

What Is Identity?

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. Dismiss the children to Children's Ministry.
- B. Slide2 GriefShare is starting this Sun Aug.9, with *Loss Of A Spouse* from 2-4 pm. They will be meeting inside the church [our *Support Ministries* are allowed to meet indoors, they are *Critical Care Services*]. **Go to the website to register.**
- C. Slide3 Rita's Ice-Custard Happiness - will be here this Sat Night. *Italian Ice, Frozen Custard, or Gelati* for purchase after service.

II. Slide4,5 **Intro: What Is Identity?**

- A. Welcome to our New Series: **Identity In Christ.** *Living Our Identity.* [both months Aug/Sept]
- B. **Ask:** What makes people feel valuable today? (not *you* of course)
Their position, their wealth, their intellect, their skills, their degrees, their success, their rank? - **And** what happens if/when these are all taken away?
 - 1. **Who are you then?** [if your identity is in your **marriage**, then what happens if that blows up? **Or** in your **work**, what happens when u retire?]
 - 2. **Remember, Roles are what you do. Identity is who you are.**
- C. Paul uses *In Christ* (or similar) more than 160 x's. (Jerry Bridges *Who Am I?*)
 - 1. **Read** Eph.1:3-6 nlt
- D. You aren't *what's been done to you* **but** *what Jesus has done for you.*
- E. You aren't what you **do**, **but** what Jesus **has done**.

III. Slide6 **REJECT MODERN IDENTITY**

- A. *Pic of Mona Lisa w/Duck Lips* - Mona Lisa worth \$860 mil. Leonardo da Vinci only finished 20 canvas paintings. Innovative technique. *Sfumato* (Italian: shaded off. Layers/dark 1st. w/o lines/borders. 3/D look. Eyes/mouth)
- B. We live in a culture that values *shallow, superficial, and temporary* things.

1. We are fed lies all day about **what's** important in life, **and** **how to be** important in life, **and** **how to look** important in life.
2. This dramatically affects **our view of our identity and our value**. **And** although we **can't un-hear the lies** of the enemy, we can **replace them** with the truth from God's Word.
3. We will learn our **identity** is not dependent on what others say about us, **or** even what we think about ourselves, **but** by *what God says about us*.
 - a) *He isn't mad at us, He is madly in love with us!*
4. **Reject Modern Identity.**

IV. Slide7 **WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?** (Mr. Big Stuff, *Jean Knight 1971, performed it on Soul Train*)

- A. If we're honest with ourselves, *we often feel insecure*.
 1. Those who hide it best often feel it most. **But our insecurity is an invitation from God** to escape the danger of false beliefs about **who we are and find true peace in who He is**.
- B. *Who do you think you are?*...automatically supposes that we probably have it wrong. *Sometimes we have stinking thinking*.
- C. Like invisible barbed wire, **insecurity** has woven itself through our lives.
 1. Insecurity can **debilitate** you, **cripple** you, and drive you to an overwhelming **weakness**. **And the only way to fight it is with truth**.

V. Slide8 **DOES IDENTITY COME FROM WITHIN OR FROM WITHOUT?**

- A. *Does your identity come from inner feelings? Do you decide who you are?*
 1. When you make anything your identity, your **career**, your **body**, your **love relationship**. That's when they stop being a good thing!
- B. *Any identity that is achieved rather than received has to be excluding*.

1. **Another words**, you feel good because these other people **aren't** as **good** as you, **or** as **enlightened** as you, **as conservative** as you, **as hard-working** as you.

2. That's often, *how we feel good about ourselves*.

C. **So what kind of identity do we need?** You can't bless yourself.

1. You need recognition. You need somebody **outside** to come in and speak to you.

2. You might think you don't need that... **Yes you do! We are social beings.**

3. **You don't just decide who you are.** Most run to a different/new set of cheerleaders. **Here's how...** On social media someone says, *I am a this now. My family rejected me **but I know who I am**. Yeah! everyone in that category cheers.*

a) They just set aside one set of cheerleaders & found another set.

b) They are looking for someone on the **outside** to verify, to clarify, *who they are*.

D. **Who Do You Need?** You need somebody on the outside. **But what kind person should they be?**

1. You need the **love and approval and esteem** of someone you esteem, **if** you want any esteem yourself.

2. You want someone who will **never let you down** or **disillusion you**.

3. You can't have someone who is **fickle**, who is up and down with you, depending on *how well you perform*.

4. You need the **adoration** of Someone who **adores** you. You need to know that *the God of the universe loves you*. That would have to give you the **most powerful basis** and **stablest identity** possible!

a) **Is it based on your performance?** **No. Then** if it is not based on your performance **then** you don't ever need to *look down your nose on others*.

E. **Slide9 How do you get that?** I never thought you'd ask...

1. Knowing you're **adopted** into his family, *that's a new identity!*

You're a **new creation**. You're a **citizen** of heaven. You are **His own**.

You're a **child** of God. You're a **friend** of Christ. You're a **family member** of Christ. You're a **bondservant** of Christ. You're His **bride**. You're His **poem**. You're the **apple** of His eye. You're His **beloved**.

2. **And** Jesus didn't show up just to *give you a new name*. He died for you!

F. *"Who do you believe has the greatest power to determine who you are and what you are worth? That is your god."* John Piper

VI. Slide 10 I'M A CHRISTIAN, I STILL STRUGGLE WITH MY IDENTITY, WHAT PRACTICALLY DO I DO?

1. When you're struggling with what **your culture** says about your identity, because you're **not** good looking enough, **not** smart enough, **not** successful enough.

2. You have to **learn how to pull out your identity & push it to the top of the deck**. *Timothy Keller*

3. When you are worried about your **status** and **reputation**, go to Phil.2, **and** remind yourself that *Jesus wasn't afraid to give up His. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave.*

4. **Key:** don't just believe this - take it to the center of your imagination, *through worship, through thinking, through applying it*, at that moment.

5. If it doesn't go to the top of the deck...you're back where everyone else is *in cultural captivity*.

B. **So**, How are you getting it **down** into your heart? Take it to the *naming* level.

1. Remind yourself again & again, *What do I know to be true*. (not *feel!*)

2. I think that's why the song *"I Am A Child of God"* became so popular. *We all need it sung over our lives. Over & over & over again. [end]*

- C. “Christian selfhood is not defined in terms of **who we are** in and of ourselves. It’s defined in terms of **what God does to us and the relationship He creates with us and the destiny he appoints for us**. God made us who we are so we could make known who He is. **Our identity is for the sake of making known His identity.**”
- D. Christ is our life — not only the guarantee of it in heaven, but the downpayment of it by the Spirit now, as he lives in us. His joy becomes our joy; his love, our love; his peace, our peace; his strength, our strength.
- E. In Christ, we are fundamentally new, and belong to the people of heaven. The language and values and customs and expectations of this world increasingly feel foreign to us. We have been born again for another world, to a greater kind of existence.
- F. *The best version of me* is **destructive**. You can’t do christianity in your own strength/identity.
1. It is **impossible** to progress in our Christianity without **His** identity.
 2. Once we have/understand ***His Identity, this leads to His Presence, which leads to His Power, which leads to our Transformation.***