

September 13, 2015: Family Matters – Guest Speaker Christine Sneeringer

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Getting to Know Me

Q1: With all that is going on locally, state and nationally, many are asking; Is freedom of speech really free anymore? What would be your answer to what freedom of speech is and why?

Q2: What do you consider to be boring?

Into the Bible

What a moving and powerful testimony Christine Sneeringer shared in finding acceptance and love in a broken and fallen world, through the love of Christ. It is a story that is repeated often; parents failing in raising their children to know they are loved with an everlasting love by an Eternal Father and His Son Jesus Christ. This leaves you with an emptiness, and without an understanding of who you are created to be.

As I listened to Christine, many thoughts and ideas were forming as to what the SBQ should be this week. As I prayed I felt the Lord say, "Identity" How many believers truly know their identity of who they are in Christ?

Webster's definition of identity; The state or fact of being some specific person; individuality; The state of being as described

We are all born with nothing but flesh, and a need to be loved. When love is not fulfilled through Biblical understanding one often begins to seek an identity that is self motivated, to find acceptance, love and meaning in life; but at the moment you trust Jesus Christ as Savior, your spirit comes alive and you suddenly have a new source of power and transformation to give you a new identity that fulfills the longing in ever heart. This is confirmed through

2 Cor. 5:17. in the scripture below

The Young's Literal Translation,

"If any one is in Christ he is a new creature; the old things did pass away, lo, become new have the all things."

In the New Century Version it is translated

“If anyone belongs to Christ, there is a new creation. The old things have gone; **everything is made new.**”

We aren't just born again, but we have become sons (and daughters) of God. So what happened to the old-you? The Scripture teaches us that the old was crucified with Christ. God didn't repair the old-you; He created a new-you in Christ.

Gal. 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.”

The new creation has been given the capability to live life in and through Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is like plugging in a light bulb to the power source and turning on the power button. When you rely on yourself instead of God, you flip the switch off, The power is still available, but you are not using the power. To find our true identity is to stay focused on Jesus Christ and Him crucified, as Paul stated in 1 Cor. 2:2 “I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

Crucified doesn't mean, He just hung on a cross, and by many inscriptions today, you see Jesus hanging on a cross, by way of jewelry, pictures, etc.. Crucified for the believer is the Son of God nailed to a cross, buried, resurrected from the dead, and given back the dominion and inheritance that Adam gave to Satan when he was disobedient to what God said in the garden. And for every born again believer the dominion of authority and all the inheritance Jesus received has now been given to them as new creations. You now take on Christ Jesus' identity.

The Apostle Paul implores us to live our lives in Christ. Paul lived this way himself, boasting, “I glory **in Christ**” Romans 5:17. Paul encourages the believer to observe what they have in Jesus Christ by saying, “in Christ,” “in Him,” “in the Lord” 160 times. That is 160 identity in Christ verses shared again and again.

Q3: Describe what it means to have your identity, “in Christ”?

As a new creation, (a new identity) in Christ, the Scripture teaches that we are to renew our mind from the old way of living to the new way of truth. Romans 12:2

Q4: Read Romans 12:2; Why is Paul urging the believers to open themselves up to transformation rather than conform to this world's way?

Q5: How does Proverbs 14:12,27 and Ephesians 4:17-24 support Romans 12:2? From these verses how can a believer reject all that corrupts?

Look up four of the following scriptures and list the identity blessings you have received as a believer:

Ps. 139:13,14,17,18

Rom.8:1

Eph. 1:2-8

Col.2:9,10

Rom. 5:1,2,5

1John5:4

2 Tim. 1:7

Heb. 4:15-16

The list could go on, and on, but for time will stop with these. As a suggestion, whenever you see “in Him” in a verse, stop and make a mental note of what you are receiving, in Him.

Application:

Q7: Homosexuality is a polarizing issue in our society and people tend to have strong views on it. Was there anything in Christine’s message that changed your thinking on the topic?

Q8: Christine made the point that one of the things that helped her move out of her former lifestyle is having appropriate relationships with other women and men. How open are you to forming relationships with people that do not live as you do so they can see the love of Jesus?

Q9: From a personal aspect, who has had a greater influence in forming your identity; society, family, yourself, or God?

Society usually forms someone’s identity from the family name, their accomplishments in relationships and job performance.

Q10: From your perspective, what is right, and what is wrong with this being a standard for accessing someone’s identity; has it influenced you in how you see your own identity?

God looks at your identity by the choice of what you do with Jesus. God's heart is that **all** mankind would find their true identity in Christ Jesus which is established in love. Romans 5:8 gives a beautiful picture of this, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us." I Cor. 13: 8 Love never fails. From these two scriptures, we learn that love will redeem a lost life and transform it into beauty and usefulness.

Christine shared in her testimony that we don't choose our attractions and feelings, but we do choose our behavior. Life can be full of grumbling, bitterness, boasting, judgments, gossip, and unforgiveness, if you are not living in Him.

Q11: What behavioral choices are you making that will keep your identity as a true witness to others from what you have learned in the scriptures of who you are in Him?

For additional study of what you have received in Christ for a true identity, read Romans 8:34-39 and list how these scriptures help identify who you are.