

Sermon June 27, 2010

New ID!

Luke 18:9-14

Summary: The most important thing that you will ever receive in this life is a new ID.

Only God can give you that new identity. And only you can choose to find it. Listen to the story of two men who talked to God: one only reinforced his old ID; the other became a new person.

I. Who IS that person on your driver's license?

A. Official pictures and other fictions

- 1. Don't you just love driver's license pictures?**
- 2. DMV photos can be divided into two groups:**
 - a) Smilers – the friendly, non-threatening, “I didn't do it, officer!” look.**
 - b) Non-smilers – the serious, “I take driving seriously” look.**
- 3. Did you ever take out your driver's license and ask yourself, “Is that really me?” “Do I really look like THAT?”**

B. Retakes

- 1. Of course, every once in awhile we get the opportunity for a make-over.**

a) We head back to the DMV and do a re-shoot of that picture.

b) One more chance to get that picture right for once.

2. Wouldn't it be great if we could get another shot at our REAL identity by sitting in front of a camera for 30 seconds?

3. Wouldn't it be wonderful to actually DISCOVER that identity and become more and more of the person that God intended us to be?

C. A new ID

1. God is in the business of issuing us new IDs.

2. Paul writes:

a) **Colossians 3:9-10 The Message: Don't lie to one another. You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of you new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it.**

3. That means that God is ready to change more than your old picture; He is ready to issue you a brand new identity – one that restores you to what you were meant to be in the first place.

II. A Tale of Two IDs

A. Two IDS

1. Jesus tells a little story about two men who come to God in prayer:

a) **Luke 18:9-13 The Message: He told his next story to some who were complacently pleased with themselves over their moral performance and looked down their noses at the common people:**

b) “Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax man. The Pharisee posed and prayed like this: ‘Oh, God, I thank you that I am not like other people – robbers, crooks, adulterers, or, heaven forbid, like this tax man. I fast twice a week and tithe on all my income.’

c) “Meanwhile, the tax man, slumped in the shadows, his face in his hands, not daring to look up, said, ‘God, give mercy. Forgive me, a sinner.’”

2. When we come to God, we cannot help but bring our ID with us; we present it at the door when we come to pray.

3. When we leave, we can walk away with our old ID intact, or we can walk into the new ID that He creates in us.

B. Old ID

1. The first person in this little story was quite satisfied with the picture on his spiritual ID.

2. For him, prayer was an opportunity to remind God just how lucky He was to have such a good person on His side. His prayer tells the story:

a) He is full of himself: “I thank you that I am not like other people – bad people.”

b) He offers his own evaluation of himself: He is not like “robbers, crooks, adulterers, or heaven forbid, like this tax man.”

c) He reminds God of all his religious deeds: fasting and tithing.

3. The old ID that he brought with him when he entered God’s presence is just fine – even God can’t offer him anything.

C. New ID

1. If anyone was hated in Jesus' world, it was a "tax collector."

- a) Tax collectors had enormous power when it came to collecting taxes for the government.
- b) When the little people – peasant farmers – couldn't pay their taxes, the tax collector would mortgage their land and crops, thus holding them in virtual slavery.
- c) They were infamous for extorting and defrauding their victims.
- d) Of all the people living in Jesus' time, none would seem less worthy to come to God than a tax collector.

2. So what happens when in Jesus' little story a tax collector DOES come to pray?

- a) "Meanwhile the tax man, slumped in the shadows, his face in his hands, not daring to look up, said, 'God, give mercy. Forgive me, a sinner.'"

3. What a contrast to the Pharisee who came telling God what a good person he was!

- a) Here is a man who is ready to trade in his old ID for a new one.
- b) Here is a man who can see how unworthy and sinful he is, despite the allure of ill-gotten gain and the power to intimidate others.
- c) Here is a man on a quest for a new ID: the identity of a person whom God has forgiven and given a brand new life.

III. New ID

A. Who changed?

1. So who do you think CHANGED as a result of his time of prayer, the Pharisee or the tax man?

a) **Luke 18:14 The Message: Jesus commented, “This tax man, not the other, went home made right with God. If you walk around with your nose in the air, you’re going to end up flat on your face, but if you’re content to be simply yourself, you will become more than yourself.”**

2. The Pharisee saw no need for a new ID; he went home the same person he was before he went to pray.

3. The tax man, on the other hand, went home with a brand new ID:

a) **His time with God changed him.**

b) **He came filled with the awareness of being wrong.**

c) **He went home made right with God, a man with a brand new ID.**

B. Prayer changes

1. David knew what it was like to have a failed ID:

a) **Even though he had seen God work in his life time and time again, in a moment of weakness he gave into temptation.**

b) **He committed adultery, lied about the relationship, and had the woman’s husband murdered.**

2. But when he hit bottom, David came to God:

a) **He didn’t come just to have the bad consequences go away.**

b) **He didn’t come so he could get things “back to normal.”**

c) **He came to be changed.**

3. This is how he prayed:

a) **Psalm 51:3-12 The Message: You're the One I've violated, and you've seen it all, seen the full extent of my evil. You have all the facts before you; whatever you decide about me is fair. I've been out of step with you for a long time, in the wrong since I was born. What you're after is truth from the inside out. Enter me, then; conceive a new, true life.**

b) **Soak me in your laundry and I'll come out clean, scrub me and I'll have a snow-white life. Tune me in to foot-tapping songs, set these once-broken bones to dancing. Don't look too close for blemishes, give me a clean bill of health. God, make a fresh start in me, shape a Genesis week from the chaos of my life.**

C. New ID for you

1. Ever feel like David?

- a) **In need of a good cleaning?**
- b) **In need of a clean bill of health?**
- c) **Needing God's joy instead of being down?**
- d) **Ready for a fresh start?**

2. When we pray, if we're willing, God creates in us our new ID.

- a) **We begin to see ourselves as He sees us.**
- b) **We begin to see others as He sees them.**
- c) **We learn to see His solutions instead of our problems.**
- d) **We change and become more and more like Him.**

3. God has a new ID waiting for you; you'll love the changes He has in mind!