

Don't Forget Who You Are

Air Dates: November 14-18, 2022

Day One

Who are you? This is a very important question, but often we have the wrong answers. Even those of us who are born from above, who are dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, all too often let the world shove us into its mold and we define ourselves by the wrong criteria.

I did that for many years, and it led to an emotional roller coaster ride, to a self-focused life, and to a sinful lifestyle. It might be the cause of a great deal of the pain and struggle you are having in your life right now. If you're unhappy with who you are, wishing you were like other people, feeling cheated because you don't have what you want, feeling guilty because you haven't lived up to other's expectations or your own, it's highly likely you've fallen into this trap of identifying yourself incorrectly. You don't really know who you are.

I want to go to Scripture to show you who you are in Christ, just in case you've forgotten or maybe you never knew.

You are God's intentional creation.

You are not an accident of nature or a mistake your parents made. In Colossians 1:16 we read:

For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.

You were not just created by him, but for him! The depth of this truth is life-changing. You and I were created by the Almighty God, and we were created for him—for his purposes, for his reasons. That knowledge alone brings significance into our lives.

A dear friend who is now with Jesus came to saving faith as an adult, and I'll never forget how this truth transformed her life. Her mother had told her all her life that she was accident—an unplanned birth—and her birth had complicated her mother's life. So, coming to know Jesus meant she finally understood that she was not an accident. She was created by God for his purpose.

And that's true for you as well. So, don't forget who you are today! You are God's intentional creation—his handiwork.

Day Two

As Christ-followers, those who have been born from above, our identity is found in our relationship to God the Father through Jesus Christ. We saw that we are God's intentional creation, created by him and for him. Now, consider this:

You were created for his pleasure.

Remember the wonderful movie, *Chariots of Fire*, the story of that remarkable Olympic champion, the Scottish runner, Eric Liddle, who was a strong Christian committed to Jesus Christ. His missionary sister was concerned about his running career because she felt he was neglecting his calling and not

putting God first. But Eric said to his sister, "Oh, don't you see, Jenny. God made me fast and when I run, I give God pleasure."

He got it! He understood that God took pleasure in him. I love this verse from Zephaniah 3:17:

"The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."

Don't you love that imagery of God rejoicing over you with singing? We often rejoice and take delight in God through singing, but to think that he does the same over us. God takes pleasure in you. You should be able to verbalize how God has created you to bring him pleasure. Maybe you would say: "Because God made me a good listener, I bring God pleasure when I listen and care about others." Or "Because God made me a good organizer, I bring God pleasure when I organize events and run them smoothly." Or "Because God made me a speaker, I bring God pleasure when I give a good talk or make a good presentation."

It really doesn't matter how God has created you; we are all very different in our gifts and abilities. But we were all created for his pleasure. It is not pride on your part to recognize how God has created you. Eric Liddle gave God the credit for his fast body, but he also recognized that it was a gift from God to bring God pleasure.

Don't forget who you are! You were created for God's pleasure.

Day Three

We all recognize that a strong self-image is important to us. Knowing who we are and why we're here is a foundation that is really necessary for living a fulfilled life. I'm pointing out from Scripture just who you are if you are connected to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

We've seen that we are God's intentional creation, we were created for his pleasure, and now, don't forget that:

You were created for his glory.

Here are a few verses from that Isaiah 43:1-7:

But now, this is what the Lord says - he who created you...he who formed you...'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine...I am the Lord, your God...you are precious and honored in my sight, because I love you...everyone who is called by my name, I created for my glory....'

We admire the paintings of great artists because of their beauty and creativity. But who gets the glory for the painting? The artist, of course. We don't give the painting credit; rather we say, "This artist is wonderful; this artist is great." The masterpiece brings glory to the artist.

That's why you and I are here—to bring glory to our Creator. Maybe you're thinking, "But Mary, there's no way that I can glorify God because my life is a mess. You just don't know all the mistakes I've made, all the things I've done wrong. My past is too awful for me to be able to bring glory to God."

Ah, but don't you see, the less he has to work with, the more God gets the glory for the workmanship! And he is masterful at taking ashes and turning them into beauty. He is incredible at transforming ruined lives into testimonies of his greatness.

When your life has been transformed by the power of Jesus Christ, you bring glory to God. Don't forget, you were created for God's glory.

Day Four

If someone asks you, "Who are you?" what do you say? Your answer to that question is important, because having a firm understanding of who you are is critical to your ability to be all that God has created you to be. I'm looking to Scripture for a clear understanding of our identity when we are born from above. We are God's intentional creation, we were created for his pleasure and his glory, and when you come to saving faith in Christ, the great news is:

You are a new creation.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 we read:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

The day that you recognized your sinful state before God and accepted his Son as your own personal Savior, that very day you were transformed into a new creation. Now, this new person that you have become because of Jesus Christ is someone you *can* feel good about.

This new person is righteous. Not self-righteous, because in ourselves, the Bible says, all our self-righteousness is like filthy rags to God. But Philippians 3:9 tells us that we have a righteousness now which comes through faith in Christ, not a righteousness of our own. The righteousness of Jesus Christ is credited to you and God sees you wrapped up in his righteousness.

And here's more wonderful news about who you are in Christ:

You are no longer under condemnation.

Romans 8 tells us that the new person has been set free from the law of sin and death. It says you are no longer condemned for what that old person is or was. You're free! There's no condemnation against you! Good news! Great news! Incredible news! Feel good about yourself; you should.

You know, when you intentionally remember who you are in Christ and because of Christ, it truly makes a difference in the way you face life, the way you face the day ahead. Regardless of what's going on in your life, what other people think of you, even what you think of yourself, if you remember who you are, it will give you strength and encouragement. So don't forget: You are a new creation in Christ and you are no longer under condemnation.

Day Five

If I told you I was an heir of a very wealthy person—say Elon Musk, the richest man in the world—would you be impressed? That would mean I would be in line to get lots of money. Well, the truth is, I have more impressive credentials than that. When you and I are born from above through faith in Christ, our identity is truly incredible. Don't forget that:

You are an heir of God and co-heir with Christ.

That's what we read in Romans 8. If you're an heir of God, that means you're in line to inherit God's riches. And if you're a co-heir with Christ, that means you'll inherit equally with Christ of the Father's great riches. When you ask yourself "Who am I?", and the answer comes back "An heir of God and co-heir with Christ," then you have to say, "I have value."

If you are indeed born from above, if you and Jesus have a personal one-on-one relationship based on faith in him and repentance from your sins, then you've got the God of heaven and earth counting the hairs of your head, putting your tears in his jar, opening the door to his throne for you to enter whenever you please. Are you somebody? How much more important and significant can you be?

When you focus on who you are in Christ and his power in you, then you can have victory over the old self-images and inadequacies and the way you've seen yourself all these years. You can know freedom from that.

So, please, don't forget who you are. Let go of the old self-images that have been based on wrong information. Know who you are in Christ according to the Word of God, and just keep remembering it. Tell yourself who you are in Christ. Reprogram your mind to get rid of the old tapes which are Satan's lies, and program the truth of who you are in Christ and because of Christ.