

Fulfilling Ministry: The Ministry of Identity

The heart cry of all ministry is simply come back to God.

From The Beginning

Genesis 1:26-27

New Living Translation

26 Then God said, "Let us make human beings[a] in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth,[b] and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

27 So God created human beings[c] in his own image.

In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:15-17

New Living Translation

15 The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. 16 But the Lord God warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden— 17 except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die."

Genesis 3:8-11

New Living Translation

8 When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man[a] and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees. 9 Then the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

10 He replied, "I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked."

11 "Who told you that you were naked?" the Lord God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?"

Genesis 3:22-24

New Living Translation

22 Then the Lord God said, "Look, the human beings[a] have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!" 23 So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. 24 After sending them out, the Lord God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

- Banished and sent out!

Romans 5:12

New Living Translation

12 When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

The Identity Cycle

Ephesians 1:3-5

New Living Translation

Spiritual Blessings

3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. 4 Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

- God makes no mistakes, He had a wonderful plan before the beginning!
- God love us and chose us!
- He planned to bring us to Himself through Jesus Christ!
- To bring us back holy, without fault, and adopt us into His family.
- The plan gave Him great pleasure.

Romans 5:15-21

New Living Translation

15 But there is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ. 16 And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. 17 For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.

18 Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. 19 Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous.

20 God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant. 21 So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Come Back to God

2 Corinthians 5:18-21

New Living Translation

18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. 19 For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. 20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,[a] so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Jesu Identifies Himself to Us

John 3:1-15

New Living Translation

3 There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. 2 After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, “we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you.”

3 Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again,[a] you cannot see the Kingdom of God.”

4 “What do you mean?” exclaimed Nicodemus. “How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?”

5 Jesus replied, “I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.[b] 6 Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life.[c] 7 So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You[d] must be born again.’ 8 The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can’t tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can’t explain how people are born of the Spirit.”

9 “How are these things possible?” Nicodemus asked.

10 Jesus replied, “You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don’t understand these things? 11 I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won’t believe our testimony. 12 But if you don’t believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13 No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man[e] has come down from heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.[f]

Believing in Jesus

John 3:16-21

New Living Translation

16 “For this is how God loved the world: He gave[a] his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. 17 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

18 “There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God’s one and only Son. 19 And the judgment is based on this fact: God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. 20 All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. 21 But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.[b]”

Matthew 16:13-17

New Living Translation

Peter’s Declaration about Jesus

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”[a]

14 “Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

15 Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?”

16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah,[b] the Son of the living God.”

17 Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John,[c] because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being.

Romans 10:5-10

New Living Translation

Salvation Is for Everyone

5 For Moses writes that the law’s way of making a person right with God requires obedience to all of its commands.[a] 6 But faith’s way of getting right with God

says, “Don’t say in your heart, ‘Who will go up to heaven?’ (to bring Christ down to earth). 7 And don’t say, ‘Who will go down to the place of the dead?’ (to bring Christ back to life again).” 8 In fact, it says,

“The message is very close at hand;
it is on your lips and in your heart.”[b]

And that message is the very message about faith that we preach: 9 If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.

Receiving Our New Identity

2 Corinthians 5:14-17

New Living Translation

14 Either way, Christ’s love controls us.[a] Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life.[b] 15 He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

16 So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

Romans 8:1-17

New Living Translation

Life in the Spirit

8 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. 2 And because you belong to him, the power[a] of the life-giving Spirit has freed you[b] from the power of sin that leads to death. 3 The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature.[c] So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin’s control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. 4 He did this so that the just requirement of the law

would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

5 Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. 6 So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. 7 For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. 8 That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

9 But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) 10 And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life[d] because you have been made right with God. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

12 Therefore, dear brothers and sisters,[e] you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. 13 For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature,[f] you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children[g] of God.

15 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children.[h] Now we call him, "Abba, Father." [i] 16 For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. 17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

- The greatest indication of who you are is whose you are.

Revealing Jesus to Others

2 Corinthians 5:18-21

New Living Translation

18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. 19 For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. 20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,[a] so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Matthew 5:1-16

New Living Translation

The Sermon on the Mount

5 One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, 2 and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

3 "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,[a]
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

4 God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

5 God blesses those who are humble,
for they will inherit the whole earth.

6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,[b]
for they will be satisfied.

7 God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.

9 God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of God.

10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

11 “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Teaching about Salt and Light

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

14 “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. 15 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

1 John 3:1-3

New Living Translation

3 See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him. 2 Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. 3 And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure.

Our Final Victory

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

New King James Version

Our Final Victory

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a [a]mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this

corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

55 "O[b] Death, where is your sting?
O Hades, where is your victory?"

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

