

I Am In Christ

Discovering My True Identity | Week 1 | Ephesians 1

INTRODUCTION

NOTES

When you begin reading the first chapter of Ephesians, and if you're a follower of Jesus that's asking the question, "Who am I?", you will very quickly find the answer to that question: YOU ARE IN CHRIST. As he writes, Paul reminds us that you're NOT defined by what you do. You're defined by whom you belong to. In this message, we're going to see exactly how God defines us as His children according to His Word so that we can discover what it means to be "in Christ."

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

KEY POINTS

1.If you are in Christ, you are not your own.

The word "identity" speaks of "the way we define ourselves." It's who you say you are, and it's who you believe that you are.

But Paul shows us that if we are SAVED, who we are is not for us to say because we don't belong to us anymore. If we've been bought at a price, if we have the Holy Spirit in us, and if we have been made new because of Jesus, then Paul tells us our IDENTITY is now in Him!

He bought us! We belong to Him and therefore, our identity should be in Him. We don't have the privilege of redefining the things that God clearly defines in His word, and in this text, He clearly said to those who truly believe and those who have been transformed that your identity is in Christ.

2. To live in Christ, we must die to self.

When we live in Christ, life is not about us. It's all about Him. This means, as I live my life, the goal isn't to bring glory to myself or my name. The purpose of my life is to bring glory to HIS name! It's not about building my Kingdom. It's all about building His Kingdom. This is what it means to die to self.

3. If you are in Christ, you are no longer a slave to sin.

Paul says you're either a slave to sin or you're free from sin. You're either one or the other, but you can't be both. He says: It's impossible to live "in Christ" and "in sin" because when Jesus changed your eternal destination, He also changed your identity, your heart, and your nature.

I Am In Christ

Discovering My True Identity | Week 1 | Ephesians 1

7. When you are in Christ, His mission becomes your mission.

When you are "in Christ," God changes your perspective so you begin to see things the way He does.

- You see your sin like God sees your sin.
- You see the world like God sees the world.
- You inherit His perspective, and you see God's blessings in your life through eternal lenses.

When this perspective change takes place, it impacts your life mission. You want to take part in God's mission when you take part in His perspective. His goals become your goals. His plans become your plans. And that is a beautiful thing to be aligned with God's will like that.

8. If you are in Christ, you are who God says you are.

If you fix your eyes on the distorted image of yourself that the devil wants you to see, you are in danger of becoming that image in your mind. On the other hand, when we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, we can then see the person that God created us to be.

Who does the devil say you are?

- You are forgotten by God and alone.
- You are worthless, dirty, and unable to be good enough for God.
- You are stuck in your past and have no hope for the future.
- You're better off without God.
- You're having more fun when you're doing what you want to do.
- You'll have money, success, friends, and freedom to do what YOU want to do if you live life your own way.
- You don't need God! You're doing just fine without him.

Who does Jesus say you are?

- You are in Christ! (Eph. 1:2)
- You are His special possession (1 Pet. 2:9)
- You are set apart, a child of God, an heir of God, and a fellow heir with Christ (Romans 8:17; 1 John 4:6-8)
- You are created in His image. (Gen. 1:27)
- You are loved unconditionally (John 3:16) and treasured supernaturally.
- You are blessed, gifted, valued, and forgiven.
- You are in God's hand and walking in God's presence.
- You are cared for by Him. (1 Pet. 5:6-7)

NOTES

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

All In with Jordan Easley

I Am In Christ

Discovering My True Identity | Week 1 | Ephesians 1

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is one way you could die to yourself today?
2. How has God changed your perspective since you surrendered your life to Him?
3. Which one of Jesus' statements about you listed above hits you the hardest? Why?

I Am A Saint

Discovering My True Identity | Week 2 | Ephesians 1

INTRODUCTION

NOTES

Isn't it cool that God calls everyone who repents and follows Jesus a saint? If you are in Christ, you are a saint. It's as simple and straightforward as that. But while that's clearly stated in Scripture, what we need to make sure we understand is that when Paul used the word "saint" to describe us, it wasn't to put a spotlight on what we do. It was intended to put a spotlight on who we are. In other words, sainthood isn't achieved, it's received. And it's only received through the person of Jesus Christ. If you are saved, Jesus calls you a saint. That's who you are. It's your identity in Christ. When Paul used that word to define the Ephesian believers, he used it to show that they were "set apart" for God's use. That's what the word "Saint" means. In this message, we are going to look at what it means specifically to be a saint and how this part of our identity informs how we live our lives.

Horizontal lines for notes.

KEY POINTS

1. Because I am a saint, I am no longer a sinner.

There's a big difference between a saint and a sinner. Humans are called "sinners" more than 300 times in the Bible. But it's interesting because Paul never calls his audience "sinners." Do you know why? Because he's talking to believers, and if you've been SAVED, you're no longer a SINNER.

That doesn't mean that you no longer sin once you're saved. What that means is that when you become a new creation in Christ, even though you still fall short at times, you are no longer defined by your SIN. You are now defined by your SAVIOR.

2. Because I am a saint, I am called to someone, not just away from something.

God doesn't just call us away from sin; He also calls us to pursue Him. When you repent of your sins and surrender to Him, that action implies a change of direction where you turn from sin, and you also turn towards Christ.

Christians sometimes have difficulty grasping the concept of true repentance, and many times it's because they grew up in a legalistic setting where 'following Jesus' was all about behavior modification. It was all about following certain rules and being a "good boy" or "good girl."

All In with Jordan Easley

I Am A Saint

Discovering My True Identity | Week 2 | Ephesians 1

Many of us grew up with a version of Christianity where there was a list of things you should have done that week, and if you did those things, you'd check the box. But Jesus doesn't want you to check boxes FOR Him. He wants you to fully surrender TO Him. And when you surrender first and you turn to God first, He will then do a work in you.

3. Because I am a saint, I experience both grace and peace in Christ.

If you are saved, God's grace and peace are always available to you. God will always extend grace to you when you fall short, and He will always provide you with peace when you're feeling anxious, worried, or unsettled. We don't have to stay feeling guilty for our sins or anxious about our worries. God promises to comfort us and forgive us when we are His children, and that comfort and forgiveness come as a result of His grace and peace.

4. Because I am a saint, I no longer live in darkness; I live in the light.

We are people that have been changed by God and redefined by God for the purpose of Him shining His light through us. We have no light of our own, but like the moon, we were designed to reflect the light of Jesus to the dark and dying world around us. Jesus changes lives. And as He changes us, He illuminates us as saints to be light in the darkness.

NOTES

All In with Jordan Easley

I Am A Saint

Discovering My True Identity | Week 2 | Ephesians 1

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Do you struggle with feeling pressure to work off of a “Christian checklist” in your relationship with Jesus? Why or why not?
2. When was a time God gave you peace that surpassed all understanding? How did that situation impact your faith?
3. What is one way you can reflect the light of Christ to the darkness in the world this week?

I Am Blessed

Discovering My True Identity | Week 3 | Ephesians 1:3-14

INTRODUCTION

Do you think God blesses us? Absolutely He does! But He blesses us not because of what we do, but because of who we are. He blesses us because we're His children. He blesses us because He's a good Father. He blesses us because He wants to! Our challenge is living in the reality of that blessing. We've got to learn how to go against the grain of human nature of achieving our blessings and begin living our life trusting God and receiving His blessings. Today, from Ephesians chapter 1, we're going to see that through Christ, we are blessed. Specifically, we are going to look at six reasons why we're blessed according to Scripture, so let's dive in.

KEY POINTS

1. I am IN CHRIST.

Paul said those who are "in Christ" are blessed. Now, if you're not saved and you don't know Jesus, you can still experience good things. You just can't experience God-things. Only those who are "in Christ" will experience God's best in their lives. If we are "in Christ" today, we are no longer SINNERS who are defined by our SINS. We are now SAINTS who are defined by our SAVIOR.

2. I am SET APART.

Paul says that those who are "in Christ" have been set apart "to be holy and blameless." We're set apart for a purpose, and that purpose is to reflect the holiness of God and the goodness of God to the world around us.

If you're saved today, it's because God met you at your point of need, He forgave you of your sins, He changed from the inside out, and He gave you a new identity and a new purpose in Christ. You have been set apart as His child.

3. I am ADOPTED.

The Bible says that when we are saved, we become a part of the family of God, and it happens immediately. You don't have to earn your way into God's family. When He saves you, you are adopted as a child of the King! And the Bible says, when that happens, we as children of God receive the same rights Jesus has. Adoption is a perfect picture of the gospel. If you've been saved, you've been adopted! And we're not second-rate sons and daughters. God has fully adopted us "in Christ."

NOTES

I Am Blessed

Discovering My True Identity | Week 3 | Ephesians 1:3-14

4. I am REDEEMED.

The concept of being redeemed is an ancient word that refers to the act of buying something out-of-market. In this case, it gives us the picture of a slave market. Think about that for a second: Because of the sins in your life, you were once a prisoner, a slave with a debt so large you were unable to be released from the bondage or to break free on your own accord.

But then, through His redemption, God has reversed the curse of your sin, He’s restored you, He’s forgiven you, and set you free. That’s redemption. He adopted you with His own blood. He erased your sin debt, broke the chains that were preventing your freedom, and He called you His son or daughter.

5. I am AWARE OF HIS WILL.

In Old Testament times, God’s plans and goals weren’t as clear as they are today. We have clarity today when it comes to God’s purpose and the “mystery of His will,” because Jesus came and revealed it to us.

That word “mystery” occurs five other times in the book of Ephesians (3:3,4, 9; 5:32, 6:19) and means “a truth once hidden but now made known.” That’s what Paul was saying here—Jesus made known the mystery of God’s plan, and since we are in Christ, we have knowledge of His will.

6. I am SEALED.

Paul tells us that the moment you believed, the moment you were saved, “you were sealed with promised Holy Spirit.” The word “sealed” referred to an object that finalized an official document.

In the first century, most documents were written on parchment paper and once they were completed, they would be rolled up like a scroll and then, to hold the scroll in place and to guarantee its authenticity, a seal would be dipped into hot wax and then pressed onto the scroll.

Here’s the picture Paul was painting here: He was saying that when you were saved, God said, “I approved your salvation and in that moment, I marked you with the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is the Christian’s seal. God seals His people and He does so by sending the Person of the Holy Spirit to indwell or take residence in our lives.

NOTES

Horizontal lines for taking notes, corresponding to the text blocks on the left.

All In with Jordan Easley

I Am Blessed

Discovering My True Identity | Week 3 | Ephesians 1:3-14

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is a specific area of your life where you've seen God's redeeming work take place?
2. What do you think God's will is for your life? Are you living out that will?
3. What is a blessing God has given you that you'll never forget? How has that blessing impacted your faith and trust in Him?

I Am Saved

Discovering My True Identity | Week 4 | Ephesians 2:1-10

INTRODUCTION

Something I've discovered over my years in ministry is that your desire to be found increases dramatically once you realize you're lost. And in the same way, your desire to be saved begins once you realize you're in need of salvation. The Bible says when you were born, you were born in need of salvation. You say, "Why is that? Saved from what?" Well, Paul's going to tell us we need to be saved because when we were born, we were born dead. That's what he told the believers in Ephesus in Ephesians 2:1: "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins." So in today's message, we are going to look at why we need to be saved and what is true of us once we are saved.

KEY POINTS

1. We were born dead in our sin.

We were born with a sinful nature, and Paul shows us in today's key passage that we were dead because of that nature. He said your sinful nature led you to trespasses and sins.

The word "trespasses" or "transgressions" is a term that talks about us "getting out of bounds with God." It gives the picture of someone making "false steps" and taking the wrong path in life, instead of the path that God intended for us to take.

The other word he uses here is the word "sins." That's a word that implies that we "missed the mark" and chose to do things that go against God's design and desire for our lives.

And Paul said that because we've taken our own path, and because we've sinned against God, you and I were dead! And the cause of our death was sin. He said—"Your sin killed you! Your trespasses against God sentenced you to death!" This is the reality of being human.

2. We are now alive in Christ Jesus.

Thankfully, the story doesn't end with us being born dead in our sin. There is hope for redemption and salvation, and that comes through Christ Jesus. When Jesus saved us, He made a reservation with our name on it, and that reservation is going to happen at the resurrection. He shows us that there is coming a day when we will physically reign with Christ.

NOTES

All In with Jordan Easley

I Am Saved

Discovering My True Identity | Week 4 | Ephesians 2:1-10

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Does your life bring glory to God? Do you produce good works that point others to Jesus? If so, how?
2. What is a new way you can bring God glory with the way you live your life?
3. Have you ever thought about why God saved you in the first place?
