

Date : 5 July 2020

Theme : Back to the Basics

TOPIC : Understanding who am I

Passage: Romans 8:14-17; 31-35

Key verse: ... *those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God... For... you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry "Abba, Father". The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children...heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. **Romans 8:14-17**.... He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all – how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?... **Romans 8:32.***

Introduction

In five days' time we head for the polls to choose our leaders. We must pray for the right leaders to lead our nation. I recall a Beirut millionaire whom I had met in Hamburg 40 years ago. He said that all his properties and luxurious cars were destroyed and burnt and that he had no country to return to due to indecisive leaders in his country. That's why it is important for us to pray before we go to the polls this week because in an instant, a wrong leader can overturn a nation which had taken the founding fathers decades to build.

The identity a person assumes can determine the destiny of those around him. That was why God challenged Jacob, who was to be father of the 12 tribes of Israel, to confront his deceiving nature. (Jacob's identity, closely tied with his name meaning *deceiver*, was for his whole life plagued by deception; he deceived his dad to obtain his elder brother's inheritance but then his uncle tricked him into marrying his older daughter first before he could marry Rachel). After Jacob wrestled with God at Peniel, God changed his name to *Israel*, meaning Prince with God.

1 Why does a right spiritual identity make for success in life?

- a) As illustrated in Manasseh's wicked choices *2 Chronicles 33:1-9*
 - He decided to reverse the religious changes of his father, Hezekiah. We must always pray for the next generation.

- Imitated one of the worst kings of Israel, Ahab and embraced the same state-sponsored worship of Baal and Asherah;
- Turned the temple of God into a idolatrous brothel, dedicated to Asherah worship through ritual prostitution; corrupted worship at God's temple, by making it a place of idol altars, dedicated to his cult of astrological worship, an attraction of the Babylonian empire;
- Sacrificed his own son by fire to the Canaanite god molech;
- Invited Satanic influence to his people by practical soothsaying, to consult witchcraft, spiritists and mediums.

b) Repentance led to God's undeserved blessings *2 Chronicles 33:10-20*

It is important for fathers to impart the fear of God into our children's identity to increase their chance of repentance when they are older.

- God spoke to both the people and Manasseh but they rejected His word *2 Chronicles 33:10*
- God sent him into exile to Babylon where he was humiliated, afflicted
- God heard him when he humbled himself *2 Chronicles 33:12-17*

2 How do we get our true identity?

a) Who do we choose as our spiritual Father (is it the Father of lights *James 1:17* or the Father of lies *John 8:44*)

- By identifying with Jesus through baptism into His body. Only in Jesus are we adopted into God's family. God accords us with the highest accolade by calling us sons of God and lavished His great love on us.

b) Consider the great cost to the Father to make us His sons?

he who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all ...Romans 8:32

3 What is the worth of my identity in Christ (benefit to my life)?

a) What is the difference between mentality of a hired hand and a son

b) What is the net worth of sons of God? *Romans 8*

- Heirs, joint heirs with Christ *Romans 8:17*
- Security of God working out everything in my life *Philippians 2:13*
- Security of God supplying all things *Romans 8:32*
- No condemnation

c) What kind of God in whom our identity rests?

- If God is for us, who can be against us? No one!

- Will God not graciously give us all things? Yes He will!
- Who will bring any charge against us whom God has chosen? No one!
- Who is he that condemns? No one!
- Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? No one in heaven, hell or on earth!

3 Application

a) What is your sonship worth?

Before he became Prime Minister, Lu Bo Wei was a businessman. He paid 12,000 pieces of gold to buy sonship for his friend Ying Chew, a minor prince of the emperor's household. Lu paid to the first wife, the empress, asking her to acknowledge his friend to be her first born. When the emperor died, Lu's friend ascended to the throne. When his friend died, the new emperor's only son, Qin Shi Huang, became China's most famous emperor in 200BC.

What is your sonship worth? How far will you go to keep it?

b) How do we demonstrate our value as sons of God? *Philippians 2:13-15*

- Shine through our good works and words
- Behave as sons of God
- Function as peace makers and not hinder the works of the gospel.