

Rip Off These Harmful Labels if You Want to Thrive in Godly Success

Leader and *loser* are both labels. One, I avoid and the other, I wear gladly.

Derwin L. Gray wrote a fantastic book about living under labels called *Limitless Life*, and I once turned his book into a sermon series. It was a huge hit because we all live under the negative labels people have assigned to us.

The Labels You Need to Rip Off

Some of those labels pertain to our physical appearance. Others to our academic and intellectual abilities. And the worst labels of all are those that imply our worth is anything less than priceless.

What should you do with all those labels?

Rip them off and remind yourself that God made you and that whatever God makes, it is good. Yes, you've sinned and need repentance and healing, but God doesn't define you by your sin. He defines you the way he shaped you and offers you redemption and full recovery through a relationship with His Son, Jesus.

When you're a believer, you get to point not only to the way God uniquely created you, but also to the way he is re-creating you in Christ to be like his Son and to fit into his family forever.

The Labels You Need to Wear Proudly

It's nice to say that we need to tear off all the labels that have been stuck to us, but the fact is, there are a few labels

that really matter for good. They'll differ for each of us.

I'm a Christian.

And "Christian" is a bit watered-down in our culture because it can mean many things to many people. It can mean I'm religious. Or I go to church. Or I am not any other religion.

So I personally prefer the label Jesus-follower. And that's still a little cloudy, but it's more descriptive.

I'm a husband, which is a label that reminds me to faithfully love and cherish my wife, and her only.

I'm a dad, which reminds me to raise my kids with affection, direction, correction and protection.

I'm a pastor, which reminds me that I'm passionate about seeing more people meet Jesus and go deeper with him and on mission for him.

I'm other things, too. I'm a bit of an entrepreneur. I'm a leadership coach. I'm a baseball fan.

All of those are labels that encourage me, that remind me of something core to who I am. They're all based on ways in which God has created me and ways in which he is directing my destiny through all of the good, bad and ugly things I'm experiencing while walking through this life under his care.

You might be a *humanitarian* or a *philanthropist* or a *consultant* or a *single mom* or *dad*. You might be a *health nut* or a *fitness guru* or a *fashionista*. You may be a *liberal* or a *conservative* or a *libertarian*. Whatever you are, whoever you are, be you with confidence, but anytime your identity is being determined by labels that conflict with your Creator's intention for you, challenge those false labels and ask this simple question...

God, you made me. You know me. You know my future. How can I

know you and become more like your Son in my own unique way every day?

My old pastor, Rick Warren, often says, “When God made you, he broke the mold. You’re the only *you* God will ever make.”

So once you have discovered redemption in Jesus and you know who God really created you to be, go be it with confidence and without apology.

And by the way, if you’re not yet a Jesus-follower like me, reach out! I’d love to help you on that journey! {eoa}

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