



Message Notes

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Wholeness Series | *Being Your True Self* | Pastor Zach Prosser

Colossians 2:9-10, The Passion Translation

For he is the complete fullness of deity living in human form. And our own completeness is now found in him. We are completely filled with God as Christ's fullness overflows within us.

Jesus' temptations in the wilderness give us an outline of 3 false identities or masks that the devil offers to each of us. They show the choices we must make to remain faithful to our God-given unique life and identity. Before the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness begins, we are given a snapshot of Jesus' understanding of who He is at his baptism.

He had yet to perform miracles or to die on the cross for the sins of humanity. He hasn't "done" anything to earn or achieve His Father's love. He receives a very experiential affirmation that he is loved by His Father for who He is.

Living and swimming in the river of God's deep love for us in Christ is at the very heart of true spirituality. Soaking in this love enables us to surrender to God's will, especially when it seems so contrary to what we can see, feel, or figure out ourselves.

Only the love of God in Christ is capable of bearing the weight of our true identity.

Ephesians 2:8-10, TPT

8 For by grace you have been saved by faith. Nothing you did could ever earn this salvation, for it was the love gift from God that brought us to Christ! 9 So no one will ever be able to boast, for salvation is never a reward for good works or human striving. 10 We have become his poetry, a re-created people that will fulfill the destiny he has given each of us, for we are joined to Jesus, the Anointed One. Even before we were born, God planned in advance our destiny and the good works we would do to fulfill it!

JESUS' IDENTITY CONFIRMED AT HIS BAPTISM

Matthew 3:13-17, The Passion

Then Jesus left Galilee to come to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But when he waded into the water, John resisted him, saying, "Why are you doing this? I'm the one who needs to be baptized by you, and yet you come to be baptized by me?" Jesus replied, "It is only right to do all that God

requires.” Then John baptized Jesus. And as Jesus rose up out of the water, the heavenly realm opened up over him and he saw the Holy Spirit descend out of the heavens and rest upon him in the form of a dove. Then suddenly the voice of the Father shouted from the sky, saying, “This is my Son—the Beloved! My greatest delight is in him.”

1. Immersed in Water

a. **John’s Recognition - Jesus the Son of God**

- i. Behold the Lamb of God
- ii. John’s need of baptism by Jesus: v. 14 – “I need to be baptized by you”

b. **The Humility of Jesus – Jesus the Son of Man**

- i. Jesus’ response: v. 15 – “It is right to do all that God requires”

ii. **Philippians 2:5-8, The Message**

Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn’t think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn’t claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a crucifixion.

c. **Immersion into Water Itself**

- i. 30 years of age
- ii. Meaning of water baptism
- iii. Surrendered wholly to the plan of redemption

2. The Spirit Descends like a Dove

- a. **Noah** (Gen 8:8-12) Sent the **Dove** – end of the flood & beginning of a new day
- b. Taking on the form of a dove – sign of the **end old order** and a new day
- c. Visible sign of who Jesus is
- d. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit / Jesus was marked by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13)

3. The Father speaks audibly “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased”

- a. Triune God
- b. This is the son of my love “Beloved”
- c. Identity: Love, Ownership, Delight, Connection, Relationship

It seemed that almost everyone had expectations to place on Jesus. Jesus was secure in His Father’s love, in himself, and was able to withstand enormous pressure.

He disappointed his family.

Mark 3:21: *And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”*

He disappointed the people he grew up with in Nazareth.

Luke 4:28-29: ²⁸ *When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. ²⁹ And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff.*

He disappointed his closest friends, the twelve disciples. They projected onto Jesus their own picture of the kind of Messiah Jesus was to be. They quit and left him. Judas, one of his closest, responsible for the money and care of everyone, “stabbed him in the back.” Peter denied and cursed someone out over whether he had even been with Jesus. Thomas was unsure Jesus was who he said he was.

He disappointed the religious leaders. They eventually attributed his power and teaching to demons.

THE TEMPTATION OF FALSE IDENTITY

Text: **Matthew 4:1-11**

Led by the Spirit

1. The way of testing establishes our identity and builds our faith

James 1:2-4, NIV

² *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,^[a] whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

2. Not all “testing” and trials are of the devil

FALSE IDENTITIES

1. I am what I Do (Performance)

Matthew 4:3: *If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread*

Culture asks the same question: What have you achieved? How have you demonstrated your usefulness? What do you do?

We are tempted to determine our value by what we do and what we have accomplished—family, school, church, relationships, career, wealth

False performance identities based on diagnoses and families of origin [My family was angry so I’m angry; I’m of this ethnicity so it means I act this way; I have this diagnoses so I behave this way]

Elijah running from Jezebel

1 Kings 19:3-4; 10

³ Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. ⁴ But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers."

The Lord spoke to him in the still small voice on the mountain.

2. I am what I Have (Possessions)

Matthew 4:8-9: *The devil...showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."*

Our culture measures success by what we own. Marketers now spend more than 15 billion dollars each year seducing children and adolescents to believe they must have certain toys, clothes, electronic devices, etc. Their very identities depend on it. As adults, we measure ourselves through comparisons: Who has the most money? The most beautiful body? The most comfortable life? Our sense of worth often is tied to our positions at work and the money or perks that come with the title. Who has the best education and from what school?

David & Goliath

1 Samuel 17:25-26

*And the men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? Surely, he has come up to defy Israel. And the king will enrich the man who kills him with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel." ²⁶ And David said to the men who stood by him, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the **armies of the living God?**"*

3. I am what others Think (Popularity)

Matthew 4:6: *If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down*

At this point Jesus was invisible. No one knew him. Most of us place a higher premium on what other people think than we realize. What will I say or not say in a conversation? What school will my child attend? Who will I date? What kind of career will I pursue?

True freedom comes when we no longer need to be somebody special in other people's eyes because we know we are lovable and good enough.

Paul & Apollos

1 Corinthians 3:3-7

³ *for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?* ⁴ *For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?* **1Cor. 3:5** *What then is Apollos? What is Paul? servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each.* ⁶ *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.* ⁷ *So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*