

**I'M A NEW CREATION:  
Learning to Identify with Who We Really Are in Christ  
(2 Corinthians 5:17)**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

A. This Morning's Big Idea: *God is teaching us to see and speak about ourselves as we really are in Christ, rather than as we formerly thought or presently feel.*

B. Opening Scriptures Pertinent to This Theme

“But you, Israel, *My servant*, Jacob whom I have chosen, the descendant of Abraham My friend,<sup>9</sup> you whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called from its remotest parts and said to you, ‘You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you.’<sup>10</sup> ‘Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; surely I will help you; surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’<sup>11</sup> . . .<sup>14</sup> ‘Do not fear, *you worm Jacob, you men of Israel*; I will help you,” declares the LORD. Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.<sup>15</sup> Behold, I have made you a new, sharp threshing sledge with double edges; you will thresh the mountains and crush *them*, you will reduce the hills to chaff.<sup>16</sup> You will winnow them, and the wind will carry them away, and the storm will scatter them. But *you will rejoice in the LORD, you will glory in the Holy One of Israel!* Is. 41

<sup>24</sup>“For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land.<sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols.<sup>26</sup> *I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.*<sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.<sup>28</sup> Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. – Ezek. 36

<sup>16</sup>Therefore, from now on we know no man according to the flesh. Even if we have known Christ according to the flesh, now we know *Him thus* no longer.<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if any man *is* in Christ, *there<sup>5</sup> is* a new creation: the old things *have* passed away, behold, new things have come to be! – 2 Cor. 5

C. Opening Prayer

**II. THE SORROW OF THE WORLD: “WHO AM I?”**

- Arthur Schopenhauer’s Identity Crisis
- The World’s Identity Crisis, and the Sorrow It Brings (HSL)

**III. OUR HEAVENLY FATHER’S GOAL FOR HIS KIDS**

- It brings pleasure and glory to God when his kids are stable, secure, confident, and filled with joy!

<sup>6</sup>As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. – Col. 2:6-7

Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand. – 2 Cor. 1

#### **IV. WHAT GOD HAS DONE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOAL**

A. He has given us a new **STANDING** in Christ

B. He has given us a new **NATURE** in Christ

C. He has taught us how to think about ourselves in light of our new standing and nature: He has given us a new **IDENTITY** in Christ

- Past: What we were in the past; what F, S, H. S. did for us in the past (HSL)
- Present: What we are in the present: Precious images arising from our union with Christ (sons, daughters, friends, bride, body, household, temple, priesthood, etc.)
- Future: What we are yet to be: Precious Images of what we will be in days ahead (sanctified here, sanctified there, glorified then)

#### **III. WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO EXPERIENCE THE POWER AND JOY OF NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST**

A. Change the way we think about ourselves

**12** Therefore, I exhort you brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies *as* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* the new spiritual way in which you are to worship Him.<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this *present evil* world,<sup>2</sup> but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may give a public proof of the will of God—of that which is good and acceptable and perfect (and TRUE). – Rom. 12

B. Change the way we talk about ourselves

- What is a Good Confession? We *say* the same thing as God says:

<sup>5</sup> But, speaking the truth in love, (let us) grow up in all things into Him who is the head, even Christ.

If any man speaks, let him speak, as it were, the very oracles of God.

Let all things be done for edification. – 1 Cor. 14

- A good confession about our identity can bring us up!

I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. – Phil. 4

- A bad confession about our identity can bring us down!

**5** Just so with the tongue: it is a little member of the body, and *yet* it boasts great things! Behold, how great a forest is set ablaze by such a little fire! **6** And the tongue *is* a fire—the world of iniquity situated in our *very* members—which defiles the whole body, sets on fire the *entire* course<sup>2</sup> of human existence,<sup>3</sup> and is *itself* set on fire by hell.<sup>4</sup> **7** For every kind of wild animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature is tamed, and has been tamed, by mankind. **8** But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* a restless<sup>5</sup> evil, full of deadly poison. **9** With it we bless *our* Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who have been made in the likeness of God. **10** Out of the same mouth proceed *both* blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things should not be so. **11** Does a spring pour forth *both* sweet and bitter *water* from the same opening? **12** Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can salt water<sup>6</sup> produce fresh. – James 5

C. The Little Train That Could: Fact-Faith-Feeling (Taming the Tension Within)

D. Test case #1: Am I a sinner or a saint? (Paul, Romans 7)

E. Test Case #2: Do I love the Lord?

#### IV. CONCLUSION

A. A Song in the Camp of the Saints Who Know Who They Are in Christ

B. Story: Chicory and the Mole People