

Pastor Jim Jackson, 10/23/16
IDENTITY, pt. 8—I am Gifted
1 Peter 4:7-11

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Pet. 2:9

Believers are GIFTED by God

Once a person has found their identity *in* Christ, they have the calling and privilege to work out their identity *for* Christ (Phil. 2:12, 13). *God is a gift-giver and always gives His best* (1 John 4:11-14)! In joining the family of God, believers are given a place and a job. Everything should be done in an attitude of love and service rather than pride and selfishness. *God’s gifts are not to bless the person, but to bless the people* (1 Cor. 12:7). Believers are to realize life is short and opportunities must be taken advantage of (Eph. 5:8-17). In the church there needs to be unity, but not necessarily uniformity. A church can have disagreements, but God never gifts a person with a critical spirit for disunity of the church (gossip, slander, anger, fighting, etc., Eph. 4:31; 1 Pet. 2:1). A healthy church is like a healthy body—though diverse in its parts, each part must do its job so all the others can survive and flourish. *The Holy Spirit indwells a person for salvation and infill’s them for serving.*

Believers are a GIFT to others

Life, salvation, and service are gifts given through the grace of God. God is a Gifter who has given gifts to the gifted to become gifts to the giftees. *What has been received with appreciation should be poured out in application.* Believers are the hands and feet of Jesus and ambassadors for Him to reconcile a hurting and lost world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:20). God’s most precious gift to the world is the believer because they have within them the most precious Gift to the world (2 Cor. 4:6, 7). Joy *in* Christ often flows from using our gifts *from* Christ for the glory *of* Christ. The reason God leaves Christians on earth is to bless others through preaching, teaching, counseling, serving, leading, encouraging, and giving (Rom. 12:3-8). *Believers are blessed to be a blessing* (Gen. 12:2; Matt. 5:16; Eph. 2:10)! The Holy Spirit gives the impulse, intelligence, and the industry to do His work so there is no excuse for poor effort as everything should be done as for God Himself (Col. 3:23, 24). *It is often through human effort that a divine effect happens!*