

February 5, 2022



A CASE OF MISSED OR TAKEN IDENTITY

Story 1. "Name Shouldn't Be Sold." Mark Cuban, owner of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, once offered WGN Chicago radio sports-talk host David Kaplan \$50,000 to change his name legally to "Dallas Maverick." When Kaplan politely declined, Cuban sweetened the offer. Cuban would pay Kaplan \$100,000 and donate \$100,000 to Kaplan's favorite charity if he took the name for one year. After some soul searching, and being bombarded by emails from listeners who said he was crazy to turn down the money, Kaplan held firm and told Cuban no. Kaplan explained: "I'd be saying I'd do anything for money, and that bothers me. My name is my birthright. I'd like to preserve my integrity and credibility."
—Skip Bayless, "Radio Host Prefers Class Over Crass," *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 10, 2001.

Story 2. FBI agents conducted a raid of a psychiatric hospital in San Diego that was under investigation for medical insurance fraud. After hours of reviewing thousands of medical records, the dozens of agents had worked up quite an appetite. The agent in charge of the investigation called a nearby pizza parlor with delivery service to order a quick dinner for his colleagues.

The following telephone conversation took place and was recorded by the FBI because they were taping all conversations at the hospital.

Agent: Hello. I would like to order 19 large pizzas and 67 cans of soda.
Pizza man: And where would you like them delivered?
Agent: We're over at the psychiatric hospital.
Pizza man: The psychiatric hospital?
Agent: That's right. I'm an FBI agent.
Pizza man: You're an FBI agent?
Agent: That's correct. Just about everybody here is.
Pizza man: And you're at the psychiatric hospital?
Agent: That's correct. And make sure you don't go through the front doors. We have them locked. You will have to go around to the back to the service entrance to deliver the pizzas.
Pizza man: And you say you're all FBI agents?
Agent: That's right. How soon can you have them here?
Pizza man: And everyone at the psychiatric hospital is an FBI agent?
Agent: That's right. We've been here all day and we're starving.
Pizza man: How are you going to pay for all of this?
Agent: I have my checkbook right here.
Pizza man: And you're all FBI agents?
Agent: That's right. Everyone here is an FBI agent. Can you remember to bring the pizzas and sodas to the service entrance in the rear? We have the front doors locked.
Pizza man: I don't think so.
Click.

—Go to <http://www.snopes.com/medical/asylum/fbipizza.asp> to get more details of this true incident.

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth' " (Genesis 1:27, 28, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 7, The Nature of Humanity:** "Man and woman were made in the image of God. . . . When our first parents disobeyed God, they denied their dependence upon Him and fell from their high position. The image of God in them was marred and they became subject to death. Their descendants share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker."
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 76-78

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read 1 John 4:7, 8, 11, 20.
- » Carlos is known for being funny, even though his jokes come at the expense of others. Nobody really gets close to him personally, but many want to be around him. How would a kingdom citizen go about reaching out to someone who seems "untouchable" and communicate what God thinks about him? How would you show Carlos his identity in Christ?
- » Share the specific problems in reaching people like Carlos. You may want to ask someone older what they think and share what you like about their answer or how that response may not be realistic.

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE NATURE OF HUMANITY

- » Read Genesis 2:7; Jeremiah 17:9; 2 Corinthians 5:19, 20.
- » It is important that we realize we belong to God. We were created in His image, and He loves us more than we can realize. When our first parents sinned, the propensity [tendency, inclination] to sin became a part of us. However, God did not leave us in sin. He sent His Son to save us. When we accept Him, we are covered in Christ's righteousness [perfection]. When Jesus comes, God's image will once again be fully seen in us.
- » When you look in the mirror, whom do you see?

- » What can you do today to reflect God's image in your life?

- » Can you match the concepts below to the correct verse?

Genesis 1:26, 27	Psalms 8:4-8	Romans 5:12-17	Acts 17:24-28	Psalms 51:10
------------------	--------------	----------------	---------------	--------------

We are sons and daughters of God _____

God's grace is a gift that gives us eternal life _____

We are made in God's image _____

God crowned humanity with glory and honor and made him a little lower than the angels _____

A prayer for God to make us clean and committed to living for God _____

Tuesday
REFLECTING

- » Read Ephesians 1:4-14.
- » Have you ever tried to join a conversation but not been able to get a word in? It's frustrating to have something to say and not be able to say it because everyone is talking. Imagine how God feels watching His children wander around wondering who they are and whom they belong to.
- » First of all, it's not easy to listen to what God thinks about you when the world is screaming at you. Also, if your identity is based on what you can do, how you look, or who likes you, then you have more than enough to keep yourself extremely busy.
- » Think about a world where you are valued simply because you are alive. What would it be like if we lived in a world where everyone focused on our potential instead of amplifying our mistakes? Can you imagine how loneliness and hatred and despair would just fade away? It's a world where we are valuable simply because the King died for us and claims us; not only claims us, but makes us children; not just children, heirs!
- » Back to the real world. Maybe our real world is in desperate need of a change in the way we think about ourselves. It seems as if we have an identity crisis on our hands. And our making it through the crisis is based on the choice of to whom we listen. Don't you think it is time we gave God a chance to tell us who we are to Him?

Thursday
CONNECTING

- » Read Luke 12:7.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Try to stump God! Ask Him a question about you that He doesn't know. Give it a try. He knows things you don't even know: how many hairs are on your head, what you are most afraid of, what you wish your friends liked about you, what you want your parents to be able to say about you, and so on. And what God thinks about you has everything to do with "who you are."
- » For professional ball players to become famous, they have to become the best at playing ball. For musicians to get noticed, they practice and practice and hope for someone to notice them. Sometimes they get it; most of the time they don't; but ultimately "who they are" is defined by what they can do.
- » Not so with God. Who you are is defined by what Jesus did. You have a legal and undisputed relationship to the King of the universe through His Son. You have rights as His child to live joyfully without fear, worry, or anxiety about anything, even death. You have the right to call upon God anytime for anything in Jesus' name.
- » You also have a responsibility to expand the family name beyond yourself. You have the responsibility to wear your family name proudly in the open. Think of it as a citizenship oath. Raise your hand and pledge allegiance to God.

Friday
APPLYING

- » Read 1 Peter 2:9.
- » If you think about the stories of your life, can you come up with a few incidents that have made the most impact on you for better or for worse (spiritually or emotionally)? Think of five to 10. Fill in a very short description of that event in one of the body parts in the person on the right. In the boxes that surround the figure place Bible passages from this lesson that you feel define you. Write a paraphrase of the verses, starting with the words "God says I am . . ."

Wednesday
BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Consider your identity, from God's point of view.
- » Read Psalm 139:13-18 (NIV) and answer the following questions.
 1. What phrase in Psalm 139:13-18 shows you what God thinks about you?

 2. Is there something in this text that tells you God is always with you?

- » What about our relationship, rights, and responsibilities? Read Paul's letter to the Ephesians 1:4-14, NIV, and answer the following questions.
 1. According to this passage, what is our relationship to God?

 2. Because of our relationship to God, what rights do we have?

 3. What are our responsibilities?

