

IDENTITY VERSUS BEHAVIOR

BY BRAD FLURRY

“ As a parent or a spouse, we can influence our family to become who God created them to be by watering the seeds God has already planted - blessing who they are, *not* what they do.

When we bless our child or our spouse, we are blessing them for **who they are** - a child of God created with infinite value, dignity and worth – and **not for what they do**. Identity is separate from behavior.

I love the fact that the first time we hear God speak audibly in the New Testament, he gives a public blessing to his son:

“And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:16-17

I love that God chose this moment, because it was not tied to performance. Before Jesus began His earthly ministry, performed miracles, and began the journey that would change the course of history, He was blessed by His father.

In the heart of every child is a cry for approval. Something happens when a father says to his son *“Son, you have what it takes, I believe in you.”* Or when a husband holds his wife by the hand and says, *“You are lovely and worthy just the way you are.”*

In our house at night, as part of our bed time routine, I routinely ask our kids two questions before bed:

- 1. If I had every kid in the world lined up do you know who I would choose? Yes – You! Do you know why? Because you are my child.***
- 2. Do you know I love you? Why? Simply because you are my child.***

blessing who they are not what they do.

On a scale of 1-10 (one being very poor and ten being excellent),
How well do you use words of encouragement with your kids?

① _____ 5 _____ ⑩

What are two things your kids are really good at? (ie: sports, school, friendship, etc?)

What are two ways you can encourage them without referencing their performance?

On a scale of 1-10 (one being little and ten being very)
How often are you frustrated with your kids and say things you regret?

① _____ 5 _____ ⑩

Spend some time in God's Word reflecting on this concept. Read the following verses and write out a short phrase for each passage to bless your kids.

Example: Genesis 1:27 = "Charlie (your kids name) was made in God's Image."

Ephesians 1:11 _____

Psalms 139:14 _____

Exodus 19:5 _____