

## Living out Our Identity

### 1. Review

- a. We must know who we are in order to live out what we are meant to be.
  - i. If you believe you are nothing more than a higher animal, you will live like it. Thus, the danger of the lie of evolution. If man is nothing more than an animal, then he will act like one. There are no constraints to his behavior.
  - ii. Last week I shared the story of the movie “Overboard” in which Goldie Hawn, a wealthy socialite who suffers from amnesia is convinced by a Yahoo that she is the mother of 4 young swamp boys from the Louisiana Bayou. The moral of the story is that if you don’t know who you are, you can be convinced you are something you are not.
- b. I have shared with you what God created us to be. Men and women who were created in the IMAGE and LIKENESS of God.
  - i. We were to so closely resemble God that when people see us they see the Father (God). Does that sound familiar? It is what Jesus said, “*If you have seen me you have seen the Father.*” (Jn 14:9)
  - ii. Jesus was able to say this because He was the perfect Man, unmarred by sin (unlike us before we met Christ).
  - iii. But the goal of the Redemption of Mankind and the establishment of the Kingdom of God was to bring mankind back into their original identity and relationship with Father God. **God wants to hear people say about His children,** “*I see the Father when I look at you.*”
    1. If you think about some men and women of God like Mother Theresa – do you think people saw the love of God in her? Of course. When they saw her, they saw the Father(’s love).
    2. So the image and likeness of God is our identity that God intended...for us to resemble Him.
    3. Why? Because God created us to reflect His glory. It is the reason we exist. You and I don’t exist for ourselves, our own happiness or even our own pleasure. We exist for God.

### 2. Why don’t our lives don’t reflect this God Image Identity?

- a. In order to reflect God you must first be Born again. You must be spiritually reborn. Unless that is the case, you carry only the fallen nature within you. When you are “born again” your old IDENTITY DIES and you receive a brand new Identity, that of Christ in You.
- b. Still, we struggle with this truth. When I became a Christian, I kind of expected to “poof” be perfect? Wow, was I in for a surprise. If anything, I found out quickly how big my flaws were, as well as my weaknesses and my tendency to pursue selfish agendas.
- c. And when I have sought to live out my new identity, if found out my “self-talk” was defeating me. **In fact, I had a battle with self talk all week long this week!**
  - i. You know about “self-talk” right? That’s where you talk to yourself?
  - ii. Anyone here NEVER talk to yourself?
  - iii. Ok, now that everyone has admitted to being human...self talk is the chit chat you do with yourself when you aren’t even paying attention. Like when you hit your thumb with a hammer and after those choice words come out of your mouth...it is what follows. Stuff like, “You dummy, how could you be so stupid to hit your thumb!” **I know when I nearly sliced my thumb off a few years back and I’m holding the wound closed, the only words I could say was, “STUPID, STUPID STUPID!”** Yes, my actions were stupid but I wasn’t stupid. But yet I called myself STUPID as I aligned myself with a false identity.
  - iv. I sometimes think that self-talk is the strongest evidence of the existence of the devil.
- d. **Self talk really is “negative faith”** in its worst manifestation.

- i. The kind of talk like, “you don’t deserve that” or “they will reject you” or “you won’t get that promotion.”
  - ii. I personally believe that “**Self-talk is evidence of how you truly see yourself.**”
  - iii. Last week, we read a scripture that said, “*as a man thinks in his heart, so he is.*” (Proverbs 23:7)
    1. The words we speak from our lips go straight to the core of our being, to the very depths of our soul. They influence how we feel, how we think and how we act!
    - 2.
    3. When you believe life simply isn’t worth living, and your life truly stinks, your self talk will present reasons to validate your claim. What you say to yourself, when no one else can hear you, has major impact on who you are. Sooner or later, that image you have of yourself will be evident.
  - iv. As a youngster, I grew frustrated when I didn’t perform well, like when I struck out or muffed a catch while playing ball. While competitive play is important, my inner voice echoed the words of the better coordinated kids, “Higgins, you’re a spaz.”
    1. By the time I was an adult, I had a whole LIBRARY of negative self-talk accumulated inside of me from which I could draw when things weren’t going well or when I didn’t feel good about myself.
    2. What needs to happen in my life and yours is that the lies of our past need to be replaced with the truths of God’s word, and that every book of untruthful thoughts be exchanged for what God says about you and me.
    3. Then, when life throws a curveball, we answer with God’s perspective instead of our own.
3. Just changing the self talk really won’t solve the problem by itself. You can eliminate the negative words but you still will possess the false beliefs about yourself.
- a. That is why it is important to get the truth inside our hearts and not just our heads. To make that 12 in journey from here to here, we must internalize and believe what God says about us.
    - i. Did you know David talked to himself? Yes. The tape recorder was on when he did it.
    - ii. “*Awake, my soul*” (Psalm 57:8).
    - iii. “*My soul...put your hope in God*” (Psalm 42:5,11; 43:5).
    - iv. “*I have stilled and quieted my soul*” (Psalm 131:2).
    - v. “*O my soul...forget not all his benefits*” (Psalm 103:2).
    - vi. “*Be at rest once more, O my soul*” (Psalm 116:7).
    - vii. “*March on, O my soul; be strong*” (Judges 5:21).
    - viii. “*Praise the LORD, O my soul*” (Psalm 103:1; 104:1; 146:1).
  - b. David had some pretty tough circumstances he was up against. He was chased by King Saul, his wife was given to another man, his own son tried to overthrow him and steal his throne, he committed adultery and murder.
    - i. In the middle of those kinds of tests and circumstances is when what we really believe about ourselves comes out.
    - ii. The truth is supposed to set us free. But we find it easier to keep believing the lies we have believed about ourselves rather than believing what God has said about us.
  - c. Most of our spiritual battles rage around what who we are. The devil wants us to believe we aren’t what God calls us.
    - i. Consider some of these lies:
      1. I must meet certain standards to have value and to accept myself.
      2. I must have the approval of others in order to approve of myself.
      3. Those who fail deserve to be punished. (I use this on myself).
      4. I cannot change.
4. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 “*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to*

*demolish strongholds. 5We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*

- a. We fight wars in the spiritual realm. People aren't our enemies. It is the lies they have been taught by the enemy.
  - b. If our goal is to pull down something, it is because it has been incorrectly built up.
  - c. When we cast down “imagination” and pretensions, we are talking about those things, those ideas, concepts and lies that set up against the knowledge of God. We bring every thought captive into obedience, so that our thoughts reflect God's thoughts.
    - i. You see that, “our thoughts should reflect God's thoughts.”
    - ii. When our self-talk is about us, about negative lies and beliefs, those aren't God's thoughts, they are pretensions that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God!
    - iii. We must tear them down!
5. Most of our emotional issues, our struggles, our bad decisions arise from our identity.
6. How? When I am discouraged, I need to ask why? What is at the root of my discouragement or frustration? I found this week that I was rooting myself in the natural realm, in my physical circumstances, and whenever I did so, I felt discouraged and frustrated. I remembered how Jesus was able to sleep in a boat in a storm because he was rooted in the eternal and spiritual reality of the Kingdom and of who he was. He had peace because he was rooted in the realm of peace.
7. Here are a few practical steps.
- a. Pay attention to what you say to yourself. Journal anything you say. Awareness of how deep the problem lies will help you understand how to dig it out.
  - b. Begin to recognize the attitudes you are projecting through your self-talk, what beliefs they are rooted in. If you are speaking “I am so frustrated” what is that arising from? Compare your statements to what God's word says. (that is “tearing down the strongholds!).
  - c. Think about what God says about you. . Think about how God has made you special or unique.
  - d. Call a friend and have a conversation about the conflict of what God says about you and what you are feeling.
  - e. Focus on the truth. Ask the question concerning the feedback your emotions or mind gives you, “is that the truth or a lie?”. Ask yourself what evidence you have to support the idea. What is the evidence against it? Just because you believe something, doesn't mean it's true.
- 8.