

Occasionally I do seminars and consultations on public speaking. Once a doctor of law, a gentleman in his sixties, came to me and summed up his problem: „I can’t watch myself on TV. Can you help me?“ „What’s wrong with that?“ I asked. „Well, it makes me feel like I can’t count to five...“ he expressed his embarrassed self-assessment.

You see; after months of very difficult court hearings, he wins a big case for someone, then reporters with cameras lurk outside the courtroom to ask him questions, and he can’t even watch his victory speech on TV because he feels weird.

First, on Internet I watched a few of his clips, trying to figure out what was wrong. When I met him in person, I advised him practical elements to „look better“ when speaking to the camera, but since the beginning I perceived that the way he looks on the outside is just a manifestation of something deeply internal. „I think it would help you, Doctor, if you would succinctly articulate your mission, your identity, in the context of these court cases“. When the esteemed lawyer didn’t know what his identity was supposed to be, I suggested: „Would you say of yourself that you are a representative of the righteousness of this state?“ „Sounds good, I’ve been trying to be that all my professional life,“ he smiled. So I asked him to stand up straight, to look me in the eye, and in a sonorous voice to utter the key phrase of his identity, „I am a representative of the righteousness of this state!“ When he attempted to do so, I said grimly, „From the way you tell me that, sir, I don’t quite believe you. Can you put more conviction into it, courage, strength?“ The honorable Mr. Lawyer had to try it five or six times before I admitted, „I’m slowly beginning to believe you.“ „And I’m slowly beginning to feel it,“ he added with a smile.

Do you have an idea why I tell you this story? When I’m involved in some believers’ attempts to share the life-giving Good News that has been changing lives of millions of people around the world quite radically for centuries, some seem to be „not able to count to five.“ (That’s how my lawyer felt when he watched himself on TV.) Yet these Christians who are trying to share the Gospel with their unbelieving friends sincerely love Jesus! Some even have things with Him abundantly lived out and studied in Scripture. Many times they are highly educated people who can speak well in public. And yet, when it comes to Jesus and the great News about Him, something breaks deep within these amazing people of God. Suddenly, even in a very personal conversation with an unbeliever, they become nervous, express

strange words, and often do not even look their counterpart straight in the eye.

„I am the representative of justice in this state!“ my lawyer rehearsed the abbreviation of his professional identity. What about your identity? Who are you in relation to people who don't yet know Jesus?

I have very important HOMEWORK for you from this lesson! Create your own formula of who you are in Jesus! I'm not talking about a bunch of important Scripture quotes. I want YOUR own statement of which you are convinced inwardly.

I want a formulation that is true from your point of view, that inspires You, that is internally fulfilling, satisfying and also motivating.

„I am a representative of the righteousness of this state!“ That is not a sentence my lawyer should say out loud to someone in court or in the face of television reporters. That's a sentence he was supposed to say to himself! To clarify his identity, to grasp it internally. Once you've put together a formulation of your identity, your next task will be to instill it deep within yourself. Your awareness of who you are shapes your thinking, your feelings and your actions.

*Lord Jesus, Your identity that you had clearly articulated and firmly grasped, has enabled You to bear human admiration with humility, and insults and attacks with firmness.*