

Who Am I?

Knowing Your Real Identity Changes Everything

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What is identity? Webster's Dictionary says identity is "the fact of being the same in all respects; who a person is." Identity can also be a statement of equality, an equation that is true "under all conditions," says Webster. In a world where the concept of absolute truth is marginalized, is it surprising that people struggle to figure out who they are?

Life happens in five areas—social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual. Each area is a vital aspect of who you are. Ongoing growth in these areas is vital to living a full and meaningful life.

Social: If you want to grow in this area:

1. Join a group—such as a Sunday school class, bowling league, book club, or something else that interests you.
2. Learn new communication and people skills, and find ways to practice them!
3. Look for people who need your help and encouragement, and volunteer to help someone, somewhere.

Emotional: If you're experiencing ongoing emotional concerns, such as grief, depression or anxiety, you could talk with a church leader trained to provide caring biblical help; or seek a professional counselor or life coach. You can find information about numerous Christian counselors at South Florida Association of Christian Counselors' website (sfacconline.org). The American Association of Christian Counselors (aacc.net) describes Christian counselors throughout the United States.

Intellectual: There are always opportunities to learn! You could discover continuing education courses at a local high school, community college or university; or try an online course at Moody Bible Institute's online studies. Visit your local library, too: you can travel anywhere with a book!

Physical: instead of letting the culture define health and beauty, go to God's Word and see how He describes it. In 1 Peter 3:3-4, we read, "*Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.*"

That doesn't mean we don't take care of our bodies. In fact, as we realize our infinite worth in God's eyes, we'll make healthy choices regarding how and what we eat, when and how much we exercise, and how we use our time—not for the purpose of having "perfect bodies," but so we can live fully for God's glory! (See Col. 3:23).

Spiritual: Our growth in every area of life hinges on how we see ourselves spiritually. C.S. Lewis explained, "Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and will Him everything else is thrown in."

In his excellent study on Romans, John Stott states, "Theologians sometimes say that we live in the 'already, but not yet.' Christians are *already* a part of God's family, but they are *not yet* living in the perfect world God designed, *nor* are they *yet* perfect physically, mentally or spiritually themselves."

In all five aspects of our identity, we can live with hope when we're continually growing in our understanding of our real identity in Christ.

One practical way to develop understanding is to look for verses that describe how God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit see you. You can write out the verses, and then write a response to them. On the next page are verses that illustrate how to increase your awareness of who you are in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (NIV) says, “So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Here is one person’s response to the above passage: *Father God, help me look at life from your perspective. Thank You for making me a new creation—for sending Jesus to pay for my sin and reconcile me to You. I’m amazed You chose me to be Your ambassador, to represent You to the world. Show me how to help people understand Your gifts of freedom from sin and new life in Christ! I want to live in Your strength and power, allowing the Holy Spirit to work in and through me so I can lovingly and clearly proclaim Your love to the people who are in my sphere of influence. I yield all I am to YOU today.*

Now, it’s your turn. Read Romans 8:31-39, ESV [below], then list seven facts about your identity in Christ.

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Reread Romans 8:31-39, and write your own prayer of gratitude to God.

You can continue finding Scripture passages that proclaim your real identity, and then respond to them in faith. John 1:12, Ephesians 2:8-9, and Titus 3:5-7 explain how to become God’s beloved child in the first place. John 14:16-18 and John 15:1-5 describe how the Holy Spirit will give you strength to live this new life.

In Christ I am...

- ❑ a child of God (John 1:12).
- ❑ a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).
- ❑ a saint (Phil. 4:21).
- ❑ God's work of art (Eph. 2:10).
- ❑ righteous and holy (Rom. 5:17).
- ❑ fully accepted by God (Eph. 1:4-6).
- ❑ the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13).
- ❑ the light of the world (Matt. 5:14).
- ❑ part of the true vine, a channel of Christ's life (John 15:5).
- ❑ chosen and appointed by Christ to bear fruit (John 15:16).
- ❑ a slave of righteousness (Rom. 6:18)
- ❑ a joint heir with Christ, sharing His inheritance with Him (Rom. 8:17).
- ❑ a temple—dwelling place—of God (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19).
- ❑ a member of Christ's Body (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:30).
- ❑ reconciled to God and a minister of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18,19).
- ❑ Christ's ambassador (2 Cor. 5:20).
- ❑ an heir of God (Gal. 4:6,7).
- ❑ a citizen of heaven, seated in heaven right now (Phil. 3:20; Eph. 2:6).
- ❑ hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).
- ❑ an expression of the life of Christ because He is my life (Col. 3:4).
- ❑ chosen of God, holy, and dearly loved (Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 1:4).
- ❑ a child of light and not of darkness (1 Thess. 5:5).
- ❑ a holy partaker of a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1).
- ❑ one of God's living stones, being built up in Christ as a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:5).
- ❑ a member of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession (1 Pet. 2:9,10).
- ❑ an alien and a stranger to this world in which I temporarily live (1 Pet. 2:11).
- ❑ an enemy of the devil (1 Pet. 5:8).
- ❑ born of God, and the evil one—the devil—cannot touch me (1 John 5:18).
- ❑ what I am by the grace of God (1 Cor. 15:10).

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV

“A person born into the family of God receives a new identity. Paul says that those who have trusted Christ have become a *new* creation. The root of the word ‘creation’ is ‘create.’ The word doesn’t mean to improve something already in existence. It means to bring something out of nothing. God didn’t simply change you when you were saved. He created a new person! You aren’t the same person you were before you became a Christian (42,43).”

Grace Walk
Steve McVey