REALITY
REMASTERED

Identity
Matthew 3:13-17
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Matthew 3:13-17
Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.”
Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Actions we take have a sense of identity behind them.

What we do
What we have
What we desire

“Is this the end of productivity? Amid the pandemic, workers whose jobs once defined their lives are questioning what it was all for.”

- New York Magazine

“When you make your identity what you produce, then you’re limiting yourself, [because] the stakes for being wrong or not producing at the level one expects of themselves are much higher if someone defines themselves by what they do.”

- New York Magazine, *“Is this the end of productivity?”*

Our being, and thus identity, is grounded in God’s love.

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“In order for our knowing of God’s love to be truly transformational, it must become the basis of our identity. Our identity is who we experience ourselves to be—the I each of us carries within. An identity grounded in God would mean that when we think of who

we are, the first thing that would come to mind is our status as someone who is deeply loved by God."

- David Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*

"Before COVID-19…we didn't know how much we were using all our stuff and experience to make up for the vacuity (va-cu-i-ty) in our souls that has needed to be filled with love for longer than we knew, but that we have instead laden with other merchandise, material, and otherwise."

- Curt Thompson

Ephesians 1:3-9, 11-14

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ…In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in

him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

"The mystery of the Christian gospel is that our deepest, truest self is not what we think of as our own separate self but the self that is one with Christ. This is the reason that the self that embarks on the journey of Christ-following is not the self that arrives. The self that begins the spiritual journey is the self of our own creation, the self we thought ourselves to be. This is the self that dies on the journey. The self that arrives is the self that was loved into existence by Divine Love. This is the person we were destined from eternity to become—the I that is hidden in the 'I AM.'"

- David Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*

"If you know you are Beloved of God, you can live with an enormous amount of success and an enormous amount of failure without losing your identity, because your identity is that you are the Beloved."

- Henri Nouwen