

## Reputation or Destiny?

By Gerri

There was a time in my journey that I sought to have identity with those in ministry who were high profile. Come on, haven't you seen those who would seek out the pastor at the close of every service, or those who attending a conference just HAD to have a word with the speaker...especially the keynote speaker? Haven't you been around those who were always looking to enhance their own reputations by who they associated with and whose name they could drop to make themselves or their ministries look more important and/or more influential? I remember the transparency of the late Jack Frost when he shared how he used to be a reputation junkie...always going to the lead speaker at the close of a service and sticking an IV needle into his arm with the full intention of sucking him dry! His comments stuck pay dirt in my heart. I realized that I was the same way and repentance and a change of heart were in order for me.

Reputation! What even we in the church will do to build it! But friend, building our own reputations or that of our ministries is a sure road to spiritual burnout. In Kingdom thinking, we must lay aside our own reputations and those of our ministries because it is imperative that our identity be only in our relationship with Father. Jesus is our perfect example. Paul writes it this way in his letter to the Philippians. I am reading from The Message translation:

Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of Himself. He had equal status with Father God, but didn't think so much of Himself that He had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, He set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave. He became human! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, He lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death – and the worst kind of death at that – a crucifixion.

Because of that obedience, God lifted him high and honored Him far beyond anyone or anything, ever, so that all created beings in heaven and on earth – even those long ago dead and buried – will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, and call out in praise that He is the Master of all, to the glorious honor of God the Father.

David Crone in his book *The Power of a Life Message* writes:

Jesus willingly laid aside the highest possible reputation and took on the shame of the Cross, having His identity secure in the Father. In choosing humility and obedience, He put His destiny in the Father's hands and received the favor of promotion.

Our reputation may be in the hands of others, but our destiny is in the hands of Father God. Reputation or destiny? The favor of the Lord awaits our decision.

One of the best things you can do is lose your reputation and the reputation of your ministry and find your identity in the Father. It is then that your promotion will come and it will come from Him. We should always remember that neither the applause nor the scorn of men should influence or change us.