

Caring for Your Soul - Part 1

26 October 2017



Identity

Our inheritance in Christ is radically influenced by the way we see ourselves. Our identity is often formed by the way we think others see us and how much we have believed what the enemy has said about us. Where our identity presently resides will influence how our future turns out.

God has a dream for your life; a specific plan. Scripture says, *'Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.'* (Psalm 139:16)

This plan will dwarf your wildest dreams and expectations. In fact it is *'infinitely more than we might ask or think (imagine).'* (Ephesians 3:20) God wants to bless you, provide for you, give you inner peace, security, safety and a clear calling and purpose. He wants you to reach a place where you are not anxious about anything but have the peace of Christ dwelling in you.

Where Do You Find Your Worth?

The world judges people on 5 levels:

- How physically attractive you are
- How much you earn
- How talented you are in a specific field (for example music, sports etc.)
- How much you can entertain others (the 'life of the party')
- How intelligent you are

Are you willing to acknowledge which of these 'standards' still influence the way you measure yourself?

Even in the church we may feel judged on how 'spiritual' we can be (quoting Scripture, saying the right thing etc.). Some of us might still be sitting with hints of these insecurities or even deep-seated wounds because brothers or sisters in Christ have treated us condescendingly.

Our identity and destiny is usually affected by destructive words that come from the world around us, not from God. Words such as:

- 'You're so stupid.'
- 'Can't you get anything right?'
- 'You are useless.'
- 'You are such a weakling.'
- 'You will never achieve anything.'
- 'You are a mistake, a failure.'
- 'You are ugly.'
- 'You are insignificant.'

Some of us might still be shrugging off competition we grew up with or inherited in our previous spiritual homes. We inadvertently compare ourselves with other people, asking things like, 'How come that person is being used by God more than me?' Although it is not nice to acknowledge that we feel this way as Christians, we sometimes do because we are still being changed from glory to glory and are not yet perfect and totally dead to self.

The Affirmation of a Father

All of Christ's security, confidence and identity lay securely in the Father. He was loved and affirmed by His Father. He was accepted and acknowledged. His father believed in Him, loved Him and backed Him up.

Jesus was acknowledged by His father with an audible voice during His baptism by John the Baptist, and at the transfiguration His Father said, *'...listen to Him'*. In John 13:3-5 it says,

'Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.'

Christ was so secure in the Father that He could wash His follower's feet. This was the lowliest task of the lowliest servant in their time.

Many of us were not affirmed, approved and supported by our biological fathers and this often results in bitterness and pent up resentment and anger. Despair begins to replace our excitement for the future. The absence of our father's verbal and physical affirmation will undoubtedly lead to our struggle in receiving our heavenly Father's inheritance. As a consequence of this neglect, you may still battle with emotions of:

- *Rejection, Fear, Anxiety, Mistrust*
- *Desertion, Neglect, Disgrace, Humiliation, Lowliness*
- *Self-importance, Arrogance, Egotism*
- *Anger, Irritation, Annoyance*

Sons and Daughters

From Scripture, it is evident that we are very special to God. He truly loves us and has blessed us with blessings we don't even fully comprehend. We are chosen, we are His priesthood, we are His possession to bring glory to Him. God Himself was personally involved in making and forming you.

So if we have not become that which He intended for us to be and if we are stumbling in the realisation of our election, of being His representatives as His priests and of belonging absolutely to Him, we don't fully bring Him glory. By fully making use of and living out every spiritual blessing, we bring honour and glory to Jesus.

As His sons (the term includes the feminine), we are adopted. He is our Abba Father; 'The word *Abba* is an Aramaic word that would most closely be translated as "Daddy." It was a common term that young children would use to address their fathers. It signifies the close, intimate relationship of a father to his child, as well as the childlike trust that a young child puts in his "Daddy."' ^[1]

We will share in His glory if we are willing to share in His suffering by laying down our likes and dislikes, and in surrendering who we are by allowing His preferences to become our preferences. The key ingredient to all of the above is faith – believing Him, trusting in Him and living life because He is our ultimate reality and truth.

If we believe and have received Him as our Saviour, we receive a supernatural power to assist us in becoming and growing up into sonship.

Distinctive, Individual and Special

The Bible says we are so special to God that if we love Him:

- He works things out for our good
- He has a purpose for us
- He has always known us
- He has chosen us to become like Jesus
- He draws us to Him
- He gives us right standing
- He gives us His presence (glory)

This is who you are. This is your identity, your future, your destiny.

His Amazing, Overwhelming Love

I once asked God to show and explain His love to me; to help me experience and taste His love. A little while later, while having a meal with a couple with a newly born baby, I was sharing an amazing testimony of a Vietnamese man who tried to share the gospel with a little village in Vietnam. The village folk became very upset with what the man was sharing and beat him up, tied heavy rocks on him and threw him into the nearest river. While he was drowning, he saw a yellow light under the water and suddenly he could breath underwater!

At this moment, the couple's baby started crying, and as I was sharing what happened to the man next, they both turned picked up their newborn, comforting him with many loving, soothing noises. I had completely lost their attention, and it was as if I was talking to thin air. Right at that moment, the Holy Spirit spoke into my heart and said that we have His undivided devotion and attention; a million times more than this baby had the attention of its parents.

If God's love is our all in all, our all-permeating truth, our all-pervading reality, our encompassing protection and foundation, then absolutely nothing will overwhelm us, shock us, hurt us, or cause us fear of any kind. We will be totally content, safe and secure in the midst of severe opposition.

Make discovering, tasting and experiencing His love for you your life's purpose, pursuit and goal.

Scriptures to meditate upon:

Eph 3:20

Mat 6:33

Ephesians 1:3

Matthew 3:16-17

1 Peter 2:9

Romans 18:14-17

Galatians 3:26-27

John 1:12

Psalms 139:13

Romans 8:28-30

Romans 8:31-39

[1] <https://www.gotquestions.org/Abba-Father.html>

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