

Kings and Priests
Pastor Joe Oakley - GFC - 3-23-25

Identity theft is a huge problem these days. Identity theft happens when someone steals your personal information and uses it without your permission to do things like open new accounts or use an existing account. Identity theft can have serious consequences for you and your family. It can ruin your credit or get you sued for debts that are not yours. Americans lost a total of \$43 billion to identity theft in 2023.

We should not only be aware and prepared for identity theft, but we should also be aware and prepared about ways we allow ourselves to be robbed of our true spiritual identity. None of us wants to be robbed by a credit card thief, but we need to make sure we aren't being robbed by an even craftier crook. Jesus said in John 10:10:

The thief comes only to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

One thing Satan tries to steal from believers is the truth of their spiritual identity – knowing who they are in Christ.

We're in a series entitled Seize the Kingdom of God. We've taken in-depth looks at the keys of the kingdom. Today I'm preaching a sermon entitled Kings and Priests.

Satan wants to steal our destiny in Christ by convincing us we are not who God says we are. There is a spirit of confusion in the world today that has people unsure of their gender or their role as a man or a woman or as a Christian.

How would you answer this question, "Who are you?" Most people answer that question by stating their name. I could tell you I am Joe Oakley, but that says little about me.

When asked who they are, most people answer with what they do. So I could tell you I am Joe Oakley, the Senior Pastor of GFC. But who I am is more than what I do. I could tell you that I am a husband, a father and a grandfather. That's a better identification of who I am.

But from a kingdom of God mindset, my identity is this: I am a born-again believer in Jesus Christ and that makes me a child of the King!

Do you know your true identity? Where do we get our identity? From our heritage, our family, our name, from our accomplishments and failures, from what people tell us we are and what we are worth.

But in the kingdom of God, we get our identity from our Heavenly Father!

Now, there are many Scriptures about who we are in Christ. We could preach a year on that. I encourage you to google “who I am in Christ” and read and memorize Bible verses on your spiritual identity. You need your mind renewed on spiritual identity or you will live your life in a state of confusion.

Today, I am going to speak on three of the many aspects of our spiritual identity. Revelation 1:5-6 says:

All glory to Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

1- You are a king in the kingdom of God!

You are not THE KING of the kingdom – that is God and God alone! But you are A KING in the kingdom of God. God’s plan all along was for us to be a kings and priests on the earth.

Go all the way to the beginning of the Bible in Genesis 1:26 and you will find when God originally created mankind – it was for this purpose:

God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, in Our likeness, and let them rule..."

We were originally created to rule and reign on earth. I preached on that last week. What I want you to see today is that God is the King of the whole earth – but He wanted His people to be kings and priests on the earth.

What does that mean? **Kings exercise authority and priests represent God to people and people to God. God wanted all of His people to worship in His presence and to have authority over the enemy.**

God told the children of Israel in Exodus 19:11

Although the whole earth is Mine, you will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

He did not want them to have an earthly king, but they chose one anyway. He wanted them all to be priests who went into His presence and heard from Him. But they rejected it. They wanted others to go to God on their behalf.

And many people today stand at a distance from God. They want others to take the priestly role and go to God on their behalf. They want others to take the kingly role and resist the enemy on their behalf.

But God wants everyone in His kingdom to be kings and priests.

**Kings rule and priests minister.
Kings exercise authority and priests exercise compassion.
Kings rule over demonic powers and priests minister to God and people.
Kings go to war and priests go to worship.**

Let's look first at our role as kings. Kings rule and reign. Kings exercise authority. Kings go to war. The ruling and reigning and warring we do is not over people – it's over demons. We are here on this planet to wage spiritual warfare against Satan and his demons. That's why Jesus gave us authority over them. In Luke 10:18-19 Jesus said -

I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

Snakes and scorpions here refer to demons. Satan and demons have power – but we have authority over them. I'm not going to speak about this much today because we have been teaching on it for the last few weeks.

**As believers, we must know the authority we have in the name of Jesus.
Satan's not afraid of us – he's afraid of the name of Jesus!
We don't overcome by our power – but by the power of Christ!
It's not our authority; it's God's – but He's given it to us!**

In Matthew 28:18-19 Jesus said-

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...

Jesus has how much authority? All authority. There is no greater authority or power in heaven or on earth. Nothing is too difficult for Him. But Jesus said, "All authority is given to me... now go." That means **Jesus delegated His authority to us.**

The purpose of our King was to destroy the works of Satan on the cross. We are now kings in the kingdom of God – ruling and reigning in Jesus name! How do we do this? By using the keys of the kingdom to take authority over the works of the enemy. We've already taught on that.

But, not only are we kings who rule and reign, we are also priests. But before I teach on that, I want to address another aspect of our identity first. The Apostle Paul taught in 1 Peter 2:9-10:

You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but

are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

There are so many great truths in this passage about who we are in Christ, who we are as born-again Christians – but I'll talk about two.

God chose us to be royal priests and a holy nation.
 God chose us to be holy – set apart for God's purpose of showing forth His praise.
 Another way of saying this is that we are saints.

2- You are a saint in the kingdom of God

Most people have the wrong view of what a saint is. They believe that a saint is a dead holy person officially recognized by the church, or a really, really good person. Like people talk about their grandmother, "She was a real saint."

On the contrary, many Bible verses teach that **every single person who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is a saint**. 1 Corinthians 1:2 says:

To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Saints are not just the really holy people who do really righteous acts. God says if Jesus is your Lord, you are a saint.

Satan wants to keep us from believing we are saints of God. He wants us to have a false humility that says, "I'm nobody, I'm nothing, I'm worthless, I'm a no-good sinner." That's not what God or the Bible say about us.

Think about this: we do not honor a painter by putting down their art. When we look at their painting and say things like, "That's the worst painting I've ever seen. You call that art? I call that trash. That's ugly." Those comments do not glorify the artist, they demean him. Right?

Yet we look at God's ultimate creation – people - and say negative put-down comments. Even about ourselves. "I'm nothing. I'm ugly. I'm stupid. I'm nothing and I'll never be nothing." These statements do not glorify our Creator. We were created by God for God. We were created in His image. So, when we put ourselves down, we are in effect putting God down!

We must start believing what God says over what Satan or people say. God calls us saints. God calls us righteous. When we are born again, we change from being condemned sinners to adopted children. I know we might not feel any different at first - that's why **we need our minds renewed to stop thinking like the old man – the sinner – and start thinking like the new man – the saint – the king - the priest.**

Ephesians 4:22-24 says:

...put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

We need our minds renewed so we can put off the old and put on the new.

We are no longer who we used to be – we are new creations in Christ.

We once were not a people, but now we are the people of God.

We once had no mercy, now we have obtained mercy.

We once were lost, now we're found.

We once were sinners, now we are saints in the kingdom of God!

Thank God for that! We are saints and kings in the kingdom of God. Also-

3- You are a priest in the kingdom of God.

Priests minister to God and to people.
Your first priestly ministry is to minister to God with praise and worship.
Your second priestly ministry is to intercede for people.
Everything we do flows out of our ministries of worship and intercession.

Priests represent God to people and people to God. They worship God and they intercede for people. They praise the Lord and they pray for people. As believers we represent Jesus Christ on the earth. 2 Corinthians 5:20 says:

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us.

We are here as Christ's ambassadors on earth. He is speaking through us and His will is being done through us.

To act in Jesus' name means to represent Jesus by doing the will of the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit by the authority of Jesus Christ in God's time, in God's way for God's glory!

It simply means to do what Jesus would do if He were here. It means to speak what Jesus would speak. It means to act in His authority.

1 John 4:17 says ***As He is, so are we in this world.***

That doesn't mean you are God or Jesus. There is a God and you're not Him! What this means is you have the authority to act in His name – to do what He would do, say what He would say, be who He would be.

So – when we minister as priests we are to do what Jesus would do. How do we know what He would do? By examining what He did when He ministered on earth. Matthew 9:35 says:

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.

You will find Jesus doing these three things over and over in the Gospels: preaching the kingdom, healing the sick and casting out demons. Not only did Jesus minister that way – but when He sent His disciples out to minister in Luke 9:1-2

He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

In other words – preach the kingdom AND demonstrate the kingdom. And when Jesus left this planet, He gave the marching orders to all His followers in Mark 16:17-18

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature... And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues... they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

In other words, do what I would do if I were there. Jesus has all authority and He delegated that authority to us to go and minister in His Name! We see an example of how to do this in Acts 3:1-16 when Peter and John went to the temple where a lame man was begging for money.

Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

Immediately the man was healed and began walking and leaping and praising God. All the people were filled with amazement, so Peter asked them:

Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ...By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong.

Notice that healing does not come because of someone's own power or godliness. We sometimes put the people God uses on a pedestal as if they have extra power or extra holiness – they don't. They just have faith in an all-powerful God. They understand the authority of Jesus' name and they act on it.

We sometimes excuse ourselves from ministering to others because we're not good enough or strong enough. Listen closely: you'll never be good enough or strong enough! Only Jesus is good enough or strong enough! He has all authority and He has delegated that authority to you! So, when you see people around you who are sick – you can pray for them in the name of Jesus.

You don't have to make a scene and pray loudly for 15 minutes. All you need to do is pray, "Lord, heal them in the name of Jesus."

Most people are afraid that they'll pray and people won't be healed. That's the lie of the enemy to keep you from being the king and the priest that you are! So, get your eyes off yourself and onto Jesus! Get your eyes off your weakness and onto His power! Get your eyes off your goodness and onto His righteousness. It does not matter how strong you are! It matters how strong your God is! And He has given you authority over all the power of the enemy.

As priests of the Most High God - We can lay hands on the sick and they will recover. As kings, we can resist the enemy and He must flee!

As priests we can minister God's love to people!

As kings we can minister God's power to people!

As priests we can preach good news to people!

As kings we can loose captives and set them free!

Today I want you to take your authority as a child of God – take authority over the enemy in the Name of Jesus and watch God move through you! Romans 5:17 says:

For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Jesus saved us so we can go to heaven AND so we can reign IN THIS LIFE! Not just in the life to come! As much as sin reigned over you in the past, how much more will you reign in life through Jesus Christ! As much as Satan stole from you in the past, how much more will you receive God's abundant provision through Jesus Christ! As bad as you were in Adam, how much more will you be righteous through Jesus Christ!

So I ask you today – are you ruling in life or are you being ruled over?

Are you a sinner or a saint? Are you a commoner or royalty?

If you're a sinner, you need to be born again and become a child of God.

But if you are born again, you are not a commoner – you are royalty!

I'm encouraging you today to stop living beneath your position in Christ!

You are not the old you cleaned up – you're a totally new creation!

You're more than just a sinner saved by grace; you're a saint!

You're a child of the King, so you are a royal heir of the promises of God.

Satan has no authority over us – we have authority over him!

Because Jesus is the King of Kings and He made us kings and priests on the earth!