

Unlock an Eternal Perspective With This Epiphany

A few months ago, a young woman I've known all her life looked at me and said, "What's that on your face?"

She's the bold, outspoken type, so her question didn't shock me, but I said, "What particular blemish are you talking about?"

"The hole in your cheek!"

"Oh, you mean the pockmark?"

Suddenly it dawned on her: *I just pointed out a pitted scar left by a pimple on my pastor's face.*

I chuckled and said, "It's okay, I embrace my flaws."

Awkward for her.

Not so much for me.

Why do we try to hide our imperfections? It's a great question.

Perhaps it's because we fear rejection. Maybe it's that we think more highly of ourselves than we ought. Of course, we could just be afraid of scaring small children.

Whatever the reason, there is a freedom that comes in our relationships when we know we are loved regardless of our flaws.

Frankly, at my age, you do one of two things when it comes to your appearance:

- Spend a lot of time and money on ways to hide your blemishes.

- Accept the reality that you are far from perfect and it's OK.

I choose to accept my imperfections.

One of my favorite Brennan Manning quotes is, "Be who you is, or you is who you ain't."

In other words, when we try to be something or somebody we are not, we compromise and lose who we truly are.

I have scars. Blemishes. Thinning, silver hair and a growing belly.

Of course, I bathe, shave, apply deodorant, floss and attempt to exercise and watch what I eat. By no means am I suggesting we just let ourselves go.

However . . .

No matter what I do, I still have scars, spots, warts and a pockmark or two. As long as I'm in this earth-suit, I must face the reality of an aging and less-than-perfect body (and mind).

It's been a long time since someone has called me eye candy.

Here's another shocker: I'm dying.

Every breath I take is one less I'll have in this frame.

Every second I experience is one less moment I'll have on this side of eternity.

And every compressed vertebra, lost or random added hair (I didn't know hair could grow on the outside of your nose) or other imperfection reminds me this is all temporary. This earth is not my home. This body is but a shell of the man I will become one day.

So I can worry about the temporary and waste an inordinate

amount of time and money trying to avoid the inevitable, or I can choose to live with eternity in mind.

I choose eternity.

Someone once said to me, "You Christians live with the delusion of a better life and of a better time to come when this is it; this is all there is."

I smiled and said, "It's not a delusion, it's hope. It's not escapism or about being distracted by the unpleasant realities of this life through fantasy. It's believing that Jesus meant it when he said, "I go and prepare a place for you," and it's a far better place.

You see, I'm not discouraged by my present realities. I'm not frustrated by my current imperfections. The old and rusty face I see in the mirror doesn't scare me.

Why?

Because I know I am loved, and that this life is not the end of the story.

I'm due for an upgrade someday. {eoa}

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