

Identity Part 6 “I am a Masterpiece in the Making” Ephesians 2:10

One of the things I really appreciate is Art – probably because I am not artistic at all. –

A) **In Jr. High school – art class** – Clay Pot – mine ended up looking like an **Ash tray** – no one in my family smoked.

B) Draw people and they would look **like Aliens** from another planet.

C) So I really appreciate those who are artistic and can do those things!

And you know what: GOD IS AN ARTIST!

A) Favorite Pastimes – watch TV or relaxing – APP on Flipboard – **Amazing Pictures** –

Aa) Stunning – reminds me of the beauty of creation

B) I was saying to Denise - **Check this out** - Awesome things God has made!

Psalm 19:1 “**The heavens declare the glory of God. The skies show forth His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech. And night unto night show forth knowledge.**”

C) See it everyday in Creation – whether you are talking about a beautiful ocean sunset like this one –

1) or – God painting the sky clouds and colors. {Amazing

D) We see **His artistry in Mountain Landscapes** like Banff, Alberta or Sedona AZ, or as **far away** as the Mountains of Patagonia

We see it in the birds of the air! As well as the fish of the Sea!

A) We see His Artistry in **little things** like insects - Caterpillar

B) **Big things** like Outer Space!

C) And Probably one of the greatest things that display the Creative Artistry of God is the make up of the **Human Anatomy**

The human body is made up of a 100 trillion amazingly complex cells. That are all different & yet work together perfectly

A) Each cell is comprised of organized grouping of molecules, which are in highly structured and complex.

B) And Every cell in your body has a specific function

C) **The DNA in just one cell contains approximately the same amount of information as 1,000 books of fine print containing 500 pages each.**

D) The Psalmist was dead on when He declared –**we are fearfully and wonderfully made.**

Now we could talk all night about the Creative Genius and Artistry of God but the thing that we need to understand is this:

A) God’s greatest work of art is THE CHRISTIAN –
Seen in Redemption

B) Think about it : For God to create the heavens and the earth, for God to create the world and everything in it, **how long did it take Him?**

1) **It took Him six days, didn't it?** He just spoke it into existence over a six-day period of time. Man / the world / the Galaxies /

C) But for God to Make a Christian – He had to send His Son to earth He had to give his very best –

1) **He had to offer a Sacrificeour sins**

D) Why - A CHRISTIAN IS GOD'S GREATEST CREATION

V. 10 *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

We are His Workmanship!

A) Workmanship is a very interesting word.” The word translated “workmanship” is the Greek word *poema*. from which we get our English word *poem*.

B) But “poem” is not the primary meaning of the Greek word.

1) The word POEMA itself means literally “to make.”

C) The word became a word that referred to a work of art.

So that became the common usage of the word *poema*.

1) It was used in reference to **works of art**. So it could mean a **statue**. It could mean a **song**. It could mean some sort of architecture.

D) It could mean a poem. It could mean a painting.

1) But the best definition of the word is this - “a masterpiece.”

Now that is really what Paul is saying here is that – we are God's Masterpiece in the making!

A) But it is important that we understand that Paul is not referring AT ALL to what we are as Human beings – But of REDEMPTION.

B) **Created in Christ** – is the key Phrase – Not JUST created – but created IN CHRIST!

C) **IN Him we become this Masterpiece.**

1) Chosen – Redeemed – Set apart – In Christ!

The Church of Jesus Christ **collectively, and each one of us individually** are a masterpiece that God is in the process of bringing into existence.

A) The Church of Jesus Christ is God's masterpiece in all of creation.

That is an Incredible Statement -

B) If we were to go through all of God's creation, as one might **walk through a museum**, we would certainly marvel at the various things He's created.

1) And we'd probably go from one room to another, thinking, **“Okay this has got to be the masterpiece right here. There's no way we can top this.”**

C) And then they say, “No, let's move into the next room.” And then we find something beyond it.

But when we come to the end of the tour, and we come to that final piece of art, Reserved to the end because it is the BEST -

A) This is the masterpiece of all masterpieces.

Guess what it is? It's the Church of Jesus Christ.

B) That's God's masterpiece. And you are part of that. And I am part of that.

1) So we are **collectively** God's masterpiece because we're part of the Church.

C) But because each individual is also vital, we are individually His masterpiece.

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Cc) For you see the **Sculptor** takes a worthless piece of Clay and makes a Beautiful Statue with it worth a million dollars

D) **Painter can take a blank piece** of canvas worth 3 dollars – add some paint to make a picture worth – **300,000 dollars**

1) Builder can take some wood – makes a house

E) But God takes a life – that was lost – Diseased by Sin / Selfish at the Core and turns that life into a Saint

1) Out of black sinners he can make bright saints

Like an Artist sees the finished Product long before –He begins the work

A) God sees the finished product as it relates to your life, my life.

B) But in the present we must realize the work is **on going** – it is a work in Progress

C) God began this **process 2,000 years ago when Jesus Christ** came into the world, and God began to assemble the Church together.

1) And He's not finished yet.

D) And He won't be finished until the trumpet sounds, and we're called up into heaven.

E) **When that happens then the masterpiece will be completed.**

God's not finished with the Church collectively.

A) And He's not finished with us individually. God's still working with us.

B) He's still **fine-tuning our lives**/He's seeking to take off those rough edges.

1) And God uses different tools in His work of producing this masterpiece.

C) **What are the tools that God uses?**

Well of course the Lord uses His Spirit.

A) **The Holy Spirit of God is actively working in our lives.**

B) Like a **potter working upon a piece of clay**, the Spirit of God is working in our lives to mould us and to shape us into the image of God's Son.

1) That is the Goal –

C) **The HS Convicts - / Instructs** – Moves us to take steps of faith – all for the purpose of making us more like Jesus So God uses His Holy Spirit in our hearts

D) **We need to stay willing!**

A church Pianist was practicing a piece by Felix Mendelssohn the famous German composer

A) The Pianist was really struggling with the piece. After 40 minutes or he was so Frustrated, he gathered up his music and started to leave.

B) He had not noticed a stranger had come in and sat in a rear pew.

C) As the Pianist turned to go, the stranger came forward and asked **if he could play the piece.**

"I never let anyone touch this organ!" came the blunt reply.

D) Finally, after two more polite requests, the grumpy musician reluctantly gave him permission.

The stranger sat down and filled the sanctuary with beautiful, flawless music. When he finished, the organist asked, "Who are you?"

A) The man replied, "I am Felix Mendelssohn."

B) Think about that - The Pianist had almost prevented the song's creator from playing his own music!

C) We can be guilty of the same thing:

1) There are times when we too try to play the chords of our lives and prevent our Creator from making His beautiful music.

Like that stubborn Pianist, we only reluctantly take our hands off the keys.

A) But it is as we yield each aspect of our lives to His Spirit that - He moves and works in us

B) Molds and Fashions us - **Beautiful Song**

C) God has a symphony written for our lives. -

1) We need to allow Him to have His way in us in order for it to be Heard!

So God uses His Spirit - He also uses His word!

A) The Scriptures liken God's word to a mirror - what does a mirror do? IT REFLECTS what it sees

B) James picks up on the mirror idea James 1:23

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

C) This is a great illustration of the Bible as a mirror because when we look at it we are seeing ourselves in light of God's standard - JESUS

1) We see Jesus - immediately think - *I need to change!*

D) We have that same feeling when we get up & look in the mirror each

1) Morning - WOW!!! / I need to change / talking over haul

There is an active aggressive attitude & action that goes w/ that need.

A) Shave - Shower - Comb hair brush teeth - outfit girls - Make up - curl hair - straighten

B) Takes some work to look Presentable

C) I see that most of you did that today - MOST 😊

For some the process took 20 minutes / others several hrs. - guys

A) Now why do we do that? Well to be truthful - We are concerned about How we Look -

B) Because how we look reflection where we are at

C) We don't want to look like a bum - if we are not one 1) so we actively approach making ourselves look presentable

THE SAME IS TRUE SPIRITUALLY

A) We come to the mirror of God's word seeing changes that need to take place -

B) And we need to actively involve ourselves in that process
James 1:22

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

C) Spiritual growth & development – NO SHORT CUTS

Physically Some of you gals know this from experience – your late for work / so you decide I'll put my make up on in the car

A) We see you out on RAOD - really amazing how you do this

B) **Knee on the steering wheel** - the rear view mirror is turned toward you /

1) The car has become a Beauty PARLOR so to speak - /

C) **But I wonder how many times some of you ladies have Found yourself –**

1) Once you get to work & get in front of a real mirror - *WHAT DID I DO??*

C) **No Short cuts – Spiritually – God's word purifies us / works on us – it does a work of transforming our lives**

D) **SO God uses his word – Read it personally or as He works thru a Bible teacher – Go to a study and God speaks to us**

1) And we walk away. Thinking , *“Wow, something wonderful took place today – God spoke to me ”*

God uses also the circumstances of our lives.

A) He uses good things.

B) **Blessings to reveal to us His love – to increase our faith – Build up our Confidence in Him /**

1) Remind us of His Love

And He uses bad things. TRIALS to further His work in us. Get out of us what He is putting into us

A) Now most of us if we had a choice we would say – I will skip the trials part – I am not into that

B) **I'm not into suffering. I'm not into pain. I'm not into misery. Or discomfort.**

1) But God's not going to let that happen because you're His masterpiece.

C) **And He's got to chisel away at us.** – Sometimes applying greater Pressure

D) **A Diamond is the result of a piece of Coal that was pressed under pressure -**

1) **God uses the Pressure of trials to make us into His diamonds**

E) **IN the moment that is hard to see!**

One time Michelangelo was working away with his hammer and his chisel on a large stone.

A) **And someone approached him and asked, “What are you doing?” At that stage it didn't appear that he was doing much of anything.**

B) **He said, “I'm liberating an angel from this stone.”**

1) That is Hard work—a hammer and a chisel, and sometimes the circumstances in our lives are similar to that

D) God pulls out the hammer and the chisel, and He starts chipping away.

SOMETIMES WE WANT TO ASK “Lord what are you doing?”

A) **Well He's creating a masterpiece. That's what He's doing.**

B) **And sometimes it takes that pounding, [and] that chipping to produce in us what He wants to produce in us.**

C) As the Potter takes the clay and beats it and stretches it – Trials stretch us

1) Potter uses water to soften the Clay –
God's word Softens us

D) Potter takes the Fire to Solidify the Clay –

1) God puts us in the fire – Make us Solid :

E) King – Black cups / actually – Gold cups covered in Black Paint -

1) The Black Burnt out the Gold Burnt in -

F) **CIRCUMSTANCES** – The fiery trial – God uses – Make us –

He [also] uses people.

A) He brings people into our lives.

B) Sometimes my least favorite – Difficult people

C) But Also super blessed - And they touch us. They impact us in various ways.

Parents: Love & Sacrifice /

D) Cimino – Commitment & Service

1) Brian – Grace /

2) Courson JESUS

E) So those are the tools that God is using as He works out this glorious work of art.

Now Question why does God do this ? 2 Reasons

A) #1 Romans 8:29 **“Conform us into the image of His own dear Son.”**

His aim is to make us more like Jesus!

B) #2 Purpose: Created in Christ – for Good works –

C) Think of it this way: What is a masterpiece?

It is the deepest expression of the artist!!

1) You listen to a beautiful song, as you see a beautiful painting, or a sculpture, or as somebody might read a poem, or something like that,

Cc) What you're hearing is, or what you're seeing, is the deepest expression of who that person is.

And here's the thing that is absolutely fascinating to me about what Paul is saying here: is that we are God's deepest expression.

A) **God wants to express Himself**, like any other artist would do through their art.

B) You are God's art. . You're God's masterpiece.

C) And what does He want to do with you? He primarily wants to express Himself through you.

1) You in Christ - Christ in You – On display for the world to see!

He does that mainly through opportunities –

A) Encounters – that He has prepared for us – each day!

B) Everyday God has encounters for us – to express Him – His heart – His love

1) To our – Family – Spouse – Kids – a world that doesn't know Jesus.

C) These opportunities are prepared before hand – 1) we just need to step into them. –

1) Discover – they fit – Tailor a suit – or a dress – fits

B) **Take my Yoke upon you and learn of me.** –

1) Yoke is easy = well fitting

1)This fits – I was made for this.

Situation comes together – it works – fits

Before we step out from home, we usually think about how we look.

A)Do we also think about God's plan for us today how He is going to display Himself through us today?

B)Pray in that way: **Ok Lord I am your Masterpiece in the making – How do you want to express yourself through me today.**

1)Help me to see it – and Help me to step into it with faith – boldness and grace!

C)Taking full advantage of the opportunities that you present before me in the power of your spirit!