SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

IDENTITY IN CHRIST WEEK 2

OPENING & PRAYER:

Identity in Christ starts with the question, "Who am I really?" The answer is not found in the body, the mind, the emotions, a ZIP code, money, skin color, or the old life. The real person is spirit, made in God's image, born again, and eternal. Paul's language gives the picture straight: dead but alive. The old man is crucified with Christ, and the new life is Christ living in the believer.

"Lord, thank you for the opportunity to study in Your Word today. We pray that You lead and guide our study as we learn more about our identity in You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

SCRIPTURE:

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. **Galatians 2:20**

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**

For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, **Hebrews 2:11**

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. **Matthew 5:13**

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. **Matthew 5:14**

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. **2 Corinthians 5:20**

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. **Proverbs 23:7a**

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. **John 5:11-12**

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. **Galatians 5:1**

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." **Acts 1:8**

Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. **Luke 10:19**

And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. **Matthew 10:1**

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. **Romans 8:16-17**

"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. **Acts 20:32**

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. **John 5:24**

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, **Colossians 1:13**

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **Philippians 3:20**

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly

places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **Ephesians 2:4-7**

GO DEEPER:

The new creation is not a cleaned-up version of the old thing. The new creation is fresh and original, not a pig with perfume, lipstick, and bows on it. God calls the person in Christ entirely new. This new identity includes being a child of God, a brother or sister of Jesus, salt in the earth, light in a dark world, and an ambassador for a higher kingdom. Salt preserves and seasons, while light shows the world what life with Jesus actually looks like.

The ambassador picture puts real weight on daily life. An ambassador may have opinions about everything, but only represents the king's agenda. Christ's people carry His name in front of a watching world, and the world knows what genuine faith looks like even when it does not agree with it. Identity must be formed by what God says, because "as a man thinks in his heart, so is he."

Eternal life means more than living forever. Zoe life is the God kind of life, redeemed and free from sin's penalty. Christ also gives liberty, not liberty to sin, but liberty from sin, law, darkness, and worldly limitations. The Holy Spirit gives both power and authority, and those gifts are meant to be used in homes, sickness, spiritual battles, and everyday life.

Inheritance belongs to God's children because Jesus died and made them joint heirs with Himself. The Word of grace builds believers up and reveals what is legally theirs in Christ, like a will that names its beneficiaries. Position in Christ means death has already been passed over, darkness has been left behind, and citizenship now belongs in heaven. God has made His people alive, seated them in heavenly places in Christ, and will show the riches of His grace in the ages to come.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Dead to old, alive in Christ. Identity cannot stay tied to the person that existed before Christ. The old man has been crucified, and the new life is now defined by Christ living within. This does not deny past failures, but it refuses to let those failures have the final word over who a believer is. **[04:16]**

2. New means new, not refurbished. The new creation is not a spiritual makeover on the old nature. God does not merely put better behavior on top of a broken identity. Christ creates something genuinely new, with a new source of life, a new family, and a new future. **[08:26]**

3. Ambassadors carry the King's agenda. An ambassador does not represent personal moods, arguments, or favorite causes first. An ambassador represents the kingdom and the king who sent him. Daily conduct matters because people often see Christ's representatives before they consider Christ's claims. **[14:01]**

4. Liberty means freedom from sin. Liberty in Christ is not permission to drift back into bondage. Christ frees His people from the law's condemnation, sin's rule, darkness's grip, and the limitations that once defined them. Freedom becomes real when it is received and lived under Christ's lordship. **[23:29]**

5. Heavenly citizenship changes present life. Citizenship in heaven does not make earthly life meaningless, but it puts earthly life in its proper place. Death has been passed over, darkness has been exchanged for light, and Christ's people are already seated with Him by grace. The believer's truest location is in Christ, even while life is still being lived on earth.

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, what has happened to the old things, and what has become true for the person who is in Christ? **[08:26]**

2. The freedom Christ gives is described as freedom from sin rather than freedom to sin. What kinds of bondage can still pull believers away from living in that freedom? **[24:03]**

3. Is there a sinful pattern, fear, or worldly limitation that you have been treating as stronger than Christ's liberty? What would it look like to receive and walk in freedom from that bondage? **[24:19]**

4. As an ambassador for Christ, is there an area where your words, attitude, or online presence may be representing your own agenda more than the King's agenda? What could a faithful response look like? **[16:49]**

5. How would remembering that your citizenship is in heaven change the way you handle a current worry, disappointment, or conflict on earth? **[39:50]**

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Lord, in a world constantly trying to tell us who we are by what we do, I thank you for the gift of finding my identity in You and who You say I am. I pray while finding my identity in You, that I can be a light to those around me. In Jesus' name I pray, amen."