

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
“Timeless Truths For Troubled Times”

1 Peter 2:4-10

The church world is under an identity crisis. How and who we see ourselves is critical to live God’s way in an ungodly world. Why do we have so many students graduate from high school and leave the church? It’s because there is an identity crisis in their life. They have left their identity in Christ to identify with culture. Paul said of Deamas, **“He forsake me because of his love for the world!”**

The way you see yourself largely determines how you act and react in life. Your self-esteem tends to be a governor in your life. If you see yourself as a loser you will act like a loser. If you see yourself as a victim you will act like a victim by letting people victimize you. If you see yourself as successful you tend to repeat successes of the past.

The Bible says, **“As a man thinks in his heart, so he is!”** It teaches that our beliefs determine our behavior. Many of our beliefs are warped. Did you ever go to a funhouse at an amusement park with mirrors that distorted your image? Because we grow up with imperfect people, we get distorted images of ourselves.

Jesus said, **“You shall know the truth shall set you free.” (John 8)** Peter’s contemporaries were really being persecuted and so in the first chapter he says, **“This is what God has done for you,”** and in chapter two he says, **“This is what God thinks of you.”**

What God says about you:

- A. “You are a chosen people...”
- B. “You are a people belonging to God...”
- C. “You are living stones...”
- D. “You are a royal priesthood and a holy nation...”
- E. “Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy...”

In verse nine out of the Philip’s Translation he said, ***“All the old titles of God’s people now belong to you.”***

What does that mean?

- I. As part of God’s family I am **acceptable**. ***“...chosen by God...”***
 - A. Most of us spend our lives trying to earn acceptance.
 - 1. From parents.
 - 2. From peers.
 - 3. From partners in marriage.

***NOTE** In order to be accepted we do dumb things; *“I dare you to do _____.”*
And you would do it at risk to your safety and beyond your better judgment.

As a kid most of us knew the pressure when two people each selected sides to play a game of baseball. *“I hope I get chosen with the cool players.”* We so love being accepted.

B. Many of us have accepted Christ but have you considered that “Christ has accepted you?” Paul says of believers, *“...Christ has accepted you.”*

1. Many live under a burden of trying to please God.
2. We maybe had unpleasable parents and are frustrated in trying to please them and get their approval.

God says, ***“Even if my mother and father forsake me, the Lord will receive me.” (Proverbs 27:10)***

II. As part of God’s family I am valuable. *“...you belong to God...”*

A. How much are you worth?

1. Not your net worth, but self-worth.
2. Your valuables don’t determine your value.

B. What determines value?

1. It’s determined by what someone is willing to pay for something.
2. It depends who owned it in the past.
 - Home
 - Cars
 - Art

***NOTE** A motorcycle a few years ago was discovered. Elvis owned it and it was worth \$100,000.00.

“You have been bought and paid for by Christ so you belong to Him...” (1 Col. 7:23, LB)

3. Jesus died for you and He did not die for junk.
4. No one has ever paid a greater ransom than God paid for you.

C. We are valuable because we are part of what God is doing.

“Come to the Lord, the living stone rejected as worthless by men, but chosen as valuable by God. You also, like living stones are being built into a spiritual house...” (1 Peter 2:4, GN)

1. Jesus was perfect but ignorant men rejected Him.
2. Jesus is the solid foundation.

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” (Matthew 7:24-27)

3. When I build my life on Christ, I am a living stone.
 - That’s supernatural because rocks don’t have life.
 - You are as valuable as a rock that could walk & talk.

***NOTE** What if on a trip to the moon they found a rock that could talk? It would be invaluable. A few years ago a marketing genius sold “Pet Rocks” and people

actually bought them! Peter says you are beyond value to God. You are supernaturally part of what He is building.

III. As part of God's family I am capable. "...you are a royal priesthood..."

A. Do you know you are a priest?

1. As a priest I can go directly to God.
2. As a priest I represent God to people and ministering in God's behalf to them.
3. The message says, "God's instruments to do His work."

***NOTE** ON the cross as part of redemption in Christ, God tore the veil in the temple from top to bottom and removed the barrier between himself and His creation.

4. In Latin priest means "bridge builder."

B. Every Christian is a minister.

"He saved us and chose us for His holy work, not because we deserved it but because that was His plan long before the world began." (2 Timothy 1:9, LB)

1. We are saved to serve God.

"There are different kinds of services to God...the Holy Spirit displays God's power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church. All of you together are like one body of Christ, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it." (1 Cor. 12:5, 7 & 27, LB)

2. How do you serve God in this life?
3. By serving people. (Matthew 25:35-46)
4. Who God calls He qualifies.
5. Nothing will bring significance more than service.
 - Not status.
 - Not success.
 - Not salary.
 - Not sex.

IV. As part of God's family I am forgivable. "...you have received mercy..."

We often blow it in life and our confidence is shook up. Peter says we need to know one more thing – God forgives. ***"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."***
(1 John 1:9)

"I am the God who forgives your sins and I do this because of who I am. I will not hold your sins against you." (Isaiah 43:25, GN)

A. We often see problems as God's payback.

1. We live with a sense of waiting for God's judgment to fall upon us.
2. We live with fear that God is mad at us.

NOTE** I love what Rick Warren says, “God did not come to rub it in, but to rub it out.” Paul said, “Through what Christ would do for us, God decided to make us holy in His eyes, without a single fault we stand before Him covered with His love.***” (Ephesians 1:4, LB)

3. I remember the fear growing up that in heaven all my sins would be played on a motion picture screen.

4. God says you are not going to go through that.

“The mountains and hills may crumble, but my love for you will never end; so says the Lord who loves you.” (Isaiah 54:10, GN)

B. How then should I live?

“It is for you now to demonstrate the goodness of God, who called you out of darkness into His amazing light.” (1 Peter 2:9, Ph)

“Once you were less than nothing; now you are God’s own!” (1 Peter 2:10, LB)