

BORN TO GIVE

PART 1: BORN IDENTITY

Luke 2:8-11 (NIV)

We're talking today about BORN IDENTITY.

We are taking some help from the median culture.

We are talking about BORN. BORN TO GIVE.

What was the mission of Christ? *(Jn 3:16)*

So I encourage you to, in the business of life and Christmas, make worshiping Jesus a part of your celebration right smack through the holidays.

Bring your relatives, they're gonna enjoy this series and I'm gonna have a lot of fun teaching it.

Today in Part 1, we're talking about BORN IDENTITY.

What did Jesus Christ come to earth to do and to accomplish?

And when we look at this whole subject of Jesus, He came and he was born to give, and it was pre-assigned, preordained.

It was God's purpose and God's plan that when Christ came to earth, He didn't come to get anything from us.

He came to solely give, bless, help, aid and assist mankind.

And in our culture today, and especially around the time of Christmas, we are sometimes too focused on getting. "I want this for Christmas."

How many of you husbands and wives do this... "Here, wrap this up and put this under the tree. It's from you to me." Right!

This is why there is an effort to take Christ out of Christmas – giving, it's counter to the culture of today

Everything in our culture is about how much you get.

Whoever has the most toys wins (he who gets the most). And then, we're pretty good at getting things.

Don't even raise your hands, don't even respond, just mentally go "Yeah, maybe you've got me there!"

How many of us have had a fully working phone and the new iPhone upgrade comes out and we're like "Gotta have it! Gotta get it!" Okay, I'm guilty there. I want the latest gizmo, gadget.

We have clothes. No one is sitting here naked and destitute.

But yet, what is one of the most purchased things at Christmas? It's clothes!

Because we look in our closet, and ladies, I don't know how you do this, but you look in your closet of racks of material and then you say... "I have nothing to wear!"

How that other woman's clothes got in your closet, I don't know.

When I was a kid growing up, there were 6-people (2-adults, 4-kids) living in a house with, this is sad, one bathroom! One bathroom!!!!!!

See, our culture doesn't know and understand patience and long suffering because you had to learn to be patient or pee at a tree outside.

Now I have 4 bathrooms - we in bathroom heaven! It is like "Go whenever you want to!"

Some people are so committed to getting that they actually go and borrow money and pay 25% interest and go to get the things they really have to have.

That means if it cost \$10, they say... "No, I don't want to pay \$10, I want to pay \$12.50 for it."

"I don't want to pay \$100 for it, I want to pay \$125 for it because I have to have it so bad!"

Well, over the next 5-weeks, we're gonna reprogram your brain about what it means to follow our Savior who was BORN TO GIVE, and His heart and His lifestyle and His passion.

Jesus was born to give. For God so loved the world that he GAVE.

The message of God is to give, to help, to aid and to assist us as mankind.

God doesn't come to take anything away from us.

He's not out to get us regardless of the false teaching that you have heard or been instructed.

God is on your side.

James, Chapter 1 - Every good and perfect gift is from above. Coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights. That God is the giver.

Titus 2:13 – *Jesus Christ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from our wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own and eager to do His good.*

So how do we identify with Christ? How do we identify this King, this Messiah that has come.

Colossians 1:26-27 – *The mystery that has been kept hidden from the ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. 27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery.*

Here's the mystery, which is, Christ in you, the hope of glory. Christ in you.

Can you imagine, ladies, being Mary?

Those of you that have born a child, carried a child inside of you, can you imagine knowing that the Son of the Living God lives and abides in you?

And in the same way that Mary got to experience that, God wants even men to experience Christ in you.

That the mystery is that Christ is in you. Jesus said... "Remain in me and I will remain in you."

Now some of you struggle with sin and temptations and you struggle with it.

Now here's my dare... get your volleyball and wear your volleyball all week. Just go into the office this way.

Don't you put this on Facebook!

Next time you go out with the guys and you don't want to drink too much, wear this into the bar.

"What's going on? Oh, Jesus lives in me. I'm just trying to remind myself." Christ lives in me.

I'm just trying to feel what Mary was feeling over these next few weeks.

Christ in me, the hope of glory.

It's a witnessing tool when you go to work.

"What's wrong with you?" Christ in me!

You're standing at Wal-Mart, as a man. People are eyeing you down... "It's alright, it's alright. It's Christ in me."

It would change the way we live. It would change the way we think.

It would change the way we function in this world and in this life if we could get the vision, if we could truly understand that Christ is in me.

We wouldn't get discouraged, we'd get encouraged.

When we're facing struggles and challenges we wouldn't be like... "I don't know what I'm gonna do!"

We'd be like... "Wait a second, Christ is in me!" Greater is He that is in me than he who is in the world.

And then when temptation comes... "Should I do it? I don't know. Well, I wanna do it.

I don't know. But I wanna do it. No, but I don't want to."

Wait a second... Christ is in me.

You see some of you think that Jesus has this James Bond, 007 ejection seat.

And when he see's you about to plow into sin He goes "Bail out!" Boom! He's out.

Pick me up when you're done.

No, His spirit indwells you. His spirit abides on the inside of you.

Through thick and thin, through nasty and praise, through sin and sickness, through challenges and troubles, He never leaves us, He never forsakes us, He never bails out on us.

So where I go, He (Jesus) goes.

So, I'm going to work and I sit down at my desk and I'm gonna start to work and all of a sudden there's something on my e-mail and my boss is asking about something, I'm like... "Oh shoot, I forgot!

Let's make up an excuse. I was gonna make up a lie, would that be cool, Jesus?

I should probably just be honest. I'm sorry, I forgot. I'll take care of that right away."

Then all of a sudden when everyone else has gone to lunch and I'm kinda surfing around on the Internet and then... "Oh no, you're here! You wouldn't want to look at that would you, Jesus? No."

And then when we go back home and you're there with your husband or your wife and you're feeling frustration from the traffic and you almost got into an accident and then all of a sudden you start to let your loved one really know how you feel and then "ARGH!

We love you." If we can grasp this image that Christ is with us wherever we go, whatever we do, that we have the winner inside of us, it'll change the way we think, it'll change the way we talk, it'll change the way we function in life.

Seven ways to identify with Christ. Let's identify with this giver.

1. OUR VISION: We look outward, not inward.

You see, too many times we're inward focused.

We're not looking inward, we're looking outward.

Our lives has to be, we sometimes go through life this way (looking downward)... "Just look at your own things, don't worry about any thing else.

Don't worry about that person over there. Don't worry about that person or whatever's happening."

Learn to be a person that looks up and looks out and says... "God, who would you desire me to help, to assist, to aid, to bless today?" Look beyond yourself, look outward.

Jesus said in Matthew 25, *He said... When I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you invited me in. When I was naked, you clothed me. When I was sick and in prison, you visited me. And the disciple said... Lord, when did we see you naked? When did we see you in prison? I don't understand? And Jesus said... When you did it unto one of the least of these, you did it unto Me.*

How many of you know somebody, that isn't going to have somebody to have Christmas with? Invite them over. "But it won't be like it is when it's just us!" Right! Get over it! Invite somebody over for Christmas dinner. Invite somebody over for Christmas lunch. Doesn't mean that you have to go out and buy them spectacular gifts. All they want is love and value and focus and attention. That's what Christmas is about. It's not about the value of the gift, it's about the love that is extended.

Secondly, we need to take on the identity of Jesus in...

2. OUR WORDS: We bless not curse.

That out of our mouth proceeds blessings and not cursing.

Luke 6:27-28 – 27 Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

Now see, I'm not tempted to curse you face to face cause that wouldn't be nice.

Where I'm tempted to curse people is when they can't hear me and they can't see me. "That stupid person.

Who do they think they are! Just pulling out in front of me!" Now, if that person were sitting right beside me I'm not rolling down my window and start complaining. I'm not doing that, oh, because I'm a good person. But what am I doing in private? Am I speaking blessings or cursing? We need to bless those that are around us. We need to speak words that will make people feel loved, valued and appreciated. It will change our dialogue. I promise you, it will change our relationships.

And thirdly, what about...

3. OUR ACTIONS: We're here to serve not take.

We're here to serve others. We're not here for "What will you do for me? Can you serve me?"

But if we take that attitude in our homes it will transform our families.

"No! It's my turn to do the dishes. I really wanted to do the dishes! Please, let me!"

Why don't we have tears over that? "I really wanted to vacuum!" "OK, you can vacuum tomorrow.

We'll let you do it again." "It's my turn to do the laundry!"

When you go to your place of employment and every time something comes up, why don't you say... "I want to do it! I want to do it!"

Till finally your boss will be saying... "Really, you can't do everything here, alright?

Back it up, slow down." Versus having your boss say... (with a kick) "Will you get your rear in gear!"

It's not about what the company will do for you. It's about what you can do for that company.

It's about how you can serve, how you can bless, how you can help.

Matthew 20:28 – Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

4. OUR ATTITUDE: We are selfless not selfish.

We're selfless. I lay down my will, my way, my wants. I am selfless.

Now, Lisa and I have this way of navigating our dates.

Because she wants to see a "chick-flick" and I want to see a "shoot 'em up flick."

She wants to go to Panera, where you get this itty, bitty sandwich and this itty, bitty pixie cup of soup.

And I want to go where there are cows in the back and they "MOO!" and they bring you a slab of something, you know, meat!

And so we have this way that we navigate this selfishness and selflessness that we rotate on our date day and our date as to who gets to choose.

And so Friday night, she chooses the movie. After Friday night, I chose the Bass Pro Shop.

See how that works! But we're selfless.

Most conflicts relationships, are rooted in selfishness. "It's what I want." The conflict arises from "I want my way!"

And it's about laying down my will.

Look at how Jesus set the example... "Father, not My will be done, but your will be done this night."

John 15:13 – *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

5. OUR RESPONSE: We forgive not retaliate.

How do we respond when people wrong us, offend us?

We're gonna get back, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth?

No, we're going to choose to forgive.

Just as Christ forgave us of our sins and of our mistakes.

Colossians 3:12-14 – 12 *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

We forgive, not retaliate.

6. OUR MOTIVATION: We live to give not get.

What we should really look at is when we're doing our income taxes is not "How much did we make this year?" "Yeah, look at that!"

It should really be, "How much did we give this year?" "How much did we give?"

It's really not just a monetary thing, but how much time did we give?

How many people did we aid?

How many people did we assist?

Philippians 2:4-8 – *Not looking to your own interest but each of you to the interest of others. 5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness 8 and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.*

It wasn't about "Well, God if I go do this. If I go down there and do this, what am I getting? What's in it for me?"

When we ask that question, we're never gonna give with the right attitude.

When someone just needs a hand, when someone just needs a pick-me-up, when someone just needs a word of encouragement.

7. OUR RELATIONSHIPS: We love unconditional not provisional.

It's not based upon... "Scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." There's no strings attached to it.

We give unconditionally. We love unconditionally. We love expecting absolutely nothing in return.

We give because it's part of our nature, because it's part of who we are.

Now for you note takers, put your notes away. I want to shift gears and here's what I want you to do.

I want you to just close your eyes. And I want to deliver a message, a message of hope.

Jesus was born to give.

His mission, His vision, His passion, His focus reveals His identity and that was that He was born to give.

Listen to what He gave to you...

He gave His blood to destroy your sin.

He gave His dignity to take your shame.

He gave His grace so you could be saved.

He gave His obedience so you could become righteous.

He gave His body so you could be healed.

He gave His riches to destroy your poverty.

He gave His name to give you authority.

He gave His life as a ransom for your freedom.

He gave up His seat in heaven to take your place in hell.

Jesus was born to give.

He gave you His armor to protect you.
 He gave His spirit to fill you.
 He gave His love to extinguish your fears.
 He gave up His crown in heaven and took a crown of thorns so you could become royalty.
 He gave His authority so you could walk in power.
 He gave up His privileges as a son so you could join the family and be adopted as a son and as a daughter.
 He gave His power so you have victory.
 He gave His glory so you could be holy.
 He gave up His position so you could be exalted.
 He gave His wealth so you could be generous.
 He gave up His desires so you could have desires.

Jesus was born to give.

He gave His comfort so you could experience peace.
 He gave His truth so you could be set free.
 He gave you His word to fuel your faith.
 He gave His angels to guard and defend you.
 He gave His spirit to guide and comfort you.
 He gave His blessings to meet your needs.
 He gave His freedom to break you out of prison.
 He gave His forgiveness to destroy your guilt.
 He gave His authority so you can walk on the devil.
 He gave you a covenant to secure your future.
 He gave you the gifts of The Spirit so you can minister.

Jesus was born to give.

He gave you love when you didn't deserve it.
 He gave you faith so you could believe.
 He gave you strength so you'll overcome.
 He gave you joy to brighten your day.
 He gave you the baptism of the Holy Spirit so you are empowered.
 He gave you His ability so you can perform miracles.
 He gave you His church so you would have a family.
 He gave you life so you would never thirst.
 He willingly gave Himself on the cross so you would be free from sin.
 He gave His anointing to teach you all things.
 Jesus gave it all. AMEN! AMEN! AMEN!

He gave it up. He paid it all. He took your place. He took your sin. He took your sickness. He took your poverty. He took your shame.

He said... "I'm going to take it for you cause I'm a giver, not a taker!
 I'm gonna give of myself to you.
 I'm gonna take away what you don't need, what you don't want, what you don't like.
 I'm gonna take that and I'm gonna take it upon myself."

My last point... Jesus gave it all, Jesus did it all, Jesus paid it all just so He could have a relationship with you. Will you stand with me and let's pray...