

Testimony

Hi everyone, I'm Winston. You have heard from my wife earlier about how I was some sort of wild party animal. That is broadly true. A big part of that was because I was actively cultivating that image and identity. I wanted my peers to see me as cool and happening. I loved it when they said things like "no party is complete without Winston".

I think as humans, our sense of self-worth is tied inextricably to our identity, and that is why I had worked to maintain different identities and images at different stages of my life. For example, as I grew a bit older and started work as a lawyer, I began to seek an identity as "a good lawyer".

When I think about it, I feel that this is one of the biggest changes that God has worked in me at RHC. My identity and sense of self-worth now, or at least that which I seek now, is that I am a follower of Jesus Christ. I do not want to find my sense of self-worth to be built on any of the talents that God may have given me. I want my self-worth to be built upon the FACT that God loves me so much, that He sent Jesus Christ to die for MY sins.

I have not yet perfected this identity, that is to say, I have not managed to always find my identity and self-worth in Christ. But what I have discovered, is that when I do find my identity and self-worth in Christ, it is very liberating. My goal changes. It is no longer "What shall I do in order that I may create or maintain a certain identity?" It becomes "What does Christ want me to do?" I have seen its impact in at least 3 areas.

Work. I work as a Court lawyer, and the nature of it is such that much of it is up for public display. So if you say or do something stupid, you can be rest assured that many people will come to know and talk about it. Consequently, I had often spent more time worrying that I would say or do something stupid instead of thinking about what it was that Christ wanted me to do. When I am able to stop and refocus upon the fact of my identity and self-worth in Christ, I find that I enjoy my job much more. I am able to work without that constant sense of worry and self-doubt that may otherwise plague me. I know that even if I fail, I remain the most important person to the most important being in the Universe, the one who Jesus loves. I can tell you, that is a real stress killer.

Ministry. I would have to confess something here. I don't know if you are like me, but I had often felt uncomfortable about praying aloud in a larger group setting. I guess at the end of the day, I was shy about what people would think about me when they heard the way I prayed. I think for me, the breakthrough in this area came at one of our RHC camps. I remember that it was being preached that communal prayer is not some sort of competitive sport, but it is what God wants us to do to encourage one another. That drilled home to me that even in doing God's work, our security is still found in Christ and nothing else. It liberates me to get over myself and just do what I know God wants me to do.

Family. I think the most impactful way that this has shaped my family is in how I try to lead my family. By that, I am referring to the miracle of how I am actually even trying to lead my family at all. As some of you may know, between Charmaine and me, she is by far the more driven Type A sort. On my part, I am happy to laze all day with either the TV or the Xbox (it doesn't really matter). Left to my own devices, I would be happy to let my wife "lead". But what I have found is that when my identity is found in Christ, I want to build that identity by following the commands that come with that identity. I know that scripture commands that I lead my family, and that is what drives me to even want to lead.

Please don't think I'm trying to tell you that I am now some kind of Master Jedi Level 90 Christian or that I am trying to prescribe some sort of formula. For that is the very opposite of what I am trying to say. What I am trying to say is that it is only by God's grace that I have managed to grow in this area of my life. For that, I am very thankful for RHC and my brothers and sisters here. He has placed great people like Ivan, Jason, Aloysius in my life, all of whom have taught or modeled something for me about Christ, whether they know it or not. There are also many avenues, such as CGs and the Raffles Place Tuesday Men's Group, in which I have had the opportunity to work through many of these issues with my brothers and sisters, just like how iron sharpens iron. The truth is that I am still prone to all the things that I have shared about, and I need my community here to guard me from that. I hope we can all grow strong together in Christ.