

Sharpen Your Faith

Week 6, Position & Identity in Christ

Paul T. Quelet, October 15, 2006

I. How Our Culture Identifies People

What phrases usually define us?

- Our definitions of our identity often consist of our relationships, vocation, success, image, etc.
- The key is to let Christ _____ who you are in every aspect of your life.
- Our identity is our _____.

II. Earning God's Favor

- When we "do things" for God (good works), what are we usually trying to gain?
- When I sin, instead of claiming God's forgiveness and approval what are some things I do to believe that God loves and approves of me?
- If we try to gain God's favor on our own effort, this is _____.

III. Does God like me?

Why do I doubt God's love and acceptance of me?

- Read Psalm 37:23-24. Read Zephaniah 3:17. God _____ in us!!

IV. Position vs. Condition

What happens to us at the point of salvation?

Which of the two lines does God want us to focus on?

V. Difference between justification and sanctification

- Read Romans 5:1-2 vs. Philippians 2:12-13.

What is justification?

What is sanctification?

- In justification, God removes all the _____ of sin.
- In sanctification, God removes all the _____ of sin.
- In glorification, God removes all the _____ of sin.

VI. Our true identity, before and after (Ephesians 2:1-3 vs. 2:4-7)

- True or False? We are sinners because we sin.
- True or False? We sin because we are sinners.

VII. What does it mean to be "In Christ" (to have His righteousness)?

- We don't react out of who we really are, but who we _____ we are.
- Christ in Me (_____ references), Me in Christ (_____ references)
- Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.
- JESUS OFFERS A TRADE: My sin goes _____; the credit for his perfect life goes _____.
- Exchanged life is more _____ living through me than _____ living through me.

VIII. Law vs. Grace (Performance vs. Approval)

- Read Galatians 2:19-21. Read Galatians 3:2-3.
- The enemy wants us to focus on our _____ as the basis for our _____ before God.

What is grace? *Grace* = _____.

- It means God is _____ you, and you can't do anything about it!! God is on your side no matter your _____ or _____.
- True/False?: Performance based approval
- True/False?: Approval based performance

IX. Gratifying the Sinful nature vs. Gratifying the Spirit

Why can't Jesus always live His life through us?

What does it mean to Walk in the Spirit?

- An old Chinese proverb said, "There is a good dog and an evil dog inside of you. Which one will dominate?"

"In an attempt to explain the biblical doctrine of sin, we've let something else creep in. You'll hear it come up almost automatically whenever Christians talk about themselves: 'I'm just a sinner, saved by grace.'...It's unbiblical. 'I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.' (Rom. 7:18) Notice the distinction [Paul] makes. He does not say, 'There is nothing good in me. Period.' What he says is that 'in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.' The flesh is the old nature, the old life, crucified with Christ. The flesh is the very thing God removed from our hearts when he circumcised them by his Spirit."—John Eldredge¹

X. How do we get the blessings?

- In the case of a death, someone _____ all that belonged to the person who passed away.
- In placing our faith into Christ's death, we inherited all of the _____ that were the possession of Jesus.

XI. Who does God say that we are? (See List)

Which of these resonates with you the most?

XII. The Greatest Blessing:

- Read Ezekiel 36:24-28.
- God will give us _____. He is going to ransom our hearts.
- Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts as the deepest part of who we are. This _____ our values, desires, and belief system.

"All sorts of awful things can seem to issue from your heart—anger, lust, fear, petty jealousies. If you think it's you, a reflection of what's really going on in your heart, it will disable you. It could stop your journey dead in its tracks. What you've encountered is either the voice of your flesh or an attempt of the Enemy to distress you by throwing all sorts of thoughts your way and blaming you for it. You must proceed on this assumption: your heart is good. If it seems that some foul thing is at work there, say to yourself, *Well, then—this is not my heart. My heart is good. I reject this.*"
—John Eldredge²

¹ John Eldredge, *Waking the Dead*, p. 75.

² John Eldredge, *Waking the Dead*, p. 105.

XIII. What does identity mean for temptation?

- Often, the reason we sin is because we forget who we are _____. We forget the great power He has given us. (1 Peter 2:9)
- When Jesus said "It is finished" (John 19:30), we often think that is a blanket statement about all sin. True...but it is true at _____.
- Thus, when I face a temptation, I must remember that Jesus already has _____!!

XIV. Living in Victory from Our Position

- **True self:** Respond from your true self—The _____ inside of you!! Do not seek to gratify your sinful desires any longer, but walk in the Spirit.
- **Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit inside of you who DOES NOT struggle with sin!! A decision not made from the Spirit will only lead to frustration.
- **Power:** 2 Peter 1:2-4. Read Romans 8:11.

XV. Taking God's Viewpoint of the World

- Note that believers are no longer sinners but _____. This is the way God looks at us.
- How differently would we treat one another if we saw one another the way God sees us?
- Remember, "The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7)
- WWJD vs. → LJDI (Let Jesus Do It!)

Bottom Line: Understanding who we are in Christ is essential to how we live our Christian life. We must make decisions from the confidence of our right standing with God.

Memory Verse: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."—Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

Suggested Resources:

2 Corinthians 5, Ephesians 1, Galatians 5

The Rest of the Gospel, Dan Stone and Greg Smith

Waking the Dead, John Eldredge