

## I'm Not Who I Was

Some recent events in my life have led me to ponder the concept of change. There is a song coming to mind by Christian artist Brandon Heath called "I'm Not Who I Was." I've included the lyrics at the end of this article. If you get a chance listen to the song, it's a catchy little tune with a likable beat.

Who was I ten years ago? I was a stay at home mom of a toddler. I was a wife, a daughter, a sister, a friend and child of God who didn't know her identity in Christ. I was an occasional pew warmer. I was barely existing...and I didn't even realize it. Being created for a purpose never even crossed my mind. I was also wounded and you, my friend, at some point in your journey have experienced woundedness too...and what do wounded people do? They wound. I've been wounded, but I've also wounded...and so have you.

By this point you're thinking, "wait a minute! I come here for words of encouragement, not to be told I'm wounded and I wound!" I'm getting to that, just stay with me a little while.

It was recently revealed to me why a relationship in my past came to an abrupt end. I went several years without knowing what I had said or done to cause this friend to completely disconnect from me. When I found out what her reason was for ending the friendship I was devastated.

Without going into great detail, let's just say I was an extremely negative person. I didn't even know it, being negative was so much a part of my identity. Do you know anyone like that? They just aren't fun, are they? I loved, but my definition of love was so limited. I had religion, (which we've talked about before) but what I was missing was relationship. It's through a relationship with Christ where we experience love, we in turn can give love. Simply put...you can't give what you don't possess.

In looking back we both wounded each other. I wounded her simply by reacting to life out of my pain. She, in turn, wounded me by rejecting and abandoning me. What's sad in this situation is she isn't open to reconciliation. I have tried, in the only way I can, to ask her forgiveness. Unless circumstances change she will never know this side of heaven I have changed. I'm not who I was.

Okay, so we've established we aren't the same. It doesn't matter if you go back 20 years, 10 years, 5 years or 5 months chances are there have been changes and; hopefully, if you are living a surrendered life, they are changes for the better.

Consider II Corinthians 3:18, *"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."* The King James uses the word changed instead of transformed. The text indicates it is a process of being transformed or changed, meaning it is ongoing.

There's a life lesson here...when isn't there?! In my state of pondering...hmmm...let's change that to processing, I was seeking the Lord. The wound had been reopened and it stung. I knew the Lord would bring about something good from this pain, if I would only give it to Him. Remember, it always requires

action on our part. I cried out to Him (literally), "I don't want this, it's ugly and it hurts and your Son died on the cross for it. It's not mine! Take it!" He gently led me to repentance and forgiveness...again! His words to me were sweet comfort. He said, "Amy, Amy, Amy don't go back to that way of thinking. You've come too far to go back to old ways. I don't see you as a negative person. I've called you to be an encourager, to bring about restoration and healing to the broken hearted. I've made beauty from ashes and my gifts to you are irrevocable. I loved you far too much to leave you the way you were. Everything I've done for you is because I love you dearly."

I processed His words and more revelation came. You see when we are still and we listen, He speaks! Again He was gentle, not condemning. I imagine He had a smile on His face and a laugh in His voice when He asked me this, "How many people have you judged based on who they were 20, 10, or 5 years ago?" There's the ouch! You knew it was coming, didn't you?

I've recently started a Facebook. Those of you familiar with Facebook know it's a great networking tool. It enables you to connect with peers, friends, family and old classmates. As you build your network it will suggest friends you might know based on your current connections, school affiliations, etc. Within a few days high school classmates starting popping up on my "people you may know list." It's amazing at what you remember about people..."he was a drunk, she was a popular, he was really nerdy, she was really quiet, he was fat, she was homely, he was a jock, and so on." What I had failed to consider was how people have changed...Papa God was merely pointing it out to me. Amy, you aren't the only one who has changed! DUH! I was looking at that list of names based on who they were eighteen years ago!

I'm not who I was! Can I get an amen? I bet most of us can humbly claim we aren't who we use to be. I am extremely grateful my Savior loves me so much He can't leave me where I was! I praise Him for training me to see people how He sees them. He sees beyond the pain, the bitterness, the wounds and negativity. He sees the person they can become! He sees the person His son hung on the cross, bled, died and rose victoriously for! When we look at people through His eyes we are not only reminded of where we've been and how far we've come, but on their potential too! Maybe all they need to start their journey of transformation is a kind word from you.

I pray as you've read this article the Holy Spirit has brought someone to your mind and reminded you they aren't who they were and neither are you!

I would love to hear how God is working in your life! You can e-mail me at [amydover@growinginrace.cc](mailto:amydover@growinginrace.cc)

### Brandon Heath - I'm Not Who I Was Lyrics

I wish you could see me now  
I wish I could show you how  
I'm not who I was  
I used to be mad at you  
A little on the hurt side too  
But I'm not who I was

I found my way around  
To forgiving you  
Some time ago

But I never got to tell you so

I found us in a photograph  
I saw me and I had to laugh  
You know, I'm not who I was  
You were there, you were right above me  
And I wonder if you ever loved me  
Just for who I was

When the pain came back again  
Like a bitter friend  
It was all that I could do  
To keep myself from blaming you

I reckon it's a funny thing  
I figured out I can sing  
Now I'm not who I was  
I write about love and such  
Maybe 'cause I want it so much  
I'm not who I was

I was thinking maybe I  
I should let you know  
I am not the same  
But I never did forget your name  
Hello

Well the thing I find most amazing  
In amazing grace  
Is the chance to give it out  
Maybe that's what love is all about

I wish you could see me now  
I wish I could show you how  
I'm not who I was