



## UNSPEAKABLE JOY

### Week 4 | The Joy of Identity

#### | KEY THOUGHTS

- **Your identity shapes what you think, what you do, the decisions you make.**
- **There are spiritual forces in the world working to create confusion between what's true and what's a lie.**
  - This was the ploy from the beginning, when Satan confused Eve and Adam about God's true identity and their own (they became convinced they could be like God).
  - Satan continues to attack us today, planting seeds of insecurity and **confusing us into thinking our identity is found in things that have nothing to do with who we really are.**
- **Jesus was fully human.**
  - Today, no one argues that Jesus was a man, but many don't believe He was God.
  - Immediately after the resurrection, though, the opposite was the case; no one argued that Jesus was God, but many didn't accept that He was a man. That's the truth Luke spoke to here.
- According to the Jewish educational system of *Beth Midrash*, Jesus asked questions in the temple; and **His questions showed such a depth of knowledge that the teachers were amazed.**
- In Jewish culture, a boy of 12 became apprenticed to his father to learn the family trade; and Jesus showed here that **He knew who His Father was, and therefore Who He Himself was.**
- In that day, it wasn't typical to refer to God as "Father" because of the connotation that a son was equal to his father.
- Jesus was fully human, and He knew that; He was also fully God, and He knew that too. **Jesus always knew His identity.**
- Jesus demonstrated the balance between obeying God's authority vs. man's by being obedient to both; **He honored God by honoring His parents willingly.**
- **When you know who you are, you don't have to prove yourself to anyone.**
- Satan attacked Jesus's identity during His 40 days in the wilderness, but **he didn't succeed because Jesus knew who He was.**

## | SCRIPTURE

<sup>41</sup> Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. <sup>43</sup> And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, <sup>44</sup> but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, <sup>45</sup> and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. <sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." <sup>49</sup> And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup> And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. <sup>51</sup> And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

<sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

**Luke 2:41-52 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> But Jesus replied, "My Father is always working, and so am I." <sup>18</sup> So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill him. For he not only broke the Sabbath, he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God.

**John 5:17-18 (NLT)**

## | PRACTICAL

- To grow your identity in Christ, discover God's character as revealed in the Bible.
  - You bear His image, being created to reflect His glory.
  - He is the source of your true identity.
- When I see His character and compare it to my own, a light will shine through the huge gap between. This is designed to lead me confession and repentance.
  - Confession means owning up not only to the bad things I say and do, but also to the good things I didn't do, the times I chose to stay comfortable instead of getting out of the boat, and every thought and desire that doesn't reflect God's glory.
  - Repentance means moving past the regret and sorrow of confession and stepping closer to Christ, asking Him for help to say "Yes" when in the past I've said "No."
  - Confession and repentance lead to restoration.
- I can prepare for the upcoming "21 Days of Seeking God First" (Jan. 2-22, 2022) by asking God to show me what He wants to reveal to me during that time about prayer and fasting.

## | REFLECT

- A created thing can't decide its own purpose; it is given a purpose by the one who created it.
- If my identity isn't built upon a solid, unchanging foundation, it will collapse.
- When I discover God's character, I will discover mine.
- The more my life is transformed by the knowledge of Who God is, the more I'll desire the Father, and I'll keep drawing closer until His desires begin to become my desires.

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