

HOW TO FIND A BETTER YOU



The prescription won't make you feel better but it will stop your whining and make everyone else feel better

Scripture:

Psalm 91:9-16

⁹Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, ¹⁰no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

¹¹For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. ¹²On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. ¹³You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

¹⁴Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. ¹⁵When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them. ¹⁶With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

Mark 10:35-45

³⁵James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” ³⁶And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” ³⁷And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” ³⁸But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” ³⁹They replied, “We are able.” Then Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; ⁴⁰but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

⁴¹When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. ⁴²So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. ⁴³But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

This is the Word of the Lord! Thanks be to God!



HOW TO FIND A BETTER YOU

For many of us, this impulse to one up each other is so deep within us, we've been

doing this for so long, we're not even aware that we're doing it."

Why do we try to make ourselves look better than we actually are? Why do we think we always have to look good or sit in special places?" Do you feel like you need to be better than others? Do you feel like you need to look like you always have it together? Do you get easily offended if someone suggests that you might need help?

These are some of the questions Pastor Rob Bell asks in relation to this story from Mark 10. He goes on to say:

"We pick up at a young age, from the world around us, that it's about winning. It's about impressing. Often we learn as children that our worth and our value and our significance all come from how good we are, how smart we are, how good looking, or how much better than others we appear to be."

"And we quickly realize that the way to get ahead in this world is to raise ourselves up, to try to sit in the best spots and reserve the places of prestige."

That is what James and John were trying to do. They were positioning themselves to have the best spots of power and prestige with Christ. They were striving for what they thought would make them better off than the other disciples. (Don't we all sin like this at times?) God preaches to me first and then I share it with you on Sunday mornings.

When was the last time you thought you were better than another person? How does this attitude affect the people around you?

When was the last time you felt thankful for your current place in life and looked to

raise up someone who needed help being accepted in a group?

MAGAZINES AND INTERNET

I chose the title of this sermon, How to Find A Better You, because many magazine articles and internet blogs have attention grabbing titles like this because they know human psychology. We are always wondering: *How to Be or Find the Better You*. The magazine publishers know how to grab our attention. Who doesn't want to find a better YOU?

Our culture teaches us to always strive to be something "better," and that we can recreate ourselves into something that society likes better by getting richer or losing weight or buying the latest fashion item.

Searching on Google, I found literally millions of articles: "7 Steps to Being a Better You in 7 days." (Interesting isn't it that they use the same number of days our Bible uses in the story of creation!)

Then there was an article titled: "11 Slightly Scary Ways to Become a Better You." A website called "Addicted 2 Success" promotes: "10 Ways to Become a Better YOU." And the list goes on and on. According to Google search, there are nine-hundred-seventy-seven-million websites that address the topic of: How to Be a Better You!

BE HAPPY WITH WHO YOU ARE

About one-hundred-fifty-million fewer sites address: How to Be Happy with Who You Are. And far less numbers of websites come up that relate to How to Be a Humble Servant. It is very counter cultural to practice what Jesus preached about being an authentic humble you who seeks only to serve.

Rob Bell goes on to say: "We learn how to build and construct masks and facades to cover up all the things that we aren't. We spend tons of energy maintaining a false self. Carefully protecting and preserving an

image that we've created that we think is better than our real self."

Our society does not promote the idea that in our own unique way we reflect the glorious image of God to the world. When is the last time you saw a commercial that encouraged staying the way we are as our authentic selves. Have you ever seen a commercial that encourages you to enjoy the same clothes you already own? Or one that promotes you buying only what you really need, and spending your time helping others rather than going shopping for something new?

Instead, we are encouraged to spend way too much energy and money worrying about what others think of us. We strive to get the better places in life rather than enjoying the moments we have left in the places where we are with the people God has given us to serve.

Many people in the world are walking around exhausted from constantly climbing a ladder in order to sit in a powerful, secure place, only to find there is another place higher up that looks even better.

LUKE 12

According to Luke 12, But Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?"

Jesus invites us to lose our life so that we can really find it," and to serve rather than be served, to give our life up to God

who calls us to be servants to fully live rather than hold too tightly and then lose our life in striving to be better.

HUMILITY

How do you lose your life? How do you find your life again once it is lost? Humility and having an attitude of service will help you find the better you.

Think about how many broken relationships don't get any better until someone humbles themselves first to apologize. Why is that so hard? It's so hard because when we say we're sorry, when we admit that our hands aren't clean and that we may have contributed to the problem, it requires humility. Healing and wholeness in your self and in your relationships begins with a refusal to continue to present to the world your false prideful self.

Some people expect others to apologize first and they refuse to be humble and serve others with no expectations of praise. They cling to their ego and their false self and they keep propping up a perfect version of themselves, only trusting in their own efforts to get better. When we keep striving to be something other than our true selves our life gets drained out of us. We lose our ability to be humble and then we miss out on the blessings that come with service and a humble attitude of gratitude in all things.

Here is a unique commercial from Thailand. I've never seen one like it. The commercial doesn't promote buying something new or becoming something we are not. Instead this is the only commercial I have ever seen that shows the blessings that come from disregarding what others think and serving those in need unconditionally.

(A video was shown to the congregation.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PesEgEYauG4>

Think for a moment: Are you holding so tightly to your life that you are actually losing it?

May you lose your false life, and in the process, find your real life which contains the authentic better you.

And may the love of God free you from fear and give you the courage to be humble and serve others with boundless gratitude for being created just the way you are.” Amen

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Benediction:

And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us now and forever more. Amen

