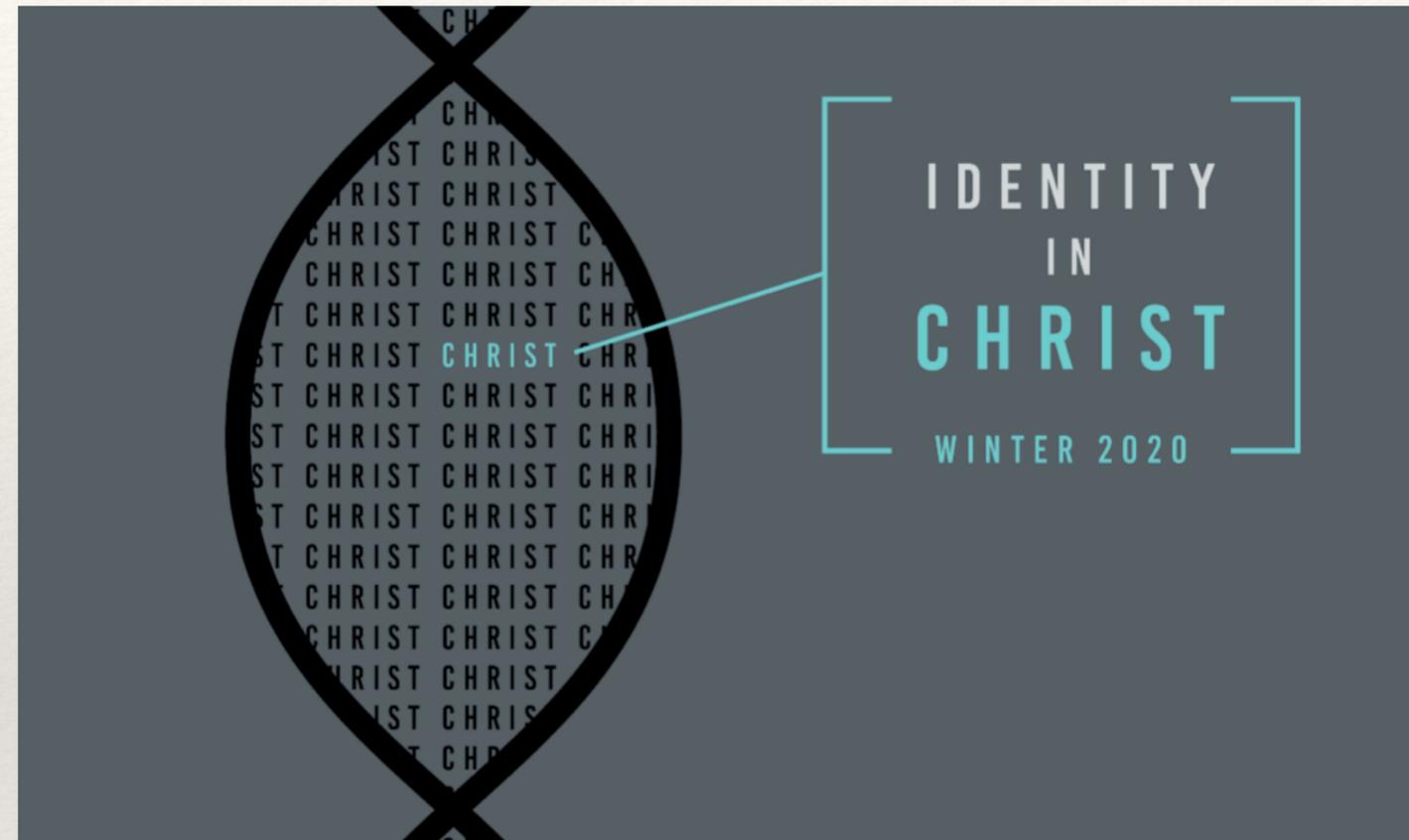


Identity in Christ



I Am Adopted

Introduction

- In Christ, we have been adopted into the family of God.
- We once were far from God, but now we are His beloved, precious children.
- We once were slaves to sin, but now we are sons of God, co-heirs with Christ to the glorious inheritance of heaven, the kingdom of God.
- As adopted sons, we are a mixed family of people who all work together to accomplish His mission.

Adopted into God's family

We are adopted into God's family

- In Christ, those who were far from God are adopted into God's family.
- Ephesians 1:3–10; 2:11–19
- Paul used the terminology of adoption into God's family because the church in Ephesus was composed primarily of Gentile Christians.
- As the descendants of Abraham, Israel was God's chosen family.
- In the Old Testament, a Gentile could join God's family by becoming Jewish through a conversion ritual that included circumcision, in essence, being "adopted" into the family.

We are adopted into God's family

- But in the New Testament, one of the first big arguments in the Church was the subject of the first church council, whether Gentiles had to first become Jewish in order to be Christians (Acts 15).
- In Ephesians Paul used this “adoption” concept to describe how everyone, Jews and Gentiles, become sons of God through Christ.
- Paul says Gentile Christians are “adopted” into the family of God as sons through Christ (Ephesians 1:5). They are no longer foreigners but citizens of the kingdom of God, members of His family (2:19).

We are adopted into God's family

- They were far from God (2:12) but have been brought near by the blood of Christ (2:13).
- He goes on to say that Jesus reconciled both Jews and Gentiles to Himself through the Cross (2:16).
- That Christ preached peace (2:17) to both those who were far from God (Gentiles) and those who were near (Jews).
- That it's only through Christ that anyone has access to the Father (2:18).

We are adopted into God's family

- Though Paul was writing to Gentile Christians, he makes it clear that both Jew and Gentile are brought near to God only through Christ.
- For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).
- There is no one righteous, not even one (3:10).
- Though the Jews may have believed they were near to God, they were really far from God, too.
- Even while we were still His enemies, even while we were sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

We are adopted into God's family

- All of mankind's relationships with God were broken way back in the beginning with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:16–19).
- And just as that relationship was broken by one man, it was fixed by one man: Jesus, the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16).
- The Gentile Ephesians knew they had to be “adopted” into the family.
- By emphasizing that both are reconciled to God by Jesus, God's only Son (Eph. 2:14–18), Paul emphasizes that none of us, Jew or Gentile, is made a true son of God by birth but only through adoption.

We are adopted into God's family

- Paul writes that we were dead in our sins, but God made us alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:1–5).
- But God didn't stop there. He also adopted us as sons, co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).
- That means we share in His sufferings on earth, but we also share in His inheritance: every spiritual blessing now (Ephesians 1:3) and future riches of the kingdom of heaven (1 Peter 1:3–4).

We Are Sons of God

We Are Sons of God

- In Christ, we are no longer slaves but sons of God.
- Romans 8:14–17
- In 1 John, John writes that God's choice to adopt us as His children shows an incredible amount of love.
- Our primary identity is a child of God. We are children of the living God (Romans 9:26).
- Paul tells us more about what this means in Romans 8:14–17.

We Are Sons of God

- Romans 8:14–17
- If we are children of God, that means we are no longer slaves.
- If we are children of God, that means we no longer live in fear.
- If we are children of God, we cry out to Him as Father.
- If we are children of God, we are heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ.
- If we are children of God, we share in Christ's suffering and in His glory.

We Are Sons of God

- We are not slaves to sin. We are children of the light (Ephesians 5:8). We have value, worth, and purpose as God's children.
- Before Christ, we were slaves to sin. Sin was our master.
- We could not be free from sin; our debt was too great for us to repay ourselves. Christ came and rescued us.
- He not only rescued us from sin but also received us into a new family, in order to be adopted as sons and daughters.

We Are Sons of God

- Paul writes in Galatians that we cry out “Abba! Father” (Romans 8:15).
- Abba is an Aramaic word for Father that expresses affection and trust. Jesus taught His disciples to pray beginning with “Our Father” and encourages us to call Him Father.
- To bring all our needs to Him, to cast all our cares on Him (1 Peter 5:7).
- Because we are His children, we can trust Him to provide for our every need (Matthew 7:11).

We Are Sons of God

- Yet, many of us still live as slaves. We live as if we are trying to earn God's love, buy His favor, pay Him back for His salvation.
- But God didn't set us free from "slavery to sin" for us to spend the rest of our lives working to pay Him back.
- He set us free to become His children.
- God's redemption is a gift.
- We don't have to earn our way in the kingdom of God.

We Share a Mission

We Share a Mission

- As sons of God, you share a mission with His other children, your family.
- Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:14–26
- As believers, we should care as deeply about the mission of expanding God's kingdom as He does, especially because we are adopted sons of God.
- Jesus chose the word witnesses here on purpose. Witnesses are people who tells the story of what they have seen and heard, what happened to them.
- As adopted sons of God, we have a story to tell.

We Share a Mission

- It is important to remember that we are sent on this mission together, as one family of Christ.
- As a family of God, we have built-in co-laborers in our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Our identity as adopted sons of God and our understanding that everyone else in the family of Christ is also equally a co-heir should give us a sense of humility toward others in the body.
- We need each other to accomplish our mission (1 Corinthians 12:21–25).

We Share a Mission

- Every one of us comes from a different background; we all have different gifts, but we are united by one Spirit and one purpose (1 Corinthians 12:4, 7).
- Yet each one of us is equally important and has equal value in the eyes of God.
- The only way we can truly live together in unity is to view others with humility and love (Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 2:1-4; Colossians 3:12).
- We have a message to share with the world.