

# How the Identity Question, "Who am I?" Needs to be Answered by God, Not Us.

Saturday, July 27, 2024 at 8:00am 54min.

**Host: David Wheaton (00:08):**

How the Identity Question, "Who am I?" Needs to be Answered by God, Not Us. That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host.

The Christian Worldview is a listener supported radio ministry. Thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support and lifting us up in prayer. Our website is [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) and all our contact information and social media pages will be given throughout the program today. Some very significant events happened since last weekend's program. President Joe Biden, who posted on social media this statement earlier this month "Let me say this as clearly as I can. I'm the sitting president of the United States. I'm the nominee of the Democratic Party. I'm staying in the race. "

Well, that same Joe Biden just announced this week that he will finish his term, but he's dropping out of the presidential race. The reality is that he was leveraged out after his poor cognitive condition in the debate with Donald Trump became blatantly apparent with those in the Democrat party, realizing that he's no longer capable to do their bidding.

Kamala Harris, his vice president and even more of a far leftist who was the first sitting vice president or president to make an official visit to an abortion mill, Planned Parenthood right here in Minnesota, immediately consolidated support as the presumptive nominee for the Democrat party. We will examine who Kamala Harris is in an upcoming program.

Meanwhile, Kimberly Cheadle, the director of the US Secret Service, has resigned over giving poor and inadequate testimony before a congressional hearing about the assassination attempt on former President Trump. The FBI is directing the investigation of the Trump assassination, the same partisan FBI that raided Trump's home with authority to shoot to kill if necessary.

Now two weeks after the assassination attempt, there still have been no regular press updates on the incident and the news cycle has already moved on. We continue to believe what we said in last week's program that there are only two options. Either the Secret Service is unbelievably incompetent and negligent to allow a man with a rifle on a roof just 150 yards from Donald Trump, especially after having flagged and photographed the man as suspicious, having the man point his rifle at officers, having rally goers point out the man with a rifle on the roof and having plenty of time to remove Trump from the stage before shots were fired. The only other option, and we think the

likely one, is that this was intentionally allowed or orchestrated from within government to get rid of Trump. An additional detail has been released that the shooter flew a drone over the area the same day and some are saying through analysis of gunshot audio that there appears to be more than one rifle used in this attack.

Unfortunately, I'm not confident definitive truth about the details of this attempted assassination will ever come out. And finally, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gave a rousing speech to a joint session of the US Congress this week thanking the US for support in Israel's war against Hamas. He's likely quite concerned that US support will wane if Kamala Harris becomes president. She didn't even attend the speech after all because she was speaking at a sorority event in Indiana.

Now we could spend the entire program getting tied up in knots about the God rejecting men and women who create the chaos all around us, but instead we're going to look up at the immutable, holy and sovereign God and His truth. That is the anchor for us in this fallen world.

So what are the first things you would say to describe yourself? One person might answer, "I'm an American white male engineer." Another might say, "I identify as a trans-woman feminist." The question being asked, *Who am I?* is about identity. The answers most everyone will give to that question are based on self-perception, as if it's up to each one of us to determine who we are. While the question "Who am I?" naturally leads to personal, subjective answers, the far better question is "Who does God say that I am?" That question will lead to an objective, truthful answer with which we can align our thinking and living.

Our guest this weekend on the program is Martyn Iles, who has written a very insightful and perceptive new book entitled, *Who Am I? Solving the Identity Puzzle*. Previously the co-founder of a law firm specializing in religious freedom cases in Australia, Martyn is now the executive CEO of Answers in Genesis. He's a young man with a sharp biblical worldview. In the book, he lays out eight puzzle pieces that will ground one's identity in who God is and who He says we are, rather than the shifting sand of who we think we are or want to be.

We hope you gain from this important discussion about one of the big questions of life as to identity. Martyn's book, *Who am I? Solving the Identity Puzzle* is our new featured resource. We're going to tell you how you can order that today for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview.

Martyn, thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview Radio program today. This is the first time you've been on the program, so I thought it'd be interesting to ask you to tell us briefly about your background and how you became a follower of Christ.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (06:22):**

My background is one of being born in Australia into a Christian family where all the good things were happening that you would hope were happening in a Christian family. I was fortunate in that

regard. Went on to start a technology business, then went to university, studied and trained as an attorney, became an attorney in a commercial firm, then started a not-for-profit law firm in Australia that deals in religious freedom, freedom of speech type cases, the first of its kind in the country, still running today, and also became the CEO of an organization called Australian Christian Lobby, which was really a Christian voice in the political space. And the Lord opened many incredible doors to take the gospel into the public squares through media, grassroots campaigns, rallies, all that kind of thing. It was really awesome. Obviously before all of that happened, I was saved. I was a Christian and that really happened when I was very young.

I am one of these people who couldn't identify a date, but maybe there's about five or six candidate dates. I don't know what the date would be. But what I do know is that very young, God just graciously worked in my life, particularly at the age of only five or six to really convict me about sin. And that was something that really troubled me, bothered me. I would say it nearly drove me crazy until I found the answer in scripture, which first came through a verse in Jeremiah where God promises, "*If you seek me, you shall find me when you search for me with all your heart.*" And that gave me a real peace because I thought, well, that's a promise, so I'm going to do just that. And over the course of the next few years, I learned much about what the Lord had done about the gospel and about saving faith. And yeah, God did a work and He converted me. So that's my story.

**Host: David Wheaton (08:02):**

It's just as much of a miracle for a young boy like you to grow up in a Christian family, for God to save you, as it is for someone who has a more dramatic testimony of a life in sin and so forth. So we're grateful to hear that.

Who have been, Martyn, some of the key influences in your life? It sounds like your parents, but name some people who have really strongly influenced you, the way you think, the way you live.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (08:25):**

A number of them are people that wouldn't be known. So I was blessed to grow up in a Christian community where there was quite a number of very, very godly Christian men in leadership and they had a significant influence on me in their teaching and so on. So those are unnamed people. My father and mother obviously, especially dad, a huge, huge personal influence on me.

In terms of people that would be known, my name is Martyn and my middle name is Lloyd or one of my middle names is Lloyd, and those who know the name will associate it with a Welsh evangelical preacher, Martyn Lloyd Jones. He was active in London in the fifties, sixties, seventies, and really was one of the major evangelical voices in the world in that era. And so I was named after him. He's very famous for his series on Romans and his series on Ephesians and a book called *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* and another one called *Spiritual Depression*.

He was a medical doctor, assistant to the queen's physician, actually, and left it all behind to go into ministry and just left a mighty imprint for the gospel on the 20th century. A lot of the American evangelical figures were profoundly shaped and influenced by him, people from Tim Keller to John MacArthur and all that kind of thing.

So in Australia, one of the things Americans sometimes don't realize is that America exports many things. One of the biggest things you export is Bible teaching. So most Australians follow American Bible teachers and that's just the way that it is. The greats come out of this country at the moment. It used to be that they came out of the UK, but over the last 50 years or so it's been more the US and John MacArthur was somebody who was doing video and audio really early on the internet.

As a kid I came across his work when I was about 14 probably, and that was great because he just went line by line through the Bible and taught it and I learned a great deal from him. And then John MacArthur is sort of the "gateway drug" to lots of other people and you sort of find yourself into, like I mentioned, the Kellers of the world, the Alistair Beggs of the world, the Ligonier Ministries of the world, and the John Pipers of the world and so on. So many people who had online ministries over the last 20 years impacted me growing up. And besides that, a lot of older people like Martyn Lloyd Jones who have now passed away.

**Host: David Wheaton (10:46):**

Well, we're very familiar with who Martyn Lloyd Jones is and that's quite a name to live up to, being named after him.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (10:52):**

Tell me about it.

**Host: David Wheaton (10:55):**

Martyn Iles is our guest today. He's the executive CEO of Answers in Genesis. And we're going to get into your new book here, Martyn. Very, very good book. It's our new featured resource here on The Christian Worldview. It is titled, *Who Am I? Solving the Identity Puzzle*. I want to read from page eight early on in your book. You say, "Who am I? It's a question most people above a certain age never asked and never felt the need to answer. More recently, however, it's the concern that seems to be gripping an entire generation. It even comes in its own word - 'identity.' This once slightly obscure word is now the staple of everything from elementary school curriculum to political creeds across the Western world, prompting young minds to preoccupy themselves with this pressing new question - who am I?" Martyn, why has this become such a pressing question? You note that it's somewhat generationally changed now where it's this pressing question.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (11:57):**

So there's a few things going on. One is that it's a question that is put before young people in a way that it never was in the past. So there's that. Also, it is kind of a progression of a way of thinking that's been emerging for a long time where people's foundations, their foundations for how they

think about the world, their foundations for how they decide how to live, their foundations for working out what is right and wrong, they've changed.

There was a time in history when the foundation was effectively spiritual. It was, well, what does God say? What does God think? And people had that vertical view of things. It was like, well, let's look up to find the truth. And really the church was seen as the source of truth and the Bible was a source of truth.

Even in my discipline of law. We have a common law system in Australia inherited from England and the great English common lawyers like Sir William Blackstone and Edward Coke and people like this, they would say, The Bible is part of the laws of England because the law is from God and they actually wrote this in their work, so how far we've fallen.

So there was a time when that was the foundation to make all these decisions, to know how to live and how to think. Then in time we sort of secularized and the mystery of Ken Ham and Answers in Genesis where I'm now working, really exploded in that context and became so relevant in that context where secularization was the great creed of the day. It's sort of like "God is dead, there is no God." The new atheists like Richard Dawkins sort of, they were rock stars and it was all about, no, we just need reason, we just need natural science, we just need morality in terms of what we think is best to make people happy. We can work it all out.

Our foundation now is kind of like the truth that we discover in the world around us. That's how we decide what's right, what's true, what to do with our lives, how to live and so on. And it becomes a very purposeless existence because you're stuck just with this secular world. There's no God, there's nothing beyond it. You lose your purpose pretty quickly and that's what happened. And so of course that worldview wasn't going to hang around for much longer.

What happened next? People started to actually base their view of what is right and wrong, their view of the world, their view of how to live in how they feel in themselves. And you see that even in the legal world.

It goes from sort of law is from God to, oh, well law needs to be measured by what is true and scientific, but now it's like, well, no, the law should protect me as an individual and even down to my feelings, hate speech and all this kind of stuff because it's you and your feelings, which are the foundation for thought and action.

You could say, well, "I need to do what's right for me." You hear that phrase come up a lot and you see your grounding righteousness in yourself, how you *feel* about it. You go to a motivational speech at a university for example, and all the students will be there and the person will get up and it'll be very unusual if they don't say something like, well, you need to believe in yourself. This is how to succeed in life, believe in yourself. You need to basically have an attitude to yourself. And that

attitude is the secret to achieving anything at all. It's all about you. You are the foundation. And we do these personality tests and we do these career choice programs and we work out what's going to make us happy, what we should pursue, and it's all based on the self.

**Host: David Wheaton (15:07):**

So true Martyn, you can see this everywhere. So what has been the natural outworking of this with regard to identity?

**Guest: Martyn Iles (15:14):**

It's in this context that this kind of worldview about identity has exploded. Where people come along and say, you know what? If it's all about you, you need to actually work out who you are. It's kind of the secret to life. You need to understand your identity, you need to understand the things that make you, you.

And the activists and the political theorists and the pop culture people and the media, and all this, and the educators have all got in on the program and they're saying to young people, "Well, now you're a blank slate. It all comes down to how you feel about yourself and there's no limits. And you know what? You need to start thinking about your lusts and your passions and come up with a sexual orientation and you need to start thinking about how you feel about your, sort of, sense of self and come up with a gender identity. And that's got nothing to do with science. Oh, that's old stuff. We used to worry about science, but now it's actually just all about you and how you feel. And science is irrelevant. Biology doesn't matter. And it's not about what's good according to some higher principle like marriage and family and all that. No, no, no. It's all about you. It's about how you feel, your sexual orientation is up to you. And then think about your cultural background, your cultural heritage."

So they start to build this blueprint and that blueprint actually becomes sort of the compass by which they live their lives. Once they work out who they are, they know what's going to make them happy and see it becomes very self-interested. Once they work out who they are, they know how they should express themselves. If it is a sexual orientation, well they should pursue that. They should run after that.

If it is a gender identity, then they should pursue that and they should surround themselves with people who affirm them. See, it's all self-centered. It all comes from me. And the most extreme expression of this is in the movement we now know as the pride movement where we've actually crossed over some line where pride is no longer some terrible sin. It's now something to be sort of championed. It's like, yeah, well you should be full of pride because it's all about you and life is about you and you need to bring yourself out into the open and pursue it and indulge it right down to your lusts and you need to celebrate it and surround yourself with others who celebrate it. And so we've got a very narcissistic worldview. That's where we've arrived. It's in that context that the question, Who am I? becomes the biggest question a young person can ask and they're being told that.

And of course it turns them away from the ultimate truth, which is God. The Bible doesn't affirm those who believe in themselves, it affirms those who believe God. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. The Bible doesn't affirm those who love themselves and do this whole self-love mantra. The Bible affirms those who love God first, neighbor second, and themselves last. It's a worldview that has turned everything on its head from God first to me first.

It's actually immunizing a generation against the gospel because the gospel comes into the picture and says, well, who are you? You're actually a sinner. And they've got no tolerance for that kind of talk. That's hate speech. Who are you? Well, it's a negative answer to the question. You need a savior. Look to the cross of Jesus Christ. Who did he die for if you are so good, if you're so worthy, if you have to pursue yourself as a good foundation for how to live? In the book I do ask that question. The question I ask is, well, let's get back to basics. If life is all about self, if that's the blueprint, ask the question, is self good or bad? And then you'll know whether this is a good or bad view of life.

And the Bible of course is very clear that out of the heart flows wickedness, the heart is deceitful above all things, desperately wicked, who can know it? We're sinners in need of a savior. That's the piece that is being attacked by this worldview, which is all around us.

**Host: David Wheaton (18:41):**

That is so well said. That doesn't sound very self-loving to view yourself as a sinner, but that's exactly what the Bible says about us.

I want to let listeners know that *Who am I solving? The Identity Puzzle* is our new featured resource that you can order for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. We highly recommend this book. It's endorsed by Ken Ham, John MacArthur and Ray Comfort. It's 208 pages, hardcover, retails for \$19.99. For a limited time, you can order it for a donation of any amount by going to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org), calling toll-free 1-888-646-2233 or by writing to PO Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

We'll pause briefly for some ministry announcements. Stay tuned. Much more coming up on this issue of identity with Martyn Isles.

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Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton.

Be sure to visit our website, [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry. Our topic today is, How the Identity Question, "Who Am I?" Needs to Be Answered by God, Not Us. Our guest is Martyn Isles, the Executive CEO of Answers in Genesis and the author of a new book titled, *Who Am I?*



Martyn, you say on page 37, "Of course, this is the entire problem with the 'Who am I?' question. It provokes our natural instinct to look at ourselves. As we have seen, that's exactly the wrong move. In fact, what if I told you that you could never actually know yourself until you first understand who God is?" I think that's a very profound statement that this question of "Who am I?" as you've been discussing, is a worldview issue.

The answer to that question does not come from self-examination, looking at us and looking at our own personal perceived qualities or traits and so forth. But the answer to that question about, Who am I? Who am I as a person? What's my purpose? What's the meaning in life? All these things, how we see ourselves, the answer is not within us. The answer comes from outside of us. Explain that, Martyn,

**Guest: Martyn Iles ([23:11](#)):**

This is so important as you just read there. When you say, "Who am I?" You kind of want to look at yourself straight away. And what I'm saying is, No, flip the script. Don't do what the world is doing. Flip the script, look to God and ask Him the question. I point out in the book that before God tells us about anything at all, He starts with that line. This is the beginning of the Bible, right before He answers any of these questions about meaning and life and self. And He says in the beginning, God, He says, no, no, don't start with yourself. Don't start with even the world around you. Start with God because then you'll work out the truth about everything because He made everything.

In the book I go through sort of the pieces of the identity puzzle, which is to say, when you go to God's view and see what He says, you learn a bunch of truth which you can gather together and say, oh, this is what a human person is.

And the first is just so simple, but so important. It says in Genesis chapter one, verse 26, God says, "Let Us make man," and I cut the statement off there. I just say, take those few words, "Let Us make man," what does that tell you? It tells you you don't actually get to create yourself. It's not who am I? Oh, it's up to me. It's my feelings. No, no, no. You have been made by God. And that tells you that it's not actually about your truth, but there is The Truth which is bigger than you, which has a decisive impact on who you are. That's God's work. And so that's why you have to go to God for answers because He is the creator of you. You are not the creator of you.

And that deals with that sort of awful statement, "my truth", which is coming out more and more and more. Well, you don't have the truth. God has the truth because He's the creator. The whole book precedes then from that foundation to say, well, what has God said? It's interesting with each of the puzzle pieces, you can actually look at what God has said and you go, that's interesting. And then you look at creation the way things are and you go, huh? The two actually line up, like one of the puzzle pieces is male and female, right? Got male and female. He created them. Chapter one, verse 27. Well, is there evidence of that? Walk down the street? You're surrounded by evidence. So it all lines up with reality, but without that revelation from God, we're making it up for ourselves, interpreting it for ourselves based on our feelings and our feelings are sinful.



**Host: David Wheaton (25:27):**

Martyn Iles is our guest today here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. He's the executive CEO of Answers in Genesis. He's also the author of an excellent, highly recommended new book, *Who am I? Solving the Identity Puzzle*. You mentioned a couple of times here, these puzzle pieces that you go over in your book. You have eight of them in the book, *Who Am I?* Piece number one is that you're made, and number two, you're made to display God created man in His own image. We're going to talk about that now. Your eternal, made from dust, dominion, gender fallen, restored — you go over each of those words that helps us shape our identity from God's perspective, not from the way we perceive ourselves.

You say on page 57, “Mostly, when we hear people say that humans are made in God's image, we hear them say it as if that's the end of the story. It's not the end of the story. It may be better to put it this way: human beings were made to image God. Notice the subtle difference. We shouldn't just think about it as our status, we should think about it as our calling. It is a calling to be holy, righteous, and to know God. Every part of our lives and every faculty we possess is supposed to be applied to that end. That is how we start to live up to our purpose of bearing God's image. And this phrase, people will say, the more educated erudite will say the *imago dei*, or you're made in the image of God.” We know that line from scripture, but what does it actually mean? I think a significant portion of your book is devoted to understanding that we are made in the image and likeness of God and you explain it. Help us understand that better.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (27:14):**

In the world we live in today, I think sometimes people read that and they say, well, that makes me feel good. And they kind of leave it there. Oh, I'm made in God's image. Awesome. Well hang on, stop. What is the meaning of that? And the other thing that we've done is that we're sort of rushed to move on. We've sort of say, oh, well, we've made in God's image, great. That says something good about me. That means all these whatever menu of nice things I want to come up with. I've got some intrinsic worth. I'm this, I'm that. Okay, stop. Let's actually find out without making it up what it actually means. I make a very important distinction first, which is to say that this is indeed how man and woman were made. They were made perfectly imaging God. In other words, they were representing or reflecting something essential to who God is that was unique and special and that's what they were supposed to continue to do in the way that they were created.

You can see a great painting of somebody and you can look at it and go, oh, that's King Charles, or that's President Trump. But it isn't really President Trump or King Charles. It's their image. It's a picture of them. And so human beings reflected something of God that was that strong where angels could look and go, huh, I can see something of God in these human beings. They're not God, but there's something of God being reflected in them. And if you go to Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 3:10, you see there, there is a discussion of the concept of the image of the Creator and the likeness of God and the features that are singled out there are true *holiness*, true *righteousness* and *knowing God*. And that makes perfect sense because man and woman were made holy. They were made without sin. There was no sin in creation before the fall.

So they were not sinning against God. They were perfect and pure and righteous and right. Then of course the next one is righteousness, which sounds like the same thing. It's not quite. Righteousness has more to do with action. So they were not only sinless, but they were actually doing good. They were doing the right thing all the time. They were following God's will. They were following God's way. They weren't rebellious, they weren't going their own way, they weren't self-serving, they were serving God in their actions. And of course they knew God because without sin there's a perfect relationship and harmony. Now that's what we were made to be, to live up to. Later on in the book, I point out that that's been quite damaged, that image of God in the fall. It's not that there's not remnants of it there, people still resemble their form of glory in many ways.

People are capable of terrible things, but people are also capable of pretty awesome things as well. They're capable of finding all sorts of innovative and genius ways to do good and to serve higher interests. And they've got a nobility and a civilization about them. Very damaged, very patchy, often undermined, but it is there and you can see it. It's why you regard a human above an animal instinctively, because there's something noble about them, something rational about them, something great about them. And we're supposed to use our greatness, our rational thoughts, our ability to relate to others, our spiritual faculties, ability to know God. We're supposed to use all of those things to be holy and righteous, basically, and to come to a knowledge of God. And that's what it means to be made in God's image. But though it is now damaged, it's still the calling on our life, though. It is still there, this is the thing for which human beings were made. And that truth endures to this day. I won't spoil anything, but the book kind of continues and it ends up revealing how we're able to do that post fall, how we're able to be restored to that for which we were made that image of God.

**Host: David Wheaton (30:52):**

That's a very worthwhile part of this book, *Who am I? Solving the Identity Puzzle*, is understanding more deeply what that means that we're made in the image and likeness of God. Doesn't mean that we are God, but as you just described, there are things about us, the way God made us uniquely and specifically apart from everything else He created that represents in the image and likeness of Him and what that means for our lives.

Martyn Iles is our guest today, the Executive CEO of Answers in Genesis and the author of this book we're discussing. In puzzle piece number four in your book, Martyn, you talk about just broadly how God-rejecting man redefines what God has designed. You give examples of this within the issue of sexuality, the current issue of critical race theory, climate change, feminism. Maybe just pick one or two of those and tell us what you mean by that. How this sense of identity and who we are and we're trying to define ourselves and how we should live apart from God, how it manifests out in one or two of those issues you bring up in the book.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (32:00):**

So this is, I think, a really crucial part of the book in terms of its context. That is the other side of the coin to the image of God. Whilst we were made to image God, and that's a great and a glorious

high calling, you can't forget that a few verses later, Genesis 2:7, it also reminds us that we've been made from the dust of the ground and that reminds us that though we are made to image God, we are not God, we're not the Creator. We're the creature. We're made from the stuff that makes creation, the dust. We are in a sense, we're all dust. Dust is compiled of atoms, humans are compiled of atoms. God can reorganize his atoms into whatever He wants, and that's how we came into being. So we are made from the dust and that's the humbling part of this truth, to remind us that we are not gods and we can never be gods.

There's things about God, like His power and His eternity and all this that we can never hope to image or reflect. I point out, however, that it's an obvious truth that our world needs to hear today because one of the sins of our day is sort of a sin of pride and a sin of arrogance against God to try and sit on the Creator's throne, to arrogate to ourselves, the Creator's power. That explains so many of the social issues today.

Let me give an example, give a really obvious one to start with, which is the gender issue. So God has made them male and female. That's His act of creation power as the Creator. And we read that in Genesis and we look at our world and we go, well, that's the truth and that's part of creation. That's by God's authority and God's design.

But you see in today's world what people want to do is they kind of want to wrestle that authority off God and say, well, you might've done that, but I want to do it my way and I actually want to do it my way so much that I almost want to sit in the seat of the Creator now and I want to say, no, I'm not a man, I'm a woman and I want to recreate, redesign what you've already created and designed. Or I want to come up with gender categories that have nothing to do with male and female. I want to write new rules or I want to come up with categories that are sort of animal in their identity and cross species together. And that's just a really obvious example of this sin of pride, this rebellion against our status as creatures, not creators that we see today. Romans one would give the example of sexuality as it's against nature.

In other words, it's against the way things are made. Same problem where there is a blueprint in our anatomy that shows us quite obviously that we are designed for heterosexual relations. But of course people look at that and they say, well, but I feel, but I want. I don't care what the Creator has done. Obvious though it is I want to rule with the Creator's authority and take over in that area and come up with new sexual orientations and use my body how I please. So those are two clear examples we can see as well.

It's relevant to the issue of life in the womb. Who gets to say what a life is and when a life is a life? Well, today we think and say that depending how we feel about it. Is it wanted, is it not wanted by its mother? Well, that answers the question. No, it doesn't. God has answered the question. We're not the creator of that life. God has created that life.

It's the same in the race politics thing, creating divisions which are not there in God's creation design. There's one human race in God's creation design. And so the barriers between us are not

the kinds of barriers that the critical race theorists would say are there. It's not true. It's not part of creation. We're trying to redraw these creation boundaries. Yeah, it's the same in so many. And in the book I go through a whole host of social issues which are creeping up in this generation which are sins of pride.

And we'd do well to remember we're the creature, not the Creator. We're humans, we're not gods. And actually the human is supposed to be submitted to their gods and it's best for the creature to hear from the Creator what He has made and what He has done and to live accordingly.

**Host: David Wheaton (35:58):**

Martyn Isles is the Executive CEO of Answers in Genesis and the author of the book we're discussing, *Who am I? Solving the Identity Puzzle*, is our guest.

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We have much more coming up with Martyn Isles after this short break for some ministry announcements. I'm David Wheaton and you are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio program.

**Host: David Wheaton(38:56):**

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry.

Our topic today is how the identity question, "Who am I?" needs to be answered by God, not us. Our guest is Martyn Isles, the executive CEO of Answers in Genesis and the author of a new book titled, *Who Am I?*

Martyn, you write on page 114, following up what you just said about identity specifically with regards to gender, "The basic problem we face today is not a denial of biological sex as a concept. Rather, the problem we face today is what you call the "so what?" problem. This problem arises when a person admits they are biologically male or female, but so what? Biology is one thing, but how I feel and what I want is another thing entirely. Why shouldn't that matter? Why shouldn't it be the most important thing? Why isn't that my true gender? "

This thinking is everywhere, I think, just to go a little deeper into this, because it's such a major issue today in the educational system with parents, it's everywhere now, they'll say that sex is different than gender. Sex is how you were physically born. It's your physical biology. But gender can be different. It's how you feel, whether you feel yourself to be male or female or something different or in between or neither of the above. Explain how to, to use a strong word, demolish, that notion that somehow our gender can be different than the sex that God made us.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (40:44):**

The gender is considered to be the main truth, right? So your biological sex, sure, we can admit that and they do admit that now, but it is, so what? In other words, how I feel is this different and that's actually the more important thing. So it goes back to what I was saying, which is where your feelings are actually more true than truth itself. And that's the real problem we face in this generation where the subjective, the sense of feeling is more true than the truth itself.

Of course, the problem is that it doesn't matter how you feel, you can't change the biological reality in which you are living. And there's lots of ways to show that from the chromosomes in your cell to the bone structure to all the rest of it. And that's all there.

But see, it's interesting. One of the other things we know, and this has really become very well known in more recent times and sort of had a bit of a renaissance in the public square, is the fact that men and women are not just physically different. You know people say, what is a woman? Well, it's an adult human female. So a woman is just the sum of her biological pieces. Is that it? Or is there something more? Is there something about a woman's innate wiring? Is there something about her psychology? Is there something deeper than just the physical that defines a woman? And we now know that yes, there is.

Actually men and women are different. And of course it's always a bell curve, but they are different. They have different ways of thinking, they have different ways of approaching things. They have different strengths and weaknesses. And that's really interesting because those strengths and weaknesses and differences which are now becoming really well highlighted in the psychological literature, they accord perfectly with what the Scriptures say God has designed men and women for.

So it's not just a biological difference and therefore the ability of procreation comes out of that, but there's something else as well. And in the book I point out that we've sort of ignored the deeper differences of men and women for a very long time, it sort of predates the transgender debate where we've sort of forgotten that God designed a man at a certain time with a certain state of intent and gave him a certain mission and then He went, Hmm, something's missing. I need a woman in this equation because the man needs her and she will need him. And also she will be made just in a slightly different way with a slightly different, well, a shared purpose, but also a slightly different emphasis of purpose as well.

And so similarities and differences come out. I just point out in Genesis chapter two that when the man is made, he is given a job and the job is described in two words, and it is to work and to keep, which really means to labor in service, that's the meaning of the word. So to serve a higher purpose in labor, in mission, in the world, but also it means to keep. The Hebrew is to sort of guard, protect and fortress. So to be one who is responsible for the integrity and the wellbeing of the thing that God has given him. And for Adam, it was a family and a garden. And I just point out that for many a modern man, it's a family and a garden, nothing's changed. There's an area of responsibility that God has given.

But particularly Adam's responsibility was first spiritual. And I point out how that though Eve ate first, Adam is held accountable and responsible for the fall because he is the spiritually responsible person in that context. He had a responsibility to ensure that the Word of God was applied in his area of responsibility. And so I point that out about men, and I say God has sort of kept that blueprint down through the Scriptures and down through the ages, and it accords for the psychological wiring of men who need a purpose, who need a mission that's out there in the world, who want to be strong, who want to be guardians.

Men just have this in them. It's just the way they are. Well surprise. It accords with what God has designed them for. Then on the female side, I do something which is so lost these days where I say, look, God makes a woman. There's two words in relation to her as well, which is that God says, well, she's a helper. And then she's also called a mother. I say there's two great commissions for women, and this is why women have this incredible interpersonal antenna that men often don't have in the same way. And it's coming out more and more, this sort of the blunt and generalized statement of it is that women have an interest in people, men have an interest in things. That's kind of the shades of difference you see in our makeup. Why would that be? Well, the woman was made with a mission towards other people, children, the husband, so on, to make others strong, to render them strength and aid and help, and that's the meaning of that word.

And so it's a very beautiful role which women are sort of predisposed towards. In today's world we just tear it to pieces. We say, no, no, no, you don't need other people. It's all about you. It's all about the greatness of yourself. It's all about self-power. It's all about being alone and needing nothing and having a singular and self-interested purpose. Well, that's not going to do well with the psychology of women long term because that's not actually the basic wiring that God gave them. And then of course, I point to the fact that God made His first promise of a gospel by talking about the fact that a mother would have a child. And I said, God regards the role of the mother as one of the highest callings in all of creation. And if you do a bit of research through the Bible, it's really a mother's prayers and a mother's child that changes the course of history over and over again in God's purposes.

Of course, it was God who chose the Savior of the world would be born of a woman when the fullness of time was come. And I talk about how Satan has attacked that truth from everything from the obvious stuff like abortion to the subtle stuff like feminism and family breakdown and everything. His attacks on that are probably because of the gospel, because it was a weakened powerless mother and the Savior who was born from her that destroyed him. So he's probably got quite a

grudge against that and therefore despises motherhood. But God has actually called it very precious, and we'd do well not to forget that because it's part of our wiring and design.

**Host: David Wheaton (46:53):**

This was a particularly strong part of your book, *Who Am I?* as you get into, not just, oh, men be masculine and women be feminine. What does that actually mean according to what God established in the very beginning? This was very helpful as you really go deeper into that. I really encourage listeners to get this book because it makes some really important distinctions.

We know the world's gone off the deep end on all this, but within the church, Christian men and women need to understand the lie that we're being sold even within the church unfortunately, and how to get back on track to God's design.

Martyn Iles is our guest today here on The Christian Worldview, the Executive CEO of Answers in Genesis and the author of the book we're discussing. Martyn, the last question for you has to deal with puzzle piece number eight. This one with regard to restoring our identity according to the way God designed us and sees us. This one's titled "Restored", and this has to do with the gospel. As we close today, explain the gospel as you do in this chapter and how it restores a sinner to a right relationship and having a right identity before God.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (48:07):**

This is why I wrote the book. I wanted to take the philosophy of the day and the issue of the day, and I wanted to say, all right, let's address it. And in addressing it, I really, really did want to make sure that the gospel was presented not as an add-on, but as an intrinsic part of the answer. It is the only answer, really, today. I point out how there's three images in scripture. There's the image of God in which we were created to bear. But then of course there's something which is articulated in Romans 5, 1 Corinthians 15 and Genesis 5, which is the image and likeness of Adam and all of Adam's offspring, which is all of us are born bearing his image also. That image according to Romans 5, contains two things that the image of God never contained. Sin and death.

We are sinners. We do not do the right thing even if we want to. We don't live up to God's standard. We don't even live up to our own standard. Death. We are dying. And actually it's an eternal death. We are destined for separation from God eternally. And that's the great tragedy of the human race, which has endured through generations, is that without God, we are sinners going to hell. And despite the resemblance of our former glory that sort of shines through, we're not in relationship to God the way that we were supposed to be.

And then the third image comes in. So image of God, image of Adam, okay, now you're in a position of tragedy. But then of course if you do a word search for image of God or likeness of God in the Bible, you will find that there's a lot of references in the New Testament, and most of them, in fact, nearly all of them don't refer to us as humans.



They actually refer to Jesus Christ. He is the image of the invisible God. Colossians chapter 1 talks about the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians chapter 4:7, or it might be verse 8. Then of course Hebrews 1, the brightness of His glory, the exact image of His person. So Jesus is actually like the glory of God, the holiness and righteousness of God in human flesh when He came. Once again, He was like all that Adam was meant to be and more, right? So He has the image that we lost. He's got it. But He's actually got more than that. He actually has victory over the sin that's in Adam's image. He suffered and died for our sin. He has the answer to that. He can actually take the eternal penalty for that on himself.

So sin is dealt with. He also has the victory over death. I think it's CS Lewis who says he blew straight through the back of death and came out the other side. And because He has done that, He now turns to us and says, actually in the salvation that I offer, you can follow too. So He has the victory over sin, the victory over death, as well as all the good things that we need from the image of God. So He is kind of the whole package.

And it's in Christ when we turn to Him, repenting of that sin in which we've fallen, and trusting in Him for those victories and all that we need for relationship with God that was lost. It is in Him that we have the answer to all our need. And so when we say, Who am I? We actually need to be saying, well, fine. We need to actually ask first who is God? And then when we find Him in Jesus Christ, which is how He has revealed Himself to us and spoken to us, Hebrews chapter 1 that answers the question.

Once we know that, actually, everything else just naturally falls into place. So the answer to this whole, "Who am I?" question, the counterfeit answer is, it's my feelings. The true and glorious and fantastic answer is, well, the answer is actually bound up in Jesus Christ who restores us to God.

**Host: David Wheaton (51:46):**

That's so well said, and I'm so glad that wasn't just an add-on to your book, "Who Am I?" But that was an important intrinsic part, and it's really like you just mentioned, that is the answer to the question. That's how God restores us, a sinner to Himself, and we can truly live in the identity that God created us to be. Thank you for writing this book and coming on The Christian Worldview Radio program today. All of God's best and grace to you.

**Guest: Martyn Iles (52:11):**

It's been my pleasure. God bless you, too. And your listeners.

**Host: David Wheaton (52:14):**

I love how he concluded that Jesus Christ forever changes our identity. When you repent of your sin and trust in Christ's atoning work on your behalf, you can see yourself as God does. Forgiven, righteous, and His child for eternity.

To find out how you can be born again, go to [TheChristianWorldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) and click on the page, "What Must I do to Be Saved?"

One final reminder that you can order, *Who Am I?* by Martyn Isles for a donation of any amount, just get in touch with us. Our information is given immediately following today's program. Thank you for joining us today and for your support of The Christian Worldview Radio Ministry. Until next time, Think biblically, live accordingly and stand firm!

The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end.

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