



Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY

905 Clearfield Street * Morehead, KY 40351 * (606)776-7089 * www.gracemorehead.org

IDENTITY Brings INCREASE

Message preached on Sunday Morning, September 8, 2024

It is an amazing thing, to be born again!

I mean, for the most part, it is like starting a vacation to go to a funeral and half way there finding yourself headed to Disney.

A total change of direction.

The problem is that most Christians are then told to ENDURE the long trip...because it is going to be a bumpy ride (and I know about bumpy rides) :-)

The truth is...God never intended on the Christian life being a glorious ending filled with horrible stops along the way.

Ephesians 2:10 – “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

(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 long ago.”

Romans 8:37 – “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 – “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

2 Corinthians 8:9 – “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

1 Peter 2:24 – “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

Philippians 4:13 – “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

Philippians 4:19 – “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Romans 8:2 – “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

BELOVED: Instead of a road full of hardships (there will be battles), we need to understand that our road is full of victories.

There may be some bumps, but God will always cause us to be above and not beneath, to be the head and not the tail (Deuteronomy 28:13).

HERE IS THE MAJOR PROBLEM: Most Christians get born again and still relate more to the world than they do to the Word.

The love God...there is no doubt...they are headed to heaven...there is no doubt...but they are used to the problems with no real solutions.

Religion has even given up on the power of God and live by “you never know how things will turn out.”

ILLUSTRATION: We've all heard about the young circus elephants and how they are trained to keep from wandering away. As a young elephant, who is still developing its strength, the trainer chains it's legs to a stake in the ground. The young elephants will try to pull itself free from the stake, but because it's strength is still developing...it doesn't break free.

After the struggle ends, the trainer can tie the defeated elephant to a weak rope and a small stake and be fine. Although the elephant could EASILY break free from the feeble rope, he has already been conditioned that he cannot do it...so he doesn't.

BELOVED: Although God created us to be HIS GLORY...walk in VICTORY...and Jesus redeemed us from the curse...TOO MANY Christians are still walking beneath and not above...they are the tail and not the head.

2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

(PHILLIPS) – “For if a man is in Christ he becomes a new person altogether—the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new.”

BELOVED: When we are born again...we are a new person...

- * we have a new identity...
- * we are no longer what we used to be...
- * we no longer have access to what we used to have...
- * we have different promises connected to us.

So, you can see the problem that would be caused by continuing to identify with our old way of life. It is no wonder religion is what religion is.

In the Beginning

Genesis 1:26-29

- 26 And God said, **Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:** and let them have **dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
- 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
- 28 And God **blessed them**, and God said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.
- 29 And God said, Behold, I have **given you every herb bearing seed**, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

We are well versed in what God gave mankind in creation...we have focused on dominion, seed, blessed, etc.

HOWEVER: There is ONE thing, the first thing, that God understood WE HAD TO HAVE in order to increase...without this ONE THING, we would fail...**HIS IMAGE!**

We had to have our identity IN HIM in order to succeed. Without it we would definitely fail.

Genesis 3 – What did satan attack? Their identity! Vs. 5

OLD TESTAMENT LAVER...where the priests would wash...but it was made out of the looking glasses of the women...purpose, to remind them who they were! **Remind them of their identity.**

BELOVED: You MUST see yourself the way that God sees you. Otherwise, you will always live below where you should be living. Even though it is preached to you...lack of identity will keep you from enjoying.

The Children of Israel

It is amazing to read the account of the children of Israel in the wilderness.

They are on their way to the PROMISED LAND (not Heaven, includes Heaven).

NOTE: All the promises of God.

It is life in the Kingdom of God in the New Covenant.

ALSO: Should have taken them 11 days, but it took them 40 years...and many never made it.

Exodus 14:13-16

- 13 And Moses said unto the people, ***Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD,*** which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ***ye shall see them again no more for ever.***
- 14 The LORD ***shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.***

I LOVE this passage. Stand still and God will fight!

THERE IS A TIME TO STAND STILL...when you are wanting to go back.

However...

- 15 And the LORD said unto Moses, ***Wherefore criest thou unto me?*** speak unto the children of Israel, ***that they go forward:***
- 16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

MOSES told them to stand still and be quiet...and then he started crying out to God. Stressing!
"What are we going to do!"

GOD'S ANSWER: I told you to go...so go forward! So move!

God told them He was taking them to a land...so keep moving! Keep believing, keep possessing!

HOW DO WE POSSESS? Your ROD OF AUTHORITY! The Word!

When you work the Word...INSTANTLY things will begin changing for you...

NOTE: You may not end up on the other side for a while, but keep walking and you will see the other side.

QUESTION: When is the official other side?

ANSWER: When your enemies are crushed.

REMEMBER: Moses had an issue with confidence...but the ROD eliminated his lack and gave him confidence.

"Eliminate bad?" - covenant

LOOK HERE: God is beginning to work on their image.

430 years in captivity...they see themselves as captives.

PERHAPS: Single people who move out of mom and dad's house...getting help from mom and dad?!

They could NOT move into the PROMISED LAND while thinking like slaves. They had to be covenant minded.

REMEMBER: The last thing they did in Joshua before taking their first city? Renewed covenant!

God wanted His children more connected to HIS VOICE...His Word...than what was around them.

Moving Past the Red Sea

As they moved along after the RED SEA, God began testing their obedience. Their identity.

Were they still identifying with lack and Egypt or with His Word?

- * They got hungry...He fed them with manna!
- * They got thirsty...He gave them water from the Rock.

HOWEVER: What was their go to? Complain about their situation...exactly like they did in Egypt. Complaining was their fall back...unfulfilled promises! **Legitimate problems!**

BELOVED: Your question becomes what you do with the challenges you face.

- * Do you complain or do you trust?
- * You cannot do both!

BILL JOHNSON: "If God inhabits your praises, then who inhabits your complaints?"

BELOVED: When we fall back into complaining...it isn't a physical issue...it is a trust issue, a lordship issue...

WOODY WOODSON: "Whose your Daddy!"

It is an identity issue!

Exodus 19:3-6 (at Mt. Sinai)

3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 ***Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians***, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and ***brought you unto myself***.

NOTE: Their new identity! In Him!

They needed to hear this...but it didn't last. If disappears at the next battle.

BELOVED: That is why you need to hear the Word over and over again! Why does Pastor Thad repeat stuff? Because we MUST remember.

5 Now therefore, if ye ***will obey my voice indeed***, and ***keep my covenant***, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

NOTICE: What they will BECOME...in covenant with Him...their new identity!

- * Special treasure
- * Kingdom of priests – we minister straight to Him and Him to us!
- * Holy nation

So Moses takes this message to the people...and here is their response.

Exodus 20:18-21

18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, ***they removed, and stood afar off***.

19 ***And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die***.

20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is ***come to prove you***, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

21 ***And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was***.

"Thick darkness" – overwhelmed by God...God was so close...shadow of His wing!

NOTICE: Their response! We don't want to hear from God or we will die.

You talk to Him and tell us what He said.

Face to Face

REMEMBER: Exodus 19 – God wanted them to be a kingdom of priests!

Priests hear from God...face to face!

God wants His people to be face to face with him.

1 Peter 2:9 tells us that WE ARE a kingdom of priests, holy nation, peculiar people...because there is NOT division.

John 4:23,24 – “Must worship in spirit and in truth.”

“**Worship**” – to kiss

BELOVED: That is face to face!

God is calling His people to covenant relationships...communication...trust...

Vs. 20 – Come to prove! Test!

BELOVED: They cannot go into the PROMISES with the wrong identity. Without their identity IN HIM.

It is pretty clear that Israel rejects what God offered them in chapter 19.

They made the decision to let Moses and the priests be their mediators.

John 15:15 – “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”

Are you a servant or a friend.

THINK ABOUT IT: A servant is concerned ONLY with getting it right...getting stuff done.

Friends are concerned about heart, about relationships. Listening! Friendship!

The things you DO are out of relationship, not obligation!

NOTICE: What Israel wanted to do was to be His servant...never His friend.

- * Just give us a list of things to do...what not to do.
- * We will have the satisfaction of doing what needs to be done.
- * But RELATIONSHIP seemed scary.

That is RELIGION!

God wants relationship. Intimacy. In Him!

Where Did That Bring Them?

That brought them to never stepping into the blessings of God, fully.

Never enjoying the PROMISED LAND...40 years!

Deuteronomy 8:1-3 (pre-text to Deuteronomy 28)

- 1 All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.
- 2 And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, **to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart**, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.
- 3 And **he humbled thee**, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but **by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live**.

“**Humble**” – to correct, change the way they think

God had to change their dependency!

BILL JOHNSON shared this quote: “You fast, but satan doesn’t eat. You labor fervently, but satan never sleeps. The only dimension by which you can outperform satan is through humility, for satan has none.”

Humility is being totally dependent upon God. Dependent upon His Word...His voice!
 God worked on them for 40 years to get them to dependent upon His Word.
 To listen to Him.

Vs. 3 – He allowed you to go hungry...provided Mannah!

God's best isn't going from miracle to miracle, but living in His promises.

Deuteronomy 8:4 He reminds them of all that He did in the wilderness.

Deuteronomy 8:9,10

- 9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.
- 10 When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

God's best isn't going from miracle to miracle, but living in His promises.

Everything in life is connected to God speaking and us HEARING.
 Living IN HIM!

Deuteronomy 8:15-19

- 15 Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;
- 16 Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;
- 17 And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.
- 18 But thou ***shalt remember the LORD thy God:*** [our identity] for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.
- 19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

God's goal was NOT to get them to the promised land where He could feed them manna everyday.
 But for them to get there to live in more than enough.
 To work and increase! Live off their seed!

But they had to go through the school of the wilderness to get there.

- * They had to learn WHOSE THEY WERE!
- * They had to learn their IDENTITY!
- * They had to TRUST Him.