

Lesson 12: What You Are

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

--1 Corinthians 3:9

For everyone who struggles with low self-esteem, the above Scripture should be like a shot of adrenaline for your confidence. You are God's co-worker. No higher value can exist. Picture yourself as God's field, with your Father laboring in your life and among fellow Christians. Seeing yourself as God's building may help you envision Him crafting your life as He constructs His church--the people.

You can get to know God the Father in a closer way by realizing what you are to Him. In this lesson, I will review some of the other exciting things that God makes you to be as His child.

His Dwelling

Ephesians 2 talks about believers in Christ being fellow citizens of the saints and members of God's household, concluding with verse 22: "in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."

Before you accepted Jesus as Savior, you probably thought of God as a far-away Being. Some Christians still think a great distance exists between them and the Father. But through Jesus, God has welcomed us into His presence. More electrifying is the truth that our Father came to live with us. He made us His dwelling place through the Holy Spirit.

His Friend

Children whose earthly fathers provided for their needs, protected them from danger, and disciplined them fairly have received a great blessing. But the best fathers add one more quality. They are good friends. A friend is there when you need to talk about what bothers you, or celebrate an exciting accomplishment, or just need some encouragement.

God is that kind of Father. Through Jesus, He has spoken to all who believe in Him, saying, "You are My friends" (John 15:13). This picture also appears throughout the Old Testament, where God spoke face to face with those who believed in Him.

His Witness

Many Christians don't witness because they don't like the idea of accosting people and convincing them they should believe in Christ. However, God didn't intend for us to think of witnessing as a duty. A witness is simply one who tells what he has seen, heard, or experienced. You should be proud to tell others about your Abba Father.

When I was a boy, a group of guys would be standing around on the playground. Someone would say, "Hey, guess what my father did?" After he told of his dad catching a big fish or taking him to the circus, everyone else piped up. Each boy wanted the others to know about his father. These guys were witnesses of their fathers. Shouldn't we be, too?

Family Members

Sometimes, Betty and I just enjoy sitting and watching our children and grandchildren. Our hearts well up with joy when we see them doing things together and enjoying each other. There is nothing more gratifying, warm, and secure than a family ruled by love.

God intends His household to be such a family. However, for His family to be as He designed, each member must appreciate what that means. We have many privileges as part of His family. I will name a few in the rest of this lesson.

Jesus is Your Brother

Hebrews 2:11 says, "For both He who sanctifies (namely, Jesus) and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Ever have a big brother who protected you, defended you, and taught you some of the ropes about life? How much more exciting to have a perfect big Brother!

You Share Your Family's Calling

What are we here for? What is the meaning of life? Questions like these keep many people bewildered, wandering, and unfulfilled. Because no degree of success, money, fame, or prestige can fill the mysterious inner void, life has no meaning. However, the godly calling in salvation gives us purpose, joy, and destiny.

Second Timothy 1:9 says we have a “holy calling,” one that is noble, sure, and true. However, within this general calling are specific missions and assignments. You will experience great joy as you discover and pursue your divine purpose.

Close Family Fellowship

A functional family--one that works as God designed it--is a beauty to behold. After years of being denied that experience, I rejoice that I am part of one. Of course, unconditional love is the key. God’s kind of love. Everyone knows they will be accepted for who they are, not how well they perform.

This kind of love forms the basis for trust, the other requirement of a functional family. With all knowing they are accepted and honored, no one has to prove anything. Everyone can share openly and trust each other not to mock, scorn, or reject them. In this atmosphere, we weep and rejoice together and deal with disagreements when they arise.

God wants His family to operate in the close bonds of fellowship. Each uses his or her strengths to support the others in their weaknesses. Now that you are part of His family, Dad wants you to participate wholeheartedly in its fellowship.

Deeper Study

1. What work do you believe your Father is doing in your life and among your fellow Christians? What would you like Him to do?

2. Look up Hebrews 4:16 and 10:20-22. What assurance do these verses provide you?

3. How will the knowledge that you are your heavenly Father's dwelling place change the way you live and behave? Name three specific changes you will make.

4. Summarize the truths in each of these Bible verses about God's friendship, then describe how knowing God as your Friend helps you know Him as your Father.

Exodus 33:11 _____

Isaiah 41:8 _____

John 15:15 _____

James 2:23 _____

5. List several blessings that you can think of from telling others about your Father.

6. Read Hebrews 2:17, Romans 8:29, and Colossians 1:18. Describe what is the most exciting thing about realizing that Jesus Christ is your Brother.

7. Consider the following verses and describe how they relate to sharing in your family's calling.

Romans 9:23-24: And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 1:26-27: For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong.

Ephesians 1:18: I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.

2 Timothy 1:9: Who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.

8. What part can other members of God's family play in helping you find your part in God's heart? What can you do to nurture your love for other family members?
