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### *The Significance of Who We Are*

Reflection during the holiday season appears to be an intentional activity for many of us. We have a tendency to examine ourselves and our lifestyles. We look back at the past and look toward the future. We take stock of our lives, consider change, inspect our relationships and investigate the stress in our lives. Sometimes it seems life is so hectic and everyone wants so much of us, we begin to really just wonder “Who am I anyway?”

It seems our meaning or value in life is being conformed to what others do, or what others want us to do. Even though we are human *beings* we seem to relate our identity more to our human *doings*. The world tells us who we are is determined by what we achieve and what we accomplish rather than in our character and the value God places on us. We search and strive for meaning and satisfaction in things such as our looks, money, degrees and knowledge, jobs, our children’s performance or our significant other’s importance, rather than in our own character-*who we are*.

#### **Life is all about Relationship**

This is the tension: being vs. doing. Our true value and identity is in *who* we are, not what we *do*. It expresses itself in our relationships-to God, self and others. Viktor Frankl, a well known psychiatrist and survivor of the German concentration camps, says one of the ways we find meaning in life is through our experiences and encounters with people. In other words, we find purpose and satisfaction in *being- in our relationships*.

Personal growth and value does not come from the world’s view which is individualistic, self serving and independent of others. God’s view as seen throughout the Bible is based on community, connection, covenant, commitment, family and personal relationships. We find our meaning in being. And our being is most fulfilled in healthy relationships. Self worth and value is seen first in the *relationship* you have with God. When we identify with Christ in his death and resurrection we have a new life which is not based on what we do-achievement and accomplishments-or on what others say or demand that we be; but on who He says we are.

#### **Who does God say I am?**

Often we fear closeness in relationships, either past or present, since we will have to expose and disclose who we are. And often we are unclear on what our identity and self worth are founded upon. In the Bible when God revealed himself to Moses in Exodus he said “I AM”! God made himself known by *who* He is, not merely what He does! The many names God was known as in the Bible all represent and correspond to His character-*Who He Is!* Recall the “I AM’s” of Christ in the New Testament. He said I am: the bread of life; the light of the world; the resurrection and the life; the way, the truth and the life, etc.

Our value and identity is determined by God. Kenneth Boa, author of *Conformed to His Image* says loving ourselves correctly means seeing ourselves as God sees us. We must look to God and not to ourselves or our achievements for the solutions and meaning we need in life. In relationship to ourselves and toward others, we need to see ourselves in the way that God sees us: complete, affirmed, secure, blameless, forgiven, non-condemned and unconditionally loved. Followers of Christ are children of God, chosen, redeemed, accepted, called to be free, dearly loved and have heaven as an eternal destination. Who God establishes and affirms we are in His Word is encouraging and motivating, allowing us to live lives of hope, security and freedom. We can place our identity, our worth and our value on the foundation of His Word; secure in the meaning and purpose of our “*human being!*”

(See John 1:12, 15:15; Romans 3:24, 6:6, 8:2, 8:17, 15:7; 1 Corinthians 1:30, 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 5:21; Galatians 4:7, 5:1; Ephesians 1:4, 1:7, 1:13, 2:4-5; Philippians 3:20, 4:7, 4:19; Colossians 2:10, 3:4, 3:12)

Blessings,

*Mike*