

Identity

We Have the Mind of Christ

1. Review

- a. God made you to be in His image. Sin marred that image. We ceased to accurately reflect the character and actions of God (righteousness and holiness) as a direct result of Adam's rebellion.
 - i. Just like getting a reflection in the mirror that doesn't reflect what its source is, that is humanity!
 - ii. Jesus came to earth to restore our relationship with Father and to restore the image of Father in us. Jesus perfectly reflected the image of God, "if you have seen me, you have seen the Father." He made it possible for us to reflect the image of Father God once we are born again as well.
 - iii. The problem is, we live as if our old self (identity) is who we are. It is what we have spent our entire life learning, and then God says, "Hey that's dead, I now live in you!" But we don't unlearn very easily even though God has said, *"If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation, former things have passed away, all things have become new."* (2 Cor 5:17).
 1. And just like the informants who are in the Federal Witness Protection program, we get a brand new identity. We are no longer supposed to live our old life, but live out of our new identity.
 - iv. Last week we learned to "put off our old identity and put on our new identity" each day. Get up in the morning and announce that you are IN CHRIST, and that HE IS who you are!

2. Reflecting More of God

- a. The more you agree with God about your identity in Christ, the more your behavior will reflect your God given identity.
 - i. It's time to stop living out of who people say you are and take hold of the truth of God's word.
 - ii. Jesus asked His disciples who people said he was. (A prophet)
 - iii. And then he asked them who they thought he was. (Messiah)
 - iv. He already knew what the Father said about Him (*"this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."*)
- b. Whose opinion of what we are matters? God alone!
 - i. I imagine Jesus could have asked His disciples a follow up question, "Who do people say YOU are?" Or "Who do I (Jesus) say you are?"
 - ii. I wonder how each of us would answer that question?
- c. **Being Christ-like is Becoming Who/What You Already Are**
 - i. Does that sound scary? Does that sound impossible?
 - ii. Becoming more Christ-like is not an unattainable goal. As you cease to conform to the pattern of this world and fill your mind with God's purpose for you, you will become more like him (Romans 12:2). You are, in fact, becoming what you already are.
 - iii. You have, through faith, the full potential to develop Christ-like character in this life.
 1. *Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.* (1 Peter 1:22-23)
 - iv. The bible teaches that our spiritual rebirth can be likened to a natural birth in which a single microscopic sperm carries all the father's characteristics into the newborn baby. As the child grows, these traits become seen in its character and appearance. At your

spiritual birth a 'seed' was deposited within you. At spiritual rebirth the seed of our heavenly Father (The Holy Spirit) was deposited within us. That seed carries all his character qualities and as we grow spiritually they become more and more evident in the form of a Christ-like character.

- v. **You become what you already are in seed form** (in fact, everything grows to whatever it is in its seed form).

3. We have the Mind of Christ.

- a. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16 *"9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" - 10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. 14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: 16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ."*

- i. Paul begins this passage with a passage we like to quote by itself without including the verses that follow it:

- ii. *v9 "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" –*

- 1. I cannot tell you how often I have heard verse 9 quoted with the following explanation, ***"see, we have no idea of what God has prepared for us when we get to heaven! Its going to be so incredible, that no mind has even conceive of it"***

- iii. I should think that folks who say such things would read the verse in context!

- 1. *v10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God"*

- 2. v10 tell us that God HAS REVEALED IT to us by His Spirit. What is "it?"
What God has prepared for those who love him.

- a. **Do you know what God has prepared for you?** I am not talking about "in heaven." I am talking about in this life, in the here and now, present day life.
- b. Jesus didn't come to the earth to take you to heaven (although that is our ultimate destination). **Jesus came to earth to put heaven inside of you and me.**
- c. He came to put the Kingdom of God inside of every believer, every Christian. But most are unaware of this incredible fact and live out their days upon the earth waiting for the "sweet bye and bye" and wave bye-bye to what God is desiring to do in their lives in the here and now!
- d. Jesus put Himself inside our spirit so that everything He did upon the earth while he was here physically He can still do through each one of us now. Our challenge is understanding how.
- e. (Hopefully you already understand the why – because He is establishing His kingdom upon the earth!).

- 4. It is when we read the rest of the passage that we begin to see just what God has done in the life of an ordinary believer like you and me..

- a. *The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.*
 - i. He goes on to say that NOONE knows the thoughts of God EXCEPT the Spirit of God.
 - ii. If he had stopped there, we would be content to say, "I won't understand until Jesus comes back." But he doesn't stop there. He tells us that "we haven't received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God IN ORDER THAT we may understand what God has freely given us."
 - iii. So we can UNDERSTAND what God has freely given us. (In the here and now!!!!).
 - iv. There is no qualifier that says "in the life to come." It is about the now. It is about the here and now present moment.
- b. *This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. 14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: 16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ."*
 - i. He tells us in verses 13-14 that we cannot understand spiritual truths without the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. God speaks to us through His Spirit.
 1. Carnally minded people (believers and nonbelievers) cannot understand the "things" that come from the Spirit of God. They must be spiritually discerned.
 - ii. In verse 16, Paul asks the question, "For who has known the mind of the Lord...?"
 - iii. And he answers his question, "But we HAVE (Possess) THE MIND OF CHRIST."

5. What does this mean for you and I?

- a. Does it simply mean we "develop" the mind of Christ?
- b. Does it mean "we are growing into the mind of Christ"?
- c. Does it mean we have the attitude of Christ?
- d. Yes to All and more! We have (present ongoing action) of the Mind of Christ.

6. **It is possible for us to think like God thinks!** We even get to think God's thoughts.

- a. All the time? No, because we also possess a carnal mind.
- b. Our Spirit is where the "mind of Christ" is because that is where the Holy Spirit dwells.
- c. Our mind translates what our spirit says. Our spirit hears what the Holy Spirit says, and He alone has access to the mind of God. So our mind has the ability to hear the mind of God through the spirit!
- d. *Our mind is not equal to the mind of God.* Our physical mind is our mind, it is a part of our soul. But the Mind of God is accessible and possessed in our spirit. Our spirit speaks to our mind. So the battlefield is our physical mind, to comprehend truth.
 - i. Carnal Mind = Carnal means to be "governed by the senses".
 1. Ro 8:5-9 - *Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you.*
 2. When you gain your new identity in Him, you have to learn to think as He thinks, with the Mind of Christ. You begin to manifest His image in this world to the degree that we think like Christ thinks.
 3. YOU HOWEVER....are controlled NOT by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives (abides) in you.

4. So...do you have a sinful mind or a mind controlled by the Spirit? According to this passage? I'm not talking about your experience, I'm talking about what God says about you and I? We have a mind *controlled by the Spirit*...or else, we don't have the Holy Spirit in us.
 - ii. God's mind is accessible through the Holy Spirit and translated into our understanding through the Spirit by our physical mind.
 - iii. And to the degree that we are not "carnally minded" (filled with the cares and concerns and thoughts of this life or governed by our senses) is the degree by which we hear clearly.
 - e. Imagine there is a person, a privileged person who has unlimited access to the largest library in the entire world. He has read every book and listened to every speech and mp3 file in the library. And every day, he dictates that knowledge by Morse code to the entire world. Anyone here understand Morse Code? It is the dashes and dots of the telegraph and later wireless. You would need a "translator" to understand Morse code, because we don't have the mind-set to understand it. So, you hire a translator. And this translator tells you what this person inside the biggest library has been reading!.
 - f. This is an oversimplified version of what it looks like in our spirit. God's Holy Spirit has unlimited access to the infinite and limitless thoughts of God. And He is broadcasting them to each Christian believer. However, we either aren't listening or we don't know how to interpret them because they are in a language that we don't understand! Our spirit, enlivened by the Holy Spirit is the translator of the thoughts of God Himself, the "deep things of God." Our mind then gets to interpret them into real life!
7. There are people who always are waiting for God to do something, but God is waiting for YOU to do something.
 - a. We are the manifestation of God (Christ) on earth;
 - b. Religion tries to change men on the OUTSIDE, while on the inside the "old man" is still on the throne. Once the Father has imparted His very Nature, Substance, and Being into your human spirits, you will change from the inside out. You have become a new creature and become One with your Creator. Man has done a good job telling others they cannot have these things, but that it was only meant for certain people in the earth.
 - c. You HAVE the Mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). Now use it.
 - d. **God will not change your mind, YOU have to change it.**
 - i. **We possess His mind**...in our spirits. We need to allow our minds (carnal) to be transformed by His word and His thoughts. We need to stop permitting ourselves to be governed by what we see and hear. (Isaiah 11:1-3) We need to believe what He says about us!
 - e. We are the ones manifesting Christ on earth. One thing we MUST realize, the body follows whatever mind we allow to work through us. It is either the carnal mind or the Christ mind

8. What does the mind of Christ look/act like?

- a. *Philippians 2:5-8, Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who although He existed in the form of God did not regard equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself taking the form of a bond servant and being made in the likeness of men, and being found in appearance of man, He humbled (emptied) Himself by becoming obedient, to the point of death, even death on the cross.*
- b. Then the mindset of Christ can be summed up in the following way. It is an identity that you are a son of God, sent from the Father to put on display the nature and the character of the Father to the world and whom God the Father sends your way by the Holy Spirit, you have oneness with the Father, spirit to spirit. You live to serve the Will of the Father; Jesus said the son of man did not come to be served but to serve.
- c. You are not concerned with the cares of this world, you are being led by the Holy Spirit moment by moment day by day. You are not living this life but Christ is living it through you. You have spiritual authority and power that attends this mind of Christ. Michael and his host attend to your commands. Your prayers are not about providence and protection, they are decrees that are uttered by the Spirit to activate Kingdom agenda. You rule and have dominion as a King and Priest, you are a son of God, Jesus Christ is your brother, and the Holy Spirit of Truth is your connection to the Family or the Household of God. In the Kingdom there is only Father and sons.
- d. .
- e. Jesus calls us outside our limiting belief boxes. To Nicodemus Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (John 3:3). Paul defined this rebirth as a new creation, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (II Cor. 5:17 KJV). The word creation is the Greek word ktisis meaning in this context "creation" (NIV) or "creature" (KJV). To experience the rebirth of Jesus means He makes us all over again. What we lost in the Garden of Eden through sin has met its match in the re-creation of Jesus. These simple truths come from The Gospels 101. Don't you think it time that we Christians get our identity from our new position in Christ and not from what our parents or some authority figure has told us?
- f. .
- g. A more true-to-fact mapping our identity minds would assert this following:
- h. .
- i. "I exist as a human being with powers of thinking, feeling, speaking, behaving, and relating. I operate in the world using such mental constructions as beliefs, values, understandings, decisions, etc. In other words, I also believe, value, understand, decide, etc. I function in mothering or fathering roles, as a worker in this or that job, etc. I am more than my thoughts. I am more than my emotions. My behaviors do not summarize the last word about myself. I exist as so much more than any given relationship, task, activity, or idea.
- j. "I once lived as a sinner but I have now accepted Christ. I have now put on His identity and my worth as a person in Him is a given. I believe and accept Romans 5:19 "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." I have taken off the old and He has put on the new. He has given me a brand new identity.
- k. "As a believer in Jesus, I live my life constantly becoming the new person He has created me to become. Daily He takes off the old person and puts on the new person. As with Paul in I Cor. 15:31b "I die daily." And daily with Paul I say, "For which cause we (I) faint not; but though our (my) outward man (self) perish(es), yet the inward man (self) is renewed day by day" (II Cor. 4:16)"
- l. This frame helps a person to dis-identify when he or she has over-identified with any one facet of life.

9. Like Christ

- a. To have the mind of Christ requires that we "think" like Him. To have the mind of Christ means we "conceptualize" like him. To have the mind of Christ, means we "talk to ourselves" like He

talked to Himself. To have the mind of Christ means we hold beliefs about ourselves as he held beliefs about Himself.

- b. Isaiah 11:1-3 tells what the mind of Christ looks like, *“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD - and he will delight in the fear of the LORD . He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.”*

10. Diagnostic Questions for a believer:

- a. How do you identify yourself? What words do you use to identify yourself?
 - i. I am _____. Write out at least 5 statements that you have used in the past to identify yourself to someone.
- b. With what have you identified yourself? What objects or values have you aligned yourself with so tightly that when people think of that they think of you.
 - i. I belong to _____.
 - ii. I love _____.
 - iii. I play _____.
 - iv. I work at _____.
 - v. I love to _____.
- c. How do other people in your life identify you? How do people perceive you?
 - i. He/she is _____.
 - ii. He/she likes _____.

11. Now that you have written these things down, compare them to what the bible says about you.

- a. What does God say you are. These must be paramount over what the world says or even what we say we are or belong to.
- b. Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do men (other people) say that I am?” He wanted to hear what they had heard. How were people perceiving Him?
- c. Then He asked His disciples, “Who do YOU say that I am?”
 - i. Now, Jesus knew who he was. He was the Messiah, the Son of God! But because of the twisted expectations of the people and the religious teachings of the day, he wanted to see if anyone could see the truth through the smoke that religion had blown.
- d. So Jesus is standing in this room. Yes He is. He is seated in this room. Yes He is.
 - i. And He is asking the question, “Who do you say you are?” After we answer that, then He asks, “Who do I say you are?”

12.