

# 1. Be Iconic

*Genesis 1:26-27*

Pearl has been awake a while. Time of the day makes little difference to her. Her radio is her main form of company and she's glad it's a twenty-four-hour service nowadays.

This morning she listens to an audio recording of the Sunday service from the church she used to attend faithfully but now seldom visits. She listens regularly to the recording and sometimes she even sings along with the hymns.

The preacher this particular morning is passionate about the fact that we serve a missionary God. He challenges and commissions his congregation to go out in God's power to the four corners of the world.

A tear forms in Pearl's eye. She can only just manage to reach the four corners of her sheltered accommodation. Every week Christianity feels more and more like a whole list of things she will never manage to do. She pauses the sermon and feels more alone and incapacitated than ever...

Pearl wipes the tear from her eye. She may not be much practical use to anyone these days, but she thanks God for loving her so much.

She doesn't know it, but one of the teenagers with whom she often chatted after church services has chosen Pearl as her role model in life. Lauren said, "I love Pearl. She really seems to care about me and is so positive about everything, even though she has a lot of pain and troubles in her own life."

Pearl's home help also knew there was something different about Pearl. Shirley said, "Many of the people I work with treat me like a resented personal slave. Pearl treated me like a real person. Nobody had ever offered to pray for me before, and as I asked her about her faith, I knew she was telling the truth. It shone out of her face. It was because of Pearl I became a Christian." (pp. 13, 17)

*"Being iconic means we understand our fundamental identity as representatives of God. This identity involves how we see ourselves, how we relate to God and how we relate to other people... Being iconic means treating every other person we come across with the same value, grace and dignity as God shows us, refusing to measure their worth by their economic or social contribution to society. Being iconic means becoming more secure that we, and others, are intrinsically and infinitely valuable. Being iconic is not something we can earn of by or achieve. It is an unchangeable status that we can appreciate and enjoy, and affirm in everything we are and do and say, ensuring that others around us know this truth too." p16-17*

**BE: What difference should knowing that we are made in God's image make to the way we view ourselves?**

**SAY: What would you say to Pearl if she came to you feeling low because she felt too incapacitated to do anything for God? How is everything we do and say affected by the way we view ourselves? Talk about some of the things you have done and said today and what they reveal about your identity.**

**DO: How will we treat others around us differently because of what we have reflected on today?**