Myself: Who Am I Before God?

- My Identity: Created in God's Image
- My Worth: Precious to God
- My **Responsibility**: A Free Moral Agent
- My **Need**: Rest in Christ

One of the most important questions we can ever ask is: "Who am I?"

The world offers many answers:

- some say, we are simply advanced animals,
- others say, we are products of chance,
- still some say, that we define ourselves, by our achievements or feelings.

Yet the Bible tells us, the real truth.

If we want the true answer to "who I am", I must look not to man's ideas, but to God's word.

Let us now hold up the mirror of God's Word, not to see others, but to see "Myself: Who Am I Before God", which is the title of the lesson.

When I use the word 'Myself' throughout this lesson, I am not speaking of me personally, but inviting each one of us, to take God's Word as a mirror and ask, 'What do I see in myself?' This is a lesson of personal reflection, meant for each of us.

First, let us establish "who I am", by nature.

I. My Identity: Created in God's Image

A. God Made Me a Person, Not a Thing

Unlike animals or objects, man was created in God's image. This defines, my identity.

 "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." (Gen.1:27)

This verse reminds us, that every human being is more than flesh and bone. We are reflections of God's image.

Solomon, after exploring all of life's pursuits, concluded with this eternal truth...

- "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole *duty* of man. ¹⁴ For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Ecc.12:13-14)
- "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psa.8:4)

My **Identity** is not meaningless.

I am a person Created in God's image, Accountable to Him, Designed for fellowship with Him.

Since we are persons created in His image, we must also recognize the unique value, God has placed upon us.

B. My Value, is Above the Animals

God did not make me equal with the beasts. Jesus Himself said I am of greater value.

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Matt.6:26)

Here Jesus tells us plainly: in God's eyes, human life is more valuable than the birds.

John wrote to assure believers, that fellowship with one another is possible, only because, we share fellowship with God.

• "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1Jn.1:3)

Who am I? I am not a thing, not an animal, but a person

—Made in God's image, Valued above all creatures, Created for fellowship with Him.

II. My Worth: Precious to God

A. My Security, is In God's Love

If I am made in the image of God, then surely I must also ask—does my life matter? Am I of value? The Bible teaches that every one of us, is precious to God.

And one of the greatest proofs of our worth, is the security we can find in His unfailing love.

All people long for security.

But true security, comes only from knowing, God loves me.

- The Bible says, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom.5:8)
- "Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee:" (Isa.43:4a)
- "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us, from the love of God, which is IN Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom.8:38-39)
- "But even the very hairs of your head, are all numbered.
 Fear not therefore: ye are of more value, than many sparrows." (<u>Lk.12:7</u>)

Even in my sin, God loved me enough, to give His Son.

- So, cast "...all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." (1Pet.5:7)
- "For to me to live IS Christ, and to die IS gain." (Phil.1:21)

My security, is not found in money or strength, but in God's steadfast love.

And if I am secure in His love, then I must also see...

B. My Significance, is In Serving God

My life matters, when I serve Him.

After describing the victory of the resurrection, Paul urged Christians not to give up, because their labor is not wasted.

- "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is **Not** in vain, **IN the Lord**." (1Cor.15:58)
- "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;
 Remembering without ceasing, your Work of faith, and Labour of love, and Patience of hope
 IN our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." (1Thess.1:2-3)
- "For we are **His Workmanship**, <u>created IN Christ Jesus</u>, unto **Good Works**, which God hath before ordained, that we should **Walk** in them." (Eph.2:10)

My worth is not based on what people think, but on what God has said. He gives me **Security** in His love and **Significance** in His service.

III. My Responsibility: A Free Moral Agent

A. I Must Choose, Whom I Will Serve

God gave me the ability to choose.

I am not forced—my destiny depends on my choice.

Joshua said long ago,

- "if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, CHOOSE you this day, whom ye will Serve...
 but as for me and my house, we will Serve the LORD." (Josh.24:15)
- "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore CHOOSE life, that both thou and thy seed may live." (Deut.30:19)
- "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man Soweth (or choose), that shall he also Reap." (Gal.6:7)
- "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly, than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man, the measure of faith." (Rom.12:3)

God helps us through His word, giving us strength to do His will. Yet, the choice is mine alone. I cannot blame others or circumstances.

If I must choose whom I will serve, I must also remember that...

B. I Am Accountable to God

...for those choices.

Accountability is unavoidable. God sees all things, and I must answer for my life.

The Hebrew writer reminds us, that nothing escapes God's notice; His judgment, will be perfectly informed.

- The Bible says, "Neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him, with Whom we have to do." (Heb.4:13)
- "So then every one of us, shall give account of himself, to God." (Rom.14:12)
- "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2Cor.5:10)
- "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth... but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment." (Ecc.11:9)

God gave me freedom, but with freedom, comes responsibility. I must choose wisely, for I will give account to Him, for my life.

Finally, after considering My Identity, My Worth, and My Responsibility, I must face,

IV. My Need: Rest IN Christ

But beyond rest for the soul, Christ also promises a peace, that cannot be found in this world.

A. My Heart Finds No Rest, Without God

Without God, life is restless. Only Christ can satisfy the soul.

Jesus said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.
 Take My yoke upon you, and Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find Rest unto your souls." (Matt.11:28-29)

Notice that Jesus' rest is not unconditional

- —it comes to those who **Accept** His yoke and **Learn** of Him, in **Obedience**.
- "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And <u>let him that heareth say</u>, Come.
 And <u>let him that is athirst</u> Come. And <u>whosoever Will</u>, let him Take, <u>the water of life</u> Freely." (<u>Rev.22:17</u>)

My need is Not money, fame, or earthly success—it is Christ. And only IN Him, do I find eternal rest.

But rest IN Christ, is not limited to relief from burdens—it also includes a deeper blessing:

B. Christ Gives Peace, the World Cannot Give

Before His crucifixion, Jesus assured His disciples, of a peace different from worldly peace.

• He said, "Peace I leave with you, My **Peace** I give unto you: Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (Jn.14:27)

Paul reminds us, this peace surpasses human understanding.

He said, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the Peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus." (Phil.4:6-7)

Christ not only gives rest, but a peace that guards the heart, in every circumstance.

And finally,

C. Rest IN Christ, Prepares Us for Eternal Rest

Heaven is described as the ultimate rest, for those who serve God faithfully.

"There remaineth therefore a Rest to the people of God. ¹⁰ For he that is entered, into His Rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. ¹¹ Let us Labour therefore, to enter into that Rest, lest any man fall, after the same example of unbelief." (Heb.4:9-11)

John describes heaven, as relief from the burdens of earthly labor.

He said, "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me,
 Write, Blessed are the dead which die IN the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may Rest from their labours; and their Works, do follow them." (Rev.14:13)

Earthly rest IN Christ, points forward to the eternal rest, awaiting the faithful in heaven.

V. Some Final Thoughts

When I look at "Myself", in the mirror of God's Word, what do I see?

- I see my **Identity**: a person created in God's image.
- I see my Worth: precious, secure, and significant in His love.
- I see my **Responsibility**: a free moral agent, who must choose and give account.
- I see my **Need**: rest only IN Christ.

The Lord calls each of us to respond.

 "He that <u>believeth</u> AND <u>is baptized</u> shall be SAVED; but he that believeth not, shall be damned". (Mk.16:16)

Will you come to Christ today, in full obedience?

What about those who were once strong in the faith—zealous, faithful, eager to serve

—but over time, the fire has dimmed?

Some attend worship, but their hearts are far away

—they are present in body, but absent in spirit.

The Lord warned of this very danger, when He spoke of those who,

• "draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have removed their heart, far from Me". (Isa.29:13; cf. Matt.15:8)

The Hebrew writer gives us this warning:

 "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed, to the things which we have HEARD, lest at any time, we should Let them Slip". (Heb.2:1)

A drifting heart is a dangerous heart,

for sin hardens and blinds, until repentance seems impossible.

• "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an Evil Heart of Unbelief, in Departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be Hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin". (Heb.3:12–13)

To those who have grown careless or indifferent, the Lord calls:

• "Remember therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and REPENT, and DO the first works". (Rev.2:5)

Like the prodigal son who came to himself and returned to his father (<u>Lk.15:17–20</u>), anyone can return to God today and find mercy.

The time to return is Not tomorrow!

- "Today, if ye will HEAR <u>His voice</u>, Harden Not <u>your hearts</u>". (<u>Heb.3:15</u>)
- God is patient, "Not Willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance". (2Pet.3:9)

But if one waits too long, it may be everlasting too late.

rce: Adapted from sermon outline by Derrel Shaw Edited & formatted by Michael Wright