

Approximately 30 minutes Topical



Who I Am in Christ

Discovering Our True Identity in Jesus Christ

Key Text:   (NIV) **2 Corinthians**

5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!¹

¹ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 2 Co 5:17.



Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we come before You with grateful hearts. Thank You for Your Word, which tells us the truth when the world confuses us, when our feelings accuse us, and when our past tries to define us. Open our eyes today to see who Jesus is and, because we belong to Him, who we are in Christ. By Your Holy Spirit, tear down every lie, heal every wounded place, renew our minds, and help us live in the identity You have given us. May Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, be honored in everything that is said. In His wonderful name we pray, amen.

Introduction: The Most Important Question

Good day, brothers and sisters. Today we are going to study a simple question with a life-changing answer: **Who am I in Christ?**

The world is always handing us name tags, or putting us into a bucket, or categories.

Some say

- successful or unsuccessful,
- strong or weak,
- attractive or unwanted,
- important or forgotten.

Our past may label us by our worst failure.

- Pain may call us broken.
- Shame may call us unworthy.
- Fear may call us helpless.

- Even success can give us a false identity by convincing us that our value depends on what we accomplish.

But the “Christian” does not have to live under a name tag written by the world, the enemy, or our own changing emotions.

God has spoken. If you have trusted Jesus Christ, your truest identity is not found in what you have done; it is found in what **He has done.**

- It is not based on your performance; it is based on His finished work.
- It is not secured by your grip on Him; it is secured by His grip on you.



(NIV)

2 Corinthians 5:17 says,

“¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the

new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!²

That phrase “in Christ” is the key. Christianity is more than agreeing with religious facts. It is a living union with Jesus. We belong to Him, His life is at work in us, and His story becomes our story.

1. I Was Created by God and for God

Before we understand who we are in Christ, we should remember who created us.

Genesis 1:27 teaches that God created mankind in His own image, male and female. **Genesis 2:7** describes God

² [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 2 Co 5:17.

forming the man from the dust and breathing into him the breath of life.

👉 **Yet something went terribly wrong.**

Humanity chose independence from God. Sin entered the world, and the image of God in us became marred....not erased, but distorted.

💡 Our relationship with God was broken; our relationships with one another became wounded; and creation itself came under suffering and death.

2. Who I Was Apart from Christ

The good news becomes truly good when we understand the bad news honestly.



(NIV)

Romans 3:23 says, **"23 for all**

have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,³

Ephesians 2 explains that apart from Christ we were spiritually dead in transgressions and sins.

We were not merely people needing improvement; we needed resurrection.

This is important: biblical identity is **not** positive thinking that pretends sin does **not** exist. The Bible gives a realistic picture. We were deeply flawed and sinful, yet deeply loved by God.

- God does not save us by telling us that sin is harmless.

³ [*The New International Version*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 3:23.

- 🙌 He saves us by dealing with sin completely at the cross.



(NIV)

Romans 8:1 announces,

**“Therefore, there is now no
condemnation for those who are in
Christ Jesus,⁴”**

Notice that it does not say there was never guilt. It says there is now no condemnation because **Jesus carried the judgment.**

The gospel does not rewrite our past by calling evil good. It gives us a **new standing** because Christ paid for the evil and rose again.

⁴ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 8:1.

3. Jesus Is God's Complete Solution

God did not abandon His creation. The entire biblical story moves toward Jesus Christ.

- He is fully God and fully man.
- He lived the life we failed to live,
- died the death our sin deserved,
- and rose in victory over sin and death.

👉 The cross is not a side note in Christianity; it is **the center**.

At the cross, God's justice and God's love meet.

Jesus did not die as a helpless victim. He willingly gave His life as a ransom.

  (NIV) **Mark 10:45** tells us **⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be**

served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”⁵

The material we are drawing from uses three powerful words: **reconciled**, **ransomed**, and **redeemed**.

- Reconciled means that enemies are brought back into peace and friendship. Sin separated us from God, but Jesus opened the way back.
- Ransomed means a price was paid for release. We were held in slavery to sin, but Christ paid the cost with His own blood.

⁵ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mk 10:45.

- Redeemed means bought back. Our debt was canceled, and we now belong to God.

When Jesus said on the cross, in **John 19:30** “...It is finished,...” tetelestai (τετέλεσται) Greek.... **“It is finished”** means that Jesus had **fully completed** the work the Father sent Him to do. **The debt** of sin was paid, **Scripture** was fulfilled, and the **way of salvation** was opened through **faith in Jesus Christ**.

He was declaring that the payment was **complete**. Paid in Full!!!

- 🤔💭 We cannot add to a finished work. We do not earn salvation by good behavior, church attendance, giving, baptism, or religious effort.

Good works follow salvation, but they do not purchase it.



(NIV)

Ephesians 2:8-9 says ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.⁶

Then the resurrection proved that the sacrifice was accepted and **death was defeated.**



Our faith is not placed in a dead teacher but in a **living Savior.**



Because He lives, those who are united with **Him receive life.**

⁶ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Eph 2:7–9.

4. In Christ, I Am Forgiven and Accepted

What does the finished work of Jesus mean for the believer?

First, in Christ I am forgiven.



(NIV)

Ephesians 1:7 says **⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace⁷**



(NIV)

1 John 1:9 teaches **⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.⁸**

Confession means that we **stop** defending sin and agree with God about it. Then we receive the cleansing He promises.

⁷ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Eph 1:7.

⁸ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Jn 1:9.

In Christ I am also justified. Justification is a courtroom word. It means that God declares the believer righteous because of Jesus.   (NIV) **Romans 5:1** says,

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,⁹.”

   Jesus took our guilty record, and we receive His righteous standing.

In Christ I am accepted. Many people spend their lives trying to earn acceptance from a parent, spouse, friend, employer, or crowd.

Human acceptance can change overnight.

But   (NIV) **Romans 15:7** tells believers to accept one another just as Christ accepted

⁹ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 5:1.

us. **7 Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. 10** 🙌 In Jesus, we are no longer outsiders standing at a locked door. We have been welcomed into God's family.

5. In Christ, I Am a New Creation and a Child of God

😬💭 This does not mean the Christian instantly becomes perfect. Not at all, not even close.

- We still live in bodies affected by the fall. We still experience temptation, and old habits may try to reassert themselves. But the ruling power of sin

¹⁰ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 15:7.

has been broken. Sin may still be present, but it is no longer our master.

Romans 6 teaches that our old self was crucified with Christ so that we should no longer be slaves to sin.   (NIV) **Galatians**

2:20 says, **“²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.¹¹”**

Paul was not saying that his personality disappeared. He was saying that the old self-directed life no longer sat on the throne. 👉 Christ was now the center.

¹¹ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ga 2:20.

In Christ I am born into God's family.

  (NIV) **John 1:12** says **¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God¹²**

Romans 8 says that we received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, **“Abba, Father.”**

  (NIV) **Romans 8:14-15** **¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your**

¹² [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Jn 1:12.

**adoption to sonship. And by him we cry,
“Abba, Father.”¹³**

6. In Christ, I Am Loved, Secure, and Never Alone

The love of God is not a distant feeling. It was demonstrated at the cross.



(NIV)

**Romans 5:8 says ⁸ But God
demonstrates his own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners, Christ died
for us. ¹⁴**

God did not wait for us to become **lovable**.
He loved us in our rebellion and moved
toward **us in grace**.

¹³ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 8:14–15.

¹⁴ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 5:8.



(NIV)

Romans 8:31 asks, ***“³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?¹⁵”***

It then declares   (NIV) ***Romans 8:37-39***
³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹⁶

¹⁵ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 8:31.

¹⁶ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ro 8:37–39.

In Christ I am sealed with the Holy Spirit.



(NIV)

Ephesians 1:13-14 describes the Spirit as a seal and a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance. **¹³ And you also were**

included in Christ when you heard the

message of truth, the gospel of your

salvation. When you believed, you were

marked in him with a seal, the promised

Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit

guaranteeing our inheritance until the

redemption of those who are God's

possession—to the praise of his glory. ¹⁷



A seal marked ownership and legitimacy. God has placed His mark upon His people. His Spirit lives within us as the

¹⁷ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Eph 1:13–14.

guarantee that He will finish what He started.

7. In Christ, I Have Purpose and Belonging

  (NIV) **Ephesians 2:10** says, **“¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ¹⁸”**

We are not saved by good works, but we are saved **for good works**.

Your purpose is not limited to a pulpit or a church building. You can glorify Christ by

- serving your family,
- encouraging the discouraged,

¹⁸ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Eph 2:10.

- praying for others,
- working honestly,
- forgiving an offender,
- helping a neighbor,
- sharing the gospel,
- caring for creation,
- and using whatever gifts God entrusted to you.

In Christ we also become part of God's people. Christianity is **personal**, 🤔💭 but it is not private and isolated.

👉 We are members of one body.

We need the teaching, encouragement, correction, worship, fellowship, and service of the local church.

🤔💭 Lone-ranger Christianity leaves people exposed. God places us in a family.

8. In Christ, My Mind Is Being Renewed

The world says, “Follow every feeling.”

Scripture says, “Bring every thought under the truth of Christ.”

Feelings are real, but they are not always reliable.

- A believer may feel condemned while God says forgiven.
- We may feel abandoned while God says never forsaken.
- We may feel useless while God says His workmanship.
- We may feel defeated while God says more than conquerors through Christ.

Renewing the mind means replacing lies with truth.

- When shame says, “**Your past is your identity,**” answer, “**I am a new creation in Christ.**”
- When fear says, “You are alone,” answer, “The Lord is with me.”
- When temptation says, “You must obey,” answer, “Sin is no longer my master.”
- When pride says, “You made yourself,” answer, “Everything I have is **grace.**”

A renewed mind is nourished by Scripture. We cannot live by God’s truth if we rarely hear it.

   Read the Bible prayerfully. Sit under sound teaching. Memorize key passages. Worship when you feel strong and when you feel weak. Speak truth to yourself before the world speaks lies to you.

9. The Apostle Paul - A Life Redefined by Christ

Paul no longer introduced himself by boasting in his lineage or family tree.

👉 He called himself a servant and apostle of Christ. He could remember his sin without being imprisoned by it. His past became evidence **of grace**.

- The persecutor became a preacher.
- The enemy of the church became a builder of the church.
- The man who tried to silence the name of Jesus carried that name across the Roman world.

Your past may explain some of your wounds, habits, or struggles, but it does not have the final word. **Jesus does**. God can

transform a painful history into a testimony of mercy. The scar can become a place from which you help someone else find healing.

10. In Christ, I Have a Future and a Living Hope

This world is not our final home. We are citizens of heaven living faithfully on earth. Our bodies age, weaken, and eventually die unless Christ returns first. But Jesus promised resurrection life. He will transform our lowly bodies to be like His glorious body.



(NIV)

1 Corinthians 15:57 says, **“⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the**

victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

19”

Christian victory does not mean we win every earthly contest or avoid every grave. It means that even the grave cannot keep those who belong to Jesus.

Putting It into Practice - Live From Your Identity

Let us bring this home.

- We do not obey in order to become accepted; because we are accepted in Christ, we desire to obey.
- We do not serve to purchase God's love; because we are loved, we serve with gratitude.

¹⁹ [*The New International Version*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 15:57.

- We do not fight sin to earn a place in the family; because we are God's children, we refuse to live like slaves.

Second, reject false labels. Do not make a home in a name Jesus died to remove.

You may have failed, but in Christ you are not a "Failure."

- You may struggle, but you are not abandoned.
- You may be wounded, but you are not without hope.

Third, practice your new identity.

- Because you are forgiven, forgive.
- Because you are loved, love.
- Because you are free, do not return willingly to chains.

- Because you are part of Christ's body, serve.
- Because you are a citizen of heaven, represent your King.

Fourth, stay close to Jesus. Identity is not a slogan we repeat while ignoring Christ.

John 15 pictures Him as the vine and us as the branches. Apart from Him we can do nothing. Abide in Him through His Word, prayer, obedience, worship, and fellowship.

Invitation - How Can I Be Born Again?

Perhaps you have heard these truths today, but you realize that you are not yet in Christ. You may know about Jesus without personally knowing Him. You may have attended church, tried to be moral, or

considered yourself religious, but Jesus said in   (NIV) **John 3:3, “ ...Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”²⁰”**

- To be born again is **not** to repair yourself. It is to receive new life from God.
- The Bible says that all have sinned and that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Jesus died in your place, was buried, and rose again. He is ready to forgive and save all who come to Him.

If you are ready, you can speak to Him right now. The words themselves do **not** save;

²⁰ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Jn 3:3.

Jesus saves. But you may pray this prayer sincerely:

 Let us pray...

“Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and cannot save myself.... I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead.... Please forgive me, cleanse me, and give me new life.... I turn from my sin and place my trust in You.... Be my Lord and Savior.... Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and help me follow You from this day forward.... Thank You for receiving me.... Amen.”

Conclusion - Say What God Says

Brothers and sisters,...   who are you in Christ?

- You are forgiven and reconciled.
- You are redeemed.
- You are bought with a price and belong to God.
- You are justified and accepted.
- You are alive and free.
- You are loved and cared for.
- You are a new creation, born of God and adopted into His family.
- You are God's workmanship, a temple of the Holy Spirit, and a member of Christ's body.
- You are sealed, secure, and being made holy.
- You are a citizen of heaven with an eternal inheritance.

So when the world asks who you are, do not begin with your job, possessions,

failures, medical condition, age, or reputation.

Those things may describe parts of your earthly story, but they do not define your **eternal identity**.

Say what God says: I belong to Jesus Christ. By grace I have been saved. Christ lives in me. I am His, and He is making me new.

 Let us pray...

Closing Prayer:

Father God, thank You for showing us who we are in Jesus. Thank You that our failures do not outrank Your grace, our feelings do not overrule Your truth, and our past does not cancel the future You have promised.

Help every believer to live as forgiven, accepted, loved, and redeemed. Renew our minds, strengthen us against temptation, and use us as faithful members of Your body.

For anyone who has called upon Jesus today, give assurance, courage, and a hunger for Your Word. May our lives point others to the Savior who died, rose again, and is coming, very soon.

We ask all of this in the mighty and precious name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



Matthew 28:19-20