

Xenos Christian Fellowship
Christian Growth
Week 4 – Our New Identity in Christ

Introduction

"Who are you?"

(2 Cor. 5:17) Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Our New Identity in Christ

Union with Christ

(1 Cor. 12:13) For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

" . . . we were all made to drink of one Spirit"	"By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body . . . "
Indwelling of Holy Spirit	Baptism by Holy Spirit
Christ In You	You In Christ
Basis of new power for change Rom. 5:5; 2 Tim 1:7; Col. 1:29; 1 Thess 1:5; Gal 5; Rom 8	Basis of new identity

Definition of new identity: What is true of us now that we are in Christ

Our new identity in Christ is a *major emphasis* in the New Testament's teaching on sanctification. In Paul's letters, he refers to this truth at least 126 times (in the identity sense): "in Christ" occurs 82 times; "in him" 20 times; "with Christ" 12 times; "with him" 12 times.

Why is understanding our new identity so important?

- 1.
- 2.

How our new identity relates to character change

Col. 3:1-3** If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Note the context:

2:10-15

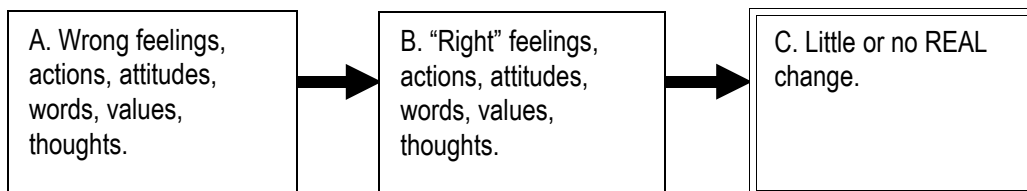
2:16-23

3:1-4

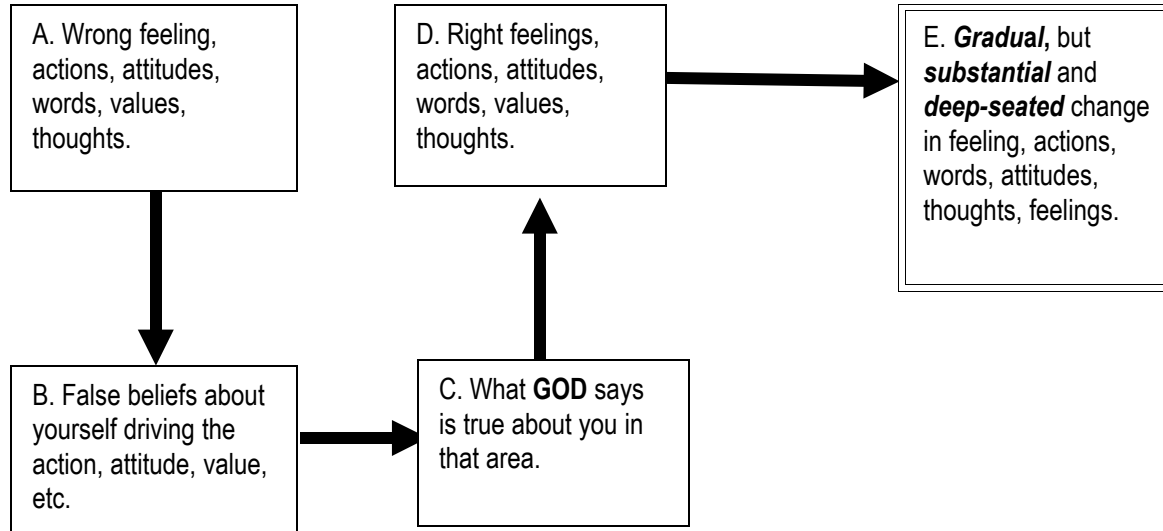
3:5ff.

Two approaches to character change:

1. Legalistic approach



2. Biblical approach

**Appropriating our New Identity (Romans 6:6,11,13**): Know, Consider. Present**

Definition of appropriation: Our role in applying our new identity in an ongoing and practical way.

1st – “Know”

Definition: Learn what the Bible teaches about our new identity, and regularly reflect on it.

(Romans 6:6)** knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin...

“Old self”

Paul says our “old self was crucified with Christ...” He is referring to our old identity in Adam which has been completely obliterated. Our old self was once a slave to sin, but that person no longer exists. See also Jn. 3:3,5; Col. 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:17.

“Body of sin”

The body of sin is not your old identity, but your *sin-nature*. The phrase "done away with" (*katargeo*) suggests that our sin nature has been removed, but other passages clearly teach that we still have a sin nature (Romans 7:17). What is the resolution? The Greek word *katargeo* can also mean "made powerless" (see the NASB margin) or (better) "put out of authority" (for an example of this usage, see Romans 7:2 " . . . she is *released from* the law . . . "). So the passage could read, “our sin nature has been put out of authority.

What is the identity truth Paul says we should know?

Why is knowing this truth so important?

What does it look like to “know” other identity truths?

2nd – “Consider”

Definition: Choose to affirm the identity truth that applies to your current problem in spite of contrary feelings, thoughts, past experiences and what others say about you

(Romans 6:11)** Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

What does it look like to “consider” identity truths?

(D. M. Lloyd-Jones) ". . .we must talk to ourselves instead of allowing 'ourselves' to talk to us! Do you realize what that means? I suggest that the main trouble in this whole matter of spiritual depression in a sense is this, that we allow our self to talk to us instead of talking to our self. Am I just trying to be

deliberately paradoxical? Far from it. This is the very essence of wisdom in this matter. Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them, but they start talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Your self is talking to you. Now this man's treatment was this; instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul?' he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says: 'Self, listen for moment, I will speak to you'. Do you know what I mean? If you do not, you have had but little experience.

The main art in the matter of spiritual living is to know how to handle yourself. You have to take yourself in hand, you have to address yourself, preach to yourself, question yourself. You must say to your soul: 'Why are you cast down'—what business have you to be disquieted? You must turn on yourself, upbraid yourself, condemn yourself, exhort yourself, and say to yourself; 'Hope you in God'—instead of muttering in this depressed unhappy way. And then you must go on to remind yourself of God, Who God is, and what God is and what God has done and what God has pledged Himself to do. Then having done that, end on this great note: defy yourself, and defy other people, and defy the devil and the whole world, and say with this man: 'I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance, who is also the health of my countenance and my God.'"¹

Why is “considering” so important?

3rd – “Present”

Definition: Choosing to step out in faith and act in specific ways that are consistent with your new identity.

(Romans 6:13)** and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

What does it look like to “present” yourself to God?

¹ D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cure* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 20,21.

“Presenting” usually involves both a negative and positive step.

(2 Tim 2:22) "*Flee* youthful lusts and *pursue* righteousness.

Sensuality:

Materialism:

Self-Focus:

Key Aspects of our New Identity (Eph. 1:3-14; Col. 2:10-15; Rom. 6:1-13, 1Cor. 12:7;14-18)**

ASPECTS OF OUR NEW IDENTITY	RESULTING SPIRITUAL PROVISION	SYMPTOMS OF NOT "KNOWING", "CONSIDERING", AND/OR "PRESENTING"	EXAMPLES OF HOW TO "PRESENT"
Adoption as God's child (Eph. 1:5)	Belonging, security in the this life.	Idolatrous human relationships. Material anxiety. Fear of rejection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loving discipline and witness. • Financial Giving.
Forgiveness through Jesus' death for sin (Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:13,14)	Acceptance apart from performance.	Destructive reactions to guilt feelings (defensiveness, self condemnation), resentment, bitterness toward others, man-pleasing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgiving others • Honesty with others about our sins
Unique role in God's purpose (Eph. 1:9,10; 2:10)	Significance.	Making unhealthy comparison to others. Vulnerability to career identity. Reactive to critique of performance or lack.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate & support others in their ministries • Focused ministry involvement • Evaluate performance critique before the Lord - is it true? He loves me nonetheless.
Inheritance (Eph. 1:11,14)	Security in the next life.	Vulnerability to temporal security. Fear of death.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to take risks and even suffer. • Long-term investment in ministry, including material generosity.
Delivered From Sin Nature's Authority (ROM 6:6; Col. 2:11,12)	Freedom from sin's control.	No deep seated change or growth in our lives, superficial view of sin, helplessness and fatalism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness about your besetting sins • Faithful, patient persistence as we cooperate with God's strategy for change • Other-centered focus in spite of besetting sins
Delivered From Satan's Authority (Eph. 1:20,21; 2:6; Col. 2:10,15;)	Freedom from demonic control.	Vulnerability to temptation; accusation, the kosmos, oppression. Fear & superstition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refusal to cave in & quit • Following God's will • Prayer warfare
Given one or more gifts and a role in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:7,14-18)	Value and purpose.	Comparing myself to others, lack of zeal, jealousy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for their success. • Look for ways to encourage others. • Focus on using your own gifting.

This chart emphasizes the importance of knowing how to appropriate your new identity . . .

Conclusion

Memory Verses

Eph. 1:3-14** - Key new identity passage

Col. 3:1-3**- Importance of setting mental focus on new identity for sanctification

Rom. 6:6, 11,13** - Appropriating your identity: know, consider, present

Assignment

Read *Walking in Victory*, chapters 10-12 and complete the *Old Self vs. New Self* Assignment.

Week 4 Exam Review Guide

- Be able to explain both aspects of our union with Christ (indwelling of Holy Spirit & new identity in Christ).
- Know why the new identity is so important for sanctification: identity precedes and affects behavior, *or* what I do will tend to flow from who I perceive myself to be.
- Know the 7 aspects of your new identity from the chart and what basic needs they meet.