

Know Who You Are - The People of God

Lesson Text: **1 Peter 2:9-10**

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Do you have an identity crisis? Do you know someone who does?
1. Definition: Identity Crisis - "A psychosocial state of disorientation and role confusion occurring especially in adolescents because of conflicting pressures and expectations. A state of disorientation and role confusion occurring in a social structure, as in an institution."
(Webster's 2nd New Riverside University Dictionary)
 2. Sometimes people become confused about who they are.
 3. It can happen to Christian people.
 4. It can happen to congregations.
 5. The Bible clearly defines and describes a Christian's identity.
- B. **1 Peter 2:9-10** - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.
- C. A person who gets hit on the head will sometimes suffer a temporary memory loss, commonly known as amnesia. As he tries to clear the fog from his mind, he wonders, "Where am I?" "Who am I?" Those questions remain unanswered until he can overcome his amnesia.
1. Illustration: Larry Joe Lipham – Thanksgiving Day – our senior year of high school – Stevenson, Alabama. Fullback. He either hit hard or was hit hard. Came over to me – was talking strange – wasn't aware of where he was or what he was doing – I remember being with Larry and his mother at North Jackson hospital late that afternoon. Thankfully, Larry began to come around.
 2. On occasion, Christians can suffer from spiritual amnesia.
 - a. Because of a blow from sin or one of the devil's attacks, confusion fills the mind.
 - b. When we suffer from spiritual amnesia . . .
 1. We forget where we are heading on our journey . . . Heaven
 2. We forget what we are here to do . . . serve, worship, and honor God.
 3. We forget who we are . . . the people of God.
 4. We forget Whose we are . . . God's own precious possession.
 5. We forget the strength & power that empowers us . . . the power of God.
 3. Congregation, know who you are!

- a. You are a people who have obeyed God's commands for people in this age of time.
 - b. You are a people who have obeyed the Gospel of Christ and have been washed in the blood of the Lamb of God.
 - c. You are a people who have been added to the Lord's church.
 - d. You are God's children . . . God's sons . . . and God's daughters.
 - e. You are a people going to Heaven after a while longer upon this earth.
 - f. You are God's ambassadors, God's representatives to a lost a dying world.
 - g. You are God's hands to lift burdens from others.
 - h. You are God's hope for evangelizing the world for Him.
 - i. You are forgiven . . . fully cleansed . . . sanctified, that is set apart for God's service.
 - j. To God you are special . . . and to God you are loved.
4. Look again at our lesson text . . . **1 Peter 2:9-10** - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.
 Do you see it?
- a. You are a chosen generation.
 - b. You are royalty . . . a royal priesthood.
 - c. You are a holy nation.
 - d. You are His own special people.
 - e. He called to you come to Him
 - f. You have now obtained the mercy of God.
 - g. You are not what you use to be . . . and you aren't fully what you are going to be.
5. 1 Peter 2:9-10 suggests:
- a. **Know what kind of people you are. v. 9**
 - b. **Know what your purpose is . . . proclaim His praises. v. 9**
 - c. **Know what has happened to you. v. 10**

KNOW WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE YOU ARE.

- A. **Christians become a "chosen generation" . . . a chosen or elect race.**
1. Peter takes this term from the Old Testament Book of Isaiah. **Isaiah 43:20-21** - . . . My people, My chosen. This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise.

2. The idea is that of an entirely new group of people that differs from all other groups of people on the earth.
 - a. God is not changing facial and skin features that are associated with groups and races of people, but rather, He is changing people inwardly.
 - b. God is changing people within their hearts . . . minds . . . and lives.
3. This new group of people of God will experience new things.
 - a. The person is born again . . . spiritually speaking. **John 3:3-5** - . . . Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.
 - b. The person becomes a new creation. **2 Corinthians 5:17** - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 - c. The person renews his mind toward the things of God. **Romans 12:2** - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
 - d. The person becomes a new person in God's eyes. **Ephesians 4:24** – And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.
3. Christians are different from all other people in the world.
 - a. We are different by choice.
 - b. We are different by faith.
 - c. We are different by obedience.
 - d. We are different by knowledge of the Bible.
 - e. We are different by the one hope of Ephesians 4:4
 - f. We are different by the manner of life we live.
 - g. We are set apart from the world . . . and set apart for God.

B. Christians become a royal priesthood.

1. A priest has access to God in the service of God.
 - a. It appears that people have always felt the need to have priest, a body of people who would dedicate their lives to God and who would then carry the needs of men before God. In essence, a priest is a person who has access into God's presence, who represents men before God and God before men. He is a mediator between God and men: he offers sacrifices and makes prayer to God for men. The priest was always looked upon as the one person who could carry a man's case before

God and God would accept the man because of the priest's intercession.

- b. We see this order in the Old Testament.
- c. We see this order in a number of prominent denominations today.
2. When one obeys the gospel of Jesus Christ, God makes that person a royal priest. Every one of us who are Christians are royal priests.
 - a. God gives us direct access to His presence through prayer.
 - b. We can approach God anytime. We don't have to go through anyone else to do that.
 - c. We live, and move, and have our very being in His love and care.
2. Note the word "royal."
 - a. This simply means that we are priests of royalty . . . priests who belong to the Sovereign Majesty of the universe, the King of kings and the Lord of lords.
 - b. Webster's definition of "Royal" has among its meanings, "the rank of monarch," and "relating to, or in the service of a kingdom."
 - c. Our service is in the Kingdom of God . . . The Church.

C. **Christians become a "holy nation."**

1. This is indeed a very meaningful description of Christians. Think about it!
 - a. God is building a new nation of people.
 - b. He is drawing people from all nations of the world, and creating a new nation of people.
 - c. What is that nation of people?
 1. It is the Church. Matthew 16:18
 2. It is the family of God. Ephesians 3:15
 - d. Please observe how God has been planning for all this.
 1. **He prepared A New Covenant for this new nation of people.**
 - a. **Jeremiah 31:31-34** -

31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a **NEW COVENANT** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah --

32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD, ' for they all shall know Me,

from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

- b. **Hebrews 9:15** - And for this reason He is the Mediator of the **NEW COVENANT**, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.
 - c. **Hebrews 12:24** - . . . Jesus is the Mediator of the **NEW COVENANT**
2. **He prepared a new name for the new people in this new nation.**
- a. **Isaiah 62:2** - The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, And all kings your glory. You shall be called by a new name, Which the mouth of the LORD will name.
 - b. **Acts 11:26** - . . . And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.
 - c. **Revelation 21:6** - . . . "Behold I make all things new."
2. The word "holy" means separated, set apart, and different.
- a. Any person who is willing to separate from sin, evil, his/her past life and obey God commandments and will, and set his life apart unto God, God will take that person and make Him a citizen of His holy nation.
 - b. What a joy to know that god thinks so highly of us that He would do this and include us in it.

D. Know what your purpose is . . . to show His praises.

1. The statement, "that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" means to speak forth . . . to tell out . . . to publish abroad . . . to set forth.
2. The word "praises" means virtues, excellencies, and the supreme and eminent qualities of God.
3. The message we are to share is the glorious message of salvation.
 - a. In the words of a rather well-known song: "It is no secret what God can do. What He's done for others, He will do for you."
 - b. That's our message, telling others that God can translate them "out of darkness into His marvelous light."
4. Jesus said in **John 8:12** - "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."
 - a. God will deliver man out of darkness into the light through Jesus Christ Himself.
 - b. God has saved us out of the darkness of sin and death and has delivered us into the kingdom of light. He has done this through Jesus Christ, His only Begotten Son.

- c. We need the zeal of the Psalmist when he wrote in **Psalm 66:16** - Come and hear, all you who fear God, And I will declare what He has done for my soul.

CONCLUSION:

- A. How blessed we are to be identified with God. How blessed we are to
1. To be a chosen generation.
 2. To be a royal priesthood.
 3. To be a holy nation.
 4. To be God's own special people through Jesus Christ.
 5. To be no longer in darkness.
 6. To be in His marvelous light
 7. To not be what we use to be . . . and to know where we are going in eternity.
 8. To be able to tell others that God is calling them to be a part of His new nation.

B. The following drama was originally reported by Peter Michelmore in the October 1987 Reader's Digest

"Normally the flight from Nassau to Miami took Walter Wyatt, Jr., only sixty five minutes. But on December 5, 1986, he attempted it after thieves had looted the navigational equipment in his Beechcraft. With only a compass and a hand-held radio, Walter flew into skies blackened by storm clouds.

'When his compass began to gyrate, Walter concluded he was headed in the wrong direction. He flew his plane below the clouds, hoping to spot something, but soon he knew he was lost. He put out a mayday call, which brought a Coast Guard Falcon search plane to lead him to an emergency landing strip only six miles away.

"Suddenly Wyatt's right engine coughed its last and died. The fuel tank had run dry. Around 8 P.M. Wyatt could do little more than glide the plane into the water. Wyatt survived the crash, but his plane disappeared quickly, leaving him bobbing on the water in a leaky life vest.

'With blood on his forehead, Wyatt floated on his back. Suddenly he felt a hard bump against his body. A shark had found him. Wyatt kicked the intruder and wondered if he would survive the night. He managed to stay afloat for the next ten hours.

"In the next morning, Wyatt saw no airplanes, but in the water a dorsal fin was headed for him. Twisting, he felt the hide of a shark brush against him. In a moment, two more bull sharks sliced through the wafer toward him. Again he kicked the sharks, and they veered away, but he was nearing exhaustion.

'Then he heard the hum of a distant aircraft. When it was within a half mile,

he waved his orange vest. The pilot dropped a smoke canister and radioed the cutter Cape York, which was twelve minutes away: 'Get moving, cutter! There's a shark targeting this guy!'

'As the Cape York pulled alongside Wyatt, a Jacob's ladder was dropped over the side. Wyatt climbed wearily out of the water and onto the ship, where he fell to his knees and kissed the deck.

'He'd been saved. He didn't need encouragement or better techniques. Nothing less than outside intervention could have rescued him from sure death. How much we are like Walter Wyatt!" **Our outside intervention is Christ!**

C. God's Plan For Man's Salvation