

“The Picture in Your Mind”

By Pastor Bruce J. Wilson

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Try to ‘picture’ your favorite picture of yourself: one that makes you smile, and you want to say “yeah, that’s me!” ... one that you want to eagerly share the story behind that picture.

My favorite is a baseball picture. I was a bout ten years old, and I was playing Little League baseball. One afternoon I had a game, and my mom brought my dad’s 35mm camera, and my mom will tell you that she is no photographer... Anyway, I was playing outfield, and the batter got a solid hit, and I could see that it was well over my head, but I ran back, and jumped up, and I caught the ball, and my mom caught it on film.

There’s another picture that I like a lot, it was taken when I was on a motorcycle tour with some other pastors, and it’s clear in that picture that we enjoy each other’s company; that we are a team; that we are a band of brothers.

Now, what does your regular picture of you look like? Grumpy, impatient, maybe childish sometimes, too preoccupied, worried, doubting, concerned, maybe even burdened... Welcome to the world. A picture often informs. You look back at something and say to yourself, “What was I thinking?” I’m not always pleased with the regular picture of myself.

Your picture should make you smile about yourself, and that’s good! I like what that says about me! Your regular picture of yourself may not make you feel so good about yourself. Maybe your self-image needs a smile-infusion? A reminder of the good person inside you? So that can make you feel good ... but I’m not here to make you feel good, I’m here to make you “feel God!”

What is God’s favorite picture of you? That’s a whole lot different than your favorite picture of yourself. The things that we like about our favorite picture are worldly, temporal, physical things, temporary things, things that won’t make much difference thirty days from now, much less thirty years from now. Things that don’t mean a hill of beans to God. What God is looking for in you is very different. God has planted in you the ability to be a minister.

Does the Bible say, Blessed are the Confident? That have a good self-image?!
No! Blessed are the meek, they that morn, they that hunger!

Matthew 5:3-10 ...Blessed are...

That’s one of the least controversial passages in Scripture. Everyone knows that passage. What kind of picture does THAT paint? It’s a very different picture than my favorite picture. What impresses our fellow man, our spouse, even our children, is not what impresses God. Can we say that he is impressed, or gets any satisfaction out of OUR picture? Is there ANYTHING about our picture that he appreciates? Probably not!

When we consider God’s picture, it becomes very humbling! Not so appealing!

But – it also shows an image that highlights things that we are very much in control of, and have a choice about: attitude, heart, focus, countenance, etc.

So it seems almost a choice of what is most appealing vs. most humbling! That IS a challenge! God is proud of us when we embrace His blessings.

Let's consider this "God Picture" of us a little more ...

2 Timothy 2:24-25 ...gentle to all men...

We have a bad tendency to look at things the wrong way. "Oh, the servant of the Lord is so impressive in her blue dress." "Oh, everyone wants to be like him, he's such a servant of the Lord." The Bible says something different. We don't generally think to ourselves, "The best thing to do today is to be meek. That will solve all of my problems." A butler, a maid, a cook; they are all there to serve. You're not on your job to collect a paycheck, not as a Christian, you're not. Those people have no love; they have no peace. They are living in the filth of this world.

1 Peter 3:8-17 ...suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye...

There will be folks that mock you, that think you're peculiar. That's okay, sit right next to them. "I'm here to stay, until Jesus takes me home."

There will be times when you will suffer for your own stupidity. Just deal with it; we all make mistakes.

There will be times when things happen, and people will try to tell you that wouldn't have happened if you'd have been right with God, like Job's friends tried to tell him. It's better to suffer in this life for righteousness sake. Sometimes you just have to tell people something that they don't want to hear. That's God's favorite picture.

If I humble myself before God, he will lift me up. But that's if you humble yourself before God. Humbling yourself before men is very different. You should be in your closet when you pray, when you fast, when you give—those things are not anybody else's business.

1 Timothy 6:6-12 ...But godliness with contentment is great gain...

Our commission is to teach all nations. All of us contribute our various backgrounds and skills to the goal. If you've been on the short end of the stick, use that to minister. There's some ministering that needs to be done because people are hurting.

We live in a hungry, voracious world; we have to fight. The Bible tells us that the eye is never satisfied. Be content with what God gives us. Follow after godliness, be meek, love, have patience.

You've got to have that picture in your mind: that's something you can control. You can't stop your hair from turning grey or falling out, but you can control your attitude; you can control your countenance. You can be in a wheelchair and still be holy. You didn't get choose to be where you work. You didn't get choose your family. There are things you can't control. You can control if you pray. You get to decide if God is your first priority.

Allow God to put that picture in your mind that is His favorite picture. “You see My son or daughter praying? You see them making godly choices?” Nobody can take that from you.

Choose today—choose God’s favorite picture; let it be greater than your circumstances. There’s a Spirit about you that’s greater than your circumstances.

Can be summed up pretty simply:

John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.



