

**Cody Boyd: 5/27/21**  
**“Fearfully & Wonderfully Made”**

For the past month or so, I've been attending Church Under the Bridge on Sunday afternoons. It's a church and homeless outreach ministry that meets weekly under the Oklahoma City Blvd. bridge over Virginia Ave., just west of downtown Oklahoma City. Each week, the service is hosted by different metro area churches who also serve a meal to the 150 or so folks who attend.

The first time I attended, the sermon was about Jesus' healing of a man who cannot walk in John 5. The speaker mentioned that the original translation would not have read “lame man” because the Hebrew language places adjectives after nouns. Jesus' encounter hints at this, since He sees the man and immediately says “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” Jesus' ministry was full of encounters like this, in which He saw and acknowledged the person, not the illness, disability, or circumstance.

Interestingly, in the world of social services and advocacy, there is a growing push to use the phrase “individual experiencing homelessness” rather than referring to a “homeless man” or “homeless woman.” This isn't some hollow effort to paint over a dire situation with sterile words. Rather, it's an intentional way of speaking that affirms the person first and foremost instead of defining them by their circumstances.

How much of our worldly identity is defined by such adjectives? A depressed man. A single mother. A low-income worker. A troubled teenager. An addict. A broken family. Does God define us this way? No! God sees each and every one of us for exactly what we are to Him – a beautiful and most-loved creation, made in His image.

For so long, I thought this meant we were physically like God, with two arms, two legs, two eyes, a mouth, etc. I think it's probably more about who we are. Humans are favored among all of His creation with the ability to reason, to think, to feel love and joy, to have hopes and dreams, and to commune with Him.

You are more than any adjective that you or the world uses to define you. The Maker of the universe looks on you with so much love and joy as his favorite creation – fearfully and wonderfully made.