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## Our Identity in Christ

Thought Conditioners

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**Every defeated Christian I have worked with had one thing in common. None of them have known who they were in Christ nor understood what it means to be a child of God.**

*(Neil Anderson, Bondage Breaker)*

**To live in victory, you need to be focused on who you are in Christ!**

### **You Have Every Right to be Free**

*(Story of young girl that was a loner before understanding her identity of Christ....)* Realizing that she was not just a product of her past, but rather, a new creation in Christ, she was able to throw off the chains of spiritual bondage and begin living according to who she really was, a child of God.

Satan didn't want her to know the truth of who she was in Christ, nor how Jesus meets her needs for life, identity, acceptance, security, and significance. He knew that God's truth would disarm his lie just as surely as light dispels darkness.

**The last thing the devil wants you to know is who you are in Christ.**

Nothing is more foundational to your freedom from Satan's bondage than understanding and affirming what God has done for you in Christ and who you are as His child. Your attitudes, actions, responses, and reactions to life's circumstances are greatly affected by what you believe about yourself.

If you see yourself as a hapless victim of Satan and his schemes, you will probably live like a victim and be in bondage to his lies. But if you see yourself as a dearly loved and accepted child of God you will likely start living like one. (1 John 3:1–3)

Every defeated Christian I have worked with had one thing in common. None of them have known who they were in Christ nor understood what it means to be a child of God. (John 1:12; Romans 8:16–17)

Our identity and position in Christ are not the only basis for living a liberated life in Christ, but the foundation upon which we minister to others. We can't impart to others what we don't possess ourselves.

### **The Whole Gospel**

Many Christians are not living free and productive lives because they don't understand who they are and why they are here. Who they are is rooted in their identity and position in Christ. If they don't see themselves the way God sees them, to that degree they suffer from a false identity and poor sense of worth. They don't fully understand the gospel and the dramatic change that occurred in them the moment they trusted in Christ.

Being spiritually alive in Christ is the overwhelming theme of the New Testament. For example, in the six chapters of the book of Ephesians alone, we find 40 references to being "in Christ" and having Christ in you. For every biblical passage that teaches that Christ is in you, 10 teach that you are "in Christ."

Dear believer, you are spiritually alive in Christ right now. You will never be more spiritually alive than you are right now. The only thing that will change when you die physically is that you will exchange your mortal body for a new

resurrected one. Your spiritual life in Christ, which began when you personally trusted him, will merely continue on. Salvation is not a future addition, it is a present transformation. That transformation occurs at spiritual birth, not physical death.

Being a Christian is not just a matter of getting something, it is a matter of being someone. A Christian is not simply a person who is forgiven and goes to heaven. A Christian, in terms of his or her deepest identity, is a saint, a spiritually born child of God, a divine masterpiece, a child of light, a citizen of heaven.

Being born again transformed you into someone who didn't exist before. What you receive as a Christian isn't the point, it is who you are. It is not what you do as a Christian that determines who you are, it is who you are that determines what you do.

**Understanding your identity in Christ is essential for living the Christian life.**

People cannot consistently behave in ways that are inconsistent with the way they perceive themselves. You don't change yourself by your perception. You change your perception of yourself by believing the truth. If you perceive yourself wrongly, you will live wrongly because what you are believing is not true.

If you think you are a no-good bum, you will probably live like a no-good bum. If, however, you see yourself as a child of God who is spiritually alive in Christ, you will begin to live accordingly. Next to a knowledge of God, a knowledge of who you are is by far the most important truth you can possess.

**Satan can't do anything to change our identity and position in Christ. If, however, he can get us to believe a lie, we will live as though our identity in Christ isn't true.**

Because you are a saint in Christ by God's calling, you share in Christ's inheritance. "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:16, 17).

Every believer is identified with Christ. We are identified with Christ in his death, burial, resurrection, ascension, life, power and in his inheritance.

Because you are alive in Christ, every one of those characteristics is completely true of you, and you can do nothing to make them more true. You can, however, make these traits more meaningful and productive in your life by simply choosing to believe what God has said about you. You will not be prideful if you do, but you may be defeated if you don't.

One of the greatest ways to help yourself grow into maturity in Christ is to continually remind yourself who you are in Him. Proclaim God's Word over your life and circumstances when you think Satan is trying to deceive you into believing you are a worthless failure. Refer to the [Declarations Home Page](http://www.phlibrary.com) of the [PH Library \(www.phlibrary.com\)](http://www.phlibrary.com) to find declarations for Total & Absolute Victory, Health & Healing, Finances, Spiritual Warfare, and more.

**I do know who I am, a new person in Christ, and by the grace of God I shall live accordingly.**

As God's adopted child, you have been given a new identity and a new name. You are no longer a spiritual orphan, you are a son or daughter of God. As a child in God's family, you have become a partaker of his "divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

How important is it to know who you are in Christ? Countless numbers of Christians struggle with their day-to-day behavior because they labor under a false perception of who they are. They consider themselves sinners who hope

to make it into heaven by God's grace, but they can't seem to live above their sinful tendencies. (1 John 3:1–3)

**If you are beginning to think you are someone special as a Christian, you are thinking right – you are special! Your specialness is not the result of anything you have done, of course. It is all God's doing. We are what we are by the grace of God. All you did was respond by faith to God's invitation to be His child. As a child of God, in union with him because you are in Christ, you have every right to enjoy your special relationship with your heavenly Father.**

What is the believer's hope? That you are a child of God now, who is being conformed to the image of God. The person who has this hope "purifies himself" and begins to live according to who he or she really is.

You must believe you are a child of God to live like a child of God. "God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

### **See Yourself For Who You Really Are**

*(Example of a young lady who was ashamed of her looks and struggled with a low self image..... but became a very well-liked and respected CEO of a large company)* And what is her secret? Clare simply accepted herself for who God said she was in Christ, and she confidently committed herself to God's great goal for her life: to love people and grow in Christ..... She wasn't a threat to anyone. Instead, she was so positive and caring towards others that everyone loved her.

The experiences of Claire illustrate the importance of establishing our Christian lives on what we believe instead of how we behave. We need a firm grip on the truth of God's Word before we will experience much success at practical Christianity. We need to understand who we are as a result of who God is and what he has done.

**A fruitful Christian life is a result of living by faith according to what God said is true.**

How can you hope to stand firm against the schemes of the devil if you have not renewed your mind to the fact that you are already victoriously "raised up with Him, and seated with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus"?

When your basic belief system about God and yourself is shaky, your day-to-day behavior system will be shaky. When your belief system is intact and your relationship with God is based on truth, however, you will have very little trouble working out the practical aspects of daily Christianity.

**We are not trying to become children of God, we are already children of God who are becoming like Christ.**

Getting right with God always begins with settling once and for all the fact that God is your loving Father and you are his accepted child. That is the foundational truth from which you live.

You are a child of God, you are created in his image, you have been justified and positionally declared righteous by Him because of Christ's finished work and your faith in Him. As long as you believe that and walk accordingly, your daily experience of practical Christianity will result in growth. You will struggle, though, if you question the finished work of Christ, and try to become somebody you already are.

We don't serve God to gain his acceptance, we are accepted, so we serve God. We don't follow him to be loved, we are loved, so we follow him. It is not what we do that determines who we are, it is who we are that determines what we do. "Beloved, now we are children of God" (1 John 3:2,) that is why you are called to live by faith (Romans 1:16 – 17).

To live the victorious Christian life, you have to believe what is already true about you. Will you have opposition to believing this truth? Of course! The father of lies (John 8:44) has deceived the whole world (Revelation 12:9), and he accuses the brethren day and night. If that isn't enough, others will put you down. We have to keep reminding ourselves of these positional truths.

The truth about who you are in Christ makes such a big difference in your success at handling the challenges and conflicts of life. It is imperative to your growth and maturity that you believe God's truth about who you are.

**Our relationship with God is based on the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.  
We are saved by how we believe, not by how we behave.**

There are no losers in the kingdom of God – none whatsoever. How can children of God be losers when they have already gained eternal life? As important as it is for you to believe in your true identity as a child of God, it is equally important that you perceive other Christians for who they are in Christ and treat them accordingly. I believe that the greatest determinant for how we treat people is how we perceive them. If we view people as losers, we will begin to treat them that way. If, however, we believe our brothers and sisters in Christ are redeemed saints, we will treat them as saints, and they will be greatly helped in behaving as saints.

**We are not sinners in the hands of an angry God. We are saints in the hands of a loving God.**

I am no longer a defeated Christian. I know now I am alive in Christ and dead to sin and a slave of righteousness. I now live by faith according to what God said is true. Sin has no power over me, Satan has lost his grip on me.

### **Knowing Your Identity Very Well**

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous  
are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. (Psalm 139:14)

This verse in Psalm chapter 129 speaks of our soul knowing very well we are fearfully and wonderfully made. God did not make a mistake when He created you and me. He formed and fashioned you with skillful hands. Your skin and hair color, height, and facial features were each part of God's special design. In fact, He calls you marvelous in this verse. These are truth's he wants your soul to know very well.

A prosperous soul is one who knows his or her identity very well. That had been my problem. I could hear teachers or Christian friends tell me how special and loved I was and mentally assent to it. But I had another picture of myself etched on the canvas of my soul. It was a picture of abandonment, rejection, unworthiness, and shame. I did not like or love myself, and I even expected others to reject me.

It was not until the Lord showed me that day I had unwittingly believed a lie about myself that I could repent and renounce that lie. For the first time, I was able to read scriptures like the one in Psalm 139 and the following verse and embrace it as truth and see myself in that truth.

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved. (Ephesians 1:6)

Did you read that? Wow. You and I are accepted in Him. We are not rejected! I prayed, "Lord, help my soul know that very well." Once the Lord showed me the lie I had believed and I renounced it, I could read and believe what His Word said about me with no struggle. My soul began to know what His Word says about who I am rather than how I had allowed my past experiences to define me.

**The more I focused on what he said about me the more freedom I experienced.**

Proverbs 17:6 says, "the glory of children are their fathers." We receive our identity from our natural fathers, our spiritual fathers (authorities in our life), and our heavenly Father. It can be a combination of all three, but if we fail to find our identity there, we will end up living as orphans, seeking approval and affirmation from anyone and everyone around us.

I never received approval and affirmation from my earthly father. It was not until I learned to receive my identity from my heavenly Father and spiritual fathers that I was able to stop living a performance driven life. Before that time, I constantly sought approval from my dad and other people in my life. I was obsessed with success and controlled by the need for approval because I did not fully know my own identity as a son.

Today I am secure and free in my identity in Christ. My soul had to come into alignment with the truth that was in my spirit man. I had to open up this area of my soul to Jesus in order to receive the truth of who He said I was. Although I did not receive affirmation and approval from my earthly dad, it was freely given to me by my heavenly Father, and some spiritual fathers in my life. God revealed and established His identity in me, and he will do the same for you.

A good father helps his son or daughter find security and identity in who they are and whose they are, not in what they do. Our heavenly Father modeled this in His relationship with Jesus when He said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

God proclaimed his approval of Jesus before He performed one miracle or fulfilled any aspect of His ministry assignment. The Father's pleasure in him was not performance-based, but relationship-based.

Matthew 4:3 reveals the first temptations by Satan to Jesus were in the area of His identity. The first words he spoke to Jesus were: If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.

The Father had just spoken over Jesus He was His beloved Son and now the devil was challenging that. He was tempting Jesus to perform and do something to prove He was the Son of God. Jesus refused to be drawn into that trap because He was secure in His identity and the Father's love for him. He had a confident relationship with the Father that was not based on performance or approval from men. As a result, He also had a prosperous soul that did not waver through the worst of times. Likewise, you and I must know our identity very well and get into agreement with God's Word about who we are to him.

The prosperous soul knows and agrees with God about who you are. He says you are fearfully and wonderfully made, a marvelous creation made with His skillful hands and care. He did not make a mistake in His creation: you. God does not desire you to compare yourself with others or wish you were someone else. He has a purpose for you, and He wants you to know your value to Him! Your soul cannot and will not prosper until it knows this well.

Unfortunately, many Christians do not know or agree with who they are and as a result, their souls are not prospering. Some are even living with self-hatred. Instead of looking in the mirror of the Word and seeing the truth of what God says, they focus on their natural mirror and notice every physical flaw.

**You will not be able to get off home plate spiritually, relationally, or in your career or ministry until you develop security in the truth of who you are and begin to like yourself and place value on yourself.**

Jesus told us he would not leave us orphans (John 14:18), and we are sons and heirs of God with Him (Galatians 4:7). If you have struggled to see yourself like this, it is time to begin to accept your God-given identity as a son and joint heir with Christ. Correcting your mindset about this will change your life forever.

God paid the ultimate price for you. He placed value on you, and that value was His Son! You are beautiful to Him. Your soul must know this very well in order to prosper. Stop believing the lies about yourself that have kept you bound. You may have seen your value to Him in your spirit but exempted yourself because of some natural facet of your body or ability. Begin to value your entire being as someone of great worth. You are beautiful, valuable, fearfully and wonderfully made. May your soul know that truth very well!

**You are skillfully wrought and beautiful to Him. Ask God to fill you with this revelation of His appraisal of you. Be determined to stay in His Word and meditate on His truth until you have a new perspective on who you are and your value in Him. Just as He delivered me from the lie that I was not worthy because my dad did not have time for me, He will free you from lies about your worth to Him when you accept the truth that you are valuable and beautiful.**

### **One With Jesus**

As Jesus is, so are you—right now—in this world! "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). Notice how it's this world, not the next. The Word says now, presently, here on earth. It's not talking about heaven in the future! As Jesus is, so are you! If you only look in your physical and soulish parts to see if you're like Jesus, you'll conclude, "The Bible is so hard to understand!"

The born-again part of you is the only feasible explanation for "as Jesus is right now, so are you in this world!" It's not your body, nor your soul, but your spirit that's as Jesus is. What an awesome truth!

If you believed that you are, in your spirit, just as Jesus is right now in heaven—in all of His glory, power, and perfection— your life would be revolutionized! However, believing is just the first step. You must also learn how to release this reality from within. Just thinking this awesome thought once won't instantaneously change everything in your life. It's a process!

As the seed of this truth becomes firmly rooted and established in your mind, a process of understanding, growing, and maturing begins in your soulish realm. Then, over time, you'll see radical changes manifest as you continue believing this truth and releasing God's corresponding power from within your born-again spirit.

The more you know and understand God's Word, the quicker you'll start seeing spiritual riches manifest in your life. But before any of it works, you must acknowledge what's already there. In your spirit, as Jesus is, so are you in this world!

**If there are molecules and atoms in the spirit realm, then you are molecule-for-molecule and atom-for-atom identical to Jesus. As He is, so are you in this world. In your spirit, you are completely one with Him!**

### **Always Pleased**

My relationship with the Lord is constant. He's always loving me. He's always pleased with me—the real me, the born-again me, my spirit (Eph. 1:6). That's the part of me that God loves and that I've come to love. I'm not enamored with my carnal self and actions. I don't like some of what I see, do, and think, but I've come to realize there's a new me. In my spirit, I am thrilled with what Jesus has done, and I place my full confidence in that.

**Since I walk by the spirit, and not the flesh, I experience God's peace, joy, and life on a daily basis.**

### **Never Separated From His Love**

Understanding God's love for me has changed my life! It's given me a deep abiding security in my relationship with God because I understand and am aware of His love! In fact, He loves me infinitely more than I've ever yet perceived.

Sometimes I may not feel worthy. Then I remember that my born-again spirit is righteous and holy. I recognize that God looks at me Spirit to spirit, and He loves the born-again part of me!

I'm His workmanship, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10). In my spirit, I'm perfect and pure. God loves me and I'm never separated from His love.

This sheds new light on, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35, 38-39).

In my spirit, God has already given me His full measure of love. "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (John 1:16). I'm full of God. One-third of me is wall-to-wall Holy Spirit.' And if you're born again, all these things are true of you too!

This knowledge will impact your life and make you feel so pure. You'll be so appreciative of what God has done that you'll live holier in your actions accidentally than you've ever lived on purpose!

### **Mind Your Spirit**

Get into God's Word and start recognizing and meditating on who you are in Christ. As you focus your attention continually on the reality of your new identity, the brightness of who you are in the spirit will begin to shine in and through you to such a degree that it'll break the control of the flesh and deliver you from these external problems. Light always overwhelms and chases away the dark!

God wants you to come to Him just as you are! After you're born again and changed inside, renew your mind to who you are in Christ. As you find out who you are in your spirit, you'll change outwardly as a result.

**In order to release God's power and life, you must overcome the flesh by continually focusing your mind on who you are and what you have in the spirit.**

### **Word Minded**

You overcome by being mindful of what God's Word says about you—especially the New Testament. When you're Word minded, you're spiritually minded because God's words are spirit and life (John 6:63). In your spirit, you're completely changed, eternal, sanctified, holy, and perfected forever. As Jesus is—so are you! If you'd dominate yourself with those thoughts, all it would produce is life and peace.

**The Word tells you who you are and what you have in Christ. It reveals spiritual truths and what's happening in the spiritual world. If you want to experience life and peace, then you need to be spiritually minded.**

### **Focus on the Spirit**

Through God's Word, concentrate on seeing who you are in Christ. Spend less time feeding the flesh and focus on the spirit instead. Surround yourself with people who speak faith, are positive, and center in on the potential we have in Christ instead of those who gripe and complain. You'll develop an entire mentality based on your new identity in Christ as you dominate yourself with what you see in the spiritual mirror of God's Word.

Whatever you continually think on will dominate you (Prov. 23:7). If it's who you are and what you have in Christ, then that's what will eventually manifest itself in your physical life.

You're constantly being fed information and drawn in one of two directions—the flesh or the spirit (Gal. 5:17). The Holy Spirit always endeavors to draw you toward God and remind you of your new identity in Christ. Satan, through the world, its images and voices—news media, movies, books, newspapers, magazines, associations, and even Our Identity in Christ – Thought Conditioners



church organizations who are mistaken in some of their beliefs—constantly pushes you to accept defeat. What you continually think on is what you'll experience (Prov. 23:7).

Your flesh and spirit constantly fight each other in your mind. God proclaims, "You can do all things through Christ." The world answers, "No, you can't. You're just a failure!" On and on, the daily battle rages. That's why this life-changing truth isn't just something you learn one time and conclude, "I've got it!" This understanding of who you are and what you have in Christ should motivate you to aggressively pursue renewing your mind to God's Word—a process that'll continue for the rest of your life!

**Turn from carnal mindedness, and start being dominated by your born-again spirit instead. Discover the realities concerning who you are in the spirit and let them control you. When you do, you'll experience life and peace. It really is that simple!**

**As you look in the mirror (God's Word), discover your identity in Christ (who you are in the spirit), and act on that knowledge in faith, you'll see the life of God within you manifest.**

### **Complete in Him**

The truth is, if you've been born again, you do have everything. You are complete in Christ. (Col. 2:10.) Everything you'll ever need has already been given to you. You're not standing and fighting against some demonic entity with superior power and authority. Instead, all you're doing is combating his lies and deceptions—the same ones he used on Adam and Eve.

One-third of your salvation is already complete! Your born-again spirit isn't in the process of growing or maturing. Right now, in your spirit, you are exactly the way you'll be throughout eternity (1 John 4:17). You have a physical body and soul that haven't been changed yet. They are subject to change and can change, but it's not automatic. However, the change of your spirit at salvation was total, complete, and automatic.

The truth is, in the spirit, you already have everything. The key to seeing what you have in the spirit manifest in your life is believing and acknowledging it.

**"That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus" (Philem. 1:6).**

It's fine for a Christian to understand that in their flesh—apart from Christ—they are nothing. But in Christ, they can do all things and much good dwells within.

Satan targets your understanding and acknowledging of who you are and what you have in Christ. All he has are lies and deception. The devil doesn't have any more power to make you fail in any area of your life than he had to make Adam and Eve fail. He has to deceive you.

### **More Like Him**

Every day you should want to become more and more like Him, being transformed from glory to glory and becoming brighter and more beautiful as God further enters your life. That's what it's all about. When that happens, you enjoy better relationships, make more money, have more influence and live on a higher level of life. Your life is more fulfilling, and you also fulfill your predestined purpose of being conformed to the image of Jesus.

A life of conforming to Christ's image is the life every Christian is called to live. So get your eyes off just trying to get to the next level in your company or getting your bills paid. Get your eyes on becoming more like Him, and you will find yourself at the next level in the company. You will find that you can have financial provision—or anything else—because God is working in you, making your life become brighter and more beautiful.



### **Life More Abundantly**

God came to give you life, not some kind of survival existence. You don't have to mope around, just hanging on. God doesn't give His born-again children some narrow, little destiny and survival mentality. He called us to a glorious life of abundance. When Jesus goes fishing, it's a net-breaking, boat-sinking load of fish! (John 21: 4-6.) When Jesus holds a luncheon, He feeds 5,000 people with two fish and five loaves and twelve baskets left over. (John 6:7-13.) So where did we get this small-living mentality? Where did we get this competitive, jealous, poverty-stricken mind-set? From sick and tired folks who are sick and tired.

We were created in the likeness and image of God (Gen.1:26), and the Lord has called us to live that way—with authority and dominion. He wants us to be like His Son, because we are sons and daughters, and walk in His image.

The Church must teach God's reality. But before we can do that accurately, we must get the true image of who we are in Him and who He is in us. We've got to know first that abundant life is available. Then we've got to stop our selfish ways of thinking that major on survival and what we want.

We must start living bigger in such a way that we change the world around us. But we will never do it until we see ourselves with a new image, created in the likeness of Christ.

God is saying to us, "Don't you make your own image of who I am. Keep a clear picture, a true image, of who I am in your life, because if you get a wrong image of who I am, you will create all kinds of problems in your life."

### **Made In God's Image**

When you serve the God of the Bible and have a true image of Him, you will be big, strong and powerful.

What's your image of God? Is He a mighty God, commanding a generation and bringing abundant life to them? Let's get a right image of God—no graven images. Let's see Him as He really is: loving, kind, gracious, big, abundant.

John knew the God who'd called him to a life of ministry. His image of God was one of compassion, miraculous power and uncompromising love. And in 1 John 4:17 he writes, As He is, so are we in this world.

As He is, so are you in this world! You're not the product of evolution. Your hundred-thousand-year-old granddaddy was not some ape. You were made in the image of God. That image was modeled for us in the ministry of Jesus, and as He is, so are we now—not when we get to heaven, not after the Rapture. No—As He is, so are we **[now]** in this world.

As humans we are all like Adam in our natural bodies, but when we are born again, we become like Jesus in our spiritual beings; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly (v. 48). So we should have His attitude, His perspective and His lifestyle, because we are made in His image.

So many of us get caught up mumbling and bumbling in the dirt of the world because that's how we see ourselves. Remember, As [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he (Prov. 23:7). What a person believes in his heart is what he expects. And what a person expects determines how he will live.

So many of us live in our own little worlds because we've never been changed into the image of God. I'm not trying to put anyone down; I'm just trying to say that it's good when you can get up on God's mountaintop, where the air is thin and the view is good. It's good when you stop living down in the valley, where you're just trying to survive. And that's where the god of this world wants you, so he can get you to waste your life just trying to make ends meet.

When you discover the true image of God living in you, all of a sudden, that guy who cut you off on the freeway isn't worth shaking your fist at anymore. All of a sudden, the kid who's so frustrating isn't worth your pulling your hair out over anymore. The reason you keep letting those little things get to you is that you don't know who you are in Christ.

But once you discover who you are in Christ, you will walk through life as a son or daughter of God in regal wisdom and composure. You will no longer think of paying the bills the same way you once did. Instead, you will start thinking about how to invest in missions and touch the world.

What are you seeing when you look in the mirror? If you're seeing anything less than the image of Jesus, you must get renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him so you can begin to live this life of Christ. As long as you see yourself as a grasshopper, you will be a grasshopper! (Num. 13:33.)

If you're always saying, "Oh, I'm just trying to pay my bills; I'm just trying to make it through life; I'm just hanging on for the Rapture, you will waste your life. You will spend all of your time trying to figure out how to come up with a lease payment for your new car. You'll spend more time on your hair color than on missions. And you will continue to surround yourself with the golden-calf idols of the world as you spend more energy trying to get an approval on that mortgage than on caring for lost souls.

But there is a better way. God has promised us an abundant life, full of His promises and replete with His glory. Abundance, not lack. Glory, not darkness. And it all starts and ends with how you interpret His image. Remember, Romans 1:20 tells us God's invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.

### **The Glorious Church**

Many born-again believers don't even realize how the bondage problems of their past keep them bound. So it's time for a new image. It's time to see ourselves becoming part of Christ's glorious Church! We need to see ourselves as God sees us and renew our self-image.

The Word of God tells us plainly who God is and what He wants us to do. And for the believer who understands God's image properly, the adventure of changing from glory to glory should happen every day. The Spirit is the changer who brings the change to pass, but we must want to be changed.

Why are so many Christians struggling with the day-to-day issues just as the world does, when they've been predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ? Why are so many Christian husbands and wives fighting, struggling with bills and their weight while their kids are running to the devil? Why are they going through the same problems the unsaved neighbors next door are going through?

Why? Image. Their image of God and themselves. The god of this age has blinded their minds, and they can't see or believe the true glory and image of God. They are limited and held back. Even though they are on their way to heaven, hell is controlling their life.

### **As He Is, So Are We**

When you mention the powerful statement from 1 John 4:17 to most Christians—As He is, so are we in this world—most of them will simply blow it off.

Why? That kind of statement just doesn't fit the image Satan has passed on to them. In fact, if you go around saying, "As God is, so are we in this world," today's modern Pharisee will call you a New Age sorcerer. His image of God is angry and confused.

When you say the Church can do Christ's miraculous works, these bound-up religious puppets, who wait to pounce on anyone who doesn't believe just like they do, will brand you a heretic. But Jesus said it, not brother what's-his-name! He said,

**"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father" (John 14:12). And Jesus is still saying that today."**

Today the Lord is still saying, "If you walk with Me, if you believe in Me, you're going to be like Me." And this is still God's goal—for us to be like Him!

So we must get the religious traditions out of our minds! We must get all that nonsense about "holy poverty," punishment and all of that other unbiblical nonsense out of our Protestant heads. We must get a new image of God, who created us to be like Him. And I tell you, if you'll believe in Him, you will do everything He does!

Walking out the reality of our Christian life is learning how to be brighter and more beautiful, going from glory to glory! God hasn't left us alone in this life with only steeples and traditions and man-made religion. He gave us Jesus as our Savior, deliverer and role model. Our Father in heaven wouldn't have done that if He intended us to fail. He wants us to learn daily how to live this life of Christianity like Jesus lived it. And He gave us Himself to make it come true.

**I'm telling you, all God wants to do is hang out with and be close to us like He was with Adam!  
He wants to live in the midst of us so He can teach us how to reign in Jesus' name.**

When you see Jesus as He really is, you begin to see who you can really be. And all of a sudden, life is no longer about paying bills or getting ticked off at the neighbor's barking dog. When you see God as He really is, you no longer put value on the priorities of the world. You begin to think differently because the god of this world can't blind your mind.

When we see Jesus as He really is, our former golden-calf idols of the world marketers stop controlling us. The sports teams don't control our schedule. The news doesn't control our emotions. The economy doesn't control our finances. All that happens because the golden calf that blinded us has been ground up. When we realize that the Father is in Jesus, Jesus is in us and we're in Him, it changes everything.

**Now it's time for a new image. It's time to remove the veil of legalism and tradition.  
It's time to move forward and be like Jesus. It's time to become Christ's glorious Church  
You were made in the likeness and image of God, so it's time to start thinking like Him.**

How you see God is how you see your world. If your image of God sounds like, "Well, God might heal, but you never know," "God might bless, but you can never be sure," "God touches some, but He doesn't touch others," or "God prospers some, but others, He wants to be poor," then these images will become the controlling factor in your life and you will act that way. Sometimes you will be generous; sometimes you will be stingy. You might be nice to some and unkind to others, because your image of God is your image of yourself.

But once you see in Ephesians 1:3 that God has already blessed you with everything heaven has to offer, it is easy to receive from heaven. It is also easy to give, because understanding that every spiritual blessing in the heavens is yours leaves very little limitation on what you have.

When your mind is renewed in the revelation that you are blessed, you will just flow. You won't be selfish or guarded. You won't be defensive. You will be a big, open, generous, liberal person. Because God is big, you will see big.

So many folks are trying to get Jesus to come down to their problems, into their negativity, and they have no idea that they have already been raised up! God wants us to live up to His presence because we are seated in Christ at His right hand.

This is your image! This is the way a believer who is grounded in God's truth should think!

But the last place Satan wants you to see yourself is seated in the heavens with Christ. Why? Because when you're seated in heavenly places it's not hard to resist temptation, and that puts him out of business.

You see, if you're just a no-good sinner, you might as well go ahead and get drunk, have a foolish affair and be stupid. But if you're seated in heavenly places in Christ, you won't live that way, because Jesus doesn't live that way. You will also understand that your new image is an eternal image, because in verse 7 Paul writes, "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." Now, if that doesn't thrill your soul, I don't know what will.

### **Know the New You**

So who do you think you are? Who are you trying to be today? Are you still just trying to survive, hiding out from the "Midianites" in your own little corner? Or are you ready to stand up and receive your calling?

The new you, you mighty Christian of valor, is just like Jesus. This is the new you. The Bible says you're a Christian—Christlike—and that you should want to live like He lived. When problems arise, you can solve them. Like Jesus, you can overcome them. When people have needs, you meet them. You have answers and solutions, and you live above circumstances. This is who you are.

When situations come up that aren't always good, you, Christian, always win. You overcome. I mean if five thousand people show up for lunch, you find a way to feed them. When the neighbor's daughter is dying, you help them get her healed. If your friends are confused and sad, you have an answer that brings joy and peace. Because you know the new you, you share Christ's vision and have His discipline to fulfill it. As He is, so are you in this world. Knowing your identity in Christ is critical.

### **Fix Your Mind On The Word**

*(.....that night he would wonder why he was so tired, why the day was so sad and why all his work associates can't stand him.....)* The reason? His image. The image this man had of himself and his world was no doubt very negative. And the same can happen to a Christian if he doesn't meditate on God and His promises.

When you're meditating on what God's Word has to say about you, you don't get up thinking about your sickness. You get up seeing yourself healthy and whole. You don't get out of bed thinking about your bills. You get out of bed thinking about how God meets all your needs according to His riches in glory. When you're meditating on the Word, you don't turn on the television to find out who died, the latest disaster or who's been having sex with the wrong person—before 6 AM. No, you just open your Bible, find something good about your God and yourself and fix your mind on it.

### **Free in Christ**

I don't believe in instant maturity. It will take us the rest of our lives to renew our minds and become like Christ. But it doesn't take long to help people resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts and find their freedom in Christ. Being alive and free in Christ is part of our sanctification process.

We are not trying to become children of God, we are children of God who are becoming like Christ. Once people are established alive and free in Christ through genuine repentance and faith in God, watch them grow! They have a new thirst for the Word of God, and they know who they are in Christ because "the Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16)

Because you are alive in Christ and seated with him in the heavenly's, you no longer need an outside agent to exercise authority for you. You now reside "in Christ," who has all authority. In order to resist the devil, you first need to understand and appropriate your identity, position, and authority in Christ. Freedom in Christ is your inheritance as a Christian. (Ephesians 1:18 – 21)

### **You are spiritually and therefore eternally alive**

As a believer, you are no longer "in Adam," you are "in Christ." For every verse that says Christ is in you, there are many more saying you are "in Christ" or "in Him." Because the life of Christ is eternal, the spiritual life you now have in Christ is eternal. Eternal life is not something you get when you die physically it is something you receive the moment you are born again! "He who has the son has the life; he who does not have the son of God does not have the life" (1 John 5:12).

### **You are a new creation in Christ**

If you don't fully understand your identity and position in Christ, you will likely believe there is little distinction between yourself and nonbelievers.

Every verse listed at the end of this article is true about every believer, and none of the verses are true about the natural person. (*i.e. non-believer*) The accuser will seize that opportunity, pour on the guilt, and question your salvation if you don't know who you are.

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. (Ephesians 2:1 – 3)

By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:4)

But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. (Romans 8:9)

### **Appropriate Response**

When the Bible tells us the truth about who we already are and what Christ has already done, again, there is only one appropriate response – to believe it. I point this out only because the verses in Romans 6:1–10 are not commandments to be obeyed; they are truths to be believed. Christ has already died to sin, and because you are in Him, you have also died to sin. You cannot do for yourself what Christ has already done for you.

We don't make anything true by our experiences. Rather, we are to choose to believe what God says is true, then live accordingly by faith. Then the truth works out in our experience. It is not what we do that determines who we are. It is who we are that determines what we do. We don't labor hoping that God may one day accept us. God has

already accepted us, and that is why we labor. We don't do the things we do with the hope that God may one day love us. God loves us, and that is why we do the things we do.

When we act out of character with who we really are, the Holy Spirit immediately brings conviction because of our union with God, and we often take it out on ourselves. But soon our true nature expresses itself again and we are drawn back to God. That's the inner person, the true self, being expressed.

**We have no spiritual power or authority apart from our identity and position in Christ.**

**Who we are must always take precedence over what we do;  
and we cannot accomplish anything apart from Christ.**

### **The Riches of Our Inheritance in Christ**

We may have an even greater advantage in spiritual warfare than the first disciples did. They were with Christ, but we are in Christ. (Mark 3:14 – 15)

Paul wanted to make sure that nobody missed his point. He tells us 10 times in Ephesians 1, verses 3–13, that we are "in Christ." Everything we have is the result of our intimate, personal relationship with the resurrected Christ and his indwelling spirit. The problem is, we don't see it.

### **Right Now**

Your identity as a child of God and your authority over spiritual powers are not things you are receiving or will receive at some point in time in the future; you have them right now. You are a spiritually alive child of God right now. You are seated in the heavenly's with Christ right now. You have power and authority over the kingdom of darkness and are able to do His will right now.

Not only were you made alive in Christ, but Satan was disarmed and defeated some 2000 years ago. His defeat is not pending, nor is it future; it has already happened.

### **Jesus Has You Covered**

There is a place that we can go and feel safe, but it is not a physical location. Our only sanctuary is "in Christ" and in Him, you have all the protection you need.

### **Free In Christ**

Freedom doesn't reside in the exercise of choice, it is always related to the consequences of those choices. Jesus set me free to make the right choices and live a liberated life in him. "It was for freedom that Christ set us free" (Galatians 5:1). The freedom we have in Christ is not a license to live independently of God, which has many unintended consequences.

### **Your Worst Enemy?**

There are very few people that I have ministered to who didn't have a self-image problem. None of them knew who they were in Christ. Many times I have asked during the process, "who do you think your worst enemy is?" Everyone has said, "me," which isn't true. It was because of their worst enemies lies that they thought they were their own worst enemy.

Another common trait for most struggling Christians. They do not know who they are in Christ, nor do they understand what it means to be a child of God. Why not? If "the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16), why aren't they sensing it?

We must have a true knowledge of God and know who we are as children of God. If we really knew God, our behavior would change radically and instantly. Whenever heaven opened to reveal the glory of God, individual witnesses in the Bible were immediately and profoundly changed. I believe that the greatest determinant of mental and spiritual health and spiritual freedom is a true understanding of God and a right relationship with him.

**When Christians are alive and free in Christ, watch them grow!**

### **Who Are You?**

Is who you are determined by what you do, or is what you do determined by who you are? That is an important question? Especially as it relates to Christian maturity. I subscribe to the latter. I believe that your hope for growth, meaning and fulfillment as a Christian is based on understanding who you are – specifically, your identity in Christ as a child of God.

**Your understanding of who God is and who you are in relationship to Him is the critical foundation for your belief system and your behavior pattern as a Christian.**

Everyone has exactly the same opportunity for a meaningful life. Why? Because wholeness and meaning in life are not the products of what you have or don't have, what you've done or haven't done. You are already a whole person and possess a life of infinite meaning and purpose because of who you are – a child of God.

**The only identity equation that works in God's kingdom is  
"you + Christ = wholeness and meaning."**

If your relationship with God is the key to wholeness, why do so many believers struggle with their identity, security, significance, sense of worth and spiritual maturity? Ignorance is probably the primary reason. The prophet Hosea said, "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (4:6). For others it is carnality, the lack of repentance and lack of faith in God, and some are being deceived by the father of lies.

Sadly a great number of Christians are trapped in the same downward spiral. We fail, so we see ourselves as failures, which only leads to more failure. We sin, so we see ourselves as sinners, which only leads to more sin. We have been deceived into believing that what we do determines who we are. That false belief sends us into a tailspin of hopelessness and more defeat.

On the other hand, "the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16). God wants us to know who we are so we can start living accordingly. Being a child of God who is alive and free in Christ should determine what we do. Then we are working out our salvation, not for our salvation. (Philippians 2:12)

For the Christian, to be spiritually alive is to be in union with God. The spiritual life is most often conveyed in the New Testament as being "in Christ," or "in Him."

Just as we inherited physical life from our earthly parents, so we have inherited spiritual death from them (Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22). Consequently, every human being who comes into the world is born physically alive but spiritually dead, separated from God (Ephesians 2:1).

**The truth (Christ and his Word) should set us free and enable us to conform to the image of God.**

**Our sense of worth is not a question of giftedness, talent, intelligence or beauty.**

**Our sense of personal worth comes from knowing your identity in Christ and who you are as a child of God.**



### **Something Old, Something New**

If you are a new creation in Christ, have you ever wondered why you still think and feel at times the same way you did before? Because everything you learned before you knew Christ is still programmed into your memory. There is no mental delete button. That is why Paul says, "do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2)

When you are dead in your trespasses and sins, you also served under a cruel self-serving skipper. The admiral of that fleet is Satan, the prince of darkness, the god and ruler of this world. By God's grace, you have been "delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of his beloved son" (Colossians 1:13). You now have a new skipper, your new self is infused with the divine nature of Jesus Christ, your new Admiral. As a child of God, you are no longer under the authority of Satan and dominated by sin and death. The old man is dead.

**We have to believe that our new identity is in the life of Christ and commit ourselves to grow accordingly.**

Why do you need the nature of Christ within you? So you can be like Christ, not just act like him. God has not given us the power to imitate him. He has made us partakers of his nature so that we can actually be like him. You don't become a Christian by acting like one. You are not on a performance basis with God.

The Scribes and Pharisees were the religious perfectionists of their day. They had external behavior down to a science, but their hearts were like the insides of a tomb, reeking of death. Jesus is interested only in creating new persons from the inside out by infusing in them a brand-new nature and creating in them a new self. Only after He changes who you are and makes you are a partaker of his divine nature will you be able to change your behavior.

We are to continuously believe we are alive in Christ and dead to sin because it is so. Believing anything doesn't make it true. God said it is true, therefore we believe it. Death is the ending of a relationship, not an existence. Sin is still present, appealing and powerful, but when you are tempted to sin, you can say, "I don't have to do that. By the grace of God, I can live a righteous life."

### **Healing Emotional Wounds**

.....the rape was a terrible tragedy and it has temporarily altered your plans, but it hasn't changed who you are, nor does it have to control your life. But if you only see yourself as a rape victim for the rest of your life, you will never get over your tragedy. You're a child of God. No event or person, good or bad, can rob you of that.

Now that you are in Christ, you can look at those events from the perspective of who you are today. You may be struggling with the question "where was God when all this was going on?" The omnipresent God was there and he sent his own son to redeem you from your past. The truth is, he is in your life, right now desiring to set you free from your past. That is the gospel, the good news that Christ has come to set the captives free. Perceiving those events from the perspective of your new identity in Christ is what starts the process of healing those damaged emotions.

### **Victory Begins**

Most Christians are dominated by what they can see, taste, hear, smell, and feel instead of God's Word. The flow of life within stays turned off because they don't believe anything they can't see. Neither do they understand the change that happened in their born-again spirits, nor are they fully aware of who they are in Christ. To them, something's just not real if it can't be perceived through their five natural senses. Attempting to be "honest," they search their physical, emotional, and mental realms for God's power. If they can't perceive it, then they must not have it.

That's why God's Word reflects you as righteous, holy, and pure. The makeup of your born-again spirit is identical

Our Identity in Christ – Thought Conditioners

to Jesus Himself!

The truth is, when you were born again, God put His power, anointing, victory, joy, peace—everything—in you in abundance. The only reason they aren't manifest in your soul and body is your unrenewed mind. It's not that God didn't give it but that you're still looking at the physical realm instead of His spiritual mirror.

Fix your gaze on God's Word! Let your spirit's reflected image dominate your thoughts. As who you are in Christ grows stronger in your heart, carnal "reality" must give way to spiritual reality. That's when you'll experience life and peace!

### **One-Third Of Me Is Complete**

My attitude completely changed since discovering these truths. When problems came, I used to feel inadequate. I'd lament, "O God, I know You've got power, but I'm just a man. I don't have any power at my disposal." Then I realized I'm not just a man anymore. One-third of me is complete. One-third of me is identical to and one with Jesus. One-third of me is wall-to-wall Holy Ghost! Because of the confidence, security, and faith this has given me, I can confront and overcome problems now that I wasn't able to before. As you keep digging, these truths will do the same for you!

**If you've received revelation from these truths, you can say, "I see it! I'm a brand-new person in my spirit. Old things passed away, and all things have become new. As Jesus is right now, so am I in this world. My spirit, the real me, was created in righteousness and true holiness!"**