

- **Identity #4 Our Mystical Union with Christ**
- **"Who am I in Christ?"**
- The greatest need in the church today is to be able to fully and clearly answer the question to ourselves and others, "*Who am I in Christ?*"
- -*What is my identity?*
- -*What is the Father's ultimate purpose for me?*
- **Review of sin**
- Last week we saw that sin must not be thought of primarily as the breaking of rules.
- -Sin isn't that I did something wrong or did that wrong.
- **Sin is essentially the breaking of our relationship.**
- **The fall of man, the entrance of sin, was a call to independence.**
- -It was the insane attempt of human beings to break relationship with God and to find meaning in themselves instead of in God.
- **"You shall be as God".**
- The temptation of Satan the reader in **Genesis 3** was "**you shall be as God**".
- Think of this: only God has life in himself.
- -God is self-existent.
- -God doesn't get his life from anywhere.
- **"You shall be as God"**
- He is self-existent, self-sufficient,
- -He is the un-beginning source of all,
- -He is the fountain of life and existence.
- -His life in himself.
- -God doesn't have any life, He is life.
- **"I will be just like God is."**
- The heart of sin is saying, "**I will be just like God is.**"
- **"I will cut myself loose from God, from His wisdom from His love, from His life"**
- **I can find all the life I need**
- **-and all the love I need**
- **-and all the wisdom I need to handle life in myself, just like God.**
- **I will be self-sufficient, I'll be self-existent, I will handle my life.**
- It is unplugging from our source of meaning
- -now having to try and find meaning apart from our source
- **"What is Your Purpose?"**
- **(ILL)** Coffeemaker, purpose is to make coffee. If unplug from the source of electricity, can't fulfill it's meaning in life—to make coffee.
- -so must find meaning within itself.
- -size of pot, shape of pot, color of pot
- -can even fill itself with coffee grounds and water, but it is not making coffee
- **"Dependent on God"**
- Humans were created to be dependent on God, to receive His love and display that love
- If we are not connected to Him, we lose our meaning in life

- -Must find meaning in ourselves—our **flesh**—any part of our life that is not under Divine influence
- So, we try to find meaning in our relationships, job, pleasure, hobbies
- *Why is humanity like this?*
- **-Family resemblance.**
- **“Family resemblance.”**
- We were all born into a family, the wrong family and that is why we are the way we are.
- **Romans 5:12, Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man [Adam], and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned**
- You may be thinking **“That’s not fair. Just because my ancestor’s sinned, I am left with this mess?”**
- **“NOT GUILTY”**
- You are not guilty because of Adam's sin but you do live in the consequence of it.
- -That is the way it is.
- -It is the way everything is.
- **(ILL) Let me illustrate it this way. I am white.**
- I can move to Africa.
- -I can move to Australia.
- -But I will still be white.
- **“I Am White”**
- **I can go to a tanning bed.**
- -I can put on tanning lotion and get that natural looking orange skin color,
- -But I will still be white.
- -I cannot change that.
- **I can be rich, I can be poor,**
- -I can be a democrat, or I can be Republican
- -I can cheer for the Dolphins or I can pull for the Buccaneers ,
- **“But I will still be white!”**
- I may want to be black.
- -I may be able to disguise myself as black for a short time and fool people,
- -until they see me dance or try to clap on beat
- -then they will know that I am white.
- I may be able to fool people some of the time, but it will come out in the end
- **“I am a Coker.”**
- **(ILL) Not only am I white, but I am also, a Coker.**
- I am from one particular white family, the Coker family.
- -I am the latest edition of the Coker clan.
- Everything that I am and everything I am doing was in the potential of my ancestors.
- -All my children’s children are in me.
- **“I am a Coker”**
- -I am the latest, unique extension of my ancestors in the unfolding history of the Coker family.
- Because I, like you, did not just spring out of nothing.
- -We didn’t just appear out of thin air.

- -We came from someone.
- Ancestry .com
- [WWW.Ancestry.COM](http://WWW.Ancestry.COM). Build your Family Tree.
- Name change in Scotland.
- Lots of criminals in a Kingly Blood Line.
- Landed in SC area ( lots of criminals) and then moved to Florida
- Susie's family is German and Swedish
- My poor boys are a mix! And so are you.
- -My children's history are in my history.
- **"Back to the Future."**
- **(ILL)** How many of you saw the movie **Back to the Future**; when parents weren't going to get married, he started fading
  - -If there had been no George McFly, there would be no Marty McFly.
- **(ILL)** Go to the store and pick up the latest edition of one of **Shakespeare's** plays.
- - Suppose he would've died when he was three years old, there would've been no **Hamlet**.
- **"Let's take this one step further."**
- I am more than **white**.
- -I am more than a **Coker**.
- -I am **human**.
- **You and I are the latest editions of the Adam family—we all came from Adam.**
- **Adam's Family Tree.**
- Just as if my father would have died as a boy, I would have died.
- All of us were in Adam,
- -All of mankind was in Adam.
- **When Adam sinned and went into spiritual death and corruption,**
- -He took all of the human race into spiritual death and corruption.
- **Adams Family Tree.**
- That is part of our family resemblance.
  - -We all died spiritually in Adam
  - -We inherited a nature that declared it's independence from God
  - -And we all agreed with that nature.
- If I wanted to be black, I was born into the wrong family.
  - -It doesn't matter how hard I try; I was born into a white family.
- **Adam Family Tree.**
- **I may want to be alive to God,**
  - -But I was born into the wrong family.
  - -We were all born into the Adam family.
- **What about salvation?**
- -Salvation isn't just getting forgiveness of my sins,
- -It includes that—thank you Jesus for that.
- **But I need more than forgiveness,**
- -I need a divine life and divine strength that will carry me on to the potential for which it was created: to be conformed to the image of Christ.

- **How does God do it?** Since all of humanity was born into the wrong family—the first Adam’s family,
- **“We needed a second Man to restart the human race.”**
- **-A second Adam who can set right what the first Adam brought to destruction**
- **This second Adam can then take mankind to the intimacy with God that he had been created to enjoy.**
- **Just as Adam was an individual but also literally contained all of humankind within him,**
- **-Jesus contains the New Creation in Himself**
- **“Jesus contains the New Creation in Himself”**
- **-He is the New Man**
- **-He is the Second Adam who restarts a different kind of race—the New Creation**
- **Jesus started this human race all over again.**
- **-There is a new mankind**
- **-It is as new as if God took a bunch of dust and started creation all over again.**
- **All of humanity is part of one of two races:**
- **-You are either “in Adam” with his sin nature and family resemblance**
- **-Or you are “in Christ” with His nature being conformed into His image and likeness**
- **Are you getting how crazy this is?**
- **-Jesus was God who became a human being and joined Himself to our humanity so we could be joined to Him.**
- **-Jesus became one of us so that we could become as He is—conformed to His image.**
- **Paul paints a picture of what happened when you were born again.**
- **-Paul uses water baptism to illustrate this truth.**
- **Listen to Romans 6:5 again in some other translations:**
- **We have been united with Him in a death like His (RSV)**
- **We have been planted together (in the ground) in the likeness of His death (CON)**
- **We have become one with Him by sharing in His death... (WEY)**
- **“Roman 6”**
- **When we went under the water, we left the old country of sin behind; when we came up out of the water, we entered the new country of grace—a new life in a new land! (Message)**
- **Your participation in Christ’s death was up close and intimate.**
- **-It is a mystical reality that you actually shared a burial with Him.**
- **You went into the tomb with Christ.**
- **-Feel it.**
- **-Smell the dirt.**
- **-Get this revelation in you.**
- **-Realize how final it was.**
- **When the water flowed over us it was as if we were in the grave with Him. (WAND).**
- **The old sinner that you once were “In Adam” completely died to the same degree that Christ completely died.**
- **“The new birth is not just the covering up of sin”**
- **The new birth is not adding on to me a new nature.**

- **-The new birth is bringing into being someone who was not before and now is.**
- Jesus parallels this reality to **natural birth**.
- In your natural birth when you were born, suddenly there is someone who was not in existence before.
- -There is now a totally and utterly new person.
- **“Old Man”**
- And the person that you were that was born into this world is now called the “old man.”
- -Before you were born again it was just “man.”
- **But now that you are born again there is a brand-new you**
- -what you were is called “old.”
- It is described as having been put to death in Jesus Christ.
- -There is a new me that has been made alive to God in every way.
- **2 Cor. 5:17**
- **<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup>All this is from God,**
- **There is a mystical reality that happens when we are born again that plunges us into all the Christ is and has done for us instantaneously and irreversibly.**
- **“My essential real true self is totally new.”**
- **-I am at one with Christ to the point where I have shared in and participated in His history.**
- **-What is true of Him is now true of me.**
- He was crucified. I was crucified with Him.
- -He was buried. I was buried with Him.
- -He was raised from the dead to a newness of life. I was raised from the dead to a newness of life.
- He was seated in heavenly places above every ruler, principality and spiritual authority,
- -I have been seated in heavenly places above every ruler, principality and spiritual authority.
- This is what it means to be **In Christ and to have Christ in You.**
- So that everything I was, has been crucified with Christ nevertheless I am alive.
- -I am alive with the very life that coursed through the human nature of Jesus Christ who was God-man.
- **“He has now made His life my life.”**
- -So now I am learning to live His life through me.
- **"I consider myself as having died and now I am enjoying a second existence which is simply Jesus using my body." Gal. 2:20 (Distilled Bible)**
- **Paul never spoke of himself as trying to be like Jesus,**
- -But of Christ Himself living in and through Paul.
- That is your new identity.
- **Christ has done everything as us and for us.**
- **“Christ has done everything as us and for us.”**
- At salvation, we are so completely joined to Jesus, and He is so completely joined to us,
- That He said, **“I am the vine, you are the branches.”**
- Jesus is not telling us a parable,

- -Jesus is describing a parallel between the relationship a vine has to its branches and the relationship we have to Jesus through the Spirit.
- This boggles the mind.
- **“Jesus is the Vine!”**
- **Jesus is the Vine, we are the branches,**
- -Everything that is true of the vine’s relationship to the branch is true of His relationship to believers.
- **Jesus doesn’t say this intimate relationship between the vine and the branch is something you move towards as a future deeper life experience.**
- -Jesus says that the Vine/branch relationship is an accomplished fact.
- -This is where believers are now in our relationship with Him.
- **Reborn!**
- **We do not know or understand this relationship when we are reborn,**
- -any more than a newborn baby understands what a human being is.
- But like the baby, we grow into what is and has been true from the moment of conception.
- -It will take us the rest of our lives to begin to fathom the unsearchable riches that are in Christ
- But you will never grow in your understanding of this or your experience of this until you grasp the truth that you are **NOW** in Christ!
- **This is your new address: In Christ.**
- **-God’s new address: Christ in you.**
- **God is not commanding you to try and become a branch.**
- *-He is pulling back the veil and letting you in on a mystery: you are united with Christ in a way that His life penetrates your life in every way.*
- **” You put a steel sword into fire.”**
- -And after a while you draw it out.
- And the **steel** is still the **steel**, it has all the attributes of **steel**
- -and the **fire** is still the **fire**
- -but the **fire** is in the **steel**.
- The **fire** has penetrated every molecule of the **steel**.
- And now you take that sword in you touch wood,
- -the wood will at least get scorched and maybe even burst into flames.
- **“Forged By Fire!”**
- But swords can't make things burn, swords can only cut.
- -But this sword has been penetrated with fire.
- -The fire and the steel had become one.
- **The fire is still fire, and the steel is still steel and yet they have become one.**
- **So you have been joined to Jesus Christ and the fire of His glorious humanity has penetrated your humanity**
- -and you are still you, but you are not just you
- -you are one with Him.
- **And therefore, you're not just steel, you can do what only fire can do.**

- -You are not merely human, you are possessed by God and living in union with Him— just like He always intended
- -Your life is caught up into His and His life is caught up into you -Now you can have meaning in life
- You look at the **branches**, you look at the **vine—they share the same nature.**
- -The nature of the vine flows through the whole plant.
- The Vine and the branch have **the same history.**
- -The history of the vine is the history of the branches
- -you can't tell where the branch begins in the vine ends.
- -They are one, absolutely one.
- **“The Vine and the branch have the same history”**
- Even though the branches are distinct, they are individual; they are organically one part of the vine.
- Every branch draws all its life from the vine, so if you cut off the branch it is soon dead.
- -If the vine dies so do the branches.
- If the vine miraculously resurrects, so do the branches.
- -The history of the vine is the history of the branches.
- **Jesus so completely joined Himself to our humanity,**
- -Because Jesus is God, He could stand for the whole human race.
- So that anyone who put their trust in Him could die to the old Adam way of life and be reborn into a new Jesus kind of life.
- -In the same way that Adam stood for us all
- -Jesus stood on behalf of us all.
- **When He died, we died with Him.**
- -When He was buried, we were buried with Him.
- -When He rose from the dead, He rose with Him.
- -When He ascended into heaven and was seated in heavenly places with authority over all things, we ascended with Him.
- **We have been united with Christ.**
- -You have been mystically united with Christ so that you now have available an interrupted flow of His life into yours.
- **We have died with Christ in His death,**
- -we have died to what we were in Adam, which is the old man
- -We no longer live or act in the sphere or realm of sin
- -We don't breathe that air anymore.
- **1 John 4:17, “As Jesus Christ is, so are we in this world.”**
- **When I joined myself to Jesus, His history became my history.**
- I am a part of His family line.
- -I inherited His nature.
- -I bear His family's resemblance.
- **What He has access to, I have access to.**
- **My human nature has been caught up into His human glorified nature**
- -Jesus does not become us and we do not become Him
- -But I am in Him and He is in me

- ***“The Tea Bag”***
- Here is **hot water**: it is tasteless, colorless, hot water.
- -And here is a **teabag**.
- When I take this teabag and place it into the hot water, something happens.
- -It's called **infusion**.
- The result is that all the strengths of the teabag, the tea, are given to the hot water.
- -The hot water did nothing to receive it except be there.
- So much is the strength of the Tea infused into the water that we now call the water “tea,”
- -but it isn't tea really, the tea is in the bag still.
- The tea has given the hot water its strengths.
- -You might say it has given its life,
- -it has infused itself into the hot water so that the water now conveys to me the taste of tea, the color the tea, strength of the tea.
- -But the tea is still in the teabag.
- **Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ who infuses His strength in me.”**
- The same word we use for making tea.
- -I do not become Christ.
- -He is the eternal son of God, and I could never become God.
- **But through the Holy Spirit, He infuses His life into mine**
- -and my colorless, tasteless life takes on His very strength,
- -the very attributes of love,
- -the power of the works of the devil
- **I live, not I, but Christ who lives in me.**
- We have **participated in the divine nature**.
- **We have been united with Christ,**
- -His history has become our history
- -When He died, we died—our Adam existence is no more
- -What is true of Christ is now true of you.
- **Today, I had shared with you the most incredible miracle of leaving the old man becoming united to Christ**
- -You have been reborn into a new species of being the moment you put faith in Christ
- ***So now, how do I live that out?***
- For this week, I want you to understand the facts.
- -Don't keep referring to your experience, you will get very discouraged.
- Understand what truly has happened to you as a believer and be ready to see how we make it work next week.