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SERMON TITLE

Who Do You Think You Are? (part 2)

SERIES

Who Do You Think You Are?

DATE

6/13/2021

KEY SCRIPTURE

John, 1 Cor, Eph, Col, Gal

SYNOPSIS

Scripture has a lot to say about who we are in Christ. Knowing who you really are is encouraging and inspiring for your walk with God.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ Who do you think you are?

There once was a hunter who found an abandoned eagle egg. Concerned for the life within, he brought the egg home to his farm and placed it with a few chicken eggs. In due time, the baby eagle hatched from its shell alongside a few chicks. The baby-eagle began his life just like the chicks, sheltered by the mother hen. As the baby eagle matured, he ate, strutted and even tried to 'cluck' and 'cackle' like a chicken.

One day as a bald eagle flew over the hunter's farm, he saw the little eagle mingling together with the other chickens. He flew down to talk to the young eagle. As the bald eagle landed, all the terrified chickens ran away. As the young eagle tried to run away, he was stopped by the bald eagle. The bald eagle asked, 'What are you doing here among all these chickens? You are an eagle! You can fly and your home is high up among the cliffs!' The young eagle was confused and could not accept the fact that he was an eagle. He responded, 'I can't fly, I am a chicken! This is where I belong, close to the ground!'

The bald eagle grabbed the young eagle in its claws and flew to a nearby cliff. As they rested on the cliff, the bald eagle said, 'You are an eagle and you can fly!' and with a mighty swish of his wings, the bald eagle carried the young eagle up into the clouds. Once they soared high above the clouds, the bald eagle dropped the young eagle as he yelled, 'Flap your wings and fly! You're an eagle!' To his bewilderment, the young eagle flapped his wings and discovered that he could fly.

You may have been born a chicken, but you have been born again, an eagle. You may have been brought up in a situation that limited your understanding of your potential, but it's time now for the past to lose its hold on you. However, many of us are too 'chicken' to leave the ground. I want to encourage you today that you are an eagle. Don't die thinking you're a chicken. Soar high, just as you were meant to. Be all that you are meant to be! Stop being a chicken today!

Last week we looked at 1 Peter 2:9. You are God's choice, favorite people; of royal lineage and heirs to the kingdom; a priestly line, with full access to God through Christ; holy, unique, set apart for God's service; ultimately belonging to God. That's who you are!

When you don't understand your true identity, it's easy to get caught up in all kinds of misuse and abuse. It's like the dinglehopper from "The Little Mermaid." A fork is not meant to be used for brushing hair. Not understanding your identity can also be like using this brush (artist's paintbrush) to slap a coat of paint on the dog house. If you really thought that's what the brush was made for, you'd think it is a really lousy design for such a job. Rather, this brush is meant for artistry. In the hands of a skillful artist, this brush can create a beautiful work of art.

You need to know who you are! There are various Scriptures about our identity in Christ:

☞ **You are a child of God**
John 1:10-13



10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

If you have received Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, you have become a child of God; you have been born of God. This speaks of God's love for you. He's a good, good Father. 1 John 3:1 says that he has lavished his love on us. You are always on his mind. Romans 8:15 talks about this relationship with God and says that we can call him Abba, Father. That's like saying "Daddy" in English.

As his child, you are under his protection and provision. He's a fantastic parent! He never neglects and he never abuses. He loves you just because you are his kid. But he also sees the potential in you and wants to help you grow and develop into the best you can be.

In the natural, a child inherits various characteristics from parents. Most people say that I look most like my mom. Family members usually say that my temperament is also a lot like Mom's. And, I have traits from my dad as well, like designing floor plans for a new home. And, sometimes, when I behave a lot like Dad, I'll get a response from someone that says, "Okay, Doug." It's the same spiritually - we inherit Godly traits. One of the most used descriptions of God's character is this: Psalms 103:8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. That is part of our nature as well. As God's kids, we are compassionate, gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love. You are a child of God!

☞ You are a friend of Christ

John 15:13-15

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

Psalms 25:14

The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.

That's what good friends do. They share intimate details of their lives with each other. To acquaintances, we tend to be very superficial, only sharing basic information. But to friends, we open up and can get really honest about how things are. We are friends of Christ. We can share everything with him. And, as we grow even stronger in that friendship, he shares more and more with us. He is our friend. Abraham was called God's friend. Moses spoke with God face to face like friends do.

Not only are we included in God's family, but we are actually his friends. If you have grown children, then you understand how the relationship can develop over the years. When kids are toddlers, parents are basically providers and protectors. That grows over time and parents then



are teachers and mentors. But eventually, as the child becomes an adult, the relationship can become more like a friendship. There's still a parent-child relationship, but it's different and we just plain enjoy each other's company. You are a friend of Christ.

--Bob Hartman...

*I can be friends with you; there's no better friend that a man can know
I can be friends with you; and I feel so special 'cause it's you I know
I don't know the Governor even though I'm a resident
I don't rub shoulders with the dignities or shake hands with the President
And I know I can be with you and I don't have to wait in line
You're the author and creator of all the world and a personal friend of mine
When I have a problem, I can always come to you
Regardless of the situation I know you know what to do
You put your arm around me and you speak so tenderly
And I feel better just to know you care and you took the time for me
I'm no special person, I've got nothing to offer you
But you treat me like I'm the only one with whom you have to do
You're closer than a brother and you're with me every day
I love you 'cause you first loved me and I'm glad that I can say
I can be friends with you...*

You are a friend of Christ.

☞ You are part of the body of Christ

1 Corinthians 12:27

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Leading up to this verse, the Apostle Paul is describing how a human body is made up of many parts, yet is a unified, single body. There is great variety in the body – feet, hands, eyes, ears, nose. Yet, there is unity – every part is needed because the parts, all by themselves, are incomplete. We need each other.

You might feel like you're an unseen part of the body, but you know what? It's often the unseen parts that are most needed! We need each other.

This past year has been a real challenge for us all. Church operations have been greatly affected as precautions were taken due to a pandemic. I think we've done very well at being gracious and supportive of each other throughout this past year. Good job Church! Now, let me say this: as everything is opening back up and restrictions are being relaxed, I want you to remember how important each part of the body is. If you still have personal health concerns, by all means continue to watch online, while you continue being part of the body. But, if you're simply watching online because it's convenient and you just aren't getting yourself around, then remember that you are an important part of the body. We need you. So, get it together and come on back.



☞ You are God's masterpiece

Ephesians 2:10

we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. NLT

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

He has been working in you since day one to be his masterpiece. As the old saying goes, "God don't make no junk." From your point of view, life may seem like a mess, but from God's point of view, it's all part of the creative process to becoming a masterpiece.

In the original creation of Genesis 1, mankind is the pinnacle of God's creation. The sun, moon, stars, land, water, vegetation and all animals were created first. But God saved the best for last when he created people. 1 Corinthians 11:7 says that man is the glory of God. That means man is the best that God created. It was designed that way from the very beginning.

Now, through Christ, we are a new creation. How much more are we now the masterpiece of God? He's making us new in the image of Christ. You are his masterpiece.

☞ You are redeemed

Colossians 1:13-14

he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The bible paints the picture of humanity being kidnapped and held hostage by sin. But God paid the ransom to set us free. It was a high price, as he sacrificed his only begotten Son, Jesus on the cross for us. But that paid the price and purchased our freedom. We have been redeemed.

*Redeemed—how I love to proclaim it! Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed through His infinite mercy, His child, and forever, I am.
Redeemed, redeemed. Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed, redeemed, His child, and forever, I am.*

*I am redeemed, you set me free. So, I'll shake off these heavy chains.
And wipe away every stain now I'm not who I used to be.
I am redeemed. I'm redeemed.*

The enemy will bring condemnation and try to make you live in your past. But God no longer condemns. He has set you free. Your past is no longer held against you. Any guilt and shame you feel now is simply to help you stay on the right track. It's not to beat you up and hold you down. You are forgiven, redeemed and set free.

☞ You are an heir of God



In that last point, Colossians said that the Lord brought us into the kingdom. In Galatians, after saying that we can call God, Abba (Daddy), it says this: **Galatians 4:7... So, you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.**

A young man asked an old rich man how he made his money.

The old guy grasped his wool vest and said, "Well, son, it was 1932. The depth of the Great Depression. I was down to my last nickel.

"I invested that nickel in an apple. I spent the entire day polishing the apple and, at the end of the day, I sold the apple for ten cents.

"The next morning, I invested those ten cents in two apples. I spent the entire day polishing them and sold them at 5:00 pm for 20 cents. I continued this system for a time, by the end of which I'd accumulated a fortune of \$1.37."

"And that's how you built an empire?" the boy asked.

"Heavens, no!" the man replied. "Then my wife's father died and left us two million dollars."

As heirs, there is an inheritance waiting for us. It's not something we have earned, but rather something God has saved for us. Colossians 1:12 speaks of the inheritance we have in the kingdom. Colossians 3:24 says that we will receive an inheritance as a reward. 1 Peter 1:4 says that this inheritance will never perish, spoil or fade – it is kept in heaven for us.

Various scriptures talk about eternal life and immortality as part of the inheritance we receive. In Revelation 21 it describes how the Lord will make everything new – a new heaven and a new earth. There will be no more death, or sorrow, or pain. God, himself will be with us, up close and personally. It goes on to describe the glory of the kingdom and ultimately says that we will inherit it all. You are an heir of God!

It's important to know who you are and why you are here. You can avoid misuse and abuse and can find great fulfillment when you truly know who you are. So, who do you think you are?

A child of God; a friend of Christ; part of the body; God's masterpiece; redeemed; heir.

No longer slaves