

# "Your True Identity in Christ "

## Ephesians 1:1-14

### Introduction to the theme

We live in a day and in a culture, which loves to define who we are. This culture will describe what is beauty and what is ugly...what is failure and what is success. If we are not careful you can buy into the idea that someone other than God can define your identity. For some their identity is defined by their education, their economic standing, or their social status. For other their identity is found in their ethnicity or political affiliation.

The fact is when someone other than God defines you, you will always be unstable in many areas of your life. Who defines you will control you eventually.

Your real identity if not found in any of the things I just mentioned. Your true identity is found in Christ. When you get a handle on this truth then your whole perspective on life will change! Please, don't allow the world to define you but let God define you.

Paul said it well in Romans 12:1-2:

" I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, to present you bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds..."

### Brief background and context

The letter Paul wrote to the Ephesians has a powerful message and that is the splendor of the church which is the Body of Jesus Christ. Paul will teach that the obvious disharmony and rebellion by humankind in the world has been reconciled in Jesus Christ. And in fact, the church is to be an agent of reconciliation, Ephesians 1:9-10.

Keep in mind that although Paul had been in Ephesus earlier, Acts 18:21, he later stay and taught them for two full years, Acts 19:8-10. His farewell message in Acts 20:17-38, is one of the most emotional texts in all of scripture. One finally point, during the time while writing this letter, Paul was in Rome, in prison. The following letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, are referred to as prison letters, because of his situation.

### **Ephesians can be outlined as follows:**

Chapters 1-3...the Wealth of the Believer

Chapters 4:1-6:9...the Walk of the Believer

Chapter 6:10-24...the Warfare of the Believer

Paul's greeting and introduction to how are identity is truly discovered (...vv.1-2)

A. He identifies himself as an "Apostle of Jesus Christ"

This is a person who was sent to spread the gospel like a missionary

B. He is an apostle because God willed it to be so

C. He write to the "saints...and the faithful in Jesus"

The idea of saints does not mean a pious person, but one who has been set apart for the holy purposes of God.

D. "Grace and peace"

Grace is God's unmerited favor and peace is God unmerited assurance.

I. "Chosen by the Father" (vv. 3-6)

A. All spiritual blessings come from God but they can be accessed through Jesus.

James 1:17..."Every good gift and every perfect gift, comes from above..."

The "heavenly places" do not speak of heaven but to the realm where Christ is seated where there is a release of the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

B. "Chosen before the foundation of the world"

The idea of chosen means that you were selected or appointed. For example, in (Deut. 7:6-9). Israel was selected by God to be a special people.

C. What must characterize the believer as chosen by God?

1. "Holy and blameless"...sanctification

2. "Predestination" ...that is God pre-determined he would do whatever was necessary to get you saved through the cross of Jesus.

3. "Adoption"...brought into the family of God

4. "The good pleasure of his will"...God took great delight in choosing you.

D. "To the praise of his glory"...give God the glory for what he has done through Jesus

## II. "Redeemed by the Son" ... (vv.7-12)

A. Redeemed means to be brought out of the slave market. The idea is that the believer has been brought with a price, (1 Cor. 6:20 a and Rom. 3:24-26).

The precious blood of Christ has purchased our freedom and secured for us the forgiveness of our sins

B. The benefits of being redeemed is that now God has revealed the mystery of his will, plan, and purpose. And that is to unite everything in heaven and on earth in Christ. This speaks of a cosmic unity and harmony out the chaos now presently in the world.

C. God has predestined us to have an "inheritance" ...this is the giving of some property or money to someone after the giver has died. God has an inheritance in us and we have an inheritance in Christ.

## III. "Sealed by the Holy Spirit" (vv. 13-14)

A. Now because you've believed the gospel you were sealed by the Holy Spirit. For example, see (Jeremiah 32:10 and II Tim.2:19).

Ownership...someone own's you, you don't belong to yourself

Authenticity...you are legitimate not a fake

Identity...who you belong to

B. The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance. He is the great promise make by God the Father to the believer... (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8 2:39).

In summary, stop allowing the world to define who you are. You see, if someone other than God defines you then you will always be defeated.