



SERMON OUTLINE NOTES

I. IDENTITY AND THE SELF

- A. Identity is our answer to the question “who are you?”
 - 1. Examples of sources that shape our identity: groups, hobbies, career, personality, relationships, achievements, personal origins
 - 2. Our identity is our self-conception
- B. Identity has turned in inward toward a psychologized self
 - 1. An inner psychologized self prioritizes feelings, intuition, and happiness
 - 2. The modern self is our understanding of my life’s purpose, what constitutes the good life, and how I express myself to others and the world
- C. Once discovered, the main goal of life and the source of the true fulfillment is the expression of our identity
 - 1. Decisions are made, and beliefs are adopted that serve the self
 - 2. The expressive individual is often lonely and exhausted

II. THE GOSPEL CHALLENGES THE WAY OF EXPRESSIVE INDIVIDUALISM (ROMANS 14:7-9)

- A. No one lives and dies all to oneself (**Romans 14:7**)
- B. Jesus has lived and died and lived again that he would be Lord over all (**Romans 14:7, Matthew 28:18–20; Ephesians 1:20–22**)
- C. So, we ought to live and die to the Lord, not ourselves (**Romans 14:8; Colossians 1:9–10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–8**)

III. EVERY IDENTITY LONGS TO BE RECOGNIZED (1 CORINTHIANS 1:2; 12:2-14, 27)

- A. Why do we feel the need to publicly express our identity?
 - 1. We were not made to live in isolation, but in community (**Genesis 2:18**)
 - 2. We are all desperate to belong, because a self can only be described in reference to other selves (**Philippians 3:3–6**)
 - 3. To have an identity is to be recognized by others (**Acts 11:21–23**)
- B. Our desire to have a unique identity, to feel valuable, loved, and wanted and to be recognized by others to whom we belong is found in Christ
 - 1. In Christ, we have a new and chief identity that gives shape to every other identity (**Colossians 2:20–3:4, 9–17**)
 - 2. We are individuals, yet we belong to one another (**1 Corinthians 1:2; 12:12–14,27**)
 - 3. Jesus recognizes us (yes, you!) (**Luke 7:36–50**)

SERMON REFLECTIONS

1. What is an identity? How would you answer the question, “who are you?”

2. Sources of identity have turned inward toward feelings, intuitions, and happiness. How has this affected our understanding of meaning and purpose in life? Why do you think our society has turned inward for meaning?

3. What is an expressive individual? Why is expressing oneself so important?

4. What does it mean to live “authentically”? What are some ways you can see this “authentic” way of living today?

5. How does the gospel challenge the way of expressive individualism? How does the gospel satisfy our longing for recognition and belonging?

6. How would you explain what it means to have your identity in Christ? What might that look like in everyday life?

ROMANS 14:7-9

For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:2

To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: