

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:22-24

Sermon Title: “**Identity in Christ**”

Before Starting Podcast

Tonight we are going to do a short activity before the message. I would like each of you to open up your journals and make a list of who you are. What is your identity? How would you describe yourself? How would others describe you? Take a couple minutes and write down some traits. You can start simple with... American, a brother, a son, a teacher... and then work more detailed into things... include both positive and negative traits or names people have spoken over you, whether in love or in anger.

Introduction

Tonight I'm going to preach about one of the most important topics that I think can be shared, and that is: “Identity in Christ.” During the past few months God has been speaking to me about this over and over and over. Who am I? Who am I in Christ? Lately when I've read the Word, names and traits of people of God keep standing out to me. Tonight I'm going to share some of what I've been learning from the Lord. I would consider this message an overview or summary to a topic that we must study and claim all our life.

***Pray*... (A new mind!)**

Casting Out Demons

Since serving in college fellowship and in missions and now on the prayer team in Korea, I've seen many demons manifest in people, whether it be during counseling sessions or during intense prayer times when the Spirit's presence was thick. I would watch as many people would pray for the person manifesting... some of them shouting, some of them crying, some of them not sure what to do. But sometimes there would be one person with strong authority and they would pray a simple prayer and bind the demon so it would stop manifesting. I would wonder why certain people had more authority than others. We are all Christians. We all are filled with the Holy Spirit. Then why would the enemy listen to some but mock others? Why would the enemy seem relaxed while some people were praying but would freak out when another person came and prayed? Everyone was praying the same, “In Jesus name!” prayer. **I've learned that one of the biggest reasons to the differences in spiritual authority came down to the person's identity in Christ.**

Those with spiritual authority understand that they aren't of this world. They understand they are filled with the Holy Spirit and have been given authority from Jesus. They understand that Jesus is the name above all names and yet calls us His friends. They know that no weapon forged against them can prosper. They know God is their shepherd and is most definitely with them, so why should they fear? Satan trembles at these people. Demons shudder and flee. They know they don't have a chance. So what is Satan's strategy? He knows he doesn't have a chance if we are walking in our full identity in Christ, so he wants to attack who we are. He wants to condemn us and shut us down to any hope of victory. He wants us to think we are no better than the animals. He wants to steal our God given identity.

The Old Self

The past few months I've had the privilege of discipling a few brothers here at church. I've been really blessed to get to know each of them more and grow with God together with them. While meeting with each of them I had them do the activity of writing down their identity...

who they are... their character, how others would label them, and so forth. For each it started simple with... “Korean-American, son, brother, teacher, Christian...” and soon they would share traits like, “listener, helper, artist, singer...” but as they would reflect more they would share things like, “prideful, trouble maker, critical, scatter brained, law breaker” and other traits. They were being honest... these were a part of their identity. And I think most people would have similar negative traits, with some a lot worse. For some of us there might have been one incident that shaped us powerfully... a teacher calling us stupid, someone we admired calling us ugly or fat, or a secret sin that makes you feel dirty, hopeless, or unable to grow with God. This is exactly what Satan wants. But now lets open the Word and begin bringing truth to these lies. Please open your Bibles to...

Ephesians 4:22-24 – To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and **to put on the new self**, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Colossians 3:9-10 – Do not lie to one another, seeing that you **have put off the old self** with its practices and **have put on the new self**, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator

There is a theme here. The old self and the new self. God tells us to remove the old self whose identity was in the world and to put on the new self whose identity is in God. We are going to begin this process tonight. I am going to get us started with some of the key identity traits of who we are in Christ. If you made the list of identity traits of yourself, go ahead and write, “old self” next to every negative trait you wrote for yourself. Now make a new column and title it, “new self.” Lets get started... get your Bibles ready...

New Creation

2Corinthians 5:17 – Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

New creation. Write that down. First and foremost we have to understand that we are **a new creation**. There is a reason why Jesus liked to say that we must be, “born again.” This is the foundation. As we grow in claiming our identity in Christ, Satan is going to keep trying to remind us of our past. But that isn’t us anymore. That was a different person. We are a new creation and no longer relate to that former self. Please declare with me, “**In Christ, I am a new creation!**” Amen.

Redeemed

Ephesians 1:7 – In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

Redeemed. Write that word down. You can add to it “justified,” and “forgiven” if you like. When we confess faith in God and accept Christ into our hearts, we are **redeemed** by His blood. All those negative traits and past failures have been covered over. Our sins have been hurled into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19). Please declare with me, “**In Christ, I am redeemed!**” Amen. When we pray the blood of Jesus over ourselves we are basically stating our redemption in God. We no longer belong to the prince of this world and the king of sinners... we have been redeemed from a life of sin! This leads us to our next character trait...

Belong to God

1Corinthians 6:19-20 – Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Belong to God. Write that down. If we no longer belong to prince of this world, then who do we belong to? We belong to God! We are not our own. We are God's possession. We belong to God. And while I'm giving you one verse for each trait, there are actually many other verses throughout Scripture that repeatedly state these traits of who we are in Christ. There is power in understanding you are God's possession.

John 10:28-29 – I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

Sexual bondage is one of Satan's favorite ways to make us believe that we belong to him... whenever someone falls with their purity Satan will try and convince the person that they belong to the sin and can't escape it and might as well give up to it. But no... we are redeemed and we are God's possession. We might stumble or fall, but by the blood of Jesus we receive grace. Satan can't steal from God. He knows he can't snatch us from God's hand. But still he tries to deceive us into believing we can't escape his grasp. **But the only power Satan can have over us is the power we give him.** When we understand that we belong to God, Satan knows his time is short. It will only be time until we confess our sins, receive God's forgiveness, and claim God's promises. At that point, Satan's grip is completely lost. Please repeat after me, "**I belong to God!**" Amen.

Anointed and Sealed with the Holy Spirit

2Corinthians 1:21-22 – And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Anointed and Sealed with the Holy Spirit. Write that down. We have been anointed by God to do good works. His anointing grants us the power to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the leper, and raise the dead. 1John 4:4 says that He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. Not only has God anointed you with the Holy Spirit, but He has also sealed the Spirit within you. Nothing outside you can take Him from you. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead lives within you. Please repeat after me, "**I am anointed and sealed with the Holy Spirit.**" Amen!

Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

Romans 6:11 – So you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Dead to sin. Alive in Christ. Write both of those down. Notice the verb tense in the verse. Is it present? Future? Past? Will we die to sin? Are we dying to sin? No, we are **dead to sin**. This verse is repeated in different ways all throughout Paul's letters in the New Testament. What does it mean to be dead to sin?

There is a saying in English, "He or she is... "dead to me." Say someone goes through a horrible breakup and are greatly let down or hurt by someone... they might then say of that person, "That person is dead to me." What do they mean? They mean that the person no longer is a part of their identity. The person no longer has an affect on them. That part of the

life is now considered gone... dead... no more. They will no longer think of that person. They've moved on.

So it is with our relationship with sin. When we are, "dead to sin," that means it is no longer a part of our identity. Its gone. Dead. We know longer think of sin or find identity in sin. Our identity is now in Christ. We find our life, our purpose, our pleasure all in Him.

Goodbye sin. Hello Christ! Please repeat after me, "I am dead to sin! I am alive in Christ!" Amen.

Free

Galatians 5:1 – For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Free. Write that down. We are free! Yaaaay! This trait only emphasizes all the more that no longer does sin have a hold on us. Its now our choice whether to submit to sin again or to walk in our freedom in Christ. And we are not just free from the bondage of sin, but we are free from the guilt as well.

Jeremiah 31:34b – For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

If God no longer remembers our sins, then why should we? We are free! Please repeat after me, "I am free!!!" Amen!

Child of God

John 1:12 – But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Child of God. Son of God. Daughter of God. Write whichever applies to you. So now we don't only belong to God, we are His family. We have greater value to Him than anything else He created.

Deuteronomy 14:2 – For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

God's Treasured Possession. Write that one down. I think all of us understand what it is to be a son or a daughter, but not all of us have been told our true value from our parents. God clears that up right here. He calls us His treasured possession. In Zechariah 2 we are called the apple of God's eye... the most precious and guarded area.

1John 3:1a – See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

Loved by the Father. Write that one down. It was God's delight to adopt us into His family. He chose us because He loves us. It was because God so loved us that He sent His son to redeem us. There is a special security in knowing that we are beloved children of God. No matter what storms may come to us in this world, we take solace in knowing we are loved and treasured by our Father. God is good! Please repeat after me, "I am a child of God. I am God's treasured possession. I am loved by the Father!" Amen!

Not only is there peace and security in knowing we are children of God, there is also responsibility...

Seated with God in Heaven

Ephesians 2:6 – God raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Seated with God in heaven. Write that down. Once again, knowing the verb tense is critical. God will not raise us up later. He isn't raising us up now. It has already happened! When we died to sin we were made alive in Christ. In the spiritual realm we came to life and we have been raised up beside God in heaven and are seated with Him. **Understanding your position is important.** There is a reason I am preaching from a stage behind a microphone. Imagine if I was trying to preach to you all from in the back of the room underneath a table. Not much authority in that. Not much power. Instead I'm in front of you and elevated while you all are seated in front of me. Some degree of authority is expected, right? Now imagine we are in a packed World Cup Stadium and I'm on a huge stage delivering a sermon in front of all the top authorities of Korea. Even more authority is to be expected, right? We have to understand our position. When we pray we aren't speaking amidst billions of people. We aren't far from God and hard to notice. No, we are seated with Him in the heavens. Angels are before us. We are above the demonic realm. We have authority! We are seated with God in heaven! This is the Truth! Its right here! Please repeat after me, "**I am seated with God in heaven!**" Amen!

Royalty and a Priest

1Peter 2:9 – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Two words that I want you to write separately: Royalty. Priest. Declaring you are royalty only emphasizes your status as a child of God and as being seated with God in heaven. Declaring you are a priest helps you understand how God wants you to exercise your authority. We aren't meant to rule over people here on earth, but rather to intercede for them, love them, and serve them as priests of God. Priests in the Old Testament were in the business of giving offerings to God and declaring grace and cleansing for the people. We are called to do the same... to proclaim the grace and cleansing we have received from God and to offer our bodies as a living offering to Him. Please repeat after me, "**I am royalty. I am a priest.**" Amen!

Citizen of Heaven

Philippians 3:20 – But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Citizen of Heaven. Write that down. Not only are we seated in heaven, but we are residents of heaven. We don't belong to this world. We are aliens to this earth. We do not live by the law of sin but rather we live by a law that is not of this world... the law of love. Satan is called the prince of this world because he has reign over all who are slaves to sin. But we are dead to sin. We are alive in Christ. We are citizens of heaven. Satan's rule no longer has any power over us. Get it in your head folks, you are out of this world! Not of it. You are heavenly beings. Please repeat after me, "**I am a citizen of heaven.**" Amen!

Eternal Being

Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Eternal being. Write that down. Our lifespan is not governed by our time here on earth. Our physical body may perish, but our spiritual being will never perish. We are eternal. What that means is our life is just a blink in the light of eternity. Why should we worry about the treasures and comforts of this world when we will be spending eternity in heaven? Why should we fear torture or death here on earth when we know we will be living forever in peace, comfort, and joy? We have already won! It is finished! We have eternal life! Who or what are we to fear? When you claim you are an eternal being you are claiming victory over every lie of Satan. He can't touch you because you already know the end result. He gets grabbed by an angel and thrown in Hell while you spend eternity with Jesus. Please repeat after me, "I am an eternal being." Amen!

More Than a Conqueror

Romans 8:37 – No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

More than a conqueror. Write that down. Paul was writing this to Roman citizens who were very familiar with what this means. Roman soldiers weren't just victorious, they were more than victorious. They would literally parade what they had conquered. Whenever they would return to the capital they would parade captured people and animals along with produce and treasures of the land. Many people think that we are always in a battle and always fighting. Many people don't think victory will come until after we die. But the truth is God calls us more than conquerors. He tells us we have already won. We just have to claim it. God promised Israel to Joshua and the Israelites. It was theirs. All they had to do was claim it. But not only do we claim and conquer what God has in store for us, we are also called to parade our victories. We are called to share our testimonies, proclaim God's good works, and show the world who truly reigns. We are more than conquerors. No weapon forged against us will prosper. It is finished. Amen! Please repeat after me, "I am more than a conqueror!" Amen!

Untouchable

1John 5:18 – We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

Untouchable. Please write that down. We are untouchable. Now that doesn't mean we aren't prone to trials, troubles, or struggles, but what it means is that we are protected by God and Satan cannot get in. He can only affect our outside. He cannot touch our inside. A teenage girl who was imprisoned in China for her faith and tortured and raped later shared with a sincere smile, "My body may have been defiled, but my soul is pure." My body may have been defiled, but my soul is pure. Satan could not steal her love or her joy. We are untouchable. Please repeat after me, "I am untouchable." Amen!

Fearless

Philippians 1:27-28 – Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in

anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God.

Fearless. Write that down. Fearless. God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind (2Timothy 1:7). When you understand that you are a child of God, that you are a citizen of heaven, that you are seated with God, that you are more than a conqueror, that you are sealed with the Spirit, that you are untouchable... you will become fearless. Its just natural. The Lord is my light and my salvation, of whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27:1). As you start speaking out who you are in Christ you are going to find your prayers going to another level. No longer do the things of this world cause you to fear. Satan and all his attacks are revealed as weak. Please repeat after me, “I am fearless.” Amen!

Temple of God

1Corinthians 3:16-17 – Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.

Temple of God. I represent God’s presence.

Salt of the earth

Matthew 5:13a – You are the salt of the earth.

Salt of the earth. I offer truth and life to this dead world.

Light of the World

Matthew 5:14a – You are the light of the world.

Light of the world. In Christ, I offer light in the darkness.

Friend of God

John 15:15 – No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

Friend of God.

Summary

We have just covered 22 identity in Christ traits. There are many more, but this should be a good start for you all. What I want us to do now is a recap and proclaim together out loud each trait that you have written down, starting with new creation. Please speak out loud, “I am...” before stating each...

I am a new creation. I am redeemed. I belong to God. I am anointed and sealed with the Holy Spirit. I am dead to sin. I am alive in Christ. I am free. I am a child of God. I am God’s treasured possession. I am loved by the Father. I am seated with God in heaven. I am royalty. I am a priest. I am a citizen of heaven. I am an eternal being. I am more than a conqueror. I am untouchable. I am fearless. I am a temple of God. I am the salt of the earth. I am the light of the world. I am a friend of God.

Specific words from people

Tonight we have covered identities in Christ that are meant for every single Christian. I will tell you though that God often has special names and special anointings for His people. Some are called to be pastors, teachers, apostles, prophets, or evangelists. Some are warriors. Some are shepherds. Some are joy givers. In Revelation 2:17, Jesus says He has a white stone with a new name for each person who overcomes and that the new name will only be known by the person He gives it to. I believe God has special names for each of us. These can be revealed in prayer, in dreams and visions, or through prophetic words spoken over us. I want to encourage you to also take such names to heart and claim them in prayer. If you have never received a specific word, I want to encourage you to pray and ask God to speak to you some of the names He has for you.

Conclusion

To fulfill this message, you must be active in claiming these identities in prayer. You must confess, repent, and renounce of past sins and take off the old self. Consider yourself dead to sin. If you need help in this, please see me or Erin for a counseling session. By speaking out who you are in Christ you will experience yourself putting on your new self in Christ. The more you speak it, the more the authority you are going to experience in prayer. I urge you brothers and sisters, claim who you are in Christ! Amen!

Pray