

Because Jesus Lives
Transformed Identity - In Christ
1 Corinthians 15:20-34

We are going to dive in a little deeper to see that, Because Jesus Lives, we have a Transformed Identity – In Christ, as we study 1 Corinthians 15:20-34 together.

Three Categories of Identity:

- 1) False Identity (worthless, perfect, dysmorphia, dysphoria, etc.)
- 2) Temporary Identity (vocation, hobbies, family, ethnicity, culture, affinity)
- 3) Primary Identity (Made in God's Image and Saved by God's Grace)

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” **Genesis 1:27**

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” **Ephesians 2:8-10**

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Main Idea: Because Jesus Lives, Our Identity Can Now Be in Him

“But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For ‘God has put all things in subjection under his feet.’ But when it says, ‘all things are put in subjection,’ it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all. 29 Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf? 30 Why are we in danger every hour? 31 I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day! 32 What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.’ 33 Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ruins good morals.’ 34 Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.”

1 Corinthians 15:20-34

I. Because Jesus Lives, We are Alive in Christ – 1 Cor 15:20-23

Some false teachers in Corinth were saying that even though Christ was raised from the dead, that doesn't mean that you won't be raised from the dead. Paul corrects this misunderstanding and makes the connection clear.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep... Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.”

1 Corinthians 15:20, 23b

Firstfruits in the Bible means giving the first and best to God as an act of trust, recognizing that everything comes from Him and more will follow. In the New Testament, it shifts from crops to people—representing those who come to faith first as a sign of what God will continue to do

“Since Christ was the first to arise from the dead his resurrection is the basis for the resurrection of all believers.” **CSB Study Bible**

“For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” **1 Cor 15:21-21**

Death is now part of life because sin entered through Adam, even though God originally created us to live forever with Him. But for believers, death isn't the end—because of Christ's resurrection, we will be raised and live forever.

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked...But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly place in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” **Ephesians 2:1-2a, 4-7**

There is only one identity that will reign forever

Main Idea: Because Jesus Lives, Our Identity Can Now Be in Him

II. Because Jesus Lives, We have Power in Christ – 1 Cor 15:24-28

“For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For ‘God has put all things in subjection under his feet.’”

1 Corinthians 15:25-27a

“Christ's resurrection set in motion a sequence of events that will culminate with the complete overthrow of all hostile powers opposed to God, including death, which entails the subjection of all things to God the Father.” **Mark Taylor**

When the world feels overwhelming, it's easy to attach ourselves to things that make us feel safe or powerful. But when we fully embrace our identity in Christ, we can trust Him through it all—knowing that in the end, Jesus wins.

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies.” **2 Corinthians 4:7-10**

“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”
2 Timothy 1:7

Main Idea: Because Jesus Lives, Our Identity Can Now Be In Him

III. Because Jesus Lives, We can Hope in Christ – 1 Cor 15:29-34

Paul tells us that the resurrection provides lasting hope. He does this by addressing a series of things that make no sense if Jesus is not alive.

“Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized... What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.’” **1 Corinthians 15:29a, 32**

We have hope to share the gospel, endure hardship and even suffering because of the hope we have in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! We reject the *“live for the here and now”* philosophy that is destroying so many lives, we hope!!!

Main Idea: Because Jesus Lives, Our Identity Can Now Be In Him

While these days the word “Identity” can mean hundreds of different things, Paul reminds us that it all boils down to two people: The First Adam & the Last Adam. The 1st plunged the world into sin causing defeat and death, the last brings victory in life. The 1st delivered the world over to Satan/Devil, but the last Adam returned the world back over to God. The 1st set in motion the ruin of history and society. The last Adam is renewing history and society. **The differences between the 1st and Last Adam is the difference of two worldviews, two world orders, two world perspectives so we MUST IDENTIFY WITH THE RIGHT ONE!!!**

“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” **1 Cor. 15:22**

All People Are Identified with Adam – Sinners, separated from God, pursuing whatever identity makes us feel self-actualized, admired by the right people, or accomplished. Whatever we call it, it's all Adam and it all leads to death.

Only Disciples Are Identified with Christ – Forgiven, reconciled to God, enjoying our identity as made in the image of God, saved by the grace of God while being completely wrapped up with being in Christ Jesus!

“If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 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 3:1-4**

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities

- **CSB Study Bible** – Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- **Exalting Jesus in 1 Corinthians** – Daniel Akin & James Merritt (2023)
- **Tony Evans Study Bible** – Tony Evans (2019)
- **Spurgeon Study Bible** – Charles Haddon Spurgeon (2017)
- **Bible Exposition Commentary** – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- **New American Commentary: 1 Corinthians** – Mark Taylor (2014)