his father was now long in the grave, he would finally make his name mean something. It frustrated him that his father was not here to see it. And, it angered him that his own grown children didn't care enough to attend his big night.

As Joe straightened his tie, the gnawing thought plagued him that really, of the things that counted most in life, he had nothing to show for it, nothing to be proud of. He was really getting a reward for endurance. He didn't have a marriage that was exemplary—not at all. He'd wanted to work on it, but kept putting it off, settling for “keeping the peace.” He had almost no relationship with his kids. He didn't really like his job, and his job didn't give him any self-worth. Worst of all, he'd never really done anything to help anyone or serve anyone but himself. Who was Joe, anyway? He was a nobody.

Reflection

When you stand back to look at who you really are, your true colors will show when you recognize your true spiritual state apart from God. Have you ever really looked first-hand at your own “spiritual bankruptcy,” or do you continue to project an image of being completely together? You see, Joe is normal—completely normal. It is only when we stand broken before a holy God, that we rise above “normalcy.” For it is only then that others see Christ in us, and not the “nobody special” that we are.

The Apostle Paul was nobody special, yet he did amazing things for Christ's kingdom. In fact, he called himself the “least important of all the apostles,” and said he didn't “deserve to be called an apostle.” (1 Corinthians 15:9) Paul was broken, standing as nobody special, doing great things for God.

Accountability and Application

Look at who you really are. Then get with a friend and discuss your discovery. Are you standing on your own merits? Or are you nobody special, letting Christ be great in you? Ask him to increase in you, so that you might decrease.

John 15:1-6 (NASB)

Jesus Is the Vine--Followers Are Branches

¹“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

²“Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

³“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

⁴“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

⁵“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

⁶“If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

PRAYER: Lord I've been standing on my own merits; but they are nothing. I'm broken. Please break me further, and allow me to see myself as worthy only in you. Let me see myself as nobody without you, and my life as nothing without you.