

Title: Loved by Jesus

Topic: Identity

Introduction

- **Personal Story:**
 - Climbing story-unnoticed/unaware wounds.
 - Internal Wounds can often go unnoticed in our lives unless something reveals them.
- **Personal Vulnerability:**
 - What God has been doing in my life
 - Revealed how fragile and misplaced my identity was.
 - My identity had been placed in my becoming a father. It wasn't until I experienced rejection that I realized that I was actually doing things for love instead of doing things from love.
 - God began to heal by showing me that when he reveals he is meaning to heal and bring change. Most importantly reminding me about my identity in Christ.
 - In Christ, I am a Child of God. As a child of God, I am loved.
 - "Define yourself radically as one beloved by God"
-Brennan Manning
 - "Your true identity is as a child of God"-Henri Nouwen

Transition: A truth we must grasp and hold onto deals with our identity. A fragile and misplaced identity will leave us vulnerable and tired of searching for a stable source of identity and value.

Main Idea: Your identity as a child of God is that you are loved by Jesus and welcomed into intimacy.

Scripture Reading: John 13:21-25

Prayer

Scripture: John 13

1. Pre-text
 - a. V:1-20 Jesus washes disciple's feet
2. Post-text
 - a. V:26-30 Jesus announces his betrayal by one of his disciples
 - b. V:31-35 A new commandment to love one another as he loves them
 - c. V:36-38 Jesus foretells Peter's denial
3. Text in Focus
 - a. V:21 The emotional state of Jesus: Troubled in his spirit
 - i. As he knows he will be betrayed and the weight of the betrayal is heavy due to who it is. One of his own. One who has walked with him had responsibility within the disciples, and seen all that he had done.
 - ii. In the midst of that moment, there is a description of one of the disciples. It is this disciple and this moment of familiarity and intimacy that I want to focus on. It cannot be reduced to a historical moment. Look at how this passage reads in various versions.
 1. "One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side" v:23 (ESV)
 2. "There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved." (NASB 1995)
 3. "One of the disciples, the one Jesus loved dearly, was reclining against him, his head on his shoulder." (Message)
 - b. V:23 A Description of John by John
 - i. Disciple: As one who follows Jesus
 1. We often think of following Jesus in terms of ethics, and behavior. Love God and Love People.
 2. We often miss following Jesus in the relationship he had with God, the Father.
 - a. "Just as **the Father has loved Me**, I have also loved you; abide in My love." John 15:9
 - b. Jesus knew he was loved, that he was God's beloved.

- ii. Whom Jesus **Loved**
 - 1. Loved: *agapaō* (verb) to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly
 - a. He identified as one loved by Jesus rather than one who loved Jesus
 - b. The confidence of John to describe himself as the “one whom Jesus loved” multiple times throughout the gospel of John (John 19:26 Crucifixion, John 21:20 Post Resurrection)
- iii. Reclining at Jesus’ Side
 - 1. He is on Jesus’ side, shoulder, bosom
 - 2. Throughout scripture, it is a sign of being blessed. Of closeness and intimacy.
 - a. Jesus himself is described as being at the bosom of the Father.
 - 3. The physical intimacy, comfort at display, the familiarity and confidence to be reclining “on Jesus” close enough to perhaps feel and hear his heartbeat at a time Jesus was troubled in his Spirit.

Transition: What description would you give? How do you identify yourself? Would you say you are loved by Jesus? Would you dare to draw that close to Jesus and lay your head on him?

- Two things I want to focus on in this passage.
 - a. Identity: You are loved by Jesus
 - b. Intimacy: You are welcomed

Body/Points

1. Identity: You are loved by Jesus

- a. Five lies of identity (from Henri Nouwen):
 - i. I am what I have (don't have)
 1. Possessions, Wealth, Relationships
 - ii. I am what I do
 1. Career, Title
 - iii. I am what other people say or think of me
 1. Whether it be good or bad
 - iv. I am nothing more than my worst moment
 1. Failures
 - v. I am nothing less than my best moment
 1. Achievements

b. Reflective:

- i. What defines you? How do you define yourself? How have others defined you?
- ii. Identity goes together with our desire to be accepted, to be loved. So when we built our identity on any of these five lies it leaves us with fragile identities.

2. Intimacy: You are Welcomed

- a. Factual and Experiential
 - i. Knowing about Jesus' love
 - ii. Knowing Jesus' love
- b. "Only in a relationship of the deepest intimacy can we allow another person to know us as we truly are." -Brennan Manning
- c. Jesus knows us as we truly are, loves us, and welcomes us into intimacy.
- d. A moment of revelation through fatherhood.

Conclusion:

- Barriers: Identity and as being loved and receiving the welcoming of intimacy, knowing we are loved frees us to seek intimacy with God
 - Self-Importance → Idolized our image-pride
 - Self-Worth → Broken image-shame

Transition: What we **have** can be taken, what we **do** can be lost, what other people say or think about us changes, our worst moments are plenty, our best moments come and go. These are not stable sources for our identity.

Gospel Solution

- My identity as a child of God rests on what Jesus has done. I am accepted and loved and welcomed into intimacy by God's grace.
 - This identity is something we receive because of what Jesus has done. Regardless of the ups and downs of my spiritual life. I cannot earn this identity I can only receive it.
- “If my relationship with God was dependent on how much I love God, I’m in trouble. But my relationship with God is actually dependent on how much he loves me” -Erwin McManus
- **Your identity as a child of God is that you are loved by Jesus and welcomed into intimacy.**