

## YOU DEFINED: Masterpiece - 12.06.09

**Me / We (Orientation / Identification)** - Tonight we wrap up the You Defined series. So far we've learned...

- What I love most will define who I am, what I become, and what I do with my life. If I love God - who I am is all about God, what I become is more about God, and what I do with my life is what God desires.
- All my own right living - is nothing more than rags compared to knowing Jesus. *It's not about what I do for God, it's all about what God does through me!* ==> That's how to say "I love you" to God.
- I must know the power of resurrection now. I must die to self to live for God, what we called "Life Reset." There is a tension between the already and the not yet. My attitude to sin is not yet arrived, yet neither enslaved.

But what about this Power of Resurrection, this Life Reset, when it comes to the positive side of how I live my life? What does that look like? How does it happen? What am I supposed to do?

**Last week I played a Groundhog Day movie clip, where Bill wakes up on the same day over and over again. At first he lives his life selfishly, entirely for himself, knowing there will be no consequences. He learns this is an empty life, and he just wants to kill himself. But I love the movie because by the end, he discovers he can live his life doing good works for others.**

***Play Groundhog02.mov clip.***

There's something inside of us that resonates with these scenes of a life lived for others. There's joy, happiness, satisfaction. And when it's done well, a LIFE RESET will be the life of every party! People flock to be around LIFE RESET people. **But is it possible to really live this way? GOOD NEWS: God tells us how in His Word. Turn to Ephesians 2.**

**God (Illumination) Read Ephesians 2:1-10 in ESV.**

Our answer for who we live out the LIFE RESET life is found entirely in verse 10. So let's take it one phrase at a time.

**For we...**

The first question we have to ask ourselves when we come to this verse is "Who is the we?" and then "Am I included in the we?" To discover the answer, we have to look at v. 1-9, all about the we. Discover 2 things - (1) not who we used to be; (2) not rest of world.

- were dead in trespasses and sins - not dead now
- in which we ONCE walked - we used to walk this way, but not now
- following course of world - path others on, but not us
- in which we all ONCE lived - we used to live this way, but not now
- ONCE lived in passion of flesh - used to live this way, but not now
- by nature WERE children of wrath - were, past tense, but not now
- dead, but made alive in Christ Jesus - Christ follower, not everyone
- saved by faith, gift of God. Ask: "Am I in the 'we'?"

... **are his workmanship** ... masterpiece (NLT), handiwork (TNIV)

ποίημα noun or ποιέω verb, to do or to make. common. w/ God:

**A noun, in the subjective, when used with God:**

“For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth...” Exodus 20:11

“Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and earth...” Acts 4:24

“... a living God, who made heaven and earth...” Acts 14:15

“... worship him, who made heaven and earth...” Rev. 14:7

Talk about heaven and earth. God makes, He creates. The MAKER. There are only 2 places where the noun is used...

**A noun, as the objective, when used with God:**

“... ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.”  
Romans 1:20

And here in our verse tonight...

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus...” Ephesians 2:10

We are literally, “that which has been made by God,” and following the story from Genesis - the final act of the creation. Therefore we should not consider ourselves any longer as rags. Not only have we been CREATED by God, but this verse goes on to tell us...

... **created in Christ Jesus** ...

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.  
The old has passed away, the new has come.” 2 Cor. 2:17

So we have been made by God, but we have also been remade by Christ. There is a God the Father, God the Son connection here. You need to view yourself as a “Masterpiece,” not because of what you have done, but because of what God has done. We are right on the verge of speaking of the “good works” that you do. But before you can ever understand yourself as the “doer,” you must first correctly understand yourself as the “done.” You are the Masterpiece because God made you and created you in Christ. We can never view ourselves apart from Christ.

But we also must never view ourselves as the end result. God has a purpose in mind for His children, for the “we,” Christ-followers...

... **for good works** ....

You are made by God, created in Christ for this reason: **for good works**. Micro level - the golden rule - doing to others as I would have them do to me. The loving neighbor as in story of good Samaritan. But also the Macro level - being an agent of change in the new order of things, the new creation.

Key question: how do I know exactly what “good works” God has in mind?

... which God prepared beforehand ...

“...hath before ordained...” KJV  
“...gotten ready for us to do...” MSG  
“...planned in advance...” NCV

Here’s the best part. I don’t have to know. I have been uniquely made by God and created in Christ that when I come to a situation where I can be an agent of God’s good will to men, I’ll know about it. What’s important to know about this is NOT that I know, but that God knows.

NOT ONLY DID HE CREATE ME, BUT HE PREPARED FOR ME WHAT I SHOULD DO! The language of 16th century English (KJV) talks in terms of God “ordaining” the works for us. What is ordination? Conferring “holy orders” onto someone. Being set aside for a purpose. Here the very works we are to do are “set aside” for us!

... that we should walk in them.

“...to be our way of life.” NRSV  
“...for us to do.” NIV

So how do I go about knowing about these good works and then doing these good works? I just keep walking! Everybody in the first century got to where they were going by walking. They walked everywhere. Natural. Didn’t have to think about it. So they had a phrase that referred to their “way of life” - walking.

In other words, this concept of doing the good things that God has made me and you to do is as natural to us as taking the next step. We are a unique “masterpiece” creation, because through Christ, I will naturally come across in my thinking and in my deeds the things that God has prepared beforehand for me to do.

Galatians 5 and Romans 5 both talk about us “walking in the Spirit.” What I want you to see is that this idea of doing good works can never be separated from God - in all three persons. God the Father made us and prepared the works for us / God the Son redeems us and we are created in Him / God the Spirit walks in and through us.

**You (Application): Why am I a “masterpiece”?**

**MADE** by God ....  
**CREATED** in Christ Jesus ....  
... **GOOD WORKS** prepared by God.

And how do I do these good works?

I just **KEEP WALKING** !

## **We (Inspiration)**

We have talked during this You Defined series about our own good works, done in our own effort, apart from God, nothing but rags. Some of you have a very hard time looking at your life in any way other than in waste, rags, as worthless.

**BUT THIS IS NOT HOW GOD SEES YOU!**

The unique aspect of Christianity is this relationship between doing good things for God and our relationship with God. Religion is all about doing good works for God. If I just do enough good things, maybe God will notice and I could have a relationship with Him.

Christian faith is not about doing enough good things to know God. In fact, Christianity admits that there is NO WAY we could ever please God in our own way. The beauty and the scandal of grace is that God begins the relationship with us, not the other way around. He makes it possible for us to know Him. In fact, it's only in knowing Him that we could ever do that which pleases Him.

### **Invite Bethany and Nate to come up front to sing "Anyway."**

While Bethany sings this song, I'd like you to think about You defined. Have you come to the place in your life where you know that the single thing that defines you more than anything else is your love for God? Have you come to the place where you want to say, "I love you" to Jesus by living in a life that please Him? Have you come to the place where you are willing to die to self to live the INCREDIBLE LIFE that God has prepared ahead of time for you?

If not, take the time during the song to pray to God... something like this: "God, I want you to know I love you. I want to live in a way that pleases you. I've been holding back and I see that I've shortchanged me and everyone around me, because I'm not the man or woman you've created me to be. I'm sorry. Forgive me. Help me to surrender my life to you. Give me your Spirit in my life so that I can be the man or woman that you have created me to be. Amen."