

What Is My Name?

Text: 1 Cor 15:10

Suggested Hymns:

851, 181, 462, 286, 515

- 1) I am God's workmanship
- 2) Man
- 3) Christian
- 4) Friend of Jesus
- 5) Faithful
- 6) Confessor of Jesus

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is 1 Corinthians 15:10, ¹⁰ *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Time and again amnesia victims walk the streets of cities, asking, Who am I? What is my name? This disease, caused by some blockage in the brain, blacks out completely the past of their lives. Nothing is remembered, not even the name.

Equally tragic is the story of thousands of boys and girls who after World War II were gathered by the Swedish government into concentration camps because they were homeless and nameless. Many of these children did not know their name or remember from what part of the country they had come. Anxiously they would ask: Who am I? Who are my parents? What is my real name? And no one could come up with the answer. Nobody knew.

You and I have often been asked: What is your name? Without embarrassment we gave our name and address, glad to be identified. However, at times we exclaim with a feeling of inferiority: After all, Who am I? In this huge universe I am but a speck! What difference does it make what I do and say and how I vote? Who am I among the millions of people on earth?

On many companies data bases you are “Just a number.” Many refer to us as “the masses.”

But then we open the Bible and hear God say to us in Isaiah 43:1, ***I have called you by your name; You are Mine.*** Even when everyone else designates us as “no-bodies” we can say, one by one: I am precious, at least in God’s sight. God thinks about me. As we kneel in humility at His feet, conscious of our numberless transgressions, God takes us to His heart, embraces us with His love, and abundantly pardons all our sins and remembers them no more.

In wonderment we ask, Who am I, that God should love me? Then we realise, as Paul did, that God has done all by grace. He has sent His Son, who reconciled us through His blood. By the Holy Spirit we have been called to the Father’s heart by the Gospel. So we exclaim with the great Apostle of the Gentiles, ***“By the grace of God I am what I am!”*** Out of the dust of my degradation God lifts me, lost in sin and unable to find my way back, and tells me who I am and what my name is. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. What Is My Name? Who Am I?

I Am God’s Workmanship

Who am I? God replies, ***“You are My workmanship. I made you.”***¹ God made me a human being. He gave us bodies, which are agile, graceful, and attractive. The various members of our body are useful and are given a definite task to do.

The hand, the eye, the tongue — each serves a specific purpose. Each member of the body is to glorify God, and is not to be given over to sin and abuse. God gave us the eye to see the beauty of His creation, the hands to serve, and the feet to walk in His ways. We must exclaim, with the Psalmist, ***“I am fearfully and wonderfully made!”***²

However, all this can be said also of the animal. The deer, the horse, the birds in the trees, the fish in the waters, have a beauty and gracefulness all their own. Not one of them is without its use and value. Even the earth-worm plays an important role in the creation; it loosens the earth that the rain may seep down and water the plant world.

Man, however, is endowed with abilities which make him more than an animal. Man was created by God as a rational being, capable of thinking, planning, making new discoveries, and finding new ways of improving his environment. The car, trucks and planes prove this.

Furthermore, God implanted in the heart of man a conscience, the monitor that approves some of our acts and disapproves others. God made us moral beings. God therefore demands of us an accounting of our conduct to Him.

This reveals to us that we live beyond this time on earth. Man has an immortal soul, which gives value to life and conduct. We have a beginning but no end. We will live forever.

Among the visible creatures man is foremost and first, subduing all things and creatures on the land and in the sea and in the air to his will. Man makes land, water, and air his servants for better living as he passes through this world.

2. Who Am I? I Am God's Masterpiece.

What Is My Name? Man.

I Am God's Child

Who am I? I am a child of God's grace. When man came from the hand of God, he was perfect and without sin. His body was without weariness and pain, his conscience was pure, and his mind was given to perfect ideals. Today this body is subject to sickness, disease, and death, and the mind is perverted and sinful, and the conscience is vexed with guilt problems.

Sin has done all this to God's masterpiece. Sin has made us a dying race. Sin condemns us as transgressors of God's Law. We offend God with our disobedience and neglect of duty. If we are honest with ourselves we are compelled to admit that we have erred from the way and are lost in the jungles of wicked devices.

However, God does not want us to perish. We are His workmanship, after all. So God found a way to restore us to His favour. His love redeemed us through His Son, who bought us with His blood and brought us back to God. This is Gospel, good and glad news.

Jesus did this by His active and passive obedience for us. His active obedience was that He lived a perfect live in our stead. His passive obedience

was that He suffered for us. He has taken upon Himself the sin of the world. To do this He assumed the full blame of our transgression and guilt.

With this burden of sin Jesus went to Calvary, suffered the penalty of our disobedience, was forsaken of God, endured the pangs of hell, shed His innocent blood, and by this act of love freed man from the guilt of sin, the punishment of hell, and brought him back to God's grace.

By and through Jesus' personal resurrection God proclaimed man's liberation from the powers of darkness and made us citizens of the Kingdom.

In this present time, while we are still dwelling on earth, God's grace, through the Gospel, tells us of our redemption and by the power of the Holy Spirit brings us to faith in Christ Jesus as our Saviour. This faith places us under the Cross, which blots out and removes from God's sight all our personal sins.

The holiness of Jesus completely covers us. This forgiveness is ours in Christ Jesus, by whom the debt of sin was paid in full. Once more we breathe the air of freedom.

This faith, an act of God's grace, transforms us into new creatures. God restores and makes over the marred vessel — you and me. This makes me us heirs of all the eternal treasures: peace, hope, heaven with all its glory. Being at peace with God we are unafraid of the final Judgment. We read in Romans 8:1, *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

3. Who Am I Now? A Child Of God's Grace.

What's My Name? Christian.

A Friend Of Jesus

As a child of God's grace, I am a friend of Jesus. I belong to God's family and household and live in the very presence of Jesus. In this closer circle of God's family I am captivated by Jesus' compassion and find myself happy and content in His presence.

I am grateful and appreciative as daily God pours out upon me His love and friendship. In this household of God I am a child of obedience and delight to do His will. Completely my will merges with His. I find myself happy doing what

Jesus does, going about helping the needy and giving encouragement to the distressed.

My entire life is interwoven with His. He dwells in me. My personality becomes one with my Saviour and Friend. Paul calls himself a slave of Jesus. He realised that Jesus had purchased him with His own blood on Calvary. However, as slave Paul does not tremble in fear as he stands before his Master. No, he comes into His presence as one who delights to serve. He is grateful that now he has eternal security. Therefore he wants to show his appreciation by giving Jesus the best possible service.

As believers in Jesus Christ each one of us knows that he is in God's family by grace. We did not come and seek Jesus. He has chosen us. We are living in this Christian fellowship because Jesus came and sought us, washed us from sin, clothed us in His righteousness, and keeps us in grace. Scripture says in John 15:16, ¹⁶ *“You did not choose Me, but I chose you.”* That is the reason why Paul says in our text, *by the grace of God I am what I am.*

4. Who Am I? A Child Of God's Family.

What's My Name? Friend Of Jesus.

A Partner Of God

In God's family I am sharing God's world with Him. God has made a beautiful world around me: the trees, the flowers, the mountains, the valleys, the oceans and rivers, the sunshine and the starry night. All these God created for me to enjoy. From all sides He pours upon me His blessings. God does all this that I might have food, clothing, shelter, and protection.

However, as God shares His world with me, He asks that I share with Him my profits. After all, we are partners. God made me a trustee of all that I am and have. If God did not give the sunshine and rain in due season, we would have nothing. God asks of me, His partner, that I give Him His proportionate share.

God has contributed so much and is entitled to my acknowledgment of Him as the Giver of all good things. Paul says that God bestowed all upon him in grace.³ And honestly he declares that this grace was not given him in vain. He

was faithful in his stewardship, and he gave God a complete surrender of life and service.

What about us? Do we consult God in prayer? Do we worship and adore Him? Do we love Him with all our heart and show our appreciation in the service we give? How much do we give of our income to God that the kingdom of Jesus may be expanded? We are receiving showers of blessings year in and year out. Are we grateful and appreciative?

5. Who Am I? A Partner Of God; In Business With Him.

What's My Name? Faithful.

A Witness For Christ

In this family of God, as friends of Jesus, we are to bear witness as messengers of the glad news that Jesus came to save sinners. Jesus says, in John 15:27 and in Mark 16:15, ²⁷ *And you also will bear witness ... Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.* We are to speak to others of the hope which is within us.

We believe that Jesus is the one and only Saviour, who has redeemed us with His own blood that we might be His own and live in His kingdom. In His church we are to testify and confess our faith by letting our light shine in laying aside the deeds of darkness and serving Him in holiness and acts of love. We bear witness to the Saviour and His Gospel as a salt, as a leaven. Our influence is wholesome.

The community is better because we live in it as law-abiding citizens, who seek and pray for the welfare of the state. We live a decent and upright life as evidence that we belong to Jesus. Our Christian lives preserve and maintain an orderly society, and we influence others to come and join us in the pilgrimage of life to the glory of God and our Saviour.

6. Who Am I? A Jesus Enthusiast.

What Is My Name? Confessor Of Jesus.

By The Grace Of God

All this is true — and this must be emphasised — through the miracle of God's grace. By grace I am a Christian. And with Paul we Christians of today must admit that God has some very poor material with which to work and accomplish this.

God created in us a clean heart, because nothing but sin abounded in us. God made us over into saints and took the disobedient spirit out of our rebellious heart. All this was done to us who were dead in trespasses and sins.

What is more, the grace of God keeps us in this saving faith through the Gospel. *And His grace toward me was not in vain* says Paul in our text. Humbly yet honestly he confessed this. Once again near the close of his life Paul wrote to Timothy, *⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*⁴ Paul looks back on the road he has travelled, the service he has rendered, and humbly announces that he has not misused the grace bestowed upon him. He was faithful unto death.

What about us? What a self-searching question! If this grace has not been bestowed in vain, then Christ comes first in our day, first in our thinking, and first in our service. If this grace has not been bestowed in vain, then we will want to grow in knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Diligently and daily we will be searching the Scriptures. Daily we will ask, *“Lord, what will You have me to do?”* The prayer door will be open at all times. Our worship will proceed regularly and in all sincerity of heart. Each week our Sunday worship will have priority over everything else.

If this grace is not bestowed in vain, then we will give loyal and royal service to our Saviour and feel that neither effort nor sacrifice is too demanding. If so, then our lives will be full and rich in joy; our hearts will be filled with that blessedness which is found only in friends of Jesus.

Who am I? By the grace of God I am a child of God’s family through faith in Christ Jesus.

What is my name? Christian. Amen

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ See Ephesians 2:10

² Psa. 139:14

³ 2 Corinthians 9:8

⁴ 2 Timothy 4:7