

## Identity (Last Session)

1. On earth as it is in heaven.
  - a. Declarative prayers instead of only requests.
    - i. If and when we KNOW our Father's will concerning a matter, we should not be asking for it, we should be declaring it.
    - ii. Example: I heard on the radio on Tuesday, a song that pleaded with God to "come fill this place." It was sung in a live worship service. I did a double take because I realized that we don't need to ask God to fill our service with His Presence.
      1. Why? (Because He has already said that where 2 or more are gathered in His name, He is there! Because He has said He inhabits the praises of His people.)
      2. How often I have been in a church service where the person opening the service has said, "God, be with us please..."
      3. Why are we ASKING for something God has already provided for? Why do we ask God to do what He has said is done?
  - b. Turnaround: How about if we made the declaration, "God, we know you are in this place because You have said that wherever 2 or more of your people are gathered in your name You would be there. You promised you will inhabit the praises of your people. We lift our praises to you today in anticipation of the revelation of Your glory among us!
    - i. Do you see the difference? The Declaration is based upon what God has already said He would do.
    - ii. Declarations are vital to the Christian life. Whatever is bound in heaven, you shall bind upon the earth, whatever is loosed in heaven, you shall loose on earth.
    - iii. Prophecy – Ezekiel was told to speak to the dry bones. Why? Why wouldn't God just raise the bones up? He could? But He required a man, to speak out what He had commanded. To bring a heavenly reality into the earthly realm. God had already determined to do it, He simply needed someone to declare it.
    - iv. Declarative prayers are powerful and needed. They tie our words to what God is doing. (We don't tell God what to do as some would say, we are simply agreeing with what God has ALREADY said!).
    - v. Like Moses, "Lord, You said..." (Ex. 32:11-14)
    - vi.

## 2. Review of Identity

- a. This is probably the last Sermon I will be doing on the subject of identity. So I want to do a thorough review and dig deeper into the value of coming to grips with who you are in Christ.
- b. Original Identity: Image of God. Lost Image. Restored Image via the cross and the Holy Spirit.
  - i. What does this restored image mean?
    1. Our restored Image means we get our value from who we are and not what we do or what we get others to do for us.
      - a. Is that true for you? I bet not. It isn't for me either. I derive personal value and significance from the things I do and from how people respond to me. The bible calls the love of the praise of men sin. Yet don't we all seek it? Why? Because we aren't getting our FULL value from God!
    - ii. You may not see the value and significance of this yet, but I hope you will.
      1. **You cannot love someone unconditionally if you are getting your value from anyone or anything other than God.**
        - a. You will, unbeknownst to yourself, have ulterior motives, whether it is "look how good I did" or "you need me" or "affirm my value by letting me pray for you." We don't say that or even think that, but ultimately its there.

- iii. God intended from the beginning that you and I be His children, reflecting His Image and likeness which is Love, because as “God is love” so He intended His children to “be love”. .
  - 1. Jesus, who is the express reflection of the Father demonstrated what love is.
  - 2. He showed us what Father’s love looks like. He lived love because He is love.
  - 3. And our restored Identity is the same. To BE LOVE. For Jesus to Love through us.
- iv. The video we watched last Sunday night talked about the reason for the absence of the power of God in the church today. **It is because there isn’t love.**
  - 1. **The power of God flows through faith motivated by love.** (
  - 2. Ga 5:6 – *“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.”*
  - 3. Matthew 24:12 says that in the end times *“...most people’s love will grow cold.”*
  - 4. We need to understand that if there is no power it is likely there is little love.
- c. Video of the conference speaker from Power and Love:

### 3. Child of God

- a. 1 John 3:1-3 *“I See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”*
- b. (Ephesians 5:1-2 *“1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”*)
- c. When you read the scriptures that speak of the “children of God” you will find that the vast majority of them are describing the incredible relationship we have with God our Father.
  - i. When I say “Jared is the son of Pat and Deina Bush” what have I just described? I described the fact that he is 1) their child 2) related to them 3) and that everything that is theirs is his by right of relationship (although he might not be of sufficient age to use it yet).
  - ii. In fact, Jared is getting ready to get his learners permit. (look out drivers!).
  - iii. But by that fact of maturity, it means that he will soon have (some) access to a very valuable possession of his parents...their car.
- 4. There are at least three words for Child in the Greek language used in the New Testament.
  - a. One is **Paidion**– which means a little child or an infant. It is most often used to describe the manner in which a person must come to faith in Christ. (
    - i. Mark 10:15 *“Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child (paidion) will not enter it at all.”*
  - b. Another is **Nepios** – which describes a child who is unschooled and who has not come into the rights of adulthood.
  - c. The other is Tekna or **Teknon**. This word is describe a child who has come of legal age. The emphasis upon this word isn’t the age of the child but the rights of the relationship that he or she possesses.
    - i. You see, when a child in the Roman world was born, they were under “custodians” or “parental authority.” Their rights were really no different in the household than that of slaves.
    - ii. This is evidenced in Galatians 4:1-7 which is our study passage for the day.
- 5. Galatians 4:1-7 *“What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child (nepios), he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. 2 He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. 3 So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.*

*4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, 5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. 6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."*

- a. The point of this passage is to help us understand that we are acting more like slaves, like Nepios than like a son or daughter with full rights to their Father's wealth.
  - i. Think about the way we talk to God. *I reflected on the language of my own prayers this week and saw evidence in my own relationship with God that looks like this. I find that I often talk to God like a "little" kid, sometimes begging, asking repeatedly, attempting to convince, or talk God into giving me something I need or want.*
    1. Why do we do this? Yes, we read we must "come (to God) as a little child" but that is speaking about the kind of faith, humility and simplicity we are to possess.
      - a. We aren't to relate to God like immature children (who in biblical terms have no more rights than the servants/slaves of the household).
      - b. We are to relate to God as "grown children" (son's and daughters – notice how he changes language from children to sons in the passage?)
    - ii. So how should it look? How should we be relating to Father? As adult children, you relate differently to your parents than you did when you were children...right? Or at least we hope so. God wants an adult relationship with each of us, because His Son isn't marrying a child-bride. He is coming back for a spotless bride, whole and complete.
      1. Just as children at the age of 20 or 21 struggle with relating to their parents, I think many Christians struggle relating to God in a manner that is mature.
  - b. I want us to look at the emphasis of verse 5 and verse 7.
    - i. *"...that we might receive the full rights of sons."* *"you are no longer a slave, but a son"*
      1. The right of adult children is to possess the inheritance of their Father.
      2. He says here that we might RECEIVE the FULL rights.
      3. It is present, not future in its emphasis.
      4. But we act like young children, who possess no more rights than slaves.
      5. We are no longer "little children" (which is the attitude of FAITH by which we come to God) but sons (and daughters) with the full birthright.
      6. What this tells us is that the way we approach God and the way that we pray has a lot to do with the way we see ourselves and what we believe about ourselves.
      7. *The devil wants you and I to see ourselves as slaves, as children without rights or an inheritance,* because if that is what we see ourselves as (like sinners), then we will always act like we view ourselves.
      8. We cannot make a difference if we don't know who we are.
        - a. We will act like defeated victims instead of the victorious warriors that we are.
        - b. We will act like defeated sinners instead of overcoming saints.
        - c. We will focus upon meeting self needs instead of fulfilling our destiny of love.
        - d. Do you want to live that way? I sure don't.
        - e. *Thursday (and Saturday): Search for Significance deals with finding out where we get our value and identity. It is a study that will help you get to the roots of your belief systems and false identity and to begin the process of getting it right.*
6. Conclusion:
7. The scriptures we just read SAY that we are Children of God, but how do we live? Often I think we live like the older brother of the prodigal.
  - a. He NEVER ASKED for anything!!!!!! He never claimed what was his! He saw himself as a slave and not a son!