

Finding Yourself in God's Story

2 Corinthians 5:15

I. Our Place in God's Story

A. Part 1: Creation

1. Our identity: image-bearers
2. Our role: vice-regents over creation
3. Our priority of allegiance: to the Creator-King
4. Our mission: to serve God by advancing his rule over the earth

B. Part 2: The Fall

1. Our identity: _____ (image of God is corrupted)
2. Our role: _____ over own kingdom
3. Our priority of allegiance: "looking out for _____"
4. Our mission: serve _____ by advancing what I perceive to be in my best interest.

C. Part 3: Redemption

1. The *goal* of God's present "project": the _____ of all things (Eph. 1:10)
 - a. To _____ what has been alienated (Colossians 1:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19)
 - b. To _____ what has been ruined (Acts 3:21; Romans 8:20-21)
2. The *process* of God's present "project"
 - a. Stage 1: The mission of Christ (atonement)
 - b. Stage 2: The mission of the Church (make disciples)
3. My part in God's Story
 - a. _____ of my rebellion and return to God through faith in Jesus (salvation)
 - b. Contribute to God's project through _____ and _____.
 - 1) My identity: _____ of God (Corresponds to "Image" in original creation)
 - 2) My role: _____ of the Master (Corresponds to "vice regent" in original creation) (1 Cor. 3:5-10; 4:1-2; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
 - 3) My priority of allegiance: to the Redeemer King (2 Corinthians 5:15)
 - 4) My mission: To serve God by advancing his rule in my life and throughout my world (Matthew 6:33)

D. Part 4: Renewal of all things (New heavens, new earth – Rev. 21-22)

II. Significant Features of a Biblical Identity and Role in God's Story

A. My identity: A Child/Son of God

1. _____: The image of God is being restored in those who become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4; see 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:16; Col. 3:9-10; Titus 3:5).
2. _____: I am royalty – "sons of the Most High" (Luke 6:35; John 1:12)
3. _____: I am one who addresses God by the family name – "Abba" (Rom 8:15; Gal. 4:6)
4. _____: I can trust in my Father to meet my needs (Matthew 6:25-34)
5. _____: My Father is committed to training me in righteousness (Heb. 12:5-12)
6. _____: I am expected to reflect the character of my Father (Luke 6:35-36; Eph. 5:1-2)
7. _____: I am an heir, with Christ, of the blessings of God (Rom 8:14-17; Gal. 6:1-7). My character will ultimately be perfectly conformed to that of Christ (1 John 3:1-2)

B. My role: A Steward (Manager) of Kingdom Resources

1. _____: to manage the assets of the owner for the advancement of his cause.
2. _____: the cause to which I am contributing is truly significant.
3. _____: I am the junior partner in a cooperative venture; the outcome never rests entirely on me (Matthew 11:28-30)
4. _____: The ultimate outcome of my efforts are assured. I will succeed (1 Cor. 3:6-7; 2 Cor. 3:4-6; Gal. 6:9).
5. Standard of Evaluation: _____ (1 Cor. 4:2). This is do-able.
6. _____: Expanded opportunities for meaningful service plus a share in the master's joy (Mat. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27).

III. Implications of Finding My Place in God's Story

A. What happens when I forget?

- I get out of sync with God's _____, trying to be something I'm not.
- I focus my attention and energies on _____ goals rather than primary ones
- I evaluate my efforts on the basis of whatever means the culture is using to _____: achievement, power, possessions, position, etc.
- I become subject to the inequities of _____: inordinate pride when I do better than another; undue discouragement and self-blame when I do poorly.
- I am tempted to sacrifice _____ for the approval of others.
- I become guilty of _____.
- I waste valuable time and energy in pursuit of that which is of comparatively little _____.
- If I persist in starring in my own story, I will be enormously _____ with how it ends.

B. What are the benefits of living my story within God's story?

- There is greater dignity in playing a _____ role in a story that matters than playing a _____ role in one that doesn't.
- Competitiveness is replaced by _____ – and joy in the success of others.
- The pressure to succeed is replaced by _____ in my God-given ability to make a significant contribution.
- Reversals are not catastrophic; they represent a change in _____.
- I am encouraged by a standard of evaluation that is _____.
- This is the only way that temporal efforts can produce _____ consequences.