



**The following is a series of messages preached at
Melville City Church in early 2010.**

King's Kids

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King's Kids 1

OUR IDENTITY AS KING'S KIDS

Rod Thiele
7 February 2010

This morning want to set the scene for King's Kids theme and build a bridge between what we have been doing in the Father's Love. So let's start by remembering the Father's Love.

A fundamental belief that God loves me unconditionally should underpin everything else we believe as a Christian and therefore how we act, both in public and in private.

God loves you unconditionally, so you don't have to work for him to earn his approval or salvation.

God loves us unconditionally, so when I sin, when you sin, we know He still loves us and we can find forgiveness from Him through the wonder of Christ's death and resurrection.

God loves you unconditionally, then even if you don't love Him back! He still loves you. So, you can start to live that same way: You can start to forgive people and love them even if they are mean to you, even if they have hurt you.

I can forgive others because I have been forgiven by God. I can love others because I am loved by God. I too can learn that I can love with God's love, unconditionally. I can offer only love in return.

I don't have to take count of the times when my spouse does something that I don't like, and we don't even need to find some way to get back at them After all, God didn't take revenge on me, so I can learn that I do not have to take revenge on another.

Ultimately, such a revelation, if we really believe it, starts to transform our relationships with others. My identity is shaped and formed by God, not be the views of those around me.

Our identity is continually shaped by our culture.

When women pick up a glossy magazine, they are told that they should look like the size zero model on the cover even though they should eat the sponge cake on page 78. They should be doing the exercises on page 46 if they are to have full health and they should be living at the luxury resort displayed on pages 71-73 if they are to have a full life.

Blokes are told they should drive this car if they really are someone, and have that jet ski to show they really are alive. Turn a few pages and they'll learn that their spare money should be going into this long term investment and overleaf they'll need that monster bbq so they aren't outdone by their peers. Their stomachs should look like the six packs displayed on the fellows at the beach illustrated on page 17 even though they should drink the beer advertised on page 43.

Our daughters should wear the skimpy clothes on page 5 that show off their young bodies and yet page 14 has an in-depth article about eating disorders and identity crises in our young women. Our children should get top grades at school and get into the best unis and courses but the page 34 feature article is about the amazing party lives of the celebrity set.

Page 19 has an advertisement promoting to our sons the latest video games. They are amazingly realistic and the most popular ones portray violence against women and also a car race in which you never die. Three pages earlier on, there is a feature on the problems of male sporting clubs overindulging in alcohol and dealing inappropriately with young women at parties.

And we wonder why people get screwed up.

Our identities are shaped but what we see, hear, read and start to believe about ourselves. That's why Romans 12:2 (NIV) says this:

²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Be transformed by your mind being renewed. So, the more you read of God's word, the more your mind will be renewed. The more your mind is renewed, the more your life will be transformed. The more your life is transformed, the less you will want to conform to the patterns and standards of the world.

Sounds like I'm bagging glossy magazines! I am. Because they, like all of the popular culture and standards and patterns of this world, will attempt to prescribe my worth. What is my value?

Let's think about what I'm worth in the standards of the world: What makes me valuable?

My looks, my bank balance, the size of my home or location in which I live, the jewels I have on my fingers or around my neck, or the size of the toys in my garage. The number of friends I have, my IQ, the number of times I've been promoted, the dimensions of my body, my income, my spouse's or parents' income, where I holiday, where I went to school and where my kids go to school, my employer, the church I go to, my role in the church, blah blah blah!

These attributes are generally about what I have got or where I have been.

These are part of the standards of the world.

If we want to look at what the Word of God says, we find better standards, higher standards. We ask different questions, such as "whose am I" and therefore, "who I am".

Yes, today we start King's Kids. This is not about children. KK is about being the sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father. Through the five weeks of King's Kids, we'd hope that your life will start to really be touched and you more fully understand what it means for you to be a son or a daughter of God. As you more fully understand it, hopefully you will more fully live it.

Let's look together at 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV):

⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Peter wrote this letter to what he calls God's elect, Christians scattered all over Western Asia and Europe. People that Peter says were chosen by God.

Yes, he says, you are a chosen people. In other places (like Ephesians 1 and 2) the Scriptures talk about a people who have been adopted by God, people who have been snatched – as part of God's amazing plan and design – from darkness and placed into a kingdom of light.

Here, Peter is saying that these people who are following Christ, have not only been chosen, they have become part of a royal priesthood, part of a holy nation, part of a people who belong to God.

What does this tell us? This tells us about our identity in Christ. Our identity as King's kids.

Let's say I have all the worth of the following stuff piled up

- My looks, my bank balance, the size or location of where I live, the jewels I have on my fingers or around my neck, or the size of the toys in my garage. The number of friends I have, my IQ, the number of times I've been promoted, the dimensions of my body, my income, my spouse's or parents' income, where I holiday, where I went to school and where my kids go to school, my employer, the church I go to, my role in the church, blah blah blah!

If all of that was gathered together as worth, as value, as identity, it might really count as something.

But let's look at some things that are bigger.

God loves me!

God chose me!

Jesus is the king of Kings, He's my big brother

I've been adopted by him.

I've been introduced to a kingdom and I'm a part of it thank to God.

I have the opportunity to access the resources of the kingdom in His Name.

I'm part of a royal priesthood

I belong to God

All of a sudden, my looks aren't as important. I've been chosen by God. When he looks at me, he doesn't see my bulges, He sees Jesus.

All of a sudden, my bank balance isn't as important to my status. I've been chosen by God. I'm a son or daughter of his. I can live as royalty, with Christlike extravagance. My value is not dictated by the print on my bank statement.

All of a sudden, the size of my house or the suburb in which I live become less important. You see, I've been adopted, chosen by God, and he delights in me as I am.

All of a sudden, the jewels I have on my fingers or around my neck count for little. You see, I get to wear the crown jewels. Bring the best robe, put it on my son. The ring of authority and family identity. They are far better than my pearls or diamonds.

All of a sudden, the size of the toys in my garage are of less important. You see I've been given access to resources that don't rust and don't go out of fashion.

All of a sudden, the number of friends I have is less important. After all, I'm part of a holy nation, a people belonging to God. I am so lucky. So fortunate.

And my IQ, the number of times I've been promoted, the dimensions of my body, my income, my spouse's or parents' income, where I holiday, where I went to school and where my kids go to school, my employer, the church I go to, my role in the church all start to pale into weak insignificance compared to this.

I've been called.

You've been called?

Called where?

Called out?

Out from where?

Out of the kingdom of darkness.

Out to where?

Into His wonderful light

Today is time for you to start looking at yourself in the mirror. The mirror of God's word. When the world says, you are fat, you are skinny, you are poor, you are inadequate, you are alone, you are unqualified, you are too short, too tall, too young, too old, you must not let that define who you really are.

It's time to let the mirror of the word of God start reflecting back at you what God sees of you, not what the world sees of you. After all, whose opinion is really worth believing.

Personally, I'd like to believe most what God says about me rather than a person up the street.

Mirror of God's word. What do you reflect back?

When I hold up my inadequacies and inability, my sinfulness and weakness, my fears and my challenges, what do I see reflected back of how God sees me?

Yes, God, I can see it. It's starting to take shape:

I am part of a chosen generation. I am part of a royal priesthood. I am part of a holy nation. I am part of a people of God. I am part of a people who have been lifted out of darkness and into privilege.

I am adopted. By God.

In fact, I'm so adopted, that I'm like a stranger to the values of this world. I'm actually like a foreigner to the culture around me. It's almost like I live in this world but I don't belong here.

It's almost like what the letter to the Hebrews 11 says of the people of the Old Testament saints: they were aliens and strangers on this earth. Because they had their eyes on something better: something eternal and heavenly.

Personally, I don't mind feeling like an alien or a stranger if I start believing what God says about me.

In coming weeks, we'll look at issues like the responsibility of living as a King's Kid, and the opportunities as well – but that's for later.

King's Kids II

OUR SUPPORTAS KING'S KIDS

Rod Thiele
7 March 2010

A few weeks ago I shared from

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

One of the things that I struggle with is that sometimes I think I take that relationship as a King's Kid a little too lightly. Perhaps a bit flippant? As Dale Hewitt asked, are we mates with God?

God loves me! Does that mean that I can get away with anything? Probably not! But what does it mean? What can I do before I start blurring the lines of relationship and I start being a problem child? Yes, we are in God's family, but doesn't every family have a black sheep?

Can I get to the point where I may be *a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God*, but that I have stopped making any declaration at all about Him.

See, one of the privileges of being a King's Kid is that we have access to the amazing creator. All things were created by him and created for him (Col 1: 16), he has incomparably great power which he makes available to us as we believe in Him (Ephesians 1:19), He offers the privilege of receiving whatever we ask for in prayer (Matthew 21:22).

So, I need to learn how to live in the fullness of that authority and that power and that prayer opportunity.

I want to live like a king's kid. But is it possible to take it all for granted? The privilege of his power, love, authority, etc.

Perhaps you sometimes feel the same. Are you taking your heavenly father for granted? Am I a family member when it suits me, a black sheep at other times, a runaway at other times. Or am I trying to do all I can to stay out of my heavenly father's way at other times, in case he asks me some hard questions or checks how neat my bedroom is!

If so, you need some guidance. Fortunately, the Scriptures give us some great help in this area. Today I want to open for you a passage that I find useful and help keep me on track in my walk with God and my right relationship with God as my heavenly father.

Book of Romans

Set context scene.

Rom 5: Peace in Christ, Life through Christ

Rom 6 and 7 Dead to sin but alive in Christ

Rom 8 freedom from sin and now more than conquerors

Rom 9 and 10: God's choices and the Jew's rejection of Christ

Rom 11: (start) God's response to the Jew's unbelief

Let's look at Romans 11: 17-22

17If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in."

Explain grafting

20Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. 21For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

22Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

Here Paul gives the new Christians some very stern warnings that we need to hear as well from time to time:

Here they are:

V18, “do not boast over those branches” never boast that you are in the kingdom and someone else is outside. To do so brings dishonour to the head.

“There, but by the grace of God, go I.”

V18, “consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you”

Remember who is the King and who is the Kid! You are the adopted one, the child, the Kid. You are not the one doing the choosing, not the adult in this relationship, you are not the King. The King does not depend on you. You depend on the king.

God supports you, you don't support him. Make sure we respect His word. (Read it and obey it). Respect His spirit (listen and obey), Respect other members of the family (Honour members of the church, speak well of them, let their name be a safe word in your mouth).

Verse 20:

Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.

Yes, he says “be afraid”, or be careful. Don't walk all over God's grace by abusing our position as King's Kids. Be solemn and respectful. Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, not us.

The picture in Romans 11 is of an unruly and wild child who finally is grafted into good root stock so that there is nourishment, fruitfulness, health from disease, so that some fruit is formed that wouldn't otherwise be there.

Notice that the intention of the cultivator is that the fruit would grow through the grafted stock but that the provider of nourishment would be the Father.

The picture is of those who have been chosen, the elect, but who are not better than the Jewish believers, but who now have access to the same nourishing flow of God, the same Spirit, the same generosity.

And all of this has come about by God's perfect grace, his choosing, not our own cleverness or goodness. Just His goodness in having Jesus die on the cross.

Let's look at his final warning:

V 22

provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

Wow – the possibility that if the Hebrew or Jewish people that chose not to accept God’s son as the Messiah, the Anointed one, the Christos. If their old branches can have been removed by God due to their unbelief, then similarly, our newly grafted in branches can be removed by our choosing not to live in God’s kindness, in effect, turning away from him or turning our back on Him.

That’s what it says in Romans 11. Paul is dead set serious about it – enough to warn these new Christians: Mate: if God did that to the Jews, he can do it to you too.

So, that’s what Paul wrote 2000 years ago. What about today. What sort of language would he write to the people of Perth?

Are you taking your Father for granted? Have you forgotten that while he is full of Kindness, there is a balancing element of sternness there as well. Is there are measure of afraid in you or have you become insensitive regarding God’s provision.

I know that God wants to challenge you today. He says “I still love you”. “I still want to be king to you. But I can’t have the life and nourishment that I provide taken for granted. To do so fails to honour me and fails to honour my Son.”

“I am always willing that non should perish and that all should come to repentance, but you need to understand that you can walk away from my grace and kindness and crucify my son all over again.”

“It’s time to come back to this statement: I am the one who is your support. I am the provider. I am the good shepherd, I am the beginning and the end, the alpha and the omega. I am the one who is the reason and author of life.

John 15:5

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

6If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

7If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

8This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

9“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

10If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

11I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

12My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

13Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

14You are my friends if you do what I command.

15I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

16You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

17This is my command: Love each other.