

## **PASTOR POY THOUGHTS -- Radiant People for Jesus**

Christian identity determines the quality of our spiritual life. Knowing your true Christian identity and maintaining it in your daily life have two benefits. First, it gives us the courage to do the right thing in the present time, and second, it provides us with the courage to walk into the future with confidence.

Christian identity means knowing “who we are, who God is, and what God does for us in our lives.” It brings us to a healthy Christian spirituality with Christian joy, hope, and confidence in our daily lives. Therefore, Christians should have a deep understanding of their spiritual identity because it determines the quality of our spiritual life and our spiritual destiny. However, our spiritual identity is not how we know who we are, but how Jesus acknowledges who we are is our true Christian spiritual identity.

### **Scriptural Insights**

Christian spiritual identity is to be the light of the world. In Matthew 5:14-16, Jesus told “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

In these verses, Jesus Christ wants us to know two things. First, the Christian is called to be a light to enlighten others. Therefore, he should not hide the light under the bowl but reveal the light of Jesus through good Christian deeds. That is, we must choose to practice the teachings of Jesus in our daily lives. The other is that Christians should give our light to everyone in the church because the church is the body of Christ and a place where we come together to worship God and serve people.

### **Power of Radiant**

The radiant light brings us bright hope. Lisa and I walked around Lake Michigan in downtown Petoskey when I was appointed to the Boyne City Area churches. It was a cloudy and gloomy day. Lisa and I complained about the weather because we wanted to enjoy a sunny midsummer day. As I groaned suddenly, a bright light pierced the dark clouds and shone on the dark lakeside, illuminating our surroundings. I still can't forget how dazzling the light shining through the clouds was. At that time, I realized that light has the power to break the darkness and can change our mood from negative to positive. It was amazing experience that taught me a great spiritual lesson.

I want to share with you one more inspiring scripture that gives me a positive spirit when I read it. It is in the book of Isaiah chapter 60 verse 1 “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.” The prophet said, “The glory and splendor of the Lord rest upon you. Therefore, “rise up” from spiritual and emotional melancholy to new hope, become a shining person who shines the radiant light of the Lord.

As a pastor, I pray that Carleton UMC will be a church that shines the light of the Lord on people of all generations and promotes justice and love of Jesus Christ to the “poor in spirit and hurt in our community.

### **Practical applications**

- You can share your hope in Jesus Christ when there is none.
- You can share words of encouragement when it is needed most.
- You can share the gospel of Jesus in your words, thoughts, prayers, and actions.