

Identity: Who am I, really?

How does the Christian life work?

Jn 14:15 "If you love me you will obey my commandments."

This is **not a pouty jab**. It's not Jesus saying, "If you really loved me you wouldn't treat me this way, you jerk." It's a **sweet invitation and a guarantee** saying, "I promise that once you get to know me, you will love me, and once you love me, obedience will flow naturally from that love."

When you see God as He is, and then **see yourself as He sees you**, you will know who you really are. And then you will relate to Him, yourself, and those around you from the strength of that exalted position. **High ground** is always a military advantage. Jesus has given us high ground in terms of who we now really objectively are.

It's a **conditional promise**, not a call to performance to prove it. If you love me – what causes that? "We love God because he first loved us." – REF. Positional righteousness leads to behavioral righteousness. Grace -> love -> obedience.

Four Stages of Love for God Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1130) French Cistercian Abbot

1.) Carnal Love for self. 2.) Love God for the sake of self. 3) Love God for God's sake. 4) To be so immersed in God's love that we love God, people, even ourselves with His love.

Learning to live as free people. Stages of deliverance from slavery (Keller). OBJECTIVELY the Israelites have been freed from slavery, but they have SUBJECTIVE slavery on the inside by degrees. "We're gonna die! Pharaoh is coming! We told you! Weren't there enough graves in Egypt?!"

Negative and Positive Identity Traits (Graham Cooke)

Negative Identity - Victim thinking, Cautious, Pessimistic, Fearful, Judgmental Prejudiced, Hesitant, Taking comfort only in the familiar, Fear of Man, Fear of Being Wrong, Fear of Looking Stupid, Fear of any kind of Risk, Prone to believe the worst about ourselves and others, Leaves us feeling unworthy and entirely too self-conscious.

Positive Identity - Has Values, Optimistic, Trusting, Willing To Try, Open to being challenged, Risk-takers, Brave, Honest, Self-aware, Open, Willing to Admit Mistakes, Prone to believe the best about themselves and others. In short, positive identity creates a tendency of thankfulness toward God and encouragement toward others.

What's the point? When we live from our true heavenly identity in Christ our perspective here on earth will be transformed and these listed virtues will be more and more evidenced in us.

Identity In Christ

- **Colossians 3:1-4** ¹"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and **your life is now hidden with Christ in God**. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then **you also will appear with him in glory**."
- **Gal 2:20**
- **Romans 7:7** "As it is, it is **no longer I myself who do it**, but it is sin living in me." –when you and I sin we're living out of a *false identity*.
- **Cate Blanchett** – "Heaven" – Paul the murderer vs Paul in Christ. He crossed over.

- **Union with Christ** gives me everything that's rightfully His without earning it. His relationship with the Father. His relationship with the Spirit. This is OBJECTIVELY who we are. We may not have brought it into our experience SUBJECTIVELY just yet, but **our job is to fight to REMEMBER.**
- **1 John 3:1** "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

So, what are we saying? Who are you, really? Is the real you how you see yourself? Is the real you how others see you? No. If you are in Christ, the real you is the new you, eternal you that God made by connecting you with Jesus.

Gideon – Who are you, really?

Judges 6:11 Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. **12** And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor." **13** And Gideon said to him, "Please, sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian." **14** And the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?" **15** And he said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." **16** And the Lord said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man." **17** And he said to him, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me. **18** Please do not depart from here until I come to you and bring out my present and set it before you." And he said, "I will stay till you return."

- **Gideon, Moses, Jeremiah and Us – The Thousand Dollar Bet**
- **Human Pushback** - "God, are you sure you're talking to me? Are you sure you've got the right guy? Do you **know me**? Do you know **my family**? **Ask anybody** and they'll tell ya. You got the wrong guy. **You don't understand** who I am or you would send someone else."
- He says, "**No, you don't understand. You don't understand who you really are in Me.** You think the most important thing about you comes from the natural human stuff. But you're wrong. The most important thing about you is this: **I am with you.**"
- **My Basement Encounter** – "I will never leave you nor forsake you." What a promise. And that fact is the most relevant thing about me. And the most relevant thing about you.

Application for the community of Jesus?

- Relate to each other according to our **heavenly identities**
- **Find and call forth Christ** in each other
- **Hook** – little boy stretching his face skin and finally saying, "**There you are Peter!**"
- **Praise is far more powerful** in provoking positive change than criticism.
- **JD Walt Greeting** - "The Spirit of Jesus in me greets the Spirit of Jesus in you."

Concluding prayer – God grant each one salvation objectively, and then subjective revelation into the glory of what has happened. And to do that for each other.