

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME

John Edwards

Men have long been concerned about greatness. In various fields of human achievement, there are those who argue who is the greatest of all time. They are often referred to as the GOAT. There is no greater man to have walked the face of this earth than the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, “...*behold, a greater than Jonas is here*” (Mt. 12:41). And again, “...*behold, a greater than Solomon is here*” (Mt. 12:42). The woman of Samaria asked Jesus, “*Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?*” (Jn. 4:12). She quickly learned that Jesus is the Christ (vv. 25-29). The Jews questioned, “*Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead?*” (Jn. 8:53). Jesus informed them, “*Before Abraham was, I am*” (Jn. 8:58).

John recorded, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing*

made that was made....And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:1-3, 14). John said of Jesus, “*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (Jn. 1:29). No one else can do that!

I suggest that the greatest of all time is not spelled G-O-A-T, but L-A-M-B.

WHO I AM

John Edwards

There are those who face an identity crisis. They have to go out and find themselves. The Scriptures reveal who I am spiritually when I obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no better place to learn the answer to this question than the First Epistle of Peter. Take a look:

I AM A STRANGER AND PILGRIM. Peter addressed “*strangers*” (1:1) and said, “*I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims...*” (2:11). We are dwelling in a strange land (Heb. 11:9-10, 13-16). As we sing, “This world is not my home, I’m just a’ passing thru. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue; The angels beckon me from heaven’s open door, And I can’t feel at home in this world anymore.”

I AM ELECT. Peter described these scattered strangers as “*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*” (1:2). Elect is to be chosen. “*But ye are a chosen generation...*” (2:9). We are chosen in Christ (Eph. 1:3-4).

I AM BORN AGAIN. “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again...*” (1:3). Verse 23 says, “*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*” The gospel seed is the begetting seed (1 Cor. 4:15). This new birth is essential to kingdom entrance (Jn. 3:3-7).

I AM A CHILD OF GOD. Peter exhorted, “*As obedient children...*” (1:14). He went on to say, “...*now the people of God...*” (2:10). I became a child of God when I was baptized into Jesus Christ as Galatians 3:26-27 points out.

I AM REDEEMED. 1 Peter 1:18-19 affirms I am “*redeemed...with the precious blood of Christ....*” Thus Paul wrote, “*In whom [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins...*” (Eph. 1:7).

I AM A LIVING STONE IN A SPIRITUAL HOUSE. 1 Peter 2:5 states, “*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house...*” Paul penned, “*And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord*” (Eph. 2:20-21).

I AM ROYALTY. Peter describes us as “*a holy priesthood*”, “*a royal priesthood, an holy nation*” (2:5, 9). The Lord “*hath made us kings and priests unto God*” (Rev. 1:6). Isn’t it amazing what He has made me?

I AM PECULIAR. 1 Peter 2:9 says, “*a peculiar people*”. We are different and may be thought strange (4:4), but the word “*peculiar*” here is used in the sense of a people for God’s own possession. Titus 2:14 teaches that Jesus “*gave Himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*”

I AM CALLED OUT. “... *that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called*

you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (2:9). We are “*the called of Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 1:6), “*called to be saints*” (Rom. 1:7), “*called in one body*” (Col. 3:15), called by the “*gospel*” (2 Th. 2:14).

I AM A CHRISTIAN. 1 Peter 4:16 says, “*Yet if any man suffer as a Christian....*” Luke reported, “*....And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch*” (Acts 11:26). As a Christian, I am a follower of Christ (2:21).

This is who I am.

SOME THINGS I HAVE

John Edwards

Now that I am a Christian, there are some things I have as set forth in First Peter.

A LIVELY HOPE. Peter said, “*...begotten...unto a lively hope...*” (1:3). There is one hope (Eph. 4:4), the hope of the gospel, in heaven (Col. 1:5, 23).

AN INHERITANCE. “*To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not*

away, reserved in heaven for you” (1:4). What a blessing!

SALVATION. Not only have I received salvation from my past sins when I was baptized (Mk. 16:16; Rom. 3:25), but through faith I have eternal salvation in heaven to look forward to (1:5, 9).

A PURIFIED SOUL. “*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth...*” (1:22). Now I aim to keep it that way (1 Tim. 5:22).

OBTAINED MERCY. God has granted to me (the unworthy) favor, benefits, opportunities and salvation by Christ! (2:10).

PEACE. Peter closes with these words: “*Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus*” (5:14). This is “the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is” (Thayer). This passes all understanding (Phil. 4:7).

What I have is of great value. I will not trade them for anything in this world!

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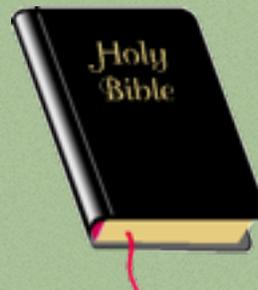
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