

The Mystery of Identity

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Introduction

From the beginning, the question has been; who are you? Or rather, what are you? The lack of the answer to this question is the root of every wrong choice mankind has ever made. The issue of identity—what and how we think about ourselves, is so central to the human experience that it is the foundation of every temptation the enemy throws at us. Who or what decides who you are. Are you a product of the experiences around you? Or are you who and what the Creator says you are.

How do we choose to do good or bad?

- The choices we make stem from what we _____ about ourselves, and the world around us.
- The _____ recognized this from the beginning—but so did God.
- God called all of creation good—but He called mankind _____
_____ We were very good because the image of God was in us.
- Then, temptation came. Satan told them if they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would know good from evil.
 - The _____ was that they would become like God. But God had already done that.
- But they had forgotten their _____.

Adam failed, so a second Adam came.

God took on flesh and grew up like anyone else. Then He went out to the Jordan River where His cousin John was baptizing people. After He was baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon Him in the form of a dove. An audible voice came from Heaven, saying, I am so happy that You are My Son!

Then the Spirit prompts Him to go out into the wilderness and fast for 40 days. At His weakest point, the tempter comes. "If you are the Son of God..."

- The temptation was not to make the stone turn into bread; it was to make Jesus _____ that He was the Son of God.
- During the second temptation, Satan would offer Jesus every kingdom in the whole world.
- Again the third temptation attempts to place doubt in Jesus' mind about His _____.

The temptation is the same now

"Will God really back you up? Are you sure you are who God says you are? Are you sure you have what God says you have? If so, then demonstrate it—authenticate it!"

We know who we are because of what Jesus did. We are:

- Chosen
- Made in the _____ of God
- Accepted
- Assured in the _____ of His love
- Assured that God is for us and will never leave us

This is the _____ that we face—who are you?

- Is Christ really in you?
- Is God really with you?
- Will God really back you up?

Dream—

This was an actual series of dreams that caused _____ and doubt in the dreamer, until they got up and used the weapon they had with them all along.

- Guns are often a metaphor for authority in dreams.
- The enemy was trying to cause them to think that they didn't have the authority to stop his attacks.

Who are you? Do you know how to answer that question?

In life, each of us will face temptations. They can spring from

- Our flesh, desires
- The world around us
- Satan

Our _____ to all of these comes from one place; we don't know who we are.

Will we listen to the questions that ask if we are good enough, smart enough, religious enough, _____ enough, strong enough, _____ enough or will we listen to the word of God?

Will we try to earn _____ or _____ through our own efforts, or will we trust that He is our strong tower?

Who we really are is found in His words over us.

- We're made in His image.
- Beloved son or daughter
- The one who makes God _____—this is who we really are!

The enemy has been trying to hold us back from God's love and acceptance from the very beginning.

- Implying that God is holding something back from us
- Suggesting that we have to _____ to get His love.

Some have given up.

- They've accepted what they have come to learn from their education, culture, and experiences and are running from God.
- Giving into their desires, they run from one tree to the next, desperately seeking _____.
- Eventually, all that they had hoped for fails them. They have to try one more time, or give in to the despair that they have been ignoring.

Some work harder.

- They've found a religious system that works for them.
- They do all the right things.
- They serve and sacrifice in their churches, mosques, or synagogues, wondering if they've done enough.
- Fighting their own desires with their own _____ so they don't offend a god that's looking over their shoulder

Neither of these will ever find peace.

Both of them are trying to find their identity from somewhere other than the word of God.

- One defines themselves by their desires, emotions, or _____.
- The other by their religious activity

Both are performing for the gods they perceive.

- The laws of nature
- The god of religion
- Both _____ gods—suggested by the original deceiver

There is only one God.

- One way to please Him
- Only one way to know who you truly are.

He is the way, the truth and the life. His name is Jesus.

- He denied Himself for the will of the Father because you _____.
- He endured the weight of the world pressing down on Him, trying to conform Him while saying no to the expectations of society.
- Fulfilling the plan of God because you can't.
- He looked satan in the eye and spoke the truth of Scripture to him, saying, "Satan, it is the Lord your God that you shall worship!"
- Jesus took the full brunt of all the weight on the cross, taking the weight off of us so you and I could find our identity in the _____ of God.
- He rose from the dead and from His throne in heaven, invites you to join in His victory.

You can find your identity in Jesus, and when you do, the full inheritance for His obedience becomes yours. And you become His.

Is this who you are?