

True Self vs False Self

A major theme in Paul's writings is that there are two selves competing for manifestation and leadership in our lives.

In Ephesians, Paul refers to this dichotomy as the old self and versus new self.

“that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the OLD SELF, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴and put on the NEW SELF, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.” (Ephesians 4:22-24)

The old self is the false self.

The new self is the true self.

In Galatians, Paul refers to this dichotomy as the flesh versus the Spirit.

“¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.” (Galatians 5:16-17)

The flesh is the false self.

The Spirit is the true self.

The Christian journey is about deconstructing the false self and discovering the true self.

We want to be then thinking, acting, and living from the true self verses the false self.

Deconstructing the False Self:

“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (Galatians 5:16)

Discovering the True Self:

“Christ lives in me...” (Galatians 2:20)

- The true self is Jesus in you.
 - The false self is unlike Jesus in character and motivation.
- “Whatever is not in Christ, Paul calls the flesh” - John Calvin.***

- The true self is your essence.
- The false self is your ego.

Our essence was created by the Spirit of God.

“...Created in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:20)

Our ego was created by this fallen world and our fallen nature.

It's not the product of the Spirit of God. It's the product of humanity's independence from God.

The false self is not from God so cannot be godly.

It can be productive, but not godly.

Successful, but not humble.

- The true self is who you are before God.
- The false self is who you are trying to become before people.

- **The true self is timeless.**
- **The false self is always altering.**

- **The true self is in a state of rest.**
- **The false self is restlessly needing to prove and protect itself.**

The true self rests in the reality that I am the beloved.

- The true self is realizing the depths, heights, and breadths of God's love.
- **“And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” (Galatians 4:6)**
- You only said “Abba” when you know who you affectionately loved. It's not “Father”.
- This is not something the false self is capable of perceiving or praying.

The false self is a serious contributor to our misery, anxiety, and suffering.

- The false self is asking the questions, “What do they all think about me?”
- It's like a broken record that false self is often replaying in their heads is what you hope or fear people are saying about you.
- The two channels the false self is tuned into be:
 - I hope they be saying network...
 - I fear they be saying network....

The true self is our eternal identity, so it's stabilizing and fixed.

The false self is always on a rollercoaster, always building on shifting sand.

- **The true self is content.**
- **The false self is insatiable.**

The true self seems to find contentment, even in the storm.

Jesus sleeping through the storm on the boat, was a picture of Him manifesting the true self.

The false self is always saying, “It’s not enough. I need something more, something else, something different, something bigger...”

- **The true self doesn’t need to perform.**
- **The false self needs to be impressive.**

In the wilderness, Satan took Jesus and told him to jump off the pinnacle of the temple to be rescued by the angels. (I don’t know if it was a snake talking to Jesus in the wilderness, I would think it was more of a battle of the mind. We don’t read Satan appeared in bodily form, but there was an interface, perhaps an inner war, not uncommon to us.)

Jesus, Mr. True Self, declined the pressure to be impressive, while this compelling voice is telling him he needs to be show off what he can do.

Since Jesus refused to be controlled by the compelling pressure to be impressive, he was able to have impact on the world from a heart of love. His ministry was not a demonstration of the false self, but the manifestation of the true self.

- **The true self is influenced by God’s heart.**
- **The false self is influenced by the social pressures.**

- **The true self is generally at peace.**
- **The false self needs to be impressive.**

That’s why peace is the fruit of the Spirit (or the true self) (Galatians 5:22). The false self needs to one-up someone, out-do someone, get revenge on someone, and prove someone wrong.

“But if you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out, or you will be consumed by each other.” (Galatians 5:15)

The Corinthian church was competing for religious elitism. The false self is exclusive because of a superiority complex. “I’m from this group...” “I’m from that stream...” Paul said they were manifesting the false self and needed to grow up.

“For when one might say, “I indeed am of Paul,” but another, “I of Apollos,” are you not fleshly?” (1 Corinthians 3:4)

Paul said that when they were hearing the message of God’s grace, they treated him like He was Jesus, like an angel, even though he had a disturbing illness on the outside.

“But even though my condition tempted you to reject me, you did not despise me or turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus himself.” (Galatians 4:14)

When they stopped hearing about God’s grace and just God’s laws- they then saw Paul as an enemy.

“Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16)

- The message of grace (Gospel) feeds the true self.
- The message of religiosity (Law alone) feeds the false self.
- The false self likes to see people as enemies. They creates sides.

- The true self sees people through the eyes of Jesus, and even as Jesus.

Stephen being stoned manifested the true self (Acts 7:59), had the face of an angel.

Paul lashed out against the high priest who slapped him, which he to apologize for after, that was the false self manifesting. (Acts 23:5)

- **True unity comes from the true self.**
- **Divisions come from the false self.**

True joy comes from deconstructing the false self to discovering the true self.

One devotional writer said that new mothers are the happiest people in the world, even though they are the most spent, because they are able to love unconditionally, maybe for the first time in their lives. They are tapping into the life God intended. Perhaps moving away from the false self.

The best things in life seem to be hidden.

- The orange is hidden in the peel.
- The diamonds are hidden in the rubble.
- The pearl is hidden in the shell.
- The oil is hidden in the earth.
- The springs are hidden in the ground.
- The true self is hidden in the false self.

Peel off the false self.

Separate false self from true self.

We want to dig for the true self.

We want to tap into the true self

“My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you” (Galatians 4:19)

Christ already lives within.

Just need Him to come forth.

We need to deconstruct the false self.

We need to discover and manifest the true self.

How does the true self emerge?

1) Pain

Gold gets separated from the rubble, when put in fire.

Gold is not refined in 70 degree weather in Redondo Beach.

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:2-4)

In the difficulties of life, the trials and tribulations, we are able to separate the false self from the true self and the true self emerges. Through difficult times and seasons, the false self is exposed and you become disgusted with the false self.

(NUT PICTURE)

2) Revelation

St. Teresa of Avila said that she was able to see her false self like vile snakes, and they made her run into the castle, which was her true self.

So we need to get disgusted with our false self, to run into our true self.

As long as we enjoy the snakes of our own ego, we will be sleeping with them.

There are a myriad of things that can be used to help us to deconstruct the false self and discover the true self.

- **Mediation.**
- **Church gathering.**
- **Study.**
- **Divine encounter.**
- **Failures.**
- **Loss.**
- **Persecution.**
- **Solitude.**

The true self is always godly.

The false self can be either worldly or religious.

The ego will compete with others in worldly arenas (jobs, houses, cars, bank account).

The ego will compete with others in religious arenas (prayer life, doctrine, spiritual gifts, knowledge, fruit.).

Remember, someone can be religious without being godly.

- **The false self is obsessed with power.**
- **The true self is compelled by love.**

In church life, the false self can make people want the spotlight, platform, and attention. Or make them even shy away from it.

- The first group want the attention because they love the sense of power, and their ego has something to prove.
- The second group is so afraid of failing and their ego has something to protect.

But when the Spirit came upon the early followers of Jesus, they became bold. The Spirit empowers us to be our true selves.

The true self is bold.

The false self is anxious.

The true self is freeing.

The false self is enslaving.

It's exhausting to live out of the false self because it's the artificial self.

It's freeing to live from the true self because that's the authentic self.

The true self is truly free. Free to love. Free to just be. Free to rest. Free to be godly.

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1)

The false self will always lead into bondage.

Destructive habits.

Enslaved by others.

Dictated by things.

- **The true self is fulfilling.**
- **The false self is emptying.**

Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes, "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless." (Ecclesiastes 1:2)

Solomon lived as a successful politician, he was well liked by people, his wives, and surrounding nations, but he felt so empty inside.

Living from and for the false self only- will not satisfy the soul, but leave you famished inside.

The ego will eventually lead you to emptiness.

When we see can see this, we realize we need a new operating system- and we can begin to live out of the true self. We live for higher purposes and deeper fulfillment.

"When you lose your life for my sake, you will find it..." (Matthew 10:39)

How much of what we THINK ABOUT is from the false self versus the true self?

How much of what we DO is from the false self versus the true self?