

UNPICKING THE PANDEMIC THIEF'S POCKET

Part 2 – Who Am I?

THE BIG QUESTION

- * WHERE do we get our IDENTITY? HOW or against WHAT do we measure our sense of WORTH & VALUE?

WORTH-O-METER

- * The Enemy thrives on INSECURITY, DOUBT, FEAR, ANXIETY & STRESS.
- * He knows that when you're secure, confident, at peace, you're a tremendous THREAT to his PURPOSES.
- * In an attempt to keep you from that place, he repeatedly ATTACKS your WORTH / VALUE / IDENTITY.

→ *Is your self-worth generally positive or negative? Give 3 words to describe how you 'see' yourself. Where are you positioned on the worth-o-meter? Is that quite stable or are you prone to yo-yoing up and down? What things tend to increase or decrease your sense of self-worth?*

→ *Why is the Thief 'after your identity?' Why is a clear, strong identity so important? What are the things that give you security, confidence and peace? And what are the things that threaten them?*

IN WHAT DO WE TEND TO ROOT OUR IDENTITY?

- Our JOBS → Is our sense of identity / self-worth rooted in what we DO, rather than who we ARE?
- POSITION, STATUS, POPULARITY → Is our sense of identity / worth rooted in what we perceive OTHERS think about what we DO or who we ARE?
- WEALTH, salary, financial status
- MARITAL / FAMILY STATUS → I'm a Mum, adopted, divorced, etc.
- CALLING / MINISTRY → How IMPRESSIVE do I LOOK and FEEL in my church community?
- PAST ACHIEVEMENTS that we hang onto
- PAST FAILURES which we allow to DEFINE us

→ *If you're honest, is your identity rooted in any of those? Tell us which one and why. Think about your parents: What do you think their identity / self-worth is rooted in? Do the same factors apply to you?*

→ *What are the dangers or vulnerabilities if your identity is rooted in a) your job / function / purpose, b) your relationships, and c) your emotional state?*

THE PROBLEM

- * Most of that is TEMPORARY ... Some of it is MATERIAL, EMOTIONAL or CIRCUMSTANTIAL.
- * The Enemy can UNSETTLE any of those in a heartbeat.
- * Question becomes, What happens when it's TAKEN AWAY?
- * If the rug is swept out from under our feet, are we still on SOLID GROUND? (Philippians 4:11)

→ *If the influences on your self-worth / identity really are temporary, fickle, material, emotional or circumstantial, why do they (your self-worth and identity) become so vulnerable to the Enemy?*

→ *How does the Enemy 'sweep the rug out from under your feet?'*

→ *How do you get to Philippians 4:11 and what happens if you do? What would change if your circumstances no longer had any power to 'rock your boat?'*

→ *Did the pandemic mess with any of a)–f) for you? Did you see it affect people you know and love? How did church going online affect you? What about not being able to be 'useful?' Any insecurities get fed through lockdown? If so, what have you learnt in retrospect?*

ROCK & SAND (Matthew 7:24-27)

- * If what you HAD, who you WERE, what you DID was built on ROCK, you were FINE ... The storm came, the winds blew, the rain lashed down and your house STAYED UPRIGHT.

* If not, then that house probably became a little WOBBLY.

- * And you were left with a lot of QUESTIONS, a new FEAR & ANXIETY, some FRUSTRATIONS & DISAPPOINTMENTS.

→ *So, having considered all that, how much of your identity is built on the rock and how much on sand? What would you like to change? Anything your group can pray for?*

→ *If you came out of the pandemic with questions, doubts, fears, frustrations and disappointments, has this message helped explain what and perhaps why?*

→ *"It starts for me when I can SEE it ... What the enemy's been up to ... What he's stolen ... Recognising what's rock and what's sand?" Can you see more clearly now? If so, what can you see?*

RESISTANCE DAY ... THE SOLUTION

Time to return to the CORE of the GOSPEL.

- * Back to the VICTORY Jesus won on the Cross.
- * To the POWER of the BLOOD and the STRENGTH of our COVENANT.
- * To the PROMISES of God that are 'yes and amen in Christ.'

Homework: YOU ARE STATEMENTS

2 Corinthians 5:17,20,21, Ephesians 1:3,4a,4b,5,6,7, Romans 8:1,15-16,37, Philippians 3:20, Ephesians 2:6,10,13, Matthew 5:13,14, John 15:5, 1 Peter 2:9

- * The beauty is, none of those are affected if you have a BAD DAY or if someone else UNDERMINES or BELITTLES you ... or if you find yourself in the middle of a CRISIS.

* WHO YOU ARE depends 0% on you and 100% on Christ.

→ *So, working your way through all those verses, who are you in Christ? Any of them jump out to you? Which one, in particular, have you decided to meditate on until you really get it? Can anyone give you any verses that might help with that?*

→ *What are the opposites of all those WHO YOU ARE statements? Does the Enemy try to convince you the opposite is true? If so, when, how and what happens when he tries?*

WORTH-O-METER

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

Secure, confident + at peace

Insecure, devoid of confidence, stressed, unsettled

YOU ARE STATEMENTS

→ This is WHO YOU ARE in Christ

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

New creation (2 Cor 5:17) ... *Old things have passed away; behold all things have become new*

Righteousness of God (v21) = A position of right-standing with God, without guilt & shame, as though sin never even existed

Ambassador for Christ (v20) ... which means you represent heaven here on earth

Ephesians 1:3-7

Blessed ... with every spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3)

Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (v4a)

Holy & blameless before Him (v4b)

Adopted as sons & daughters (v5, Gal 3:26)

Accepted in the Beloved (v6)

Redeemed by His blood (v7) **with sins forgiven + forgotten** (Ps 103:12, Isa 1:18)

Romans 8

Free from condemnation (Rom 8:1)

No longer a slave to fear, but rather a child of God (Rom 8:15-16, Gal 4:7)

Heirs of God & co-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17)

More than a conqueror (Rom 8:37)

Citizen of Heaven (Phil 3:20)

Seated in heavenly places in Christ (Eph 2:6)

God's workmanship (Eph 2:10)

Brought near by blood (Eph 2:13)

JESUS SAID, You are

Salt of the Earth (Matt 5:13)

Light of the World (Matt 5:14)

Branches on His Vine (John 15:5)

PETER SAID, You are

Chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, people belonging to God (1 Pet 2:9)