



pneuma church

relate · renew · release

status update



What are you doing?|

#struggles

#struggle2breal

- Last month, there were one hundred and seventy million in one month with the word *#Selfie* somewhere in it.
- Over-55' s taking more than those aged 18-24.
- A survey taken by Samsung in Britain found that 17% of men and 10% of women take selfies.
- That is 880 billion images a year.

- Now we are a selfie-obsessed culture.
- The more filtered our lives become, the more we show others the “me” we want them to see, the more difficult it is to be authentic.
- All this leads to #Struggles 2 B REAL.

The foundation of our **#Identity** is
who Jesus says we are.

- **Acts 3** ⁶ Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” ⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong.
- Their identity in Christ determined their actions. Peter said, “what I have I will give you.”

Moses: Exodus 3 ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

- ¹³ Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?”¹⁴ **God said to Moses, “I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”**

- In Jesus Christ we who are born of God have the unspeakable privilege of knowing Yahweh as our Father — I AM WHO I AM — the God:
- Who exists.
- Whose personality and power is owing solely to himself.
- Who never changes.
- From whom all power and energy in the universe flows.
- And to whom all creation should conform its life.

- Only after you secure (anchor) WHO YOU ARE, will you clarify what your purpose is... WHAT YOU ARE TO DO.
- So to find your Identity...
- Number 1: Who is Jesus to you?

- Number 2: There are 3 separate parts of the Foundation of each person's IDENTITY:

1. Uniqueness

2. Belonging

3. Worth/Value

- Uniqueness:
- Each of us need to feel that we are unique, special, significant.
- Uniqueness is RELATIVE – If you are alone, you cannot be Unique. The very word requires by definition that there is more than one.
- The world says you gain your uniqueness through DIFFERENCES.
- The key to differences is comparison.

- So we have the “er” – “biggER, fastER, strongER, prettiER, thinnER...richER.”
- In God’s kingdom, uniqueness comes through receiving God’s purpose and plan for your life.

2. Belonging:

- Each of us has a tremendous need to belong.
- We all desire a sense of connectedness.

- The world says: “you gain your belonging through **Alikeness (being like another... thus acceptance)**”
 - ✧ Race
 - ✧ Social/ economic status
 - ✧ Special knowledge – doctors, lawyers, pastors, etc
 - ✧ Religion
 - ✧ Nationality
 - ✧ #
 - ✧ Likes on Facebook

- In the Kingdom of God it is not so. God has woven into the fabric of divine relationships two incredible levels of belonging:
 1. **Husband – wife – family.** God created Adam in a perfect environment, perfect fellowship, but said, **“It is not good for man to be alone.”**
- So God designs this incredible unit and called it **MARRIAGE. Within this unit the relationship bears fruit of their joint identities.** Children that look like both of them. They look into the faces of two people who look like them and thus provide a great sense of belonging.

- The second unit designed to provide a sense of belonging is “the Body of Christ.” Your local church.
- **Ephesians 5:** ³⁰ for we are members of His body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² **This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.**
- This acceptance is not done by what you have done for the church, but it is determined by what He has done for you.

3. Value/ Worth

- Each of us has a need to feel we are of Value.
- While significance is relative (comes from relationship), worth does not come from another; it is intrinsic. **Worth is an internal sense of value.**
- The world says you get your worth from **WHAT YOU DO... And thus, your purpose.**

- In the Kingdom of God worth and value are not connected to your purpose, but rather connected to our critical need for approval.
- Approval from whom? How do we achieve this approval?
- In the world we seek approval from those who have succeeded in a field where we have desires or passions.
- In the Kingdom, worth is connected with Approval from God the Father.

- Built into each of us is the need for our Father's approval.
- “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” I greatly approve of Him.
- Jesus' ministry started after He received the approval of the Father.

This is not a conditional approval based on successful performance, but rather this is an expression of love originated out from the heart of the Father.

How do you come into such a relationship with the Father, such that you can experience this fantastic unconditional approval from the Father?

Remove the Veil

- “We are not like Moses, who ... put a veil over his face” – watch this – “to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away.”
- He put a filter over his face so they would not see the truth, that the glory of God was starting to fade away.
- But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the Old Covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.

- **2 Corinthians 4:4** “The god of this [world] has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so they cannot see the [truth].” The veil was covering their eyes from seeing the truth of who Christ is in the New Covenant. **16** But whenever anyone turns to the Lord – this is good news – the veil is taken away.
- **17** “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. **18** And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His image with [everlasting] glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

- So, what do we do now? We've got, literally, a generation that is being trained on filtering their image. Image management – “Here's the ‘me’ I want you to see.”
- At this point, normally what I would do is give you some practical suggestions, like **try to be yourself** – good advice. **Don't use a filter every time** – good advice. **Try not to care what people think** – good advice.

- I want to give you godly advice. This is why you're here, to hear from God's Word today.

Only Christ can remove the veil.

- **2 Corinthians 3:16:** "But Whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away."
- There are some of you, you are here for this moment, because you've been turning to everyone and everything else for affirmation, and you still don't have it.

- When you turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. And suddenly you're not getting your approval from their likes, but you are getting it from His love!
- You are no longer living for the approval of people, but you are living from the approval of God! You recognize, *I am acceptable to God, through Jesus. I am the righteousness of God, in Christ. Christ is sufficient, all in all.*
- When I realize He is all that I have, suddenly I realize He is all I need, and I don't need approval from someone else, because I've got approval from Him!

- My identity is not in how many followers I have. My identity is in Who I am following, and I am following the Lord Jesus Christ.
- “17 Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18And we all, who... **How do we get unveiled faces? When you turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away,** “and we ... with unveiled faces” are being transformed into the image of Christ, not for the approval of people, but for the glory of God, because we are not called to elevate self, but to die to self, and follow Jesus, to give Him glory in all that we do. And that’s how we follow Jesus in a selfie-centered world.

- We all want to know who we are. We seek and search and try to “find ourselves.” Many of us have taken personality tests and other assessments. We learn that we are a lion, a beaver, an ENFP, an activator, a competitor, a high I, high D. But as helpful as those tests can be, have you ever stopped to ask, “**What does God think about me? Who does He say that I am?**” In all my years as a Christian, I had never asked the question quite this way until recently. And what I found is that God has a lot to say about what He thinks about us — a whole Bible full. But if we could summarize it in a short space, here’s how it might sound:

- **You Are Valuable:**

- I am the Creator and you are my creation. I breathed into your nostrils the breath of life **Genesis 2:7**. I created you in my own image **Genesis 1:27**. My eyes saw your unformed substance **Psalms 139:16**. I knit you together in your mother's womb **Psalms 139:13**. I know the number of hairs on your head, and before a word is on your tongue, I know it **Matthew 10:30; Psalms 139:4**.

- You are fearfully and wonderfully made **Psalm 139:14**. You are more valuable than many sparrows **Matthew 10:31**. I have given you dominion over all sheep and oxen and all beasts of the field and birds of the heavens and fish of the sea **Psalm 8:6–8; Genesis 1:26, 28**. I have crowned you with glory and honour as the pinnacle and final act of the six days of creation **Psalm 8:5; Genesis 1:26**.

- However, from the very beginning, you exchanged the truth about me for a lie. You worshiped and served created things rather than me, the Creator **Romans 1:25**. You have sinned and fallen short of my glory **Romans 3:23**. Just as I said to Adam and Eve, the penalty for your sin is death **Romans 6:23; Genesis 2:17**. And in your sin, you were spiritually dead **Ephesians 2:1**. You were children of wrath, living as enemies to me **Ephesians 2:3; Romans 5:10**. You turned aside from me. You became corrupt. There is none who does good, not even one **Psalms 14:2–3**. What you deserve is my righteous judgment **Psalms 7:11–12**.

- And yet, in my great love, I gave my unique Son, that all those who believe in Him will not perish but have everlasting life **John 3:16**. While you were still sinners, Christ died for you. While you were still hostile toward me, you were reconciled to me by the death of my Son **Romans 5:8, 10**. Sin doesn't have the last word. Grace does **Romans 5:20**.
- Now everyone who calls on the name of Jesus will be saved **Romans 10:13**. You who have believed are born again **1 Peter 1:3**. I have adopted you **Ephesians 1:5**. You are children of God, heirs of God **1 John 3:2**; **Romans 8:16–17**. You are no longer orphans. You belong to me **John 14:18**; **1 Corinthians 6:19**. And I love you as a perfect Father **1 John 3:1**; **Luke 15:20–24**.

- **You Are New:**

- In my eyes, you are a brand new creation. The old has passed away; the new has come **2 Corinthians 5:17**. Sin is no longer your master, for you died to sin and are now alive to me **Romans 6:11**; **Ephesians 2:4**. You are finally free from the slavery of sin and death. There is now no condemnation for you **Romans 8:1–2**. All your sins are forgiven **1 John 1:9**. All your unrighteousness has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus **1 John 1:7, 9**.

- You are now righteous in my sight with the very righteousness of my perfect Son **Romans 4:5**. You've been saved by grace **Ephesians 2:8**. You've been justified by faith **Romans 5:1**. You are utterly secure in me; nothing will be able to separate you from my love in Christ Jesus **Romans 8:39**. No one is able to snatch you out of my hand **John 10:29**. And I will never leave you nor forsake you **Hebrews 13:5**.
- **You Have My Spirit**
- You not only have a new Father, but also a new family of brothers and sisters (**Luke 8:21**). You are now part of the people of God (**1 Peter 2:9**). And together the life you now live is by faith in my Son (**Galatians 2:20**).

- Look to Jesus. Keep your eyes on him. He is the author and perfecter of your faith (**Hebrews 12:2**). Christ is in you by my Spirit, and you are in Christ (**John 15:5; Colossians 1:27**). Stay close to Jesus. Abide in Him (**John 15:4**). For your life is found in Him (**John 14:6; Colossians 3:3–4**). To live is Christ and to die is gain (**Philippians 1:21**).
- Don't live by your own power or understanding. No, live by my Spirit within you (**Zechariah 4:6; Proverbs 3:5**). Remember, I have given you the Holy Spirit to be with you and in you (**Romans 5:5; John 14:17**). The Spirit will guide you into all truth, help you to obey me, and empower you to do my work (**John 16:7, 13; Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:16**).

- **You Will Be Transformed:**
- As you seek me and see more of my glory, I am transforming you into the image of my Son (**2 Corinthians 3:18; Exodus 33:18**). One day you will be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet sound (**1 Corinthians 15:52**). When Jesus appears, you will be like Him, because you shall see Him as He is (**1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29**).
- You will be delivered from your body of death through Jesus Christ, and your dwelling place will be with Me (**Romans 7:24–25; John 14:3**). And I will wipe away every tear from your eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore (**Revelation 21:3–4**).

- You will drink from the spring of the water of life without payment, and I myself will make for you a feast of rich food and well-aged wine **Revelation 21:6; Isaiah 25:6**. You will enter my rest, inherit the kingdom I've prepared for you, and step into fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore **Hebrews 4:9–11; Matthew 25:34; Psalm 16:11**. But most of all, you will see my face and be with me where I am **Revelation 22:4; John 14:3**.

- **You Represent Me:**

- Therefore, walk in a manner worthy of your calling **Ephesians 4:1**. You are no longer darkness, but light in my Son. Walk as children of light **Ephesians 5:8**. You are the light of the world, a city set on a hill **Matthew 5:14**. I have called you **2 Peter 1:3**. I have chosen you **Revelation 17:14**.

- You are now a saint, a servant, a steward, and a soldier (Romans 1:7; Acts 26:16; 1 Peter 4:10; 2 Timothy 2:3). You are a witness and a worker (Acts 1:8; Ephesians 2:10). Through Jesus you are victorious (1 Corinthians 15:57). You have a glorious future (Romans 8:18). You are a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20). You are an ambassador for my Son (2 Corinthians 5:20).