

What Is Your True Identity?

Introduction

I trust that as a result of what you learned in the last lesson that you have a better understanding of what God did at salvation to give you a new identity. I want to begin this lesson by giving you another way to understand what God did in you at salvation. After that discussion, we will see the makeup of your new identity in Christ.

Another Way To Understand What God Did At Salvation

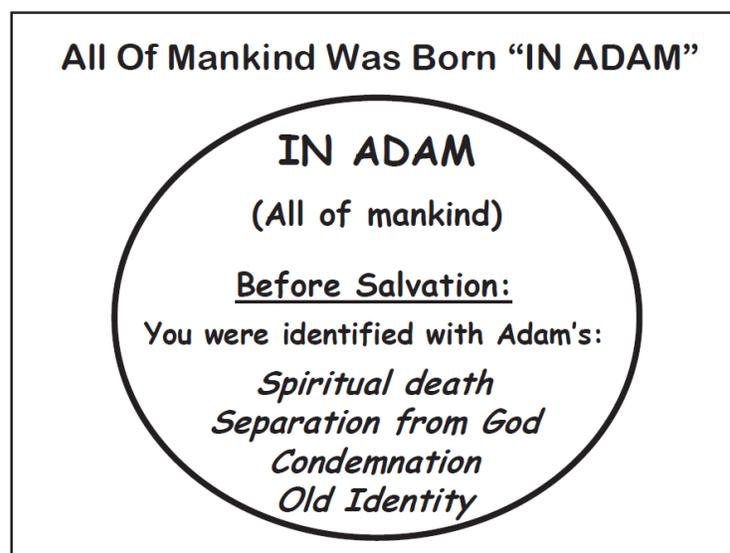
"IN" ADAM

I want to give you another way to see what God accomplished by removing our old identity and giving us a new one. As we mentioned before, we inherited Adam's spiritual condition. Another way to say this is that since we all came from Adam's gene pool, we were all physically born **IN Adam**.

As a result, part of our old identity IN Adam means that before salvation we **IDENTIFIED** with Adam in his:

- **Spiritual death** – 1 Corinthians 15:22
- **Separation from God and His life and power** – Ephesians 4:18; Isaiah 59:2
- **Condemnation** – Romans 5:18
- **Old Identity (made up of your false beliefs)** – Proverbs 23:7

We see in the next diagram an illustration of what it looks like to be born **IN Adam**:

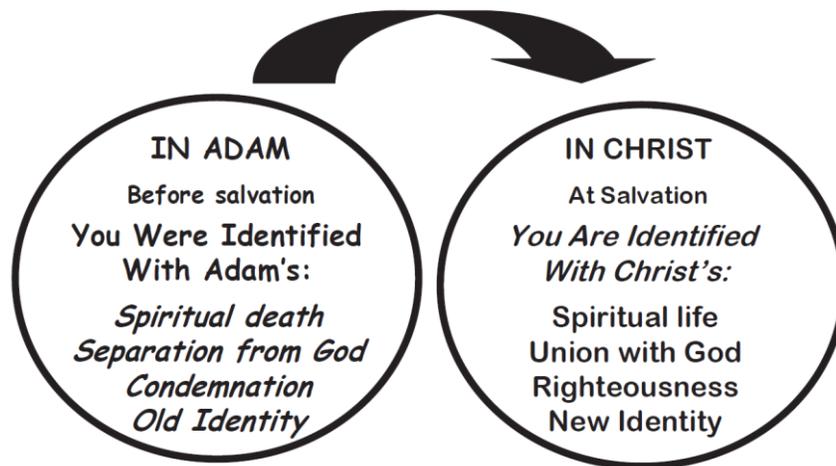


"IN" CHRIST

However, as a result of trusting Christ for salvation, you are NO longer identified with Adam in his spiritual death, separation, condemnation, and old identity. At salvation God took you out

of being IN Adam and placed you **IN Christ** with the result that you are now **identified with Christ**. The following diagram illustrates what God did at salvation in taking you out of being IN Adam and placing you IN Christ:

God Took You Out Of Being IN Adam and Put You IN Christ



***You had an OLD identity IN Adam before salvation.
However, now that you are IN Christ, you have a NEW identity.***

What Is Your New Condition Now That You Are IN Christ?

1. You are spiritually ALIVE.

God brought you from death to life. We see this is 1 Corinthians 15:22:

“For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.” 1 Corinthians 15:22

2. You are now in UNION with God.

You are no longer separated from God. We saw this previously in John 14:20:

“In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”

3. You are now RIGHTEOUS!

There is another critical way that you became identified with Christ. When God crucified your old unrighteous identity within you, He exchanged it for a **righteous** new identity. You are no longer under condemnation. God made you RIGHTEOUS in your new identity! Warning: You may have a struggle with this truth but look at God’s word concerning your righteousness.

“for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness...” Romans 8:10

“Consequently, just as the result of one trespass (sin) was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man (Adam) the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the One man (Jesus) the many will be made righteous.” Romans 5:18-19 (Parentheses mine)

*“God made Him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that **in Him** we might become the righteousness of God.” 2 Corinthians 5:21 (Parenthesis mine)*

*“**having been filled** with the fruit of **righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ**, to the glory and praise of God.” Philippians 1:11*

*“and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes **from God on the basis of faith**.” Philippians 3:9*

Please Read This:

Have you believed the lie that you have to work for God to be righteous? Have you thought that it was up to you to do (or not do) something to attain God’s righteousness? These three verses (and many others) tell us that we became righteous the moment that we were saved! In other words, righteousness is not something that you earn. It is something that you receive at salvation because God gave you a new righteous identity.

Your RIGHTEOUSNESS in Christ has nothing to do with what you do or don’t do. It is the result of what God did IN you at salvation.

It is also important to know that since you are now righteous in Christ, there is **no** more condemnation from God. He will never condemn you again for your sins. Furthermore, you no longer have to condemn yourself. Paul confirms this in Romans 8:1:

*“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus**.”*

Now that you are RIGHTEOUS in Christ,

God NO longer condemns you, and you NO longer have to condemn yourself.

4. You have a NEW IDENTITY (You are a PARTAKER of the divine nature.)

“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things (old identity) passed away; behold, new things (new identity) have come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17 (Parentheses mine)

Having a new identity means that you are a PARTAKER of God’s divine nature.

*“For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become **partakers of the divine nature**.....” 2 Peter 1:4*

God made you a partaker of His divine nature the moment when you were saved. **“Partaker”** in the Greek means “one who shares.” Therefore, as a result of your union with God in your human spirit, you share part of God’s divine nature. Another way of saying it is that there are some “godly characteristics” that God is sharing with you. This does not mean that you are becoming deity. It means that there is a part of God’s divine nature that He is sharing with you or is imparting to you.

<i>Partaker of God’s divine nature means that you SHARE with God GODLY characteristics that He imparts to you as part of your new identity.</i>
--

Your True Identity In Christ

“For we are God’s MASTERPIECE....”

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

We are now going to be looking at some of the godly characteristics that make up your true identity in Christ. I don’t know what your reaction will be as you read through the following list. My first response was that this is too good to be true. If you feel the same way, realize that everything listed below is the truth of who you REALLY are in Christ.

Therefore, I would like for you to read through this list slowly and let the truth of your true identity sink in. When you read through this list remember that “in Christ” refers to who you are in your true identity. For example, you might read each characteristic like this: “In my true identity in Christ, I am victorious.”

Some Of The Characteristics of Your TRUE Identity “IN” Christ

- Romans 8:35, 38-39 In Christ, I am unconditionally loved.
- 1 Corinthians 15:57 In Christ, I am victorious.
- Psalm 71:5 In Christ, I am confident.
- Psalm 56:4 In Christ, I am fearless.
- 2 Corinthians 9:8 In Christ, I am sufficient.
- Psalm 139:14 In Christ, I am worthy.
- 2 Corinthians 3:5 In Christ, I am adequate.
- Romans 8:37 In Christ, I am more than a conqueror.
- Ephesians 6:10 In Christ, I am strong.
- Psalm 71:5 In Christ, I am confident.
- Romans 15:7 In Christ, I am accepted and acceptable.
- Ephesians 4:24 In Christ, I am righteous and holy.
- Colossians 3:13 In Christ, I am a forgiving person.
- Colossians 2:10 In Christ, I am complete in Him.

Galatians 5:1	In Christ, I am free.
Colossians 3:12	In Christ, I am compassionate, humble, kind, patient.
Psalm 139:5	In Christ, I am secure.
Ephesians 1:1	In Christ, I am a saint. (See 1 Cor. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2)
John 15:13	In Christ, I am sacrificial.
Philippians 2:3	In Christ, I am others focused.
Galatians 5:22, 23	In Christ, I am joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle.
Romans 8:17	In Christ, I am a joint-heir with Christ.
John 1:12	In Christ, I am a child of God (part of His family).
1 Corinthians 2:16	In Christ, I am in possession of the mind of Christ.
Galatians 3:26, 28	In Christ, I am a son of God.
John 15:15	In Christ, I am Christ's friend.
Colossians 3:12	In Christ, I am chosen of God, holy, and dearly loved.
Hebrews 3:14	In Christ, I am a partaker of Christ.
1 Peter 2:9, 10	In Christ, I am a chosen race, a royal priesthood.

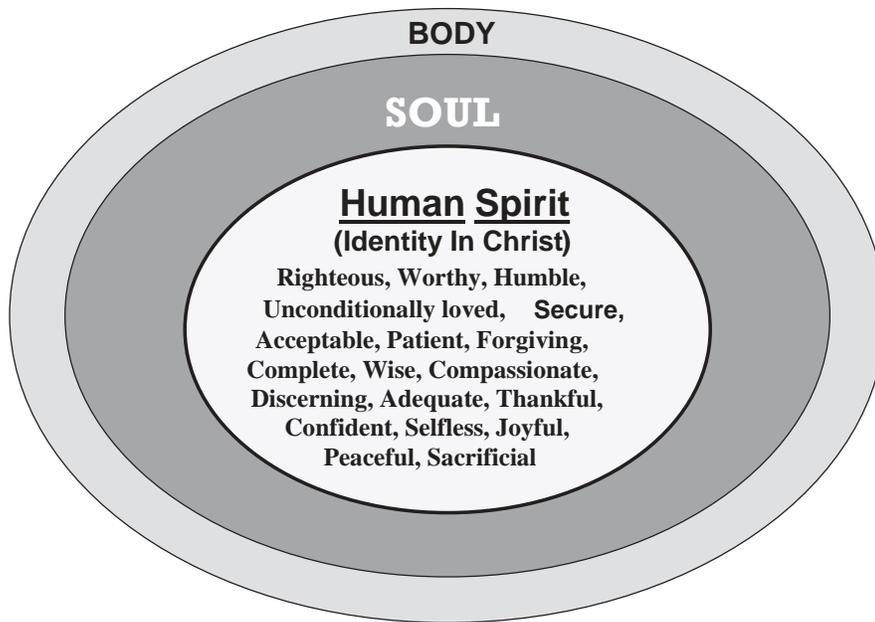
Your True Identity And The Circle Diagrams

Remember the diagram below that we studied in Lesson Two. It depicts your true identity being located in your human spirit.



In the following diagram, I have enlarged the human spirit to show some of the characteristics of your true identity from the list on the previous page.

Some of the Characteristics of Your New Identity IN Christ



KEY POINT TO REMEMBER:

How you FEEL or what you BELIEVE about the truth of your new identity does NOT change the fact that God's truth is TRUE.

Expanding On Some Of The Characteristics Of Your New Identity

To give you a better sense of what your new identity looks like, let's take a closer look at a few of the characteristics of your new identity.

In Christ You Are COMPLETE.

Colossians 2:9 - "For **in Him** all the **fullness** of Deity dwells in bodily form"

Colossians 2:10 - "and **in Him** you have been made **complete**"

Before salvation we were all incomplete. However, at salvation God made us complete in Christ. All of God's fullness dwells in Jesus, and Jesus dwells in us with the result that we are complete in Him. In other words, there is nothing that we need to add to our completeness in Christ.

Question: If you feel or believe that you are incomplete, does that change the truth that you are complete in Christ?

In Christ You Are Totally ACCEPTED and Are ACCEPTABLE.

Romans 15:7 - "Accept one another, then, just as **Christ accepted you ...**"

not
not
the



The reason why a holy God can totally accept us is because He has made us acceptable. You may feel or experience rejection coming from others, but that does not change the truth that you are accepted by God unconditionally! This means that there is no sinful behavior too great to cause God to reject you. (God does not condone sinful behavior, but He does not reject you because of your sinful behavior.) As a result, you no longer have to earn (or perform for) God's acceptance or acceptance of others.

You can receive God's acceptance and be free from rejection by others. Believing that you are accepted in Christ will give you the freedom to accept others unconditionally.

Questions: Since God unconditionally accepts you, can He ever reject you? If you really believe that you are accepted in Christ, do you have to take ownership of any rejection directed toward you by others (or even by yourself)?

Engaging God: If you struggle with rejection, ask the Holy Spirit to persuade you that you are totally acceptable and that you no longer have to take ownership of someone else's rejection of you.

In Christ You Are Totally SECURE.

Psalm 91:14 - "Because he has loved Me; therefore, I will deliver him; **I will set him securely on high because he has known my name.**"

Ezekiel 24:38 - "They will no longer be a prey to the nations, and the beasts of the earth will not devour them; but they will live securely, and no one will make them afraid.

What are you feeling insecure about? Is it your job, your marriage, or just those insecure feelings that you have about yourself? You no longer have to feel that way because in Christ you are totally secure. Are you trying to find security in something or someone else other than God? The truth is that our only true security is in Christ. Since He is sovereign and is the only One who is truly in control, we can live from our security in Him.

Questions: What events or relationships in your life are making you feel insecure? What difference would it make in those situations if you really believe that you are secure in Christ?

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you what or whom you are putting your security in other than Him. Seek Him to renew your mind to the truth that your only security is in Him. (God will sometimes allow the things we are putting our security in to be removed so that we will realize that our only true security is in Him.)

In Christ, You Are STRONG.

Ephesians 5:10 - "Finally, be **strong in the Lord** and in the strength of His might."

We all have an inner strength, a physical strength, and an intellectual strength. We tend to use our strength resolve or deal with the issues of life. However, events, circumstances, and relationships can rob us of those human strengths. God allows events in our life to reveal to us that our human strengths are no match for the power of sin, the flesh, or Satan. He reminds us through these events that the supernatural strength He provides us in our true identity can never be defeated or overcome. Paul came to realize that his human strengths were actually weaknesses in 2 Corinthians 12:8-10.

Questions: What are some things that can rob you of your physical, intellectual, and inner strength? What do you think it would look like in your life to live from Christ's strength?

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you how you are trying to use your own inner or intellectual strength to deal with struggles or issues in your life that can only be truly dealt with in God's strength. Seek Him to give you deeper revelation and desire to quit trusting in your own strength and live from His strength.

In Christ You Are Totally ADEQUATE.

2 Corinthians 3:5 - "Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our **adequacy** is from God."

Many believers feel or believe they are unworthy and/or inadequate. We look at ourselves, and we don't measure up to the world's standards of adequacy/worthiness. We may seek our adequacy and worth in relationships, our job, or in "things." However, these will never bring us the adequacy or worthiness that we can only find in Christ. Here's the good news: Believing and living from your adequacy in Christ relieves you of the pressure of trying to find your adequacy in someone or something else.

Questions: Even though you feel or believe that you are inadequate, does that change the truth that you are totally adequate in Christ? How do you believe it would change your behavior if you truly believe that you are adequate in Christ?

Engaging God: If you struggle with inadequacy, begin entrusting your inadequacy to God and take steps of faith for Him to renew your mind to the truth that you are totally adequate in your new identity.

In Christ You Are UNCONDITIONALLY LOVED.

1 John 4:16 - “*And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love...*”

1 John 3:1 – “*See how **great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God.***”

Romans 8:38,39 - “*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***”

You no longer have to believe that you are unlovable because God immeasurably, eternally, and unconditionally loves you. It is His essence to do so! He has no greater desire than to love you because of Who He is. In addition, Romans 8:38-39 clearly points out that nothing can separate you from His love. There is nothing that you can possibly do that will change God’s continuous flow of His love for you.

God’s love does not depend on who you are or on what you have or have not done. It is based solely upon Who He is. Since God is love, and He is in you, then you possess all of God’s love. You not only can receive God’s unconditional love, but you can also allow God’s love to flow through you to others.

Questions: If you don’t feel or experience God’s unconditional love, does that change the truth that He loves you? How would it change your perspective toward God if you truly believe that there is nothing that you can do (or not do) to change His love for you?

Meditate: on the verses for the four characteristics of your new identity in this section.

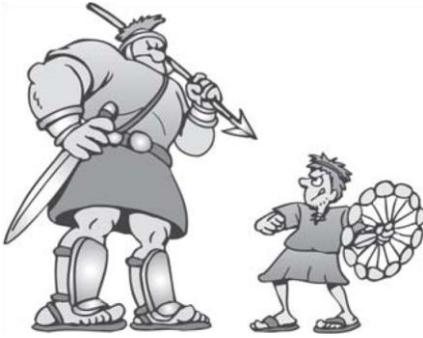
Engaging God: If you struggle on some level about God’s love, seek Him through steps of faith to replace your lying beliefs with the truth that He eternally, immeasurably, and unconditionally loves you.

In Christ You Are VICTORIOUS And Are More Than A Conqueror.

1 Corinthians 15:57 - “*but thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through ... Christ.*”

Romans 8:37 - “*But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us”*

or



to

situation will turn you to dependence upon God and will allow Him to be victorious through you. Therefore, start living from the victory in Christ in your true identity.

You may see yourself as a failure, but in Christ you are victorious and a conqueror. There is no problem, conflict, adversity that Christ cannot conquer through you. On the other hand, you may see yourself as a “self-sufficient” victor or conqueror in life apart from Christ. Since the truth is that apart from God you can do **nothing** (John 15:5), God loves you enough that He will bring impossible circumstances (or relationships) into your life reveal to you your inability to overcome that situation. Recognizing your weakness and inability to resolve a

Questions: If you feel like a failure, does that change the truth that in Christ you are more than a conqueror? If in Christ you are victorious, do you have to strive to be victorious?

Engaging God: Look at the areas where you think you are failing in life. In those areas, ask God to give you revelation of what it looks like to walk in victory in those areas.

In Christ You Are FREE.

Galatians 5:1 - “It is for freedom that **Christ has set us free.** Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

Romans 8:2 - “For the power of the life-giving Spirit **has freed you through Jesus Christ** from the power of sin that leads to death.”

Take a close look at Galatians 5:1. It says that you have been set free. It is past tense! It is a completed act. Your freedom was won at the cross. As a result, in Christ you are free from the power of sin, from your fleshly behavior, from legalism, and from your defeating sin patterns. You are also free from the grip of the world and the power of Satan. In other words, you no longer have to live as if you are still enslaved to those things because the truth is that you have been set free from them.

Question: Even though you may not be feeling freedom in some area of your life, does it change the truth that you have been set free?

Engaging God: Ask God to persuade you that even though you may not feel free from the power of sin, fleshly behavior, a defeating sin pattern, etc., that you have been set free.

In Christ You Have The MIND OF CHRIST.

1 Corinthians 2:16b - “...we have the **mind of Christ.**”

What does it mean that you have the mind of Christ? It means that you no longer have to rely on your limited and finite wisdom, understanding, discernment, and intellect to try and figure out life. For every situation that you face, you can draw on Christ's infinite knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and discernment.

Question: Could it be that God allows difficult situations in your life so that you will see your need to draw on Him as your Source for divine wisdom, discernment and understanding? What are the situations you are facing today that you need the mind of Christ?

Engaging God: In those situations, ask God to stop you from continuing to draw on your limited wisdom, discernment or understanding and begin to draw on His.

In Christ You Are A SAINT.

Colossians 1:12 – *“giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.”*

Most believers I know identify themselves as sinners. Why? Because they believe their sinful behavior determines their true identity. However, since you are a “saint” you no longer have to identify yourself as a sinner. Why? God says over and over in His word that you are a saint. This doesn't mean that you will never sin again. It means that in God's eyes your identity is no longer determined by your sinful behavior. You might say it this way: in your true identity you are no longer a sinner. Rather, you are a saint who sometimes sins. Since all of your sins have been removed and God remembers your sin no more (Isaiah 43:25), then know with confidence that God no longer sees you as a sinner.

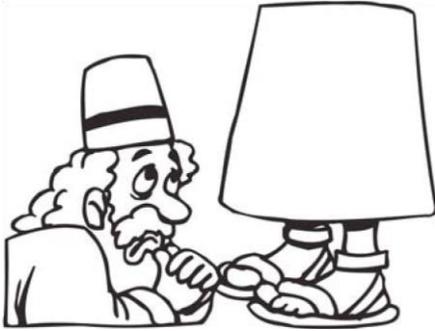
Question: How might it change the way you think if you saw yourself as a saint who sometimes sins rather than as a sinner?

Engaging God: Ask God to begin persuading you that your identity is no longer that you are a sinner. Seek Him to reveal to you that you are a saint even though your behavior may not always be “saintly.”

In Christ You Are A FORGIVING Person.

Ephesians 4:32 - *“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”*

you
that



You may have been offended by another person, and don't feel that you have to forgive them (or you believe you have the right **not** to forgive). The truth is that you have no excuse for not forgiving others. Why? It is because in your true identity you **are** a forgiving person. Whether or not you feel like forgiving is not the issue. You can choose to forgive because that is your true identity in Christ. If you are unwilling to forgive, ask God to move your heart to be willing to forgive.

Questions: Is there someone in your life that you don't feel like forgiving? Since you are a forgiving person in Christ, do you still have the right not to forgive that person?

Engaging God: If you struggle with forgiving someone, begin entrusting your unforgiveness to God and diligently seek Him to renew your mind to the truth that you are a forgiving person and set you free from your unforgiving attitude.

Contrasting Living From Human Characteristics Versus Living From Your New Identity In Christ

I feel that it might be helpful at this point of the study to draw a contrast between living from human characteristics versus living from the divine characteristics of our new identity in Christ.

Human strength – is a human strength of character that has limitations and weaknesses.

Christ's strength – has no limitations or weaknesses.

Human self-confidence – has limitations in that there are people or circumstances that can rob man's self-confidence.

Christ's confidence – has no limitations and cannot be compromised by circumstances or people.

Human fearlessness – is an illusion because every man has one or more things that they fear.

Christ's fearlessness – means that you do not have to be fearful in any situation.

Human control – is also an illusion. Man has very little control over circumstances, relationships, and even his own life.

Christ's control – keeps you from sinning and keeps you at rest by knowing that God is in control.

Human acceptance - is based on what others think about you. You can be rejected by others.

Christ's acceptance - means that you don't take ownership of other's rejection because of your unconditional acceptance in Christ.

Meditate: Ask God to clarify in your mind the differences between the characteristics of being a man versus being a man living from his new identity in Christ.

Engaging God: Ask God to expose where you are living from your human characteristics versus your true identity in Christ. Seek Him to move you away from living from your human characteristics to living from your true identity.

Two Critical Things To Remember Concerning Your New Identity

#1 - Your BEHAVIOR Does Not Determine Your Identity In Christ

This is a question you may be asking: "Even though God's truth says that I am righteous, accepted, forgiving, etc., my attitudes and/or behavior may tell me just the opposite. Which is true, what my behavior tells me, or what God is telling me is true of me? "

Even though your behavior may not always line up with what God says is true about you, does it change the truth of your identity in Christ? The answer is NO! As believers, God has given you, in your human spirit, a new identity that is separate and apart from your sinful behavior. Before salvation, what you believed and how you behaved revealed your identity.

However, now that your new identity is part of God's divine nature in you, your fleshly, sinful behavior no longer determines who you really ARE. Consider this illustration. When I was born into the Loveless family, I became a Loveless. It doesn't make any difference if I am a good Loveless or a bad Loveless; my behavior doesn't change my identity as a Loveless. In the same way, your identity in Christ remains unchanged by your behavior.

Let's look at some examples:

Example #1: - Even though you may choose fleshly behavior and commit an unrighteous act of being critical or judgmental, it does not change the truth that in your new identity in Christ you are righteous.

Example #2: - Your sinful behavior may lead you to an unforgiving attitude toward your spouse who has offended you. This does not change the truth that since you are a forgiving person in Christ, you can forgive.

Does the fact that your fleshly behavior does not determine your identity give you license to live from your fleshly behavior? Of course not. God is never pleased with your sin in any form. However, it is essential to understand that because of what God has done in giving you a new identity, you have the choice to live no longer from your sinful behavior.

Meditate: On the truth that your behavior does not determine your identity.

Engaging God: If you struggle with the truth that your identity is based on your behavior, then ask God to renew your mind to the truth that your sinful behavior does not determine your identity.

***As a Christian, your sinful, fleshly behavior
does NOT determine your identity in Christ.
What GOD SAYS about you determines your new identity***

#2 - Your FALSE Beliefs And Feelings Do Not Determine Your Identity In Christ

Even though God has given you a new identity in your human spirit, you still have false beliefs and negative feelings about yourself. It is important to understand that your false beliefs or negative feelings about yourself don't change the truth of who you are in Christ. In other words, the false beliefs you are believing or the negative feelings you are feeling do not change the truth of your new identity in Christ.

Let's look at some examples:

<u>False Belief Or Feeling</u>	<u>The Truth Of Your New Identity In Christ</u>
You feel/believe you are rejected.	You are accepted and acceptable in Christ. (Romans 15:7)
You believe that you are self-sufficient.	Your sufficiency can only be found in Christ. (2 Corinthians 9:8)
You don't feel like forgiving.	You are a forgiving person in Christ. (Ephesians 4:32)
You don't feel unconditionally loved by _____.	God unconditionally loves you. (1 John 4:16)

Perhaps up until now your false beliefs and negative feelings have been the truth to you. However, now that you at least understand intellectually that God has given you a new identity, He wants you to believe His truth as opposed to what your negative feelings and false beliefs are telling you.

Meditate: on the truth that your false beliefs and negative feelings do not determine your true identity.

Engaging God: Begin taking steps of faith for God to persuade you of your true identity even though you have false beliefs and/or feelings about yourself.

Summary

I trust that God has used the truths in this study to give you deeper insight into the makeup of your identity and that you will allow Him to persuade you of your TRUE identity in Christ. The two questions you may be asking at this point are, “I know that I have a new identity, but why do I still choose to live from my false beliefs?” and “How do I move from living from God’s truth versus my false beliefs?” We will explore the answers to those two questions in the next lesson.