

As the Father Has Sent Me



Identification (Part 13)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as we continue to explore together all the treasures contained in our special theme for this Easter season: Identification.

In my talks this week I've been explaining how, through faith, we are identified with Jesus in all that followed His death: that is burial, resurrection and ascension. The Scripture says in Ephesians, chapter 2, we were dead in our transgressions and our sins but God, in His mercy, made us alive with Christ, raised us up with Christ and seated is with Christ. The key word all through, the key phrase is "with Christ." It's totally dependent upon our identification with Jesus. I emphasized right at the beginning of my messages with week the gospel centers in Christ and what He did. There's no human contribution to the gospel. But when we are identified with Christ and what He did, then that identification takes us all the way out of the tomb into resurrection and even into ascension, to the very throne of God.

As I explained in my last two talks, it's like being in the elevator. Once you get in the elevator, you go wherever the elevator goes. It doesn't depend on your own power or ability or cleverness. It just depends on the ability of the elevator. And the elevators destination is your destination. So why settle for less. If the elevator is going to the throne, why do you want to step off before that? That's at least my philosophy and my viewpoint and I want to tell you it works in experience.

Well, today I'm going to speak about that very question. About the practical outworking of our identification with Jesus in our daily living as believers or as disciples. How does it affect the way we live? What kind of a person should we be?

I'm going to commence with what I consider to be one of the most exciting and also challenging statements of the New Testament. It's found in John chapter 20, verses 19-22. It describes the first appearance of Jesus after His resurrection to His disciples collectively in a group. It happened on the evening of the Sunday of the resurrection. The disciples were shut away in a locked room for fear of the Jews and suddenly Jesus was right there in their midst. This is what happened:

> "On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' [That's the typical oriental greeting. That's still what they say today, 'Peace be with you.'] After he said this, he showed them his hands and side, [to prove to them that that was the very same person that they had seen hanging on the cross] The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you!' [And I'm sure they need the repetition of that message, Peace. They're hearts were pounding. They were half fearful, half afraid. They could scarcely believe what was happening. They needed that reiteration, 'Peace be with you!'] Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! [and these are the words I want to focus on] As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" (NIV)

And through that inbreathed breath of the resurrected Christ in a totally new way the Holy Spirit entered into each of those disciples and through the Holy Spirit the very life and nature of Jesus was imparted to them. And on the basis of that impartation of His own life and nature Jesus was able to say to them those astonishing words, "As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." The Father sent Jesus into the world to fulfill a unique task which no one else could fulfill. Jesus fulfilled the task and was about to return to the Father, but He didn't leave Himself without representatives on the earth. He said to those disciples, "Just in the same way the Father originally sent Me to fulfill a special task, now in turn I am sending you, My disciples to fulfill a special task. I will be returning to the Father but I'll be leaving you on earth as my representatives to fulfill a special task." And He said, "Just as the Father sent Me, I am sending you."

What is included in that phrase, "Just as the Father sent Me"? I want to turn to another passage a little earlier on in John's gospel to illustrate that. John chapter 14, verses 8-10. Philip said to Jesus:

> "Philip said, 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.' Jesus answered: 'Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.'" (NIV)

That brings up three aspects of the relationship of Jesus with the Father. First of all, Jesus did not speak His own words, but He spoke words that had been committed to Him to speak by the Father who sent Him. Secondly, Jesus did not do anything in His miraculous ministry through His own power or ability. He said, "Really, it isn't I who am doing it, but it's the Father who is performing His works through Me." And thirdly, and this is even more amazing, to see Jesus was to see the Father. He said, "You don't need to see the Father. You've seen Me. And if you've seen Me, you've seen the Father."

Let me recapitulate. First, Jesus spoke words proceeding from the Father. Second, the Father performed His works through Jesus. Third, to see Jesus was to see the Father. Now, here's the application. Jesus said, "Just as the Father sent Me, I'm sending you. In other words, the relationship that existed between the Father and Me, will be the same relationship that exists Me and you My disciples."

What does that mean? It means that exactly what was true of the relationship of Jesus to the Father should be true of us to Jesus. First of all we do not speak our own words. We speak words proceeding from Jesus. Secondly, it isn't we who do what's done in any significant sense, it's Jesus in us performing His works, just as it was the Father in Jesus performing His works. Third, to see us is to see Jesus. Isn't that a challenge and a responsibility?

Let me recapitulate. First, we do not speak our own words. We speak words proceeding from Jesus. Second, we don't do our own works. It's Jesus in us that does the work. Third, if anybody has seen us, he's seen Jesus. That's to be His representatives on earth at this time.

So we are Christ's official representatives here on earth. This same truth is beautifully presented by Paul in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verses 17-21.

> "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the

> righteousness of God." (NIV)

First of all, it starts with a new creation. This is passing out of death into a new life. If anyone is in Christ he's a new creation. Then in that new creation we become the official representatives of God and of Christ on the earth. God has given to us the ministry of reconciliation. Just as God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, so now Christ is in us reconciling the world to God. We are Christ's ambassadors, Paul says. As though God were making His appeal through us. "We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." And the basis of the message is this very theme we're taking, Identification. This is the only basis for reconciliation. And so the closing verse says:

> "God made Him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (NIV)

Notice, two essential points. We cannot become Christ's representatives until we have first been transformed ourselves. We must enter into the new creation. We must be created anew. The old creation has no message for itself. It's the new creation that has the message.

And second, let me emphasize once again our message is based on that divine exchange that took place at the cross, when God made Jesus who had no sin for us, to be sin that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Think of yourself as a reconciled reconciler. First, you have to be reconciled to God through Christ, then you become God's agents and messengers of reconciliation through Christ to the rest of this world.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be explaining further practical implications of our identification with Jesus.

Radio Program

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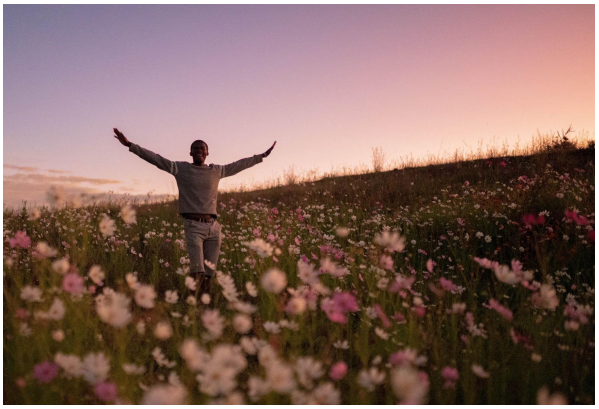

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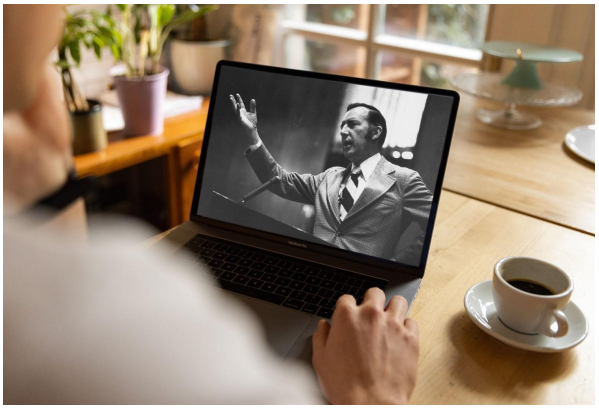

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