

## THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

Pastors Notes  
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This morning I want to read from Colossians 1

Here's what we are going to focus on as we read

- Who Jesus is
- What Jesus has done for us
- And who we are in Christ Jesus

Colossians 1:13-18 NASB

- 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light
- 13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **Jesus**
- 14 in **Jesus** we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- 15 **Jesus** is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
- 16 For by **Jesus** all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities- all things have been created through **Jesus** and for **Jesus**.
- 17 **Jesus** is before all things, and in **Jesus** all things hold together.
- 18 **Jesus** is also head of the body, the church; and **Jesus** is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that **Jesus** Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Years ago I was listening to Ann Graham Lotz give a message at the key arena (Now Climate Pledge)

I had only listened to her for a short time before I realized that the most recurrent word in her vocabulary was Jesus

Over and over: She Carefully and Deliberately said the Name of Jesus

Just in one message She Talked about

- The Love of Jesus
- The Cross of Jesus
- The Passion of Jesus
- The Words of Jesus
- The Prayers of Jesus
- The Life of Jesus
- The Grace of Jesus
- The Compassion of Jesus
- The Heart of Jesus
- The Lordship of Jesus

Even while talking to the media: She kept mentioning Jesus

Her brother Franklin does the same And her father Billy did the same thing

When they asked questions They talk about Jesus

Saying things like: People need Jesus

The only answer is Jesus, I give all the glory to Jesus

What came to my mind were the words of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians

1 Corinthians 2:1-2

- 1 And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God.
- 2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

I resolved to come to you with; But bottom line : JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED  
I didn't want anyone to run off into peripheral things  
And start a new denomination

The bottom line: THREE THINGS we need to know

1. Who Jesus Is
2. What Jesus has done for us
3. And who we are in Christ

IGNORNANCE of these three things  
Will cause us to be lost  
It will cause us to be live without purpose or meaning

We as Believers also must understand  
Who He is, What he has done for us And who we are in Him

So we can experience the fullness of His life  
So we can be all that Christ intended us to be

The Apostle Paul put it this way:

Philippians 3:12 NLT

*"But I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be."*

I KEEP WORKING TOWARD THAT DAY:

- When I will fully understand who Jesus is
- fully understand His power and His work in me
- And to fully understand who I am in Christ

He didn't want to fritter his life away - Majoring in minors  
Wasting his thoughts and energies  
In the pursuit of vain things  
And end up falling short of his potential in Christ

If we are not clear about:

Who He Is, What He has done for us, Who we are in Him

Jesus will only be a shadow of who He really is  
And we will only be a shadow of who we really are.

What is Paul Praying for in following Passage?

Ephesians 3:14-19

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,  
15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,  
16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened  
with power through His Spirit in the inner man,  
17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being  
rooted and grounded in love,  
18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length  
and height and depth,  
19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled  
up to all the fullness of God.

This is a powerful prayer And we need to put it on our most often prayed list

*Lord! That I may be able to comprehend and truly know, how big your love is for me  
and for this world and that I may be filled up with the fullness of God"*

I pray that I will Comprehend it, See it, Get it, Know it, understand it, experience it, and  
live in it

The title of this message this morning is: THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

Have you ever read the book or seen the movie: The Man in The Iron Mask?

In the Opening Scene??

A young man is taken, as an infant, away from his mother To be Raised in a secret  
place in the country By people who he assumes are his parents, Then suddenly, when  
he is a teenager, he is taken, in shackles, to a remote island prison. There he is Put  
into a solitary cell in an Iron face mask. So no one can ever see his real face  
He didn't know why:

What He Didn't Know?

He didn't know he was a prince, He was the identical twin of the King  
Born of royal blood

That knowledge had been kept from him all of his life  
He had no idea who he really was!

Grew up and lived as a country boy, He didn't know the King  
He didn't know his relationship to him, He didn't know who he was

This is precisely  
the predicament  
we find  
ourselves in  
The devil  
has been  
trying to  
keep a  
certain  
knowledge  
from us all  
of our lives

2 Corinthians 4:4

in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds  
of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the  
gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

They are blinded to Who Christ is  
And consequentially Blinded to what he has done for them  
And blinded to who they can be in Christ

A FRIEND OF MINE ONCE SAID:

Sometimes I see this culture like mutants, who have gone through some great  
holocaust who barely resemble what they were created to be, and they don't  
know who God created them to be!

They have an identity crisis

The way they think about themselves is all wrong

Proverbs 23:7 As a man thinks in his heart so is he!

How you think about yourself affects your behavior

Let me ask you this today: WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

- Do you think you are some kind of  
"Son or Daughter of the living God?"
- Do you think you are a Child of the king?
- Do you think you are a prince or a princess?
- Do you think you are a friend of God?
- Do you think you are a Saint?
- Do you think you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you?
- Do you think you are strong in the Lord and in the power of His might?

IF THAT'S WHAT YOUR THINKIN: I'M THINKIN: NOW YOU'RE THINKIN!

Our do you think, as most people think!

I am insignificant, I am inadequate, I am a disappointment  
I am ungifted, I don't really matter much  
Nobody loves me, Nobody listens to me, I am powerless

If you are thinking this way:

The god of this world is blinding your mind to  
Who Christ is, What He has done for you. And who you are in Him

I really am a child of the King  
He really is my Father  
He really is my friend  
He really has set me free  
Christ Really did die for me  
I really do have an inheritance in Him  
I really am special to him, My life matters  
Romans 8:17 Amplified

And if we are [His] children, then we are [His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow  
heirs with Christ, sharing His inheritance with Him

Two problems we can have:

1. I don't believe I am a prince or a princess  
Then: You are the man in the Iron Mask  
I am a commoner, just like everyone else  
"Then what difference has Christ made in your life?  
If you can't believe it you can't receive it
2. I don't want to be a prince or a princess  
This is a problem just as insidious as not believing

I don't want to be a prince  
Can't I just be like everyone else?  
I don't want to accept the responsibility  
I don't want to lead, rule or reign  
It's too much pressure!  
CAN'T I JUST BE A COMMONER?

No! you can't just be a commoner, but you can sure live like one!  
You are still a child of the king .....

The following Scripture will tell you a thing or two about  
Who Jesus is: What He has done for us And Who we are in Him

Ephesians 1:3-6

- 3 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.
- 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love
- 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—
- 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Don't just pass over these words? They are speaking about you!

You are chosen  
You have a destiny  
You are holy (set apart for Christ)  
You are blameless???? Exonerated....  
You are something!  
You are precious to Jesus  
And you are "The praises of His glorious grace"

THINK ABOUT THAT?

It's time for us to start living up to who we are

Before we pray: Let me remind you of this Scripture!

2 Corinthians 10:4-5

- 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.
- 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

These strongholds are mental! They are: Arguments, Pretensions and Thoughts

**BUT WE HAVE POWERFUL WEAPONS  
WHICH CAN DEMOLISH THESE STRONGHOLDS**

Before we start looking at the strongholds in the minds of others: Let's Start aiming these divinely empowered weapons at the strongholds in Our OWN lives

We have these things in our own minds

Our minds can and do argue against the truth of God

God says: "I am a child of God" My mind says I am not

God says: "I am a child of the King" My mind says I am not

God says: I have an eternal inheritance in Christ My mind says "I don't see it"

Our minds can replace the real deal with pretensions to convince us that "We are OK"  
When we are not

Our thoughts can be contrary to God's thoughts

God in His divine power wants to demolish our old way of thinking about ourselves

We are going to pray and believe God this morning for some demolition some wrong thinking about who we are.

Demolish the argument that you are not who Christ says you are

Worship is Warfare: Garth come up and lead us:

Sing: Whom the Son sets free is free indeed

I'm a child of God: Yes I am --- Affirm the truth!