

Christ Is My Identity

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

“Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world” (1 John 4:17).

This is the most beautiful, glorious, magnificent verse. As Jesus Christ is in heaven, so are we on this earth. Why? We are hid with Christ in God. And, if that is our position, in the Father’s eyes we cannot be anything less than who He is.

Through Christ, you can be anything God wants you to be. You can do every single thing you are supposed to do and you can have everything you are supposed to have when Christ is your identity.

God is looking for men and women whose love is made perfect because they have accepted His perfect love toward them. He will supply all our needs. Forever and ever, He will see us in our position, seated above, in Him (Ephesians 2:6).

As this booklet will show, we need to let

God's thoughts echo in our hearts. And by accepting His perfect love, we will be edified and built up in the Body of Christ as we discover our true identity.

Chapter One

PURE, HONEST, LOVELY, AND TRUE THOUGHTS

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

A church is only as effective as its obedience excels in grace. Christians who make stepping-stones out of stumbling-stones are operating with God. But if we really study it, behind every operation performed through grace is one man’s obedience to the privilege of thinking with God.

We have a responsibility to bring every thought into subjection to the mind of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). As we do, we will begin to realize that our thought life controls our confession. In fact, our thought life could even affect

our physical bodies. So, having a divine premise for thinking, the Holy Spirit controlling our bodies, and the promises of God for our confession gives us a combination that produces the issues of life in our hearts (Proverbs 4:23).

Each man and woman who is born again can live a complete life with Jesus Christ. No one needs to be dependent on someone else's relationship with God. Ultimately, it is through our personal relationship with Christ that we find our source of help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

Recognizing Virtues

Ned Bedford, one of John Rockefeller's closest business advisers, told the story of how Mr. Rockefeller dealt with a man whose wrong decision cost his oil company a huge sum of money. Mr. Bedford made an appointment to discuss how to deal with the man. Expecting Mr. Rockefeller to be angry, even though the loss was not his fault, Mr. Bedford was prepared for a difficult meeting. When he went into the office, he noticed a notepad in Mr. Rockefeller's hands. On that pad was a list of twenty-five virtues that characterized the man who had cost Standard Oil two million dollars.

"You know this man has saved me money

five or six times—saved me far more than two million,” Mr. Rockefeller said. “I am going to give him a raise.”

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure and honest and lovely—these are the things we should think on. We need to think about the good reports and virtues we hear about people. Mr. Rockefeller practiced this; and as Christians, every one of us should practice this, too.

We should practice this with ourselves. I want you to wake up every morning and I want your hearts to be so thankful to God. Realize every day that you are God’s man or God’s woman. We are God’s people and He wants us to grow into ladies and gentlemen—people who have matured in Christ’s character.

Scripture shows that in 1 Corinthians 11:11, for example, the Greek word for “woman” is used to refer to females in general; while in 2 John 1 and 5, the word for “lady” specifically refers to a refined woman with an excellent Christian character. In God’s eyes, there is a difference—and it has nothing to do with outward appearances.

Caring for Souls

“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul” (Psalm 142:4).

This verse reveals one of the saddest situations, because at this point in David’s life, no one would care for his soul. Churches cannot afford to let this happen to their people. We need to have love for people at *all* times.

So many are going through heartaches and suffering and pain. We need to know and recognize those who have needs among us. When we are in tune with God, we can weep when one person weeps and rejoice when one person rejoices.

I can be praying for someone I have not talked to in a while and just begin to weep because we have a spiritual connection. I may even break into tears because of certain things that person is going through. When my identity is in Christ, I will identify and respond to the things that are on His heart.

Chapter Two

IT'S THE HEART THAT MATTERS

“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none” (Ezekiel 22:30).

“But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee” (1 Samuel 13:14).

“And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will” (Acts 13:22).

God wants men and women who are after His own heart. That is how God saw David. A person doesn't have to be perfect to fulfill all of God's will. He sees us according to our potential

and our capacity. He knows our genetics; He knows how we were reared up and how we were trained. He knows the good and the bad that each of us has been through.

What does He do with all this information?

“All that matters is a heart that is after Me—that’s all I care about,” God says. “They love Me. And when they fail, they receive My love. And, because of what I have placed in their hearts, they are kept from falling.”

Have an Excellent Self-Image

In Jeremiah 5:1 we read, “Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.”

God needs people who can think categorically through grace and through the power of God—people who know they can be victorious through living by every word of God. That includes rebound. Every word of God includes the beautiful things that God does for us, because *as He is, so are we* in this world (1 John 4:17). This is an excellent self-image to carry into each day.

Every morning I say to God, “I am going to

have the best day of my life. I am broken before You because I love You. You are so amazing to me!"

Wisdom in Action

"The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel" (Judges 5:7).

"Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb" (1 Samuel 25:3).

God has such a plan for women of God. The tender heart of the Holy Spirit ministers through women who are creative, responsive, and appreciative. God's plan is so amazing.

Abigail had a husband, Nabal, who was evil. David just wanted to kill him for the evil he had done, but Abigail intervened. In so many words, she told David to let God handle things.

Sure enough, God handled it. Nabal died and Abigail became the wife of the king.

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of

wisdom" (James 3:13).

"But as for you all, do ye return, and come now: for I cannot find one wise man among you" (Job 17:10).

As a servant of God, this is why I continue to study the Word so fervently. I just want to be able to have the wisdom of God to apply knowledge through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

God is looking for people who understand His heart and who allow Him to do His work in them. Take what the Word of God says so beautifully about the centurion, in Matthew 8:10. This man revealed the greatest faith Jesus Christ had seen. He believed the word Jesus spoke, and his servant was healed. That word was enough for him. He identified with Christ's authority and put his faith in that authority.

The Lord is looking for men and women with this kind of heart to be His counselors (Isaiah 41:28).

Chapter Three

CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS: OUR ONLY HOPE FOR GLORY

"And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art" (Genesis 41:38-39).

"Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matthew 15:28).

Many people have led terrible lives in sin. And in this life, many suffer the consequences of their decisions. But that will be one beautiful thing about heaven. Except for what is done through Christ, none of what is going on here on earth will matter. People from all over the world and every walk of life will come and sit at the feet of Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God.

Every one of our saved family members will be in heaven with glorified bodies. No old sin natures will be there to deal with.

Some people think that they go through hell on earth.

"What could be worse than this?" they declare.

"Wait and see," I would tell them.

We don't even remotely understand how terrible hell will be. In fact, I cannot preach a message about hell without weeping for those who will spend eternity there.

But when those same people cry out, "Is there any hope for me?" I love to tell them, "There is as much hope for you as there was for me."

God's Transforming Love

God loves a weak man in spite of his alcohol and promiscuity. If he would come and let God give him the gift of repentance and the power to change, he would be a new creation in an instant. A transformation would bring him a renewed mind and a renewed soul.

This man is closer to God than he thinks. He may be in bondage, but he is just as precious to God as the saved man who lives in and reveals

Christ as his identity.

It is self-righteous people who have the real problem. Their righteousness, which is apart from Christ's righteousness, is as filthy rags in the sight of God. They may be good neighbors, and I thank God for those who are. But the most shocking thing will be the day they wake up in hell and find that their works did not matter to God. They never personally received Christ by grace through faith, because they thought that they were good enough on their own.

There is not a single thing I can do to get saved except to believe. Furthermore, there is not a thing I can do to get unsaved. There is not a sin I could commit that would separate me from Christ.

Does this prompt me to sin? Far from it! Rather, it moves me to obedience, because I don't want to hurt Him or grieve Him. He is so good to take me just as I am. Why would I want to hurt Him? I am in Him and He is in me. Christ is my identity, and in Him I am complete.

CONCLUSION

Just think about this: The moment we were saved, the Holy Spirit sealed us (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). That means that no matter what we go through in this life, we *will* arrive in heaven with our glorified bodies—without a doubt. In the history of the universe, God has never given up on one of His own. A man has to die and go to hell before God will ever stop trying to win him. He keeps going after people, right up until their last breath, just as He did with the thief on the Cross.

Once we find our identification in Christ, He will never leave us nor forsake us. He gives us the Holy Spirit who justifies us, sanctifies us, and inhabits us. We are saved, and we are members of the family of God.

Oh, what joy there will be when the family of God reunites in heaven. What a glorious thing it will be to see Jesus Christ there. The men and the women of the Bible will be there. And all of

our loved ones from around the world will gather with us. We will enjoy our identity in Christ forever and ever and ever.