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Viewpoints

Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.

Freedom From Groupthink ~ February 25, 2016

Jesus frees us from the psychological bent that killed a little dolphin.

[Online Version & Archive](#)

Tourists at a beach in Argentina did something sad. Critics who heard what happened at the Santa Teresita resort in Buenos Aires were so angered, they've described the tourists with terms like "morons" and "a waste of oxygen."

Two cute, small Franciscan dolphins were spotted in the waters of the beach. Instead of swimmers guiding the gentle creatures into deeper water, people picked them out of the water. The beach-goers passed them around so they could take selfies and videos. At least one of the dolphins died and was left lifeless on the hot sand.



clickorlando.com/news/baby-dolphin-dies

But before you and I join in an emotional response that slings words like "morons" let's analyze this sad situation using logic and reason. The little dolphin was killed because of a psychological situation called deindividuation.

When deindividuation occurs, people in a group lose connection to their individual identity and assume the identity of the crowd. Being one in a crowd offers anonymity that masks and hides personal identity. And personal responsibility is diffused among the many, numbing one's awareness of accountability. In other words, selfishness mushrooms into ugly groupthink.* And the larger the crowd is, the more these groupthink factors increase.

I doubt that anyone individually thought, "I want to kill this cute, little dolphin!" Instead, someone's foolish idea to play with the dolphin – an action that of itself probably would not have harmed the dolphin – gathered a crowd. Deindividuation erupted. In the flash of the moment, parents and kids found themselves swept up in the excitement and snapping selfies, because they didn't want to miss out on what everyone else was doing.

But there was at least one person who knew better. She told people to stop. She reasoned with them explaining that they were hurting the dolphin. It didn't work because she was only one. But good for her! She stood strong in her personal identity and integrity.

Perhaps that brave lady was a Christian of strong faith? At any rate, she serves as an example of what it means to be anchored to one's personal identity... especially when that identity is anchored to heaven.

As believers in Jesus, we have an identity that's been forged at Skull Hill. This is where God's Son went to the cross to pay the price to forgive our sins. And through the faith that believes this is true, we're adopted into God's forever family. **"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ"** (Galatians 3:26,27). Look into the mirror of Christ's death, and you see a sibling of Jesus, an heir of heaven. Look some more, and you also see a prophet, priest and king—offices that make titles like PhD, CEO or POTUS blush in embarrassment.

Through your new identity as a child of God, you have the strength to stand against the deindividuation that used and abused a little dolphin to death. Even more, you have the strength to stand against the deindividuation that Satan uses to suck so many people into the "every does it" ungodly behaviors that abuse lives and souls, leaving them to rot on the sands of hell.

Perhaps, if you and I and a few other believers were at that beach, we could have saved that dolphin's life. But what's not hypothetical is that all of us who have our identity in Christ are left here on earth to reach out to those caught up in the "every does it" ungodly behaviors of deindividuation. †

* Similar to deindividuation, groupthink occurs when a group makes faulty decisions because group pressures lead to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment.

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Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz

