



Week 4: Colossians 1:11-14

9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. **11** May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. **13** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

About This Week's Message – January 23, 2011

This week's message will be big on the themes concerning our identity in Christ. Your 1:10 group time will spend a lot of time talking about our identity in Christ. We'll look at what was accomplished on the cross (12-14) – we are qualified, given an inheritance from the Father, delivered from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of Jesus, redemption, forgiveness. We'll first explore Paul's prayer for the Colossians, dipping back into last week's text of verses 9 and 10 for a bit. Paul prays the believers would be filled with knowledge of God's will, bear fruit, be strengthened to persevere, and to worship God in thankfulness for Jesus. We'll work through those four points, then explore our Gospel identity (qualified for inheritance, freed from the bondage of sin, and forgiven and redeemed from our past). After camping out on 12-14 and our identity, we'll cycle back through the four points from 9-10 and how they relate to our identity in Jesus. – Josh

*The following questions are the 1:10 Homework for the week of January 23, 2011.
Comments in the grey boxes will not be included on the 1:10 Homework your group receives.*

Getting Started

This week's study is based on Colossians 1:11-14.

Start by praying for the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Then read through Colossians 1:3-14 a few times before moving on.

With your group, you might want to begin by reading the passage aloud. Maybe you would have someone read beginning in v. 1 and read it imagining a group of people around them, the whole church, hanging on every word of instruction for them from Paul.

The following questions are just introductory discussion starters. Remember that throughout you don't have to cover every single question with your group. Let the Spirit lead!

1. What are some of the first questions you might ask a stranger to get to know them?
2. What are some of your identities? (Examples... Profession? Sports teams? Political party? Coke vs. Pepsi? Etc.) List as many as you can think of.

Digging Deeper

In this section we'll get into the text, both Colossians and some jumps to other parts of Scripture. Remember, you DON'T have to cover every question! You know your group. Depend on the Spirit to guide you.

1. Earlier you listed some of your identities. Did you list your identity in Christ? Why or why not?

Talk about what makes it hard for us to first list who we are (saints, redeemed, set apart, forgiven) rather than what we do. — The core issue is that often times we don't truly believe it at a heart level, and in our sin deny the core effects of the gospel. We all struggle with this to greater and lesser degrees. We find our identity first in what we do instead of who we are. The next question deals with this as well. — — — Here's the big idea to be talking about —> We want to repent and move to the fact that our true identity comes not from anything WE do, but from what Jesus has done. It's imputed to us. God no longer sees us as sinners who do some good, but as holy saints who occasionally sin. See the difference? We're redeemed. Holy ones. Set apart. Made new.

2. Pastor Josh mentioned that sometimes we can live in the past and find our identity in our failures and sin. However the New Testament never refers to believers as sinners, but as saints. If we really believed this, how would it affect our lives?

During the message I'll talk about ontology vs. economy. Ontology = "the nature of being" who we are... our true identity. Economy = "what we do"... our activity... our actions... how we live. We mess things up by thinking that our ontology flows from our economy — i.e. who we are is a result of what we do... But the bible says it's the other way around... what we do is a result of who we are... or in the case of this question, who we see ourselves to be. When we understand our true identity as a redeemed, holy, loved, qualified follower of Jesus, our lives will begin to look dramatically different.

3. **Read Romans 1:18-25.** Here Paul talks about unbelievers and how they have no excuse not to believe in God. Paul says in v. 25 "they exchanged the truth about God for a lie". As you read the whole passage you see how it affects everything about how they live. So what about you? As it relates to your identity and what you believe about yourself, what truths of God's Word have you exchanged for lies of the enemy? How does it affect the way you live?

This is huge and could dominate most of your time depending on how open people are to discuss it. As believers in Christ, we still sin and exchange the truth about Jesus and what he has done for us on the cross for the lies of the enemy. We do this everywhere... Some

assume a relationship with someone will make them whole. Nope, only Jesus. — Some come from homes growing up where no matter what they did it was never good enough. As a result, they tend to focus on their shortcomings and failures and feeling like they never measure up... Not so. Because of Jesus (and him alone) we are qualified! — Some believe that because they have been sinned against (abused, raped, divorced, etc.) that they are vile, unlovely, and worthless... Not true. Jesus redeems, rescues, and renews us. We're a new creation. We are precious and lovely and pure to him, and He loves us passionately. — The list could go on and on. Maybe you would make a list ahead of time of lies we buy into vs. the truth that the Bible teaches. Ephesians 1 & 2 talks extensively about our identity in Christ.

How does buying into these lies affect the way we live?

Here's a list of some passages relating to our gospel identity:

ROMANS 3:2 – WE ARE JUSTIFIED (DECLARED “RIGHTEOUS”) – JUST-AS-IF-I’D NEVER SINNED

1 CORINTHIANS 1:30 – WE ARE PURE AND HOLY IN CHRIST

ROMANS 8:1 – NO CONDEMNATION AWAITS US

EPHESIANS 3:6 – WE SHARE IN THE PROMISE OF BLESSINGS THROUGH CHRIST

ROMANS 8:2 – WE ARE SET FREE FROM THE POWER OF SIN THAT LEADS TO DEATH

1 CORINTHIANS 1:2 – WE ARE SANCTIFIED (MADE HOLY) IN JESUS CHRIST

1 CORINTHIANS 15:22 – WE WILL BE GIVEN NEW LIFE AT THE RESURRECTION

EPHESIANS 5:29-30 – WE ARE MEMBERS OF CHRIST’S BODY, THE CHURCH

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 – WE ARE NEW PERSONS

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 – WE ARE MADE RIGHT WITH GOD

COLOSSIANS 2:11 – WE ARE SET FREE FROM OUR SINFUL NATURE

EPHESIANS 1:3 – WE ARE BLESSED WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN CHRIST

GALATIANS 3:28 – WE ARE ONE IN CHRIST WITH ALL OTHER BELIEVERS

EPHESIANS 1:4 – WE ARE HOLY AND WITHOUT FAULT

2 TIMOTHY 2:10 – WE WILL HAVE ETERNAL GLORY

EPHESIANS 1:5-6 – WE ARE ADOPTED AS GOD’S CHILDREN

EPHESIANS 1:7 – OUR SINS ARE TAKEN AWAY, AND WE ARE FORGIVEN

EPHESIANS 1:10-11 – WE WILL BE BROUGHT UNDER CHRIST’S AUTHORITY

EPHESIANS 2:6 – WE HAVE BEEN RAISED UP TO SIT WITH CHRIST IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS

EPHESIANS 1:13 – WE ARE IDENTIFIED AS BELONGING TO GOD BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

EPHESIANS 2:13 – WE HAVE BEEN BROUGHT NEAR TO GOD

EPHESIANS 2:10 – WE ARE GOD’S MASTERPIECE

COLOSSIANS 2:10 – WE ARE MADE COMPLETE IN CHRIST

EPHESIANS 3:12 – WE CAN COME BOLDLY AND CONFIDENTLY INTO GOD’S PRESENCE

4. **Read Ephesians 1:3-14.** Paul talks a lot about our gospel identity in Ephesians chapters 1 and 2. Make a list of everything you can find just in this passage (1:3-14) about our identity in Jesus.

5. When you understand your identity in Jesus, how does it affect the way you give thanks?

You may have already noticed that in this 1:10 discussion we’re working backwards through Sunday’s message and the passage (Col. 1:9-14). We’re starting with our gospel identity in v. 12-14, and then going back to say “ok, so how does that affect how we live?” (v. 9-12) – You might just back through each of the 4 numbered points from Sunday’s message notes (we only explore the last two here) and say, “How does knowing my identity in Christ affect this?” 1) Knowledge of God and his will, 2) Bearing Fruit, 3) Strengthened to persevere, 4) Worshiping the father in thankfulness

6. What is one of the hardest situations and/or seasons of life you’ve ever had to endure? What was the hardest part?

7. Paul prays the believers would endure and be patient “with joy”. How does knowing and understanding your identity help you do this?

For questions 6 and 7 you might explore how some of our false identities keep us from persevering and enduring and being patient the way that God calls us to be.

Up Close

1. What is one lie, one false identity, that you need to exchange for the truth of God's Word?

Sometimes your spouse or good friend can see this more clearly and help you figure it out better than you can on our own. — Another good reason for 1:10 Groups.

2. What are things you are thankful to God for?

3. What about Jesus are you thankful for?

Spend some time in prayer tonight just thanking God for the identity he gives us in Jesus. Thank him for Jesus.

Spending at least some time each week praying for each other will be huge in developing community and seeing growth in your group. Don't just skip over this. If you're starting a new group, it will probably be sparse at first, but set the pace early and establish prayer for each other as an important part of your time together.

Focus first on prayer for each other, but if you need additional ideas, prayer requests will be on the inserts each week after the 1:10 Homework.