

A person wearing a blue jumpsuit is seen from behind, carrying a large wooden cross. They are standing on a wooden pier or dock that extends into a body of water. The background is a misty, overcast landscape with mountains or hills in the distance. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

WHO

AM

I?

Grasping Our Identity
Ezekiel 34:31

Grasping Our Identity

- Identity - Refers to a person's sense of self, meaning how we view ourselves, where we fit, how we see ourselves
- Jesus knew His identity at least from age 12
 - **Luke 2:49 ESV**, And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house? (*Or about my Father's business*)
 - **John 8:23-24 ESV**, 23 He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins."
 - **John 12:27 NIV**, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour."

Grasping Our Identity

- It is extremely important Christian for you to understand, to grasp who you are or better yet who God says you are – Why?
 - Because everything in this life is temporary and can be stripped from you at any moment
 - Your health, finances, home, family, name, security, country, peace
 - And because you have an enemy longing to silence your hallelujahs
 - **1st Peter 5:8 NIV**, Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Grasping Our Identity

- But Christian, there is one thing that is permanent throughout eternity because it is kept not by us, but by our Heavenly Father
 - Who you are in Christ Jesus or better, who God says you are being in Christ Jesus
 - **John 10:27-29 NIV**, 27 My sheep listen to (*for*) my voice; I know them, and they (*know my voice and desire to*) follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never (*eternally*) perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.
 - Did you notice what Jesus said?
 - ❖ No one, nothing can snatch you out of His hand, nor His Father's hand

Grasping Our Identity

- Because of this Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit could encourage us by writing
 - **Romans 8:34 NIV**, Who then is the one who condemns?
 - **Romans 8:35 NIV**, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ (*or the hand of God*)?
 - **Romans 8:37-39 NIV**, 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Grasping Our Identity

- Randy, this all sounds good but, how do I know it is true?
 - When my darkness is screaming at me
 - Loser
 - Just give up
 - You/It will never change
 - You will never make it
 - You are weak and hopeless
 - Christian this is not our identity

Grasping Our Identity

- How do I know I'm not condemned especially if my darkness is from my own decisions or sinfulness?
 - How do I know I'm not separated from the love of Christ because it sure feels and looks like it?
 - Great question and the answer is found in looking how God responded to sinful Israel
 - As the Nation of Israel has been conquered with Jerusalem and their temple destroyed
 - The Jewish people have been scattered all over the Babylonian empire
 - No temple, nation, nothing that would identify them as God's people
 - It looks, feels like God is done with them

Scripture

- **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.

Grasping Our Identity

- **Genesis 17:7 NIV**, I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.
 - Israel lost their blessing for a period but never the covenant
- God places the current blame squarely on the Political and Spiritual Leaders
 - **Ezekiel 33:31-32 NIV**, 31 My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to hear your words, but they do not put them into practice. Their mouths speak of love, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. 32 Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice.

Grasping Our Identity

- God places the current blame squarely on the Political and Spiritual Leaders
 - **Ezekiel 34:4, 10 NIV**, 4 You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. 5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals.
 - 10 This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves.

Grasping Our Identity

- God assumes the position of Shepherd over His people
 - **Ezekiel 34:11-12 NIV**, 11 For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. 12 As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.
 - **Ezekiel 34:23-24 NIV**, 23 I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. 24 I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the Lord have spoken.
 - Who is the servant David referencing?

Grasping Our Identity

- Israel is still in Babylonian captivity, still without a country, still without a temple or even strong spiritual leadership, still in darkness, still scattered over all the Babylonian area – Hopeless?
 - Then God gives them their true identity, how they are to see themselves, their current situation, their future
 - **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.

Grasping Our Identity

- How are we to think when
 - When darkness tries to roll over my bones
 - When sorrow comes to steal the joy I own
 - When brokenness and pain is all I know
 - Oh, I won't be shaken, no, I won't be shaken
- Why/How
 - What is God's answer to you this morning through His Word?

Circumstances will come and go but who you are and your position in Christ Jesus is eternally secure

- Just as God never forgot His everlasting covenant with Abraham, He will never forget His covenant with you through Jesus
 - God preserved the world through Noah
 - Initiated redemption through Abraham
 - Established the Nation of Israel through Moses
 - Promised an eternal shepherd-king through David
 - And then fulfilled all of his covenants through Jesus

Circumstances will come and go but who you are and your position in Christ Jesus is eternally secure

- **1st Corinthians 11:23-25 NIV**, 23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is *(given or broken)* for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Circumstances will come and go but who you are and your position in Christ Jesus is eternally secure

- **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.”
 - Everyone else may be running scared, hopeless, without any kind of security
 - Your foundation/security is firm, secure beyond rock solid because it rests upon the finished work of Jesus Christ

Circumstances will come and go but who you are and your position in Christ Jesus is eternally secure

- **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.”
 - Jesus is our eternal Shepherd
 - **Psalm 23:1 NIV**, “The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.”
 - God identifies Himself with us as our Shepherd
 - We belong in the presence of our Shepherd because He claims us as His

Circumstances will come and go but who you are and your position in Christ Jesus is eternally secure

- **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.”
 - Not only do we belong and have a place, but we are also under the blessings of our Shepherd King
 - Blessings of provision, protection, leadership
 - **Psalms 23:4 NIV**, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”
 - **Matthew 6:25 ESV**, Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

God is telling you this morning you were created special from every other part of creation

- **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.”
 - You were created with a spark of the eternal
 - **Genesis 1:27 NIV**, So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”
 - You were made to resemble and reflect God through your moral, spiritual, and intellectual nature
 - You are eternal beings with the ability to know, accept, love, and submit to Creator God

God is telling you this morning you were created special from every other part of creation

- A prince when he started ruling parts of the King's business was called upon to reflect or make decisions that would harmonize with the King's decisions
 - To rule as if it was the King, the Prince would have to know his father, how he made decisions, and chose to accept and do likewise
 - Mankind has mostly failed to subdue or rule over God's Kingdom in the way that reflects His glory
 - This is the reason Father God had to send His Son, Jesus, to bear the penalty of your sins
 - To allow you to once again to be place in His flock and His pasture
- We are still finite beings with the God given ability to know our Creator and live in harmony with Him as sheep in His pasture

God is reminding you this morning He is God, and you are not

- **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.”
 - So we would not get the idea we are or can become gods, God reminds us of today that this is His flock, His field, and He is the Shepherd and not us
 - We think we want to control our lives like a wandering sheep believing the grass is better by the cliff

God is reminding you this morning He is God, and you are not

- God is infinite and perfect in His understanding, knowledge, power
 - He knows what tomorrow will bring to us
 - He knows what that next spoken word will lead to
 - He knows the way to your blessing and the blessing of others
 - He knows how to highlight your life so others can see Him and maybe reach out to

God is reminding you this morning He is God, and you are not

- **Ezekiel 34:31 AMP**, “As for you, My flock, the flock of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.”
 - The greatest word in the sentence is “your”
 - We can proclaim God is our God all day long and that means nothing eternally unless God declares, “You are mine!”
 - Marvel upon marvel, God is telling you today, you can be eternally His
 - Is He your Shepherd?

Grasping Our Identity

- Nido Qubein, “Your present circumstances don’t determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.”
 - You start this morning where you currently are at
 - In your sinfulness, bitterness, darkness and your choice determine where you go
- All this today is only possible if you find yourself “in Christ Jesus”
- What you need today is eternal grace and it is found only in Christ Jesus
 - You need eternal Forgiveness, Mercy, Love, Blessedness, Acceptance
 - All found at the foot of the cross

A person wearing a blue jumpsuit is seen from behind, carrying a large wooden cross. They are standing on a wooden pier or dock that extends into a body of water. The background is a misty, overcast landscape with mountains or hills in the distance. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

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Standing in Your Love

When darkness tries to roll over my bones
When sorrow comes to steal the joy I own
When brokenness and pain is all I know
I won't be shaken, Oh I won't be shaken

My fear doesn't stand a chance
When I stand in Your love x 3

Shame no longer has a place to hide
I am not a captive to the lies
I'm not afraid to leave my past behind
Oh, I won't be shaken, no, I won't be shaken!

There's power that can break off every chain
There's power that can empty out a grave
There's resurrection power that can save
There's power in Your name, power in Your name

My fear doesn't stand a chance
When I stand in Your love x 3

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