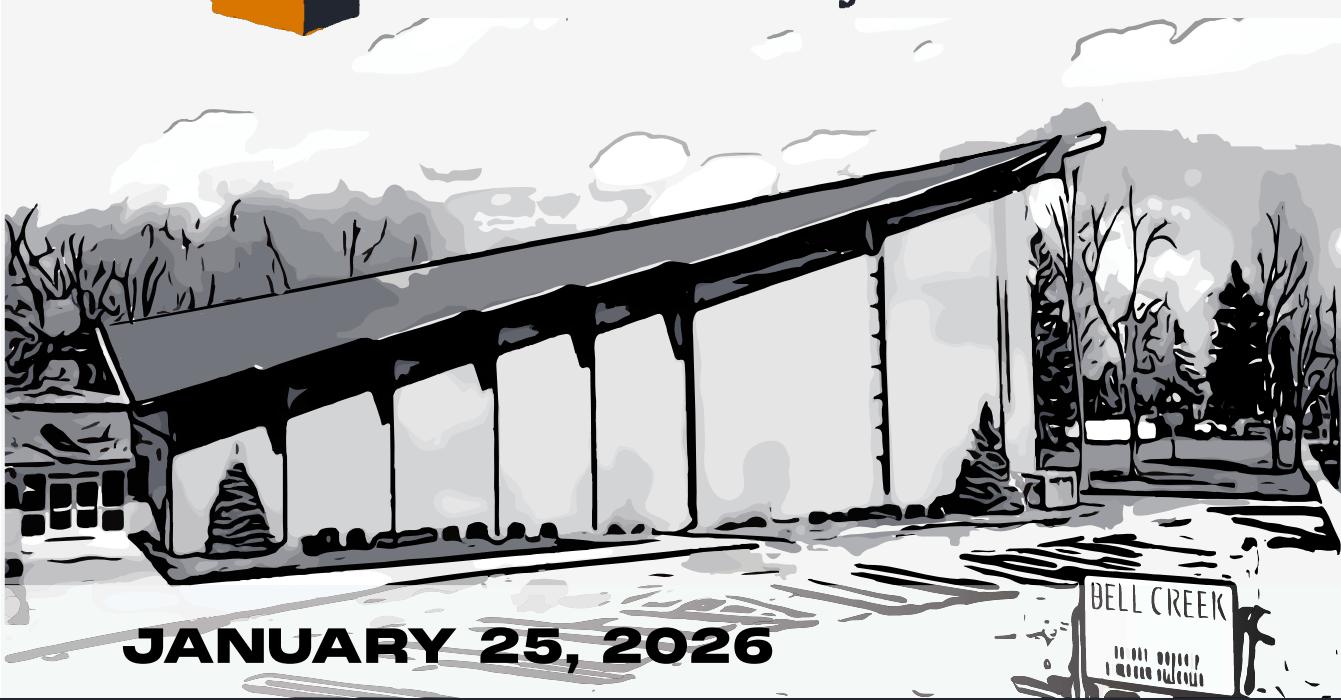


WELCOME TO



BELL CREEK
Community Church



JANUARY 25, 2026

**WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST: IDENTITY RESTORED
THROUGH JESUS
COLOSSIANS 1:12-14**

SERMON BY: PASTOR FRED WRIGHT

CURRENT SERMON SERIES:
FOLLOW – OUR JOURNEY WITH JESUS

WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST: IDENTITY RESTORED THROUGH JESUS

COLOSSIANS 1:12–14

Our Identity is Restored through Redemption.

Our Identity is Restored through Union with Christ.

Our Identity will be Completed in Glory.

FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Ephesians 6:10-18 to prepare for next week's sermon.

DAILY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE READING

JANUARY 25: GENESIS 38-40
JANUARY 26: GENESIS 41-42
JANUARY 27: GENESIS 43-45
JANUARY 28: GENESIS 46-47
JANUARY 29: GENESIS 48-50
JANUARY 30: EXODUS 1-3
JANUARY 31: EXODUS 4-6

UPCOMING AT THE CREEK

EVOLUTION: FACT OR FAIRY TALE

Join Bill Durkee for a seminar on Evolution today in the Prayer Room during both services.

NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY CLASS

Join Pastor Dylan to explore the history, literature and theology of each book of the New Testament on Sunday evenings at 6:00 in the Prayer Room.

AAA BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN

Bell Creek is participating in AAA Pregnancy Center's Baby Bottle Campaign to support the Sanctity of Human Life. Empty baby bottles are available in the back of the gym after both services for pick up. If you prefer to donate online, please scan the QR Code on the insert inside the bulletin. Please put "Bell Creek Community Church" for group affiliation. If you have questions, please contact Becky DeGrazia (BeckyD1633@gmail.com).

NIGHT TO SHINE

We are so excited to be an official host church, partnering with 242 -Livonia, for this year's "Night to Shine" sponsored by the Tim Tebow Foundation! The event will be Friday, February 13th from 6:00-9:00 PM at 242 Church on Five Mile. Night to Shine is an unforgettable worldwide celebration event, centered on God's love, honoring and valuing people with special needs. On one night, hundreds of churches of different denominations from all over the world will come together to celebrate people with special needs! To find out how you can be a part of this worldwide movement, visit the information table located in the back of the gym or contact dylan@bellcreek.org.

BETWEEN TWO TREES BOOK STUDY

Our Between Two Trees study will meet Sunday, February 8 to discuss *The Magician's Nephew* by C.S. Lewis! Please contact Pastor Dylan (dylan@bellcreek.org) for more information.

NEW LEADERS NEEDED

We are in need of more leaders for our Small Group Studies. If you are interested in hosting and leading a study, please contact Randy Brock (randy@bellcreek.org). For a list of our current studies, please visit www.bellcreek.org/groups.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER MEETINGS

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM

FRIDAYS 12 NOON

PRE-TEEN & MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP

2ND SERVICE

AWANA

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM

SEPTEMBER-MAY

HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

AND EVENTS AT BELLCREEK.ORG

OUR MISSION

MATTHEW 22:37–40

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets depend on these two commandments.”

MATTHEW 28:19–20

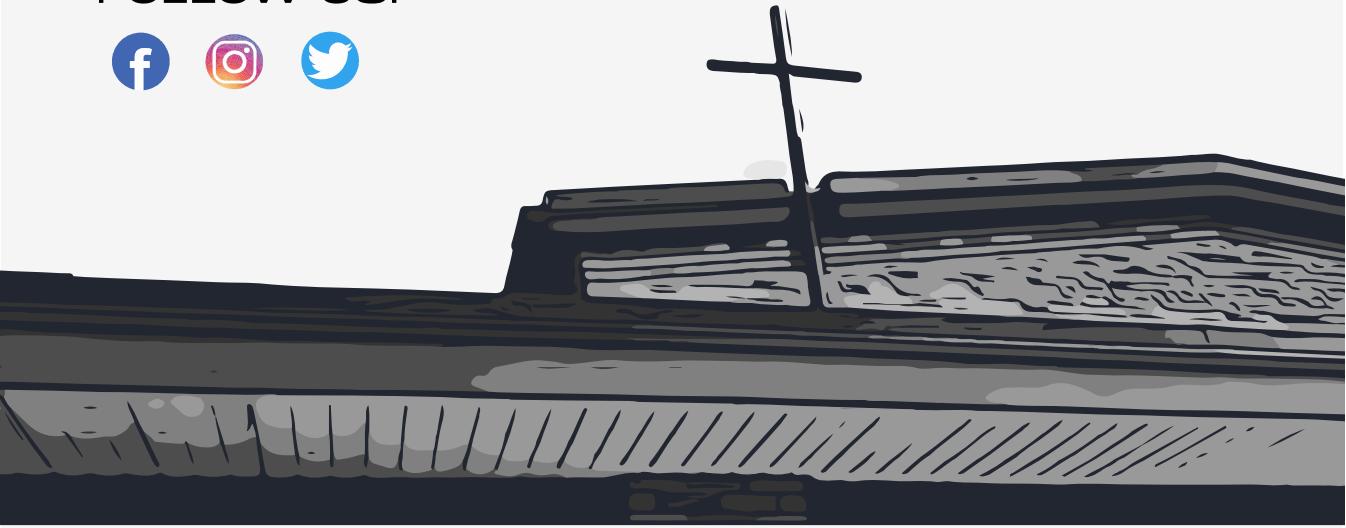
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am with you always to the end of the age.

STAY CONNECTED

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU HERE!

WWW.BELLCREEK.ORG/CONTACT-US

FOLLOW US!



BELL CREEK
Community Church

30000 FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MI 48154

Who We Are in Christ: Identity Restored Through Jesus

(From the Sermon Series: Follow – Our Journey with Jesus)

Sunday 01.25.2025

Sermon Text: Colossians 1:12-14

SCRIPTURE READING:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love” (Ephesians 1:3-4, ESV)

Last week we saw that our identity was given by God, fractured by sin, and now must either be self-constructed or God-received. But in Christ, God restores what we lost. He seeks us, names us, and gives us a new identity and purpose. Let’s examine that more fully!

Important Note: A great way to apply the truths we are about to proclaim is to read the Scriptures below, reflect on them, pray over them, ask God to make them a reality in your mind, heart, and soul by the power of the Holy Spirit, write them down, memorize them, carry them with you, and talk about them with others. We must do this if we want to experience and live out our new identity in Christ.

Our Identity is Restored through Redemption

“giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” (Colossians 1:12-14, ESV)

What is “redemption” and why do we need it?

Redemption (noun): “the action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil; the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt.” (Oxford English Dictionary).

We needed redemption because sin devastated us completely. It did not merely make us guilty before God, it made us spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1), enslaved to unrighteousness (Romans 6:17), hostile toward God in our minds (Colossians 1:21), and objects of His righteous wrath (Romans 5:9). Sin corrupted our very nature (Ephesians 4:22), severed our fellowship with God (Isaiah 59:2), and left us exiled from His kingdom under the dominion of darkness (Colossians 1:13). We COULD NOT pay what we owed, repair what we had broken, or restore what we had lost.

But Christ accomplished what we could never do! He offered Himself as a ransom to free us (Mark 10:45), bore our sins in His own body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24), became sin for us though He knew no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), purchased us with His precious blood (Revelation 5:9), and was raised for our justification (Romans 4:25). His death satisfied God's justice; His resurrection secured our new life.

Through Christ's finished work, our debt has been paid in full, our relationship with God has been restored, and our eternal inheritance has been guaranteed. What we ruined by our sin, Christ has redeemed by His blood.

Listen to who we were, and who we are now because of Christ...

Christ redeemed us from death to everlasting life (Ephesians 2:1–5; Colossians 2:13)

Ephesians 2:1–5 “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins... even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...”

Colossians 2:13 “And you, who were dead in your trespasses... God made alive together with him...”

Christ redeemed us from condemnation to forgiveness (Romans 8:1; Colossians 1:14)

Romans 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Colossians 1:14 “In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Christ redeemed us from captivity and slavery to freedom (Romans 6:17–18; Galatians 5:1)

Romans 6:17–18 “You who were once slaves of sin... having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.”

Galatians 5:1 “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore...”

Christ redeemed us from being enemies of God to being children of God (Romans 5:10; Galatians 4:4–7)

Romans 5:10 “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son...”

Galatians 4:4–7 “...to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons... and if a son, then an heir through God.”

Christ redeemed us from exile to citizenship in heaven (Colossians 1:21–22; Ephesians 2:19; Philippians 3:20)

Colossians 1:21–22 “And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind... he has now reconciled...”

Ephesians 2:19 “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but... members of the household of God.”

Philippians 3:20 “But our citizenship is in heaven...”

Christ redeemed us from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Colossians 1:13; Acts 26:18)

Colossians 1:13 “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.”

Acts 26:18 "...to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God..."

Christ redeemed us from being unclean to being holy (1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5)

1 Corinthians 6:11 "But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ..."

Titus 3:5 "...he saved us... by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit."

Christ redeemed us from a corrupt nature to a new nature (2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:9–10)

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation..."

Colossians 3:9–10 "...put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self..."

Christ redeemed us from the wrath of God to receive the grace of God (Romans 5:9; Romans 6:14)

Romans 5:9 "Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God."

Romans 6:14 "For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."

Christ redeemed us from being strangers to being the very people of God (1 Peter 2:10)

1 Peter 2:10 "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people..."

From death to life, from condemnation to forgiveness, from slavery to freedom, from enemy to child, from exile to citizen, from domain of darkness to Kingdom of God, from unclean to holy, from wrath to grace, from stranger to His people. This is what Christ has done.

Redemption has renovated our identity, restored our relationship with our Creator, and reclaimed our lives for God. Do you believe this?

But Jesus does not redeem us and leave us! He redeems us so that we might become like Him. This is why He says, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men" and so much more! (Mark 1:17). Redemption gives us a new identity; union with Christ tells us who we are now.

Our Identity is Restored through Union with Christ

"For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." (Colossians 3:3–4, ESV)

What does "Union with Christ" mean? Another way to say it, is to say that we are "in Christ." "In Christ" and closely related words occur more than a hundred times in the New Testament!

To be "in Christ" means that believers are united to Jesus in such a way that what belongs to Christ belongs to us, and what is true of Christ becomes true of us, because we are His.

Why do we need this union? Redemption restores our relationship with God, but union places us in the Son, gives us the Holy Spirit, and conforms us to Christ. God did not redeem us merely to

forgive us; He redeemed us to remake us. "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men," and so much more! (Mark 1:16-17).

Listen to who we are because we are "in Christ!"

Because Christ is the Son, IN HIM we are sons and daughters of God (Galatians 4:4-7; Romans 8:15-17)

Galatians 4:4-7 "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God."

Romans 8:15-17 "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ..."

Because Christ is righteous, IN HIM we are counted righteous (2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9)

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

Philippians 3:9 "...not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith."

Because Christ is holy, IN HIM we are saints (1 Corinthians 1:2; Hebrews 2:11)

1 Corinthians 1:2 "To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints..."

Hebrews 2:11 "For He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one origin. That is why He is not ashamed to call them brothers..."

Because Christ is Light, IN HIM we are children of light (Ephesians 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:5)

Ephesians 5:8 "For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light."

1 Thessalonians 5:5 "For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness."

Because Christ is the Beloved, IN HIM we are accepted and beloved (Ephesians 1:6; Colossians 3:12)

Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV) "to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."

Colossians 3:12 "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience..."

Because Christ is the Heir, IN HIM we are heirs of God (Romans 8:17; Ephesians 1:11-14)

Romans 8:17 "...and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him."

Ephesians 1:11–14 "In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it..."

Because Christ is King, IN HIM we are citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3:20; Colossians 1:13)

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

Colossians 1:13 "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son..."

Because Christ lives forever, IN HIM we have new and everlasting life (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:4)

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Romans 6:4 "We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

In Christ we are sons and daughters, in Christ we are righteous, in Christ we are holy, in Christ we are beloved, in Christ we are citizens, in Christ we are heirs, in Christ we are alive forevermore. Do you believe this?

Our Identity will be Completed in Glory

"Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2, ESV)

Redemption and union with Christ reveal who we are now; glory predicts and reveals who we will be when He returns. Here's the main point: AS HE IS, SO WE WILL BE!

Because we will be like Him, we will reflect His glory (1 John 3:2)

1 John 3:2 "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is."

BECAUSE CHRIST is the Man of Heaven, we will bear His heavenly image (1 Corinthians 15:49)

1 Corinthians 15:49 "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven."

BECAUSE CHRIST is raised in glory, we will be raised in glory and power (1 Corinthians 15:42–43)

1 Corinthians 15:42–43 “So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.”

BECAUSE CHRIST is imperishable and immortal, we will be imperishable and immortal (1 Corinthians 15:52–53)

1 Corinthians 15:52–53 “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet... and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.”

BECAUSE CHRIST is holy and pure, we will be like Him in holiness and purity without sin, forever (1 John 3:2–3; Revelation 21:27)

1 John 3:2–3 “We shall be like Him... and everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure.”

Revelation 21:27 “Nothing unclean will ever enter it...”

BECAUSE CHRIST inherits the Kingdom, we will inherit the Kingdom prepared for us (Matthew 25:34)

Matthew 25:34 “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”

BECAUSE CHRIST shines in glory, we will shine like the sun in the kingdom of our Father (Matthew 13:43)

Matthew 13:43 “Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

BECAUSE CHRIST reigns, we will judge and reign with Him (1 Corinthians 6:3; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 22:5)

1 Corinthians 6:3 “Do you not know that we are to judge angels?”

2 Timothy 2:12 “If we endure, we will also reign with Him.”

Revelation 22:5 “And they will reign forever and ever.”

The call to follow Jesus is not just about obeying Him in this life; it is a call to become like Him for eternity. Do you believe this?

Application:

If Jesus truly offers full forgiveness, a new identity, and a secure future, what is keeping you from turning to Him today?

If this is who you are in Christ: redeemed, adopted, and destined for glory, what is one concrete way your thinking or living needs to change this week?

If you are hurting today, how would it change your perspective and give you hope if you truly believed that your life is hidden in Christ, that He is with you now, and that you will be perfected in glory?

Benediction:

"Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2, ESV)



FOLLOW – “Who We Are in Christ: Identity Restored Through Jesus”

1. What did you think of the sermon “FOLLOW – Who We Are in Christ: Identity Restored Through Jesus”?

2. Think back to the sermon at how we heard that Christ moves us from something->to something. Which one, told in scripture, resonates with you most? Why?

3. Why do you think it can be difficult for Christians to believe that Christ not only forgives but also reshapes who we are? Do you struggle believing you are forgiven or believing you are truly being changed by Christ? Why?

4. Union with Christ means that what is true of Jesus is now true of us. Which “because Christ” statement needs to move from knowledge to belief for you? How do your daily choices look different, if you lived from that identity?

5. Scripture says, “as He is, so we will be.” How does the promise of future glory (being like Christ forever) give you hope, endurance, or clarity in your present struggles?

