

Ephesians 2 Ultimate Belonging

When we seek to find our identity in all the world has to offer, we put ourselves under the tyranny of self-improvement which we either **affirm** that we can find self-fulfillment or **resign** ourselves to never being able to reach our potential, compete, or have success. (Alan Noble, You Are Not Your Own)

Affirmation
Or
Resignation

What Is Our Only Comfort/Hope in Life and Death?

That we are not our own but belong, body and soul, both in life and death, to God and to our Savior Jesus Christ.

If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Romans 14:8

Part One: We belong to Christ

Vs 1-3 Our Identity Pre-Jesus

We *were* spiritually dead.

We lived according to

- To the the ways of the world
- To the enemy (ruler of the power of the air)
- To our fleshly desires

Vs 3 Children of Wrath

We were not just dead, but dead in rebellion and in rejection of his love, mercy, and grace.

Identity in the world always requires acknowledgment of other people. (Affirmation and/or Resignation)

Vs 4-6 Our Identity With Jesus

We *are* alive!

Vs 4 But God. He changes everything.

He lifts our burdens, sees our needs, validates us according to his perfect wisdom and love.

- He is rich in mercy.
- He is overflowing with love for us.
- He made us alive.
- He is rich in grace and kindness.

God is merciful, loving, full of grace and kindness. He takes your exhaustion and/or apathy, gives you a new heart and spirit. (Ez 36:26)

Vs 5 You are saved by grace!

Salvation is active.

- Made us alive — Christ's resurrection
- Raised us up — Christ's ascension
- Seated us with Christ — Christ's enthronement

Vs 8-10 Our Identity As God's Art

We are God's workmanship: poiēma, 'his work of art, his masterpiece'

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness." 28 God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth." 31 God saw all that he had made, and it was *very good indeed*. Genesis 1:26,28, 31

Our spiritual deadness prevented us from this very work that God intended for us.
Being alive in Christ means we are a display of God's art, craftsmanship, original intention — shalom.

Our work brings about peace in this world. What is our identity?

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Part Two: We belong to God's family

Our Identity as God's Family

Vs 11-12 Without Christ, we are alienated from one another.

Vs 4 But God... made us alive and brought us near to him.

Vs 13 But Christ Jesus... brought us near to one another.

Our Identity as Peacemakers

Through his death on the cross and the blood he shed

- He brought us near to himself vs 13
- He breaks down hostile barriers between people vs 14
- He reconciles divided people to God in peace vs 15
- He gave his followers access to God the Father through the Holy Spirit vs 18

Our Identity as Member's of God's Family

Do you want to grow in your God-given identity to belonging to him?

Questions:

As you contemplate these questions, remember Paul's prayer in chapter 1:15-19.

To whom do you belong?

Think about where you spend your thoughts, time, energy, and resources.

Based on this analysis, what vies for your identity? How does the tyranny of self-improvement affect you?

Where are you on the scale between the need for affirmation/striving and resignation/apathy?

How would your life change if you fully embraced being alive in Christ?

What are your thoughts, feelings, and actions concerning belonging to God's household?

Where do you find your true identity? This week make a list of who you are in Christ.