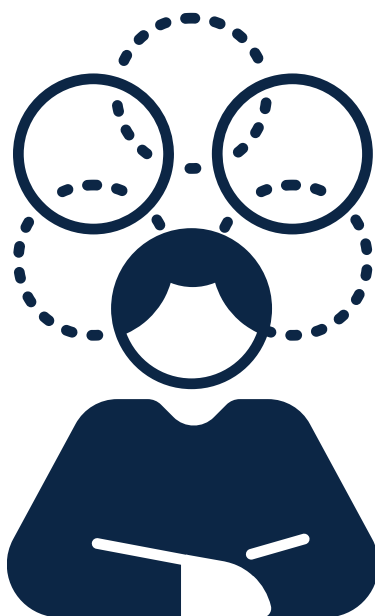




# 6 BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF IDENTITY



A RESOURCE OF THE CHURCH AMBASSADOR NETWORK

In the Church Ambassador Network, we understand how important a person's identity is to the overall trajectory of their life. Words and mislabeling can have a lasting negative impact, while properly understanding who you are, especially in Christ, can positively transform your life. The devil greatly understands this, and the arena of identity is his favorite playground. As the Church and as a state, we must understand the importance and power of identity and ensure we are building into people's true identity.

**The core of our identity comes from God, not ourselves, another person, or government.**

Every person has been created by God in His image, and only in Him can we truly find our identity. If we try to find our identity in ourselves, another person, or government, our identities will be lost. When it is found in God, our eternal, unchanging Creator, it is on a firm foundation and can never be lost.

*"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27.*

**Our identity is clouded because of sin and has left us endlessly searching.**

From the beginning, the devil has worked to confuse us in our identity. Because of sin, mankind has been separated from God, further confusing our identity. This is why our identity cannot be found simply through soul searching. It is only found when we turn to the Bible, the true Word of the living God, who promises that He is near and that those who search for Him will find Him. Left alone, we are on an endless mission, an emotional roller coaster of highs and lows that leave us instead in despair and delusion.

*"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 2:14.*

**Identity is who you are; it is not what you do or how you appear.**

As people, we often find our identity in where we work, what we desire, how we look, the size of our bodies, our sexual orientation, physical health, race or ethnicity, education, socio-economic status, and so on. We call ourselves diabetic, obese, American, felons, doctors, poor, rich, divorced, black, or white, but these are not who we are or where our value and life are found.

*"People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7.*

**Family, whether biological, adopted, or communal, grounds us in our identity.**

God created us with an internal desire to belong, yet so many do not feel they belong anywhere, and when that belonging is lost, identity can be lost with it. A part of our

identity comes from our family and community. That is why family, community, and church come with such powerful feelings of belonging and why there is so much pain in isolation. The hope of the Gospel brings the ultimate hope of belonging, through adoption into God's family and unity with the Father through Jesus Christ.

*"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." 1 Corinthians 12:27.*

*"But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" John 1:12.*

### **Understanding identity is key to seeing people break free from bondage and live their lives in freedom.**

If someone is labeled with an identity for long enough, they will begin living out that identity. If it is not their true identity, the identity Christ has for them, they can become enslaved to it. So many people are enslaved to a false sense of identity, and it has them in bondage. People are enslaved to identities like addict, felon, poor, or unintelligent, and it has consumed them. As a nation, we must step away from labeling people and begin building an identity in them that can lead to freedom.

*"They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved." 2 Peter 2:19.*

*"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Romans 12:2.*

*"Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive. Above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. And let the peace of Christ, to which you were also called in one body, rule your hearts. And be thankful." Colossians 3:12-15*

### **Our identity is redeemed in Christ.**

What was lost has been found. Christ came to redeem and restore everything, including our identity in Him. Through Christ, we find belonging by being adopted into the family of God. Through Christ, we find acceptance because of His work to reconcile us to the Father. Through Christ's work on the cross, we find real freedom. Through Christ's resurrection, we find real life. Through Christ, we find our identity in being redeemed children of God.

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17.*

*"That the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God." Romans 8:21.*



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