

“What God wants us to know about ... Feeling Belittled!” Pastor Kervin Raugust

May 25-26, 2013

THE MAIN THING: Feelings of belittlement arise out of words spoken to, or about us, or even what we think about ourselves. If this continues for a long time it becomes ‘normal’. Yet this is not how we are meant to live. To overcome this we must have the vision for learning a new language, and the intentionality of pursuing it with action, discipline, rigorous practice and patience. Jesus spoke of this language (his teachings) and we must hold to them. If you do hold to the language of truth, you will come to know it in your life and the truth will set you free.

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: *Opportunities to connect and pray as a group*

1. Think of a time you were belittled. Describe how you felt.
2. Is there a particular “I AM” statement of Jesus that encourages you?

PURSUE GOD: *Time that is devoted to the Word of God*

Observation and Reflection

1. Read John 8:31-32 in a number of different translations and compare the different verbs used to describe how we are to “hold” to Jesus’ teaching. How do the different word pictures expand on what Jesus means?
2. In addition to John 8:31-32, now also read John 8:44 and John 10:10. How do the two fathers compare in what they desire for us? Why are we so easily enticed by lies? (see also 1 John 2:16)
3. Read Mark 12:30-31 and 1 John 4:19-21. How does the command to love God compare and relate to how we are to love our neighbour?

Application

1. Of the four declarations of who we are in Christ, which ones are easiest and hardest for you to hold on to and why?
2. How do we put these truths of our identity into practice?

As an added resource on who we are in Christ see:

<http://www.theshoreline.org/CMS/uploads/My%20Identity%20in%20Christ.pdf> (copy and paste into browser).

THE WORD (NIV)

John 8:31-32

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³²Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

John 8:44

You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Mark 12:30-31

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Child of God – John 1:12, 1 John 3:1

Ambassador of King – 2 Cor 5:17-20

Lion-Hearted Knight – Eph 6:10-18

Member of Royal Priesthood – 2 Peter 2:9

What God wants us to know about ... Feeling Belittled! Pastor Kervin Raugust

May 25-26, 2013

Identity theft is a wide-ranging problem. Should you be a victim it can be costly in time, money and many other things. An oft asked question is 'Who am I?' Identity is who we are as a person. How we see ourselves can be seen in what we talk about, wear, own, who our friends are, and how we use our talents, time and money. 'Who I am' is formed by life's experiences, external factors or teachings that can leave our identity confused and distorted. Thus, discovering our true identity matters greatly. We know one identity from the five senses: the physical side. The other side, equally important but unseen, is the spiritual. Have you felt that the good life is elusive, that you do not measure up, or are weary of striving to be more? The root of this is feeling belittled.

Feelings of belittlement arise out of words spoken to, or about, us, or even what we think about ourselves. If this continues for a long time it becomes 'normal'. Yet this is not how we are meant to live! To overcome this we must have the 'vision' for learning a new language, and the 'intentionality' of pursuing it with action, discipline, rigorous practice and patience. Jesus spoke of this language (his teachings) that must be held onto (for it is opposed) in John 8:31-37. The religious leaders of the day were constantly questioning Jesus' identity. Not wanting to believe who He said He was, they belittled Jesus throughout His time on earth. He knows how you feel. Wherever He went Jesus reminded people of who He was. In John, Jesus gave 45 different 'I AM' statements (ex. John 8:23, 5:43, 6:35, 11:25, 14:6). The matter of Jesus' identity is vitally important for us. If we accept who He is we will be convinced to learn the language He speaks, and this is essential to experiencing the freedom He promises.

Jesus spoke of two fathers, each of whom offer an identity to those in their family. There are people who are unable to understand the language of truth because they are sons of a father who is evil – the devil (John 8:44, 10:10). Hearing lies has no effect on our identity until we agree with them. Then we enter the world of feeling belittled. The other Father, God has children who live the language of truth and have abundant life (John 10:10). Jesus' words are important. He knew from the most important commandment (Mark 12:30-31) how a person was made up. Abundant life is living in freedom in all 5 domains of our being.

1. Your Emotions (Heart). Our identity is affected by our emotions where we often feel belittled first. The deepest wounds to our identity reside in our hearts. Hold to the teachings of Jesus and we will be set free from bondage to emotional wounds.
2. Your Thoughts (Mind). Our identity is affected by our thoughts. Images and ideas steer our lives like a rudder of a ship. As a person thinks, so one goes and so shall their identity be. In the Bible God often bids us to 'remember', 'fret not', 'forget not' etc. Not all ideas and images are good for us. Hold to the teachings of Jesus and we will be set free from untrue ideas and images.
3. Your Body (Strength). Our body has an effect on our identity. 'Body language' says much about us, and our appetites can cause us to use our bodies for good or harm. Bodily appetites are given to us by God to be satisfied in accordance with the language of truth, not to do what they want when they want. Indulgence is being ruled by our appetites. Hold to the teachings about Jesus and be free from the bondage to lies about our bodies.
4. Your Spirit (Soul). The soul is the life centre of our identity and is a battle zone. Feelings of belittlement are an attack at the core of your being. Hold to the teachings of Jesus to free us to go beyond the circumstances of life and form greater depth of character.
5. Your Relationships (Neighbour). Life is tested in our relationships. Rootedness in the first four areas is essential to withstanding the tests that come while in relationships with people. Jesus spoke of being rooted in love, the essence of which is that God is for us! Hold to the teachings of Jesus to be set free to develop deep relationships with God and with one another.

If you hold to the language of truth you will come to know it in your life and the truth will set you free. To guard against feeling belittled we must learn the language of truth and declare it. Because I am who God says I am, I am a) A Child of God; therefore, I am loved unconditionally (John 1:12, 1 John 3:1), b) An Ambassador of the King; therefore, I live with His authority (2 Corinthians 5:17-20), c) A Lion-hearted Knight; therefore, I fight evil influences with His power (Eph 6:10-18), d) A Member of the Royal Priesthood ;therefore, I am not alone (2 Peter 2:9).