

Raised with Christ- A series through Colossians-

Sermon Title: Identity- Receive it, don't try to achieve it

Sermon Synopsis: Those who have made a decision to follow Christ (raised with Christ) have been given a new IDENTITY (orientation for life). This true IDENTITY is based on **receiving** the gift of life in Christ and not a false one that we strive to **achieve** by what we do, what we have or what we want.

Colossians 3:1-4 (ESV)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Intro-

Recap- Colossians- Last week we saw the Colossians drifting into making secondary things primary- external rules rather than Christ alone....More about the Box vs what's in the Box

Dig in to the text we are studying this morning.

Colossians 3:1-2 (ESV)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

If then- isn't a question, but a statement of fact, more like since or because

Raised with Christ- born again, from death to life, a new Spirit, dominion of darkness to kingdom of light, WE are **united** with Christ, we are in Him and He is in us! TRUTH- FACT

Seek things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God- set your heart, desire, pursue with passion, war won, completed work, victorious King, in place of honor

Set your minds on things that are above- a complete orientation toward- entire being

Not the things of this Earth- what has died, corrupted hearts & minds & actions

Stark contrast of earth and heaven, death-life, darkness-light, fear-peace, uncertain-certain

This is Paul's reset for the Christ followers in Colossae- remember that even though they were **Raised with Christ- had new life-** they were drifting into making secondary things primary- empty philosophies, external rules rather than Christ. They had a case of mistaken IDENTITY

(Current situation)-

Identity- answers the question, Who am I?

- What this looks like for each of us is influenced by many factors: like family, country, faith, ethnicity, age among other things, It determines the filter that we live our lives by- what we value, how we get meaning & purpose
- It controls how we think, decisions we make, steps we take
- The Bible is laying out 2 alternative IDENTITY models:
 - 1 focused on “earthly things”, **Self-centered life-** described as earthly, fleshly- **Uncertain and bringing on “death”**
 - **The other focused on the “things above”-God-centered life-** described as from above, heavenly- **Certain and bringing on “life”**

Old Testament text that gives a more descriptive view of the same Truth

Jeremiah 17:5-8 (ESV)

⁵ Thus says the LORD:

“Cursed is the man who trusts in man
and makes flesh his strength,
whose heart turns away from the LORD.

⁶ He is like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see any good come.

He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

⁷ “Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.

⁸ He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,

and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

2 paths for IDENTITY- SELF CENTERED OR CHRIST CENTERED

(The Problem)-

False Identity- Even though we they/we as Christians are raised with Christ- We can also get distracted, we drift, are lured into basing our IDENTITY on the lessor things or wrong things.

- **3 Categories we can fit our Identity (false) into-** influencing how we think, act, value
 - **What we do** (or don't do)
 - Father, Mother, Grandparent, Son, Daughter, Businessman or woman, Doctor, Lawyer, Teacher, Student, Pastor
 - Athlete, First Responder.....what might this look like?- **Success fueling pride,**
 - **Failure fueling slander**
 - **What we have** (or don't have)
 - Bank account, 401k, business, Car, House, wardrobe, technology set up
 - Good looks, physique, intellect...what might this look like?- **Lack fueling envy**
 - **Excess fueling lack of gratitude**
 - **What we want** (or don't want)
 - Relationships, Hobbies, Passions, addictions.....what might this look like?-
 - **Checkered past fueling impurity, desire fueling covetousness**

Can you relate to any of these things becoming so powerful that they define your ID?

- **What is the problem** with our letting our **IDENTITY** drift or be lured into what we do, have & want? Your false identity
 - **Is temporary** (not eternal)- uncertain vs certain.....based on circumstances
 - **It separates us from God**- creates FUD not Peace and life-

Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)

19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust^[a] destroy and where thieves break in and steal, **20** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

*replace treasures w/ **IDENTITY**

PAUSE-

QUESTION- As you think about your life-

What is currently forming your sense of IDENTITY?

What is at the core of how you are thinking, placing value on, acting?

Can you see that you may be distracted, drifting, drawn into setting your **IDENTITY** on a lesser thing or a wrong thing?

(The Solution)- Good News

New IDENTITY in Christ-

Paul is challenging them for a complete orientation or **reset** toward the things that are above, heart & mind completely and passionately on Christ! This is a call to set our **IDENTITY** on Christ...

But we need to be in a **cont. reset mode**, not just a 1 time decision, **lifestyle of repentance**

Keep resetting on Christ as the core of our IDENTITY-

Have any of you ever had a faulty laptop that just couldn't stay connected to the network?

When you get so frustrated you finally go into the store or call the support center?

What do they ask you to do to clear the problem? Have you reset it, restarted it, turned it off and back on

That's what we have to **continuously** be doing with our hearts & minds, orient completed to Christ...

John 15 description: Union with Christ- what does orientation to Christ look like?

- Vine & Branch- connected, giving life- picture of our **UNION** with Christ

- Abide/remain in Him, His Love, His Word
- Only way fruit can be produced

We've been talking about the **HOW**- (totally orienting toward Christ) now we see the **WHY**

³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Hidden with Christ in God-

Old self is gone, now life in Christ is hidden with Him in God-

What does that mean?

- Bound up, protected, Safe, Secure, Concealed
- Union w/ Christ- He is our life, in us, us in Him
 - All of His benefits we enjoy! In Glory

When the Father sees US he sees CHRIST!!

Personal Example- Hide & Seek story, kids were young, older ones played H&S, Daughter didn't know how, oldest son, under desk, blanket- secure, safe, protected, fully covered, confident because he/I were there.....

That's the GOOD NEWS- raised w/ Christ, hidden w/ Christ, appear in glory w/ Christ!

The Benefits-

Past, Present and Future

Why is this such good news!

What Paul is telling us is that by being raised with Christ He has taken care of EVERYTHING-He has made provisions for our:

- **Past-** forgiving our sins and giving us new life
- **Present-** safe, secure & protected- "hidden"
- **Future-** will appear with Him in glory

For this we can be certain as Christ Followers- those who have been raised with Christ

Pause

Next Step- RESET-Orienting our entire being on things that are above- (heart & mind)

A way to set our IDENTITY in the right place is to marinate in the Truth of how God sees you!

This is the essence of your IDENTITY in Christ.

Posture yourself to receive these truths- (If you don't know Christ as your Savior)

WHO DOES GOD SAY I AM?

I am made in God's image (Genesis 1:27)

I am a child of God. (John 1:12)

I am a branch of the true vine, and a conduit of Christ's life. (John 15:1, 5)

I am a friend of Jesus. (John 15:15)

I have been justified and redeemed. (Romans 3:24)

I am no longer a slave to sin. (Romans 6:6)

I will not be condemned by God. (Romans 8:1)

I am a fellow heir with Christ. (Romans 8:17)

I have been accepted by Christ. (Romans 15:7)

I have been called to be a saint. (1 Corinthians 1:2; cf. Ephesians 1:1; Phil 1:1; Colossians 1:2)

In Christ Jesus, I have wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor 1:30)

My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in me. (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19)

I am a new creature in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

I have become the righteousness of God in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

I have been set free in Christ. (Galatians 5:1)

I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 1:3)

I am chosen, holy, and blameless before God. (Ephesians 1:4)

I am redeemed and forgiven by the grace of Christ. (Ephesians 1:7)

I have been predestined by God to obtain an inheritance. (Ephesians 1:10b-11)

I have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. (Ephesians 1:13)

Because of God's mercy and love, I have been made alive with Christ. (Ephesians 2:4-5)

I am seated in the heavenly places with Christ. (Ephesians 2:6)

I am God's workmanship created to produce good works. (Ephesians 2:10)

I have boldness and confident access to God through faith in Christ. (Ephesians 3:12)

I was formerly darkness, but now I am light in the Lord. (Ephesians 5:8)

I am a citizen of heaven. (Philippians 3:20)

The peace of God guards my heart and mind. (Philippians 4:7)

God supplies all my needs. (Philippians 4:19)

I have been made complete in Christ. (Colossians 2:10)

I have been raised up with Christ. (Colossians 3:1)

My life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:3)

Christ is my life, and I will be revealed with Him in glory. (Colossians 3:4)

God loves me and has chosen me. (1 Thessalonians 1:4)

As we move into musical worship I have

- Marinate in the truth I just spoke over you- The IDENTITY you have in Christ is based on the way that God sees you- it's received as a gift-not based on what you do, have, want
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify things you are basing your IDENTITY on other than Christ and get rid of them or put them in their rightful place.
- If you have never made a decision to accept Christ's gift of salvation-

- Carpets
- Prayer
- Communion