

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembly together...but encouraging one another.
Heb 10:24-25

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

June 13, 2008—Atonement—Relationship Restored: Me With Me—Part I

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<p>1) Review May He grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all your counsel! (Ps 20:4)</p> <p>a) My desires—what do I seek? (John 1:38)</p> <p>b) How do you answer Jesus? “To be like you,” we cry.</p> <p>c) God determined who I am and where I was to be:</p> <p>i) Psalm 139:13-14</p> <p>ii) Acts 17:26-27</p> <p>iii) From within this context of your life:</p> <p>(1) What does it mean to be Christ-like; what does it “look like” for you?</p> <p>(2) How do you measure “progress” along the path?</p> <p>2) Our path to becoming Christ-like</p> <p>a) Our deepest desires give us a window into who we really are, that person God has uniquely created us to be, our “true self” (the New Man)</p> <p>i) John 3:3</p> <p>ii) Romans 6:5-6</p> <p>There is no deep knowing of God without a deep knowing of self and no deep knowing of self without a deep knowing of God. --John Calvin, <i>The Institutes of the Christian Religion</i>, 1536</p> <p>Humble knowledge of self is a surer path to God than the ardent pursuit of learning. --Thomas à Kempis, <i>The Imitation of Christ</i>, ca. 1400</p> <p>Grant, Lord, that I may know myself that I may know thee. --Augustine, ca. 400</p> <p>3) Christian Transformation</p> <p>a) Romans 12:2</p> <p>b) Healing v Transformation</p> <p>i) Popular connotation of “healing” is to restore something broken</p> <p>ii) We are not “restored” in Christ because we are born broken</p>

- iii) The path of Christ is not one of a self-help program or one of building or one of incrementally fixing me
- iv) The path of Christ is death and resurrection: we are not to be fixed, we must die and be made new
- v) Mt 9:16-17

Christian healing [transformation] comes not by making a broken thing good enough to work, but by delivering us from the power of that broken thing so that it can no longer rule us, and by teaching us to trust His righteousness to shine in and through that very thing.¹

- vi) 2Corinthians 12:7-10

4) My True Self

In all of creation, identity is a challenge only for humans. A tulip knows exactly what it is. It is never complicated by false ways of being. Nor does it face complicate decisions in the process of becoming. So it is with dogs, rocks, trees, stars, amoebas, electrons, and all other things. All give glory to God by being exactly what they are. For in being what God means them to be, they are obeying him. Humans, however, encounter a more challenging existence. We think. We consider opinion. We decide, We act. We doubt. Simple being is tremendously difficult to achieve and fully authentic being is extremely rare.²

Paradoxically, as we become more and more like Christ we become more uniquely our own true self.³

[T]here are many false ways of achieving uniqueness. These all result from attempts to create a self rather than receive the gift of my self-in-Christ. But the uniqueness of being our true self is never a uniqueness of our own making. Identity is never simply a creation. It is always a discovery. True identity is always a gift from God.⁴

- a) Isaiah 50:10-11
- b) Romans 12:3
- c) 1Corinthians 3:18

5) Table talk:

- a) If your deepest desire is to be Christ-like and to glorify God, how would journeying toward this change how you experience yourself, possessions, illnesses, marriage, jobs, friendships, malice, pain, persecutions, etc?
- b) Remember, however, we are humans with emotions. What emotions do you see from the writer, David, in Psalm 13, as he journeyed with God?

¹ Sandford, *The Transformation of the Inner Man*. 11.

² Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*. 14.

³ Ibid. 15.

⁴ Ibid. 16.

	Next week: Beginning to find our true self.
7:00	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">--Jesus (Luke 9:23)</p> <p>Every morning I must say again to myself, today I start.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">--St. Anthony of the Desert⁵</p>

Further reading:

- *The Bible*
- Benner, David G. *Surrender to Love*. IVP Books. 2003.
- _____ *The Gift of Being Yourself*. Eagle Publishing. 2004.
- _____ *Desiring God's Will*. IVP Books. 2005.
- Neuhaus, Richard John. *Death on a Friday Afternoon*. Basic Books. 2000.
- Sandford, John & Paula. *The Transformation of the Inner Man*. Victory House. 1982.
- St. Bernard of Clairvaux. *On God's Love*.
- St. Teresa of Avila. *The Interior Mansions*.

⁵ Quoted in Benner, *Surrender to Love*. 75.