

III. Why does your identity matter?

- Identity is defined as “the fact of being who or what a person or thing is.” Therefore, your identity is who you are. More importantly, your beliefs about your identity are who you believe yourself to be.

Identity drives our decisions and where we go. When we know who we are we know where we are going, and it informs our decision making. For instance, while you can consider yourself a sinner saved by grace, you can also see yourself as a saint who still sins. By identifying yourself as the latter, your identity shifts from being defined by your actions to your position in Christ in the Kingdom of God. Can you see the difference in these two identities: a sinner vs. a saint? Your identity impacts the decisions you make and where you go in life.

As a follower of Christ, you should identify as a disciple.

In the Gospel of John, the apostle records Jesus Christ as saying, “So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” (John 13:34-35 NLT)

As a disciple of Christ, people should be able to identify you as such by the way you love God and others.

IV. There are many places within Scripture where God tells us our identity. A comprehensive look at all of them is too much for one study, so we’ve chosen several that are foundational to your discipleship journey. A basic understanding a belief of the following passages will help you follow the Great Commandment (love God and others) and fulfill the Great Commission (go make other disciples).

- You are fearfully and wonderfully made. You are not an accident. You were created by God to be born at the time you were, into the situation and circumstance you were born into, and for a purpose within God’s greater design. **Read Psalm 139:13-18** and answer the following:

Do you believe you are fearfully and wonderfully made by God in His image? Why or why not? What has contributed to this belief about your identity?

How does your answer to the above question impact how you live?

- After you were formed, born as the person you are, and met Christ, there came a time when you accepted Him as your Lord and Savior. God tells you through His Word that you became crucified with Jesus, and He now lives in you. You now walk by faith in Jesus and in the love He gives you. You are to give that love away to others. **Read Galatians 2:20** and answer the following:



What does this passage teach you about your identity?

- Genuine love is the mark of a true Christian. Genuine love is the evidence that you have been born of God and know God. If God is in you and you know Him, then you can't hate others because they were also created by Him. **Read 1 John 4:7-8** and answer the following:

What is genuine love to you, and have you experienced it?

- You are part of God's family. **Read Romans 8:12-18** and answer the following:

How has your family impacted who you have become?

How does your identity shift knowing who your spiritual family is?

- As you walk in the new life with Jesus, you are to be an imitator of God. You are to walk in love. Once you know your identity and who you are, the actions will follow as you live it out. If you identify as a lover of God and lover of others, then your actions should follow and be loving toward God and others. **Read Ephesians 5:1-2** and answer the following:

What does this say about your identity?

How can you practically apply this in your everyday life?

IV. Reflect and Write

- When you know the truth (per God's Word, which is truth) of who you are and who you were created to be, you will make decisions to trust God and put Him in His proper place above all else in your life. It will be easier for you to receive grace, extend forgiveness, allow your mind to be renewed in the truth, and walk in the new life in Christ with the Holy Spirit. You will look different from the world. "For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7 KJV)
- Spend some time in prayer reflecting on identity. Invite the Holy Spirit in and ask Him about your identity. Then, write a letter to yourself from God about who He says you are. Periodically pull the letter out and read it to remind yourself of your God given identity.