

**PLENTY TOO MUCH SERIES PT. 2**  
**POSSESSING YOUR PLENTY TOO MUCH IDENTITY**  
**5/31/20**

**I. Introduction**

Hello HFTW family! So glad to be sharing with you today. We began our PTM campaign last week and already are hearing such great reports. I got to be a part of Zoom groups and it was so great to experience the strength of sharing and discussing God's Word together. Sure hope you will go to our website and try out a PTM group.

As I mentioned last a week, a campaign is a 40-day challenge to have a radical transformation on every level of our lives: To invite God to do something powerful in our minds, emotions, relationships, our faith, our dreams, our finances, our families... In this campaign, it is to apply ourselves to be radically changed from a scarcity to a PTM abundance mindset.

Our memory verse talks about what this involves. It literally involves **RETHINKING** or **REWRITING THE SCRIPT OF OUR LIFE** based on what God says in his Word and not what we have thought, felt or believed.

Can we all quote this week's memory verse from Romans 12:2? *"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."*

Don't you love how this tells us that if we will learn to rethink our lives to think like God thinks, we will be totally transformed people. This takes commitment. That's why I'm encouraging you to do something every day to move towards a PTM lifestyle. Memorize, read the book, join a Zoom group, encourage others... Again, a campaign is more than a sermon series; it is a discipleship course.

- A. Our focus is to move into a whole new mindset of someone who's mind is no longer focused on what they're not in themselves but who they are in Jesus. It really changes everything.

I love the story of the mouse who got a PTM mindset. There was a bridge that was occupied by this haughty young lion who was boasting, "I'm the king of the jungle, nobody crosses this bridge without my permission." There were some groupies with him, hyena's and so forth, saying, "Yes, you're the king of the jungle."

All of the sudden this mouse shows up bold and courageous. An African Elephant was walking not far behind him. The mouse gets to the bridge and at first the lion doesn't see the elephant, and the little mouse in his squeaky voice says, "No lion, sorry I'm a king too and I'm crossing this bridge." The lion starts laughing but the mouse keeps coming. Suddenly the elephant appears and starts throwing animals

off the bridge including the lion. When they get to the other side, the little mouse looks up and says, “We sure did show them who’s boss.”

This is the kind of mindset we see in the story of the “Feeding of the 5000” that this series is based. It is what caused a little boy with a tiny lunch to act not like a pauper but a partner and be at the center of catering the most famous lunch in history. It is this mindset that helped a little shepherd boy use a tiny sling to bring down an enemy giant. It was this mindset that helped Caleb be the dissenting voice, when at age 40 the 10 spies told him the giants were too big to defeat, and by 85 he took his “mountain” from the biggest giants in the country. (Joshua 14:10-13)

- B. I think we’d all agree that one of the heaviest burdens we’ve carried is a negative mindset. I think in our nation often the biggest struggle we have is not so much not having enough but feeling that we aren’t enough as a person, not good enough, worthy enough, pretty enough, spiritual enough or whatever it is.

I saw in an article that one of the greatest fears of our young people is to be socially shamed. In this age of social media to be rejected in that world is crippling for so many. We’ve all probably experienced the struggle of I’m not enough in one way or other. Maybe for example it is:

1. Our struggle with criticism. Isn’t it funny how 10 people could compliment us for something but if we get one criticism that’s all we remember?
2. Some studies say that 80% of Americans self-talk is negative; 84% of women in a study said they felt they weren’t attractive enough. Few of us feel absolutely worthy enough for God to use us.

Why is this? I believe it is because in so many ways as humans the devil has hacked into our minds lies, feelings, and emotions reinforced by people, circumstances, and events that keep us from living up to our full potential.

As a child I somehow got a lie into my mind that I wasn’t brave enough to be a Christian. I lived in fear not just of sharing my faith but of the fear that my fear would make me unqualified to be a Christian. It was a lie that actually brought me to doubt my salvation and believe that I had committed the unpardonable sin. I’m so thankful that God exposed that lie and set me free, otherwise I might have lost my destiny.

- C. Why does this matter so much? It’s not just our emotional well-being that is affected by this; it is our destiny. I believe the Bible teaches us that when we look in the mirror, the person we see is the person we’ll be. The more we change the

way we see ourselves to see ourselves through God's eyes, the more we will be able to be our true self that God has created us to be.

Look at this verse that really emphasizes this.

*"Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy." (Eph. 4:21-24 NLT)*

I love how he says literally put on and wear the truth (the uniform) of who you are every day. Just as important as putting on clothes is putting on the truth every day of who you are in Jesus. I said in my book, "You can't soar like an eagle if you think you're a chicken."

## **II. That's why I love in the Bible, when God is going to use a person's life or change a person's life, he doesn't start with their ability; he always starts with their identity.**

When Jesus meets insecure Simon, one of the first things he tells Simon is I'm changing your name to Peter which means rock. When God speaks to Abram and Sarai, when they're in their 90's and don't have kids, he doesn't say you're not trying hard enough. He says, "I'm changing your name to Abraham and Sarah" which means mother and father of a multitude. Frightened Gideon, he called a "mighty warrior". Perhaps the most incredible was the murderous, apostate Saul on the road to Damascus, when he changed from persecutor to Jesus' chosen vessel.

- A. With God the present facts about your performance aren't as real or as important as the truth about your identity. God isn't focused on who you've been; he's focused on who he sees you becoming. That's why when God brings someone to repentance he doesn't rub in their past and put them through penance; he calls them to leave that behind and focus on their future. With the Prodigal, it was the religious elder brother that wanted to point out the wicked past of the brother. The father focused on who he was and was becoming. He gave him a robe to say that he had a new identity, a ring that said he had a new authority, and a party so that he knew he had new joy and blessing to look forward to.
- B. So here is the first important truth about your identity. God sees you as much better than you or other people think you are. Others might put a 3 or a 5 on your head; God puts a 10. Why is this so important? Because seeing who you are and walking in that awareness gives you the power to transform and become who you are.

I like the story of Ben Hooper. He was born out of wedlock in 1870 and struggled with all kinds of rejection and insecurity. One day he went to church and after the service was trying to sneak out quickly to avoid people but the Pastor caught him, put his hands on his shoulder, looked him in the eyes and said "I know who you are!" Ben said he was terrified but the pastor went on to say, "Why, you are a

child of God; his treasure.” Reflecting years later on the words of the pastor, Ben told people he was alive before that, but that was the day he was born. He went on to become the two-time Governor of Tennessee.

The Bible teaches that one of the Holy Spirit’s most important jobs when we accept Jesus is to help us realize our identity.

Romans 8:15-17 (NLT)

*“So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you receive God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, **“Abba Father.”** For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory.”*

This of course echoes the story of Jesus at his baptism. God wants us to experience this same personal affirmation. As we move into the truths I’m sharing today, I believe we can all have a personal experience of life transforming affirmation of Father affirming in our spirit who we really are.

- C. In the story of the loaves and fishes when the disciples tell Jesus there’s no food, we need to send the people away... Jesus says, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” (Matthew 14:16)

Here’s an example of Jesus believing a lot more in the potential of his disciples than they believed in themselves. Even when we feel totally inadequate, he sees us as his Royal Ambassadors that he has given power and authority to open the flood gates of heaven and bring a release of heaven’s resources for earth’s needs. We might see ourselves as the three stooges but he sees us as Royal Ambassadors with the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.

The Bible speaks of us as those who wear his crown of favor and in his name will cast out demons, lay hands on the sick, ask boldly for nations and see the tide of things changed.

In fact, he sees us as citizens of Heaven, here on Earth, one with him in spirit and on a mission to bring his kingdom into visible manifestation to hurt and broken people and circumstances.

Philippians 3:20 says, *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus...*

One person said, “We are not earthly people having an occasional spiritual experience, we are eternal spiritual beings having temporary earth experiences.” The point is that if we see ourselves this way it affects the impact we make. When policeman put on their uniform, they expect to have a law enforcement impact.

When we put on our identity as witnesses, gatekeepers of God's kingdom, we will naturally expect and receive the power to have a greater impact.

I might say it this way. The more we align with who Heaven says we are in our hearts, the more we will see the floodgates of Heaven released through our lives. **As we claim our identity, we will create supernatural atmospheres around us.** Peter and John in the book of Acts walked the streets and when their shadows touched people they were healed. Agreement and affirmation with who we are brings manifestation of his authority and power through us.

I remember one of the first times I saw and claimed this in high school feeling led to witness to some youth who were drinking at a park. My voice sounded weak as I began to share Jesus. Realizing who I was in Christ, I gained confidence and spoke boldly. Some threw beer cans at me, others fled but a few stayed and received Christ.

- D. Another very important impact of claiming our identity is that it is key to disempowering the old lies, habits, attitudes, and practices that have kept us in bondage.

Going back to that verse in Eph. 4:22-24, Paul doesn't say try to quit thinking those bad thoughts and doing those bad things. He tells us as Christians those old things aren't you anymore. They are like the old lizard skin that is dead on a lizard or the old bill that has already been paid for. God doesn't see those old habits and deeds as who you are but as who you were.

Certainly, we own up and confess our sin if we get tricked into going back to those old ways. But he affirms that we are to take a stand based on who we are in Christ and the truth God says about us, people who are now righteous (like Jesus) in the deepest part of our nature. Because our spirit is alive, we can be boss over our emotions, thoughts, bad attitudes, and even the attacks and strongholds of the devil.

### **III. So how do we get free from the old ways and begin to live in the confidence, joy, power, and freedom of who we are.**

- A. We accept the new person. Jesus died so that we could be completely forgiven, brand new in our inner being.

2 Cor. 5:17 says,

*"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"*

If you've never accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior that is where it starts and you can do that today.

- B. We stop agreeing with the old lies that we've believed and make a deliberate decision to replace them with God's truth.

All of us have junk and thoughts that try to rob and stop us from living our new life in God. This includes stinkin thinking, mental manure, rotten tomato attitudes, stupid choices we are used to making. But God says we can stop believing that's who we are; we can agree with God that, that is who we were and rethink and rescript with the truth of who God says we can be.

A dear lady named Cybil Mae Archer challenged me as a teenager, "The devil is going to come with his garbage pail but just because he comes to the door of your mind and heart, you don't have to let him dump that trash in your living room." The bill is canceled; you can nail the junk to the cross and agree in your spirit with God's word.

James 1:21 says it so beautifully. *"Get rid of all the filth in your life and accept the Word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls."*

One of the tools we are using in our life groups is the "belief assessment". It is so powerful to do an inventory of your beliefs. We know that Satan has no power over our lives until we believe a lie. When we believe and speak his lies to ourselves, we partner with him and give him permission and agreement to have some control. It's almost like a contract. But when we agree with God, through the blood of Jesus, that contract is broken and a new covenant with Jesus is established that empowers us to walk in freedom.

- C. Make a decision to wear and put on your new identity. Receive the Father's blessing by letting your spirit agree, decree, and activate your new identity.

1. I was thinking that when it comes to *putting on* something, it is a commitment to more than a profession; it has implications. We sometimes talk about the difference between fans and being a player on the field. I might be a fan of the LC High School Bulldogs and even have a T-shirt. But wearing the jersey of a player is a different thing from being a player. It is agreeing with the team; this is who I am and what I do.

In Christianity getting water baptized is symbolically how we make that kind of statement. How do we put on something? I believe it includes our words. We begin to make declarations. (see pages 43-46 in book PTM) We do it in songs that we sing, verses we memorize, and agreements we remind ourselves.

2. We do it by reminding ourselves that what makes this true is not our performance. What we do is going to change from time to time. We will have good days and bad days but who we are doesn't change. I tell people just because I visit Canada doesn't make me a Canadian. I'm an

American. Even if you visit the world that doesn't change who you are. Confess your wrong and reclaim who you are.

We remember that our identity isn't in what we do but what Jesus *did*. What makes us special and amazing is not what we've been but *whose* we are. I was thinking about the fairytales. Why is Cinderella famous? It wasn't so much because of what she did but who loved her. The prince chose her even though she was just like a slave girl.

We were slaves to sin, lost, orphans. But the Prince of Peace came. He didn't just choose us; he died for us to have us as his treasure. We are somebody because of who we are to him and who he is to us.

To know this, we then not only declare our faith, we *activate* it. We make choices to deliberately live out the script of who we now have become. We do things we didn't used to do. We read the word, we pray and worship, fellowship with believers, give generously, serve the hurting, expect miracles, love everybody. We activate our faith with actions of agreement.

I really believe that as we close, God wants some of us to have a personal encounter with Jesus and our Heavenly Father by his Spirit. He moves on you and in you as you are agreeing with who he says you are. Some of you have a specific lie you've believed about yourself. A fear or sense of worthlessness that has held you back. Let's agree with Jesus and take that to the cross. Let's receive, put on, and wear the new us. In Jesus' name.