

who do YOU say that I am?

A Story

I was planning a worship set

Feeling crushing pressure and tension

I was completely stuck

I thought, "I'm a worship coach! [www.adlibmusic.com]"

So I posted a question on my blog [www.adlibmusic247.blogspot.com]

I read one of the responses: "to obsess over this, as if the future of the Kingdom rested on my ability to hear God for the perfect list" and realized that I wasn't worried about the Kingdom, I was worried about the opinion of a pastor.

I read "Clear my name, God" from Psalm 26, and I realized that I had attached my name to the leading and that was one of the main reasons for feeling the pressure. I repeated that phrase over and over, letting God's forgiveness wash over me. I said "God, I take my name off of the leading for these next two Sundays. Forgive me for constructing my identity from my leading, my style, my creativity, my track record."

Then I still had struggles as I read over my yellow pad notes.

I re-wrote with a sharpie who God says that I am.

What defines me?

What I wear?

Where I'm from?

What I know?

Who I know?

What I do?

What I've done?

No.

These things shape me, and more interestingly,

They reveal what defines me.

All of us live as a result of what defines us.

It drives everything we do. And most of us don't know who we are, what defines us. Or we have a false sense, an untrustworthy definition.

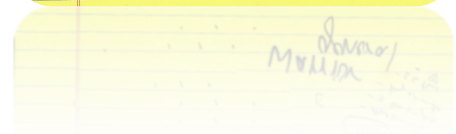
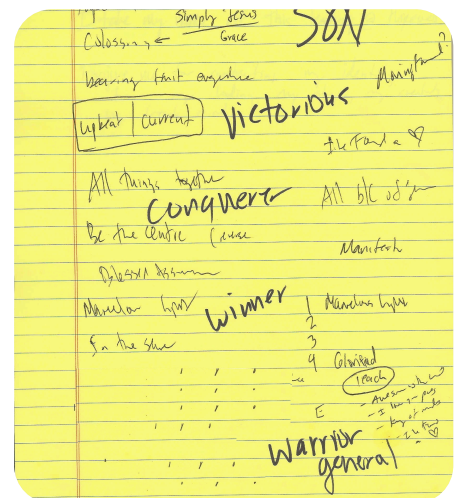
I live as a result of what defines me.

Another Story

One Saturday, I sat in a room of leaders. My calling is to eradicate isolation and burnout so that leaders bear much fruit. My insecurity was stunning that day. I didn't want to talk to anyone, make any connections, do anything other than just sit there and keep to myself...isolated. [clever, no?]

It defined me.

"Not enough" defined me.



It told me who I was and it told me what to do.

Mr. Insecurity. Mr. No One Will Like Me. Mr. No One Cares About Me. Mr. Shut Up And Keep To Yourself. Mr. Eradicate Isolation was Mr. Isolation.

But there is another lonely leader in that room.

There's a church who needs to be led by a leader who walks in Godly authority. There's a leader who's caught up in trying to make the church he leads match the thriving church down the street – so intent on doing so that he has forgotten about what God already told him to do.

There's a leader who is overwhelmed by the pressure of life, family, ministry...that tomorrow, she'll give up.

Somewhere in that room is Rescue. Is Victorious. Is Conqueror. But right now, he's Mr. Insecurity.

See, our lives are a gift to each other. We were designed in God's image, we were defined by God's definition.

And when I live by some other definition, it's not just me that loses out, it's you, it's the world.

That Saturday, the Spirit of God prompted me to ask Him a question. A question that Jesus had asked His disciples.

Let's look at Matthew 16. Jesus has this way of asking an easy question and then flipping it to go deep into someone's heart.

Matthew 16:13-19 [NIV]

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

People are always trying to define you, or at least understand your definition, because it reveals who you are, how you will act, what you will do.

If Jesus wasn't settled in who He was, He may have made an OAK tree grow out of his hand or changed the color of His hair. Instead, He reveals the strength of His identity by rebuking them.

Then in verses 7-11, He's basically saying "You don't understand yet?! What? Don't you know that I'm defined by being more than enough? The strength of my identity is more than enough and that means that around Me, you'll never have to worry about...having enough bread."

That's how identity or definition works – it always gets lived out. That's why it's so important.

Then in verse 13, "Who do PEOPLE..." and then "Who do YOU..."

Hear Jesus' response to someone who understands His definition: 18b "I will build My Church on that revelation..." There is power at stake when someone understands their identity. What happens when you know who you are? Everything happens!

And it's really important, before we begin to work really hard to figure out our definition, our identity, that verse 17 clearly tells us that it's not from human revelation, but by the Spirit of God.

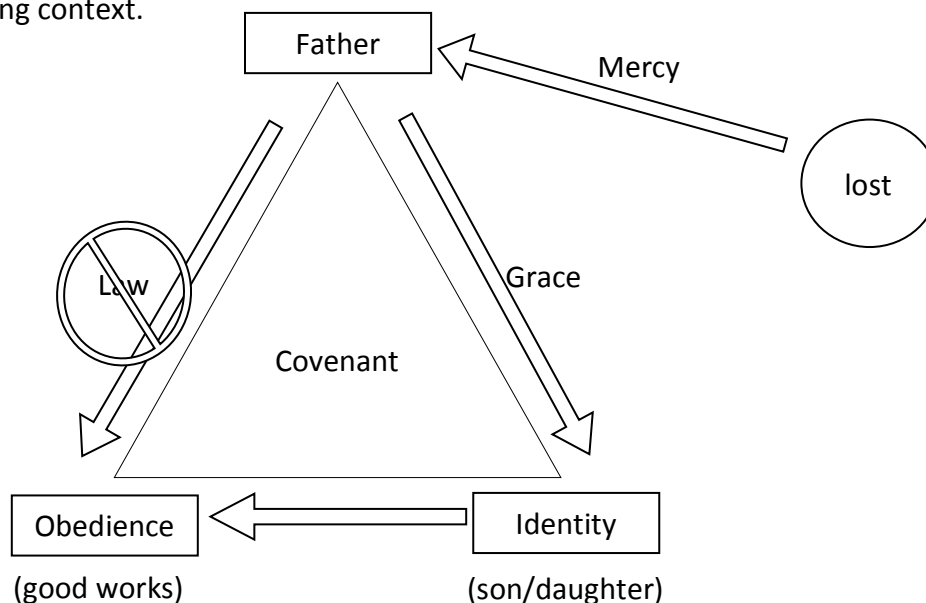
So that Saturday, I pulled a "Jesus move" and flipped His question around and asked Jesus "Who do You say that I am?" And everything changed.

Since that day, I've asked Him on various occasions to answer that question. I've heard: Victorious, Conqueror, Warrior General, Winner, Son

The Identity Triangle

You are worshipers! You are sons and daughters. You are growing in your knowledge of God. You are learning to give your love back to Your heavenly Father. You are practicing biblical expressions of worship.

But before you either a) ignore me because you think you'll never be able to be disciplined enough to earn your identity as a worshiper or b) you're already fretfully making a mental list of the things to be added to your duty roster to avoid being disqualified and found out to "not be a true worshiper" let me give you some very freeing context.



If you work at being obedient through the Law, you'll try to define your Identity by your Good Works. If I pursue Obedience before knowing my Identity, my good works (obedience) become my identity rather than who my Father says I am.

As C. J. Mahaney explains in *The Cross Centered Life*:

"Legalism is seeking to achieve forgiveness from God and acceptance by God through obedience to God. In other words, a legalist is anyone who behaves as if they can earn God's approval and forgiveness through personal performance."

Is this Biblical?

You might be saying: "I want to please You. I want to do everything I can do for You...and hope that it's enough." Let me share what I believe is God's pattern in this:

Matthew 3:16-17 (NIV)

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, **"This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."**

When Jesus was being baptized [before He had done ANYTHING], God gave Him His stamp of approval, His Identity and His blessing. He hadn't healed anyone. Hadn't prophesied. Hadn't cast a demon out. Hadn't raised the dead. Nothing. By the way we live, it would seem like that moment would've happened more like this: "This is my son, whom I love; He's really got potential. He may do great things. I'll let you know in a few years if He amounts to anything. He's new in ministry, but give Him a few years to prove Himself. But no, He says "I AM WELL PLEASED."

So it's in the context of being drawn to the Father, knowing that we're sons and daughters, dearly loved and pleasing, that we should obey, know what good works we can be doing, and journey forward as worshipers!

Marks of living from who God says I am

1. I know His voice
 - a. My sheep know my voice. Say "Baaaaaa" – John 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me..."
 - b. Listening for 8 things
2. I'm fearless
 - a. Worship starts being scared → "say what you need to say, no fear of man."
3. I will be "toward" each other
 - a. No longer comparing
4. I will be unique and bold about it
 - a. No longer just trying to fit in
5. I'll look for ways to partner, to walk in community
 - a. The Trinity
6. I'll take risks
 - a. I'll actually believe that I MUST do who I am
7. My schedule will reflect [reveal] dependence
8. I'll stop looking over my shoulder for approval
 - a. I'll walk in authority
 - b. My prayers will shift from "please help John" to "I release healing to John"
9. My life will be marked by rest
 - a. Cease striving and know that I am God [Psalm 46:10]
 - b. Because I will no longer have to strive to define myself by my good works and performance
10. ? → !

We hope you're encouraged by the Worship Fertilizer, a free resource from Ad Lib Music, *"in simple love and pure devotion to Jesus, we are eradicating isolation and burnout so that leaders bear much fruit!"*