



Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- March 30, 2023

The Lord be with you.

One does not know who he is until one knows whose he is. That's what a missionary statesman, E. Stanley Jones said, "one does not know who he is until one knows whose he is." And I wonder about you today. Do you know whose you are? Do you know to whom your life belongs? Do you know from whom your life came and to whom your life will one day return? Today, I want us to see that you and I that we belong to God. That's whose we are. We don't belong to the culture, to an institution. We do not belong to another human being, but we belong to the maker of heaven and earth.

When I was young, we, we used to talk about someone trying to find himself. We called it an identity crisis. I wanna look today at a scripture that solves the identity crisis as it tells us who we are. I'm looking at the prophet Isaiah chapter 43 where I began reading in verse one. But now thus says, the Lord He who created you, Oh Jacob, he who formed you, Oh Israel.

Well, that's, that's you and me as by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we are incorporated into, we are made to share in the promises that God made to ancient Israel. We are now made God's people. But now thus says, the Lord He who created you, He who formed you, do not fear. For I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine.

Now, I've underlined in my Bible, these different verbs here as it as what it says that God has done for us. It says created, formed, redeemed, called by name. You are mine. That's, that's who we are. We live in a culture trying to tell us a lie that we're here by random chance that we're just, we're just molecules that have happened to come together. We are from slime that came up out of the ocean so that we're here today without any meaning without any purpose. And frankly, that's why life is so so cheap in our culture today.

But scripture says that that God created you. He formed you. Psalm 139 says that God knit you together in your mother's womb. That is God gave special care to making you to be you. And just like God doesn't make any two snowflakes alike, so God gave special care to making you. That gives us divine dignity amidst a culture that just can't figure out why we are here. God created you. He formed you. And then our text adds, it says that God redeemed you as God once redeemed Israel out of the bondage of Egypt, so through Jesus Christ, God has redeemed you out



water from rock

of the bondage of sin and death and given you eternal life. He has redeemed you. And then our text adds, it says, and God called you by name.

Now, this is spoken in a culture that gives great significance to names as, as God took a man, Abraham and he gave him a name of promise, Abraham, the father of many nations. He took a Jacob that name a man, hill grabber swindler and he gave him the name Israel triumphant with God and, and Jesus took a man named Simon and he gave him the new name Peter, the Rock, and he took a Saul of Tarsus and he gave them a new name, the Apostle Paul. And so so the God who created you who formed you who redeemed you from the powers of sin and death. He has given you a name.

Now people may call you different names but but God has his special name for you, what God is making you to be. And so God then goes on in our text to say, do not fear. Whatever your circumstances today, God says, do not fear for I have redeemed you. I've called you by name. You are mine. That's who you are. God says you are mine.

Our scripture text in Isaiah continues. When you pass through the waters, it does not say if you pass through the waters, if you pass through the rivers. But, but, but when, because you're not, we will have problems. But God's promise is He says, when you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you for I am the Lord, your God. That's whose you are.

I, I like how the old hymn, How Firm A Foundation, it takes this imagery of Isaiah and it sets it to music and it says when through the deep waters I called you to go, The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow, for I will be with thee, Thy trouble to bless and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress. When through fiery trials, thy pathway shall be my grace, All sufficient shall be thy supply, The flame shall not harm thee I only design thy draws to consume and thy gold to refine. the soul that on Jesus, that lean for repose. I will not, I will not desert to his foes, that soul though all hell should endeavor to shake. I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake.

We began today with “One does not know who he is until one knows whose he is.” I hope and I pray for you today that you know whose you are as God says, you are mine and what a difference that makes.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.