

**July 31, 2016**

**Hoo Boy!**

Read 1 Peter 2: 9-10

Hoo Boy, indeed! It has been too long since my last *Roots*. I apologize for that. To be fair I have written several since the last one I published, but they have all been nonsensical or entirely too heady. I thought subjecting you to nothing would be much better than the drivel I have been writing lately. Frankly, I have been a little uninspired of late, and my writing has shown it. This just goes to show you that no one is immune to slumps, well at least it shows you pastors aren't immune.

In times like that I have to ask myself, "Who am I?" So, who am I in those moments? Am I the uninspired lump that I feel like? Am I the neglectful pastor that I feel like and that my surroundings suggest I am?

Perhaps, you have had moments in your life where you've had to ask yourself similar questions. Perhaps, you've experienced something different, a crisis or even a joy that has caused you to question who you are. Maybe the loss of a loved one impacted you in a way that has made you question what to do next in life. Maybe a recent promotion has made you so busy and successful that your family doesn't recognize you anymore. We all go through changes like this. We all grow and our role morphs, sometimes our personality even shifts.

In these situations, where is our identity? How do we answer who we are in those situations? Peter gives us the answer in 1 Peter. Who are you? You are chosen royalty, priestly possessions, marvelous mouthpieces put in the situations you are put in that in them you may glorify God. Are you suffering? Maybe,

*Roots*

but that isn't who you are! Are you climbing the ladder of success? Possibly, but that isn't who you are! Peter reminds us here in the second chapter

of his first book that no matter where you are or what you're going through, you are God's precious possession made to proclaim his mercies and blessing to everyone and everything around you.

Paul parallels Peter in Philippians chapter 3. "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." To Paul, no earthly success or glory comes even close to surpassing just knowing Jesus. Neither does he consider any suffering or loss enough to separate us from Christ's love.

We are not defined by what we've done in God's eyes. Neither should we (or anyone else) in our own eyes. Paul and Peter want us to consider ourselves dead to ourselves and alive to Christ. Therefore, only by our faith in Jesus do we know who we are. There we find that regardless of the pressures of this world or the sufferings it inflicts we are precious, we are desired, and we are victorious! Christ considered you worth dying for! Perhaps even more amazing, he considered you worth going to hell for and rising to life again! Why? Because you are his precious creation, made for his purposes, made to be loved and to love. So, who are you? You are you, loved by Christ that in whatever circumstances you go through, you can share that love and that relationship with others of Christ's precious creations.

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