



Set Free:
Permission to Flourish

COMMUNION



Day One: Set Free Once and For All

Hebrews 9:11 – 15 (MSG) *When the Messiah arrived, High Priest of the superior things of this new covenant, he bypassed the old tent and its trapping in the created world, and went straight into Heaven's Tent – the true Holy place...once and for all...he also bypassed the sacrifices consisting of goat and calf blood, instead using His own blood to set us free once and for all.*

Everything Jesus did for us on the cross, He did ONCE AND FOR ALL! There's no question marks, no going back, no wavering and no exceptions. If Jesus did it, He did it for you and He did it for me, and it's DONE now and forever!

His blood was the price that was paid to set us free. And not only in one area of our lives, or for one miracle, or for a single moment. But He actually made us free in every area of our lives, in every crevice of our bodies and souls, in everything for all time now and forever!

So the question is: Are we living as though Christ has already set us free? Are we living in a way that is a fitting response to His blood shed for us? Or are we accepting the things that He has already paid for?

Are we settling for things that cost Him His life?

The Lord says to us today, "You are free, once and for all." Let's live like we believe it!



How do you respond to the questions asked in today's devotional?



Day Two: Who Do You Say That I Am?

To live in this freedom, Jesus knows that we must understand two things:

- Who He is.
- Who we are.

In other words:

Everything comes down to identity.

We cannot know who we are if we don't know Who Jesus is. And if we don't know who we are, we can never walk in the 'once-and-for-all' freedom Jesus has already provided for us. It would be like starving while having a bank account with billions of dollars in it... and many people essentially do just that.

Jesus has a process for showing us our identity. Just as He did with the disciples, Jesus calls us by name, and says, "Follow me." Then He reveals to us personally who HE is. And then IN Him, He begins to reveal to us who we truly are! This is an ongoing an expanding revelation...changing us from glory to glory. It's an expanding revelation that the early disciples also walked in. In Mark 8:29 when Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do YOU say that I am?" He wasn't really interested in what other people thought about Him. He wanted to know who THEY thought He was. Because He knew that if they knew His identity, they could walk in their own.

When Peter responded, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God," Jesus knew He had a foundation on which He could build. He said to Peter, "This has been revealed to you by My Father. On this rock I will build..." Jesus always builds on His revelations and once we've seen who He is, He builds on this revelation and shows us who WE are.



Soak Time

"Who do YOU say that I am?" How do you see Jesus?



Day Three: Who do you say that YOU are?

After He asks us, “Who do you say that I am?”, He asks us the next most important question: “Who do you say that YOU are?”

What is your identity? Just as what others said He was didn’t define Jesus, what defines you is not actually who others say you are, but the identity from which you live is defined by who YOU say that you are. In the end, it’s what you believe about you that affects every single aspect of your life.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...*

Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you in a settled place of resting in God’s opinion of you... reveling in that precious position?
- Are you defined by what you do? Your work, service, education, property, family, position, your failures, missed opportunities, what has happened to you, your weaknesses or your abilities and giftings?
- Have you allowed other’s opinions, words or actions to define you and keep you living below God’s best for you?
- Are you driven by other’s expectations or your own – are you performance driven?
- Are you driven by an inner need to be accepted? To prove you have a right to be here?

God wants us to realise that anything that does not line up with God’s opinion of us is a LIE! And of course when we believe a lie, we open ourselves up to the enemy’s continuous plan to rob, kill and destroy from us.

John 10:10 (NKJV) *The thief does not come expect to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...*

Satan’s #1 strategy to accomplish his stealing, killing and destroying is by telling us that we are not who God says we are. He goes after our identity, and we find ourselves attempting to discover who we are (or justifying who we think we are) in all the wrong places and pursuits.



Some people search for identity through sexual relationships, drugs, and other things many would label “rebellion.” However, the ‘wrong places’ extend far further than that. God doesn’t rate sin (which is missing the mark of the glory He has placed within us) – sin is just sin. There is no ‘missing it big’ or ‘missing it small’. And often we can have our identity in things which seem innocent or even good, and not even realise that we are still receiving some form of identity from a source that we have no business receiving it from. No matter how close or far we deem ourselves to be from God’s truth, if we derive our identity from anything other than Christ, we’ve definitely missed it.

Jesus is our true source of identity. When we discover who He is and we know that He lives within us and we are one with Him, we discover our identity. He is the only source of identity that is unshakeable and victorious. Any time our identity is in anything else, it is subject to shaking, insecurity, fear or failure.

We could find our identity in a relationship... yet that person could let us down. We could find our identity in our work... yet who are we when we lose our job or our business fails? We could find our identity in our service to God... yet essentially that leaves us looking at our ‘good works’ to tell us who we are and there’s no end to the pressure of having to ‘perform’ so that we can feel good about ourselves. It doesn’t matter which way you look at it, seeking identity from anything other than Jesus leaves us insecure, unsettled and uncertain.

No matter what the place we have looked to for our identity in the past (such as our career, our bank accounts, our giftings), God wants us to live in the abundant life which comes from our identity being unshakeable because it’s entirely in Him.



Soak Time

Consider the questions contained within this devotional. From where have you derived your sense of identity? And how has this left you open to being insecure, unsettled or uncertain?



Day Four: Identity Before Purpose

In this world there is a longing and searching for belonging, significance and identity. A desire to be known... to be seen, and to be free to be ourselves. The other great longing that we as human beings experience is the intense desire to have a purpose for living and to do something with our lives that impacts eternity.

Understanding our identity in Christ is the vital starting point for finding our sense of purpose. There are so many people in the world who are desperate to know why they are here and are searching, searching, searching. Yet even if they feel they have an idea of their purpose... that they have a map for their lives... they have no idea where they are starting from. 'X' may mark the spot, but imagine trying to get there when you don't know where you are to begin with! That's essentially what trying to do life without having our identity squarely aligned with Christ within us does. We all need a 'You Are Here' arrow on our life's map, to align us with truth so that we can go forward to the spot we're destined to find.

Travelling with baggage is really hard going, and many people give up before they get where they want to go. Why? Because we already hold a backpack full of beliefs about ourselves that are lies. Our heart struggles with value and worth. We worry that if we don't perform well enough, we won't be accepted or loved or included. It's wearying and it keeps many of us from what God created to for.

Knowing your identity in Christ means you can set aside any image of yourself that isn't from the One Who made you.

We need to remember that He had chosen us before the foundation of the world as the object of His love (Eph 1:4). He is the One Who made us. He is the One Who lovingly and wisely put us together (Ps 139). He is the One Who knows who we are... our true identity. He calls us His masterpiece and says that we have a purpose and a destiny to fulfil.

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT) *For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us.*



Wow! Consider the extravagance and majesty of our God! Consider the wonders of the world and of the universe! The unimaginable diversity and glorious colours, patterns and variety. Yet in all of this, He considers US His MASTERPIECE!!!!

He says that in His eyes, we are the pinnacle of His creation. Yet there's also another piece of wisdom we can glean from this scripture. Do you see the pattern here? It's IDENTITY first (we are His masterpiece). *Then* PURPOSE (good things).

God says:

The 'BE' always comes before the 'DO'.

We will never do what God has called us to do until we know our 'BE'... until we know our identity in Him.

To be all God has called us to be, we have to know who we truly are!!! And our true self is who GOD says we are in Christ Jesus! Once we know that, we can go on to fulfil the destiny that He has created us for.



You truly are God's masterpiece. Yes, He was talking about YOU when Holy Spirit inspired that verse of scripture. What does that make you feel about who you are? Imagine God looking at you with a smile on His face... a glorious painting made by His hands... and ask Him to show you what He sees.



Day Five: Esteemed and Delighted In

The disciples were no different to us... or should I say we are no different to the disciples. Come with me to the table and join Jesus and the disciples as they are sharing their last Passover meal together before Jesus goes to the cross. Use your holy imagination to see the scene. Let's see John's take on the subject of identity.

John 13:21 – 26 (AMP) *After Jesus had said these things, He was troubled (disturbed, agitated) in spirit and said, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, one of you will deliver Me up [one of you will be false to Me and betray Me]! The disciples kept looking at one another, puzzled as to whom He could mean. One of the disciples, whom Jesus loved [whom He esteemed and delighted in], was reclining [next to Him] on Jesus' bosom. So Simon Peter motioned to him to ask of whom He was speaking. Then leaning back against Jesus' breast, he asked Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered...*

Just think about it – John was the one who wrote the book of John. In this passage, John was speaking of Himself! Some may think this arrogant, to call themselves a disciple '*whom Jesus loved*', yet who do you think knew their identity? Who do you think was confident in Jesus' love? Confidence in Christ Jesus is often perceived as arrogance, but it's not – it's identity. John never said the other disciples weren't loved equally by Jesus... He just knew that He WAS loved! I think he nailed it!!!

John's identity was, "*I am the disciple Jesus loves, whom He esteems and delights in...*" That's it in a nutshell! And we see that this wasn't just mental assent. He continued to refer to himself in this manner many times throughout the Gospel, and he also acted in a manner which demonstrated that this identity was unshakeable in His heart.

His body language reflected the posture of His heart. Leaning on and into Jesus was a posture of comfortable intimacy. Intimacy requires trust and vulnerability. And you know, trust doesn't change our circumstances but it does change us! It demonstrates a willingness to know and be known, a desire for accountability, an absence of fear and a relaxed peace and confidence.

Resting on Jesus is the place of revelation... you begin to hear His heartbeat, His love for you and for others. You become sensitive to Jesus' heart... when



He is troubled, disturbed or agitated... becoming attuned to hear and feel what breaks His heart. And it's important also to note that other Gospel accounts (written by other disciples) tend to refer to the disciples' feelings, not Jesus'. John, however, shows that He was aware of the condition of Jesus' heart... wounded by betrayal of one of His own and the impending events to come.

Jesus always reveals the secrets of His heart to those who will draw near.

James 3:8 (ESV) *Draw near to me and I will draw near to you...*

Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV) *Call to me and I will show you great and mighty things which you don't know.*

Do you want to hear the secrets of His heart today? Lean on His chest... listen to His heart. He wants you to hear its beating and to know what it's saying...



Can you hear the beating of His heart? What is it saying to you?
