
07 Genuine Discipleship – Identification

Recap to Date

1. We had two sessions on the real commitment of seeking God, being aggressive and intentional in that quest. God has always required that people seek Him passionately. That is going to be necessary the more we talk about Christ-like ness. This is foundational to our goal of genuine discipleship, growth to maturity and transformation.
2. We looked at the importance of knowing our starting point and our destination in God's Positioning System.
3. We had two sessions on the world, the flesh and the devil really exposing the predicament that we are in. We have this flesh we inherited from Adam. We live in this world system run by the devil.

Old Testament Lack of Understanding About the Flesh

In the Old Testament they did not know much about the flesh with its old man nature and its propensity to sin. They really did not know much about the world either. Those two topics were really exploded upon by Christ.

John 1:17

17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

This is not saying that the Old Testament law was not true. Rather it says that greater grace, truth, and life came through Christ's unfolding of the truth.

- He exposed the devil and the devil's snare.
- He exposed to people their sinfulness and inability to keep the law.
- Upon Christ's coming those who sat in darkness saw a great light as he exposed the world, the flesh, the devil.

When we consider this predicament, we may be overwhelmed and think, "I am just going to get saved and wait for the Lord's return." However, the New Testament actually details how we can really become Christ-like. In the Old Testament God would put holy spirit on some who would communicate to others but nearly everyone was a body-and-soul-only being with no direct communication with God.

In the Gospels were they really able to walk like Christ? No! Despite being in his presence and witnessing all the signs, miracles, and wonders. They saw him cast out devils and raise Lazarus from the dead. They could observe it all, but they could not yet walk like him.

Acts 1:8

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and **you** will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The highlight here is YOU will be witnesses! I began to realize that is not just the power, because in [Matthew 10](#) Christ gave them authority and power go out and heal the sick and cast out spirits and they came back amazed. They could operate the power, but they had not yet changed. They did not have the heart, the compassion to truly walk like Christ. We saw that because later in the gospels they fell short time and again even saying they would go to the death with Christ but when the time came, they all fled. When did that change come? On the Day of Pentecost something huge happened that we need to explore and understand.

Do We Really Want to be Christ-like? Do We Really Know What It Means?

Pause and thoughtfully consider these verses that speak to what is really required.

John 5:16

[16](#) And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. [16](#) And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. [17](#) But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."

Experience opposition and persecution. Jesus was always doing the Father's will which resulted in him being persecuted. If we are really going to speak the Word, there is going to be opposition.

John 8:28, 29

[28](#) So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man [crucifixion], then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

Relinquish all we say and do to God's direction. We need to ask ourselves, "Do I really not want to do anything on my own authority?" Do I really want to be like Christ and speak only what the Father tells me. That is a big deal! Take stock of what you have done and spoken just over the last 24 hours!

[29](#) And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him."

Be a "sent one." Do I want to be one who is sent? Do I want to always do the things that are pleasing to Him? Certainly, we may *want* to, but do we actually *do* it?! That is what we will be exploring! We must "count the cost" as Jesus had said.

John 10:17

[17](#) For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. [18](#) No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

Lay down our life. Do I want to lay down my life? We don't have to physically die but do I truly want to die to self? By his free will he made this choice. The same free-will choice exists for all of us. I have authority to do with my life what I want to. When I get up in the morning, I can ask,

“What do I want to do today,” or I can ask, “What does God want me to do today to be pleasing to Him.”

John 12:49

49 For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.

Speak the Word and nothing but. Again, take inventory of what you have said, what you have spoken about over the last day or so. Am I willing to say I want to be Christ-like—I want to look to the Father’s commandment and speak only as he directs me.

John 14: 8-11

8 Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? **10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

23 Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

God and Christ to make their home in me. This section reiterates the commitment to not speak on our own authority but to speak as the Father directs. Then in verse 23 do I want God and Christ to make their home in me or is there no room because I am too entangled with too many other things? Consider the parable of the sower and the various conditions of one’s heart that may prevent the Word from taking hold.

YOU Gotta Go!

Remember again Romans 7 where Paul says in my flesh dwells no good thing. What I want to do I don’t, what I don’t want to do, I do! Who shall deliver me from this dead body? So, when we consider this struggle within and what we truly want to do, we come to the conclusion: “You Gotta Go!” Meaning what did God actually do to make it possible for me to become Christ-like? Can a human do it on his own? No! Can we do it in our flesh? No!

Day of Pentecost – It is Christ IN YOU!

What did God do to make it possible? Ever since the Day of Pentecost after holy spirit was poured out those who believed got Christ in them. This is the miracle of all miracles. What we do with it afterwards is a free-will choice.

Speaking of the gospel...

Colossians 1:25-28

25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, **26** the mystery [sacred secret] hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.

The word “mystery” at the time this was written carried a different meaning than it does today. It is better understood with the word “secret.” It was a secret held by God until it was revealed and the best translation of it is “sacred secret.”

This sacred secret was hidden in God. No one knew it was coming in the Old Testament. Principalities, powers, devil spirits did not know it! It is a great huge thing that happened on the Day of Pentecost with the coming of the holy spirit.

27 To them [to his saints-born-again believers] God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory.

We can't do it, Christ did it! He obeyed the law. He was obedient unto death. Now I have Christ in me, the hope of glory. What does it mean? What kind of ability does that give us? How do we leverage that so we can actually walk like Christ?

28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, **that we may present everyone mature in Christ.**

This is a huge component of our goal of genuine discipleship and growth to maturity! In Ephesians we see more of the magnitude of this.

Ephesians 3:1-10

1 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— **2** assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, **3** how the mystery [sacred secret] was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly.

4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery [sacred secret] of Christ, **5** which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

Again, it was not known in the Old Testament. Not known to the devil. Notice that it says it was revealed to his holy apostles and prophets (plural). He gave it to multiple people so they could all confirm what really happened on the Day of Pentecost. Oh, my goodness, **we have Christ in us!** We have no way of knowing what all Christ shared with them during those 40 days between his resurrection and ascension!

6 This mystery [sacred secret] is^a that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

The fact that the Gentiles are now fellow heirs with any Jews who believed was also new.

7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. **8** To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable [untrackable] riches of Christ,

The riches of Christ being in us and what he accomplished was not fully known in the Old Testament, but now it is revealed to Paul and other apostles. Now they are living it. Now they are writing about it. There is corroboration on it from Peter, John, Paul, and James.

9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery [sacred secret] hidden for ages in **10** God, who created all things, **10** so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

The devil and devil spirits are now going to say..." Oh my God this incredible secret that God held ... we crucified the Messiah ... God raised him from the dead ... the Day of Pentecost came and all these believers now have Christ in them!" **Instead of Christ being in one place he is everywhere there is a born-again believer!**

You may ask, "Why aren't there signs, miracles, and wonders taking place all over the place? Why aren't there people living in a way that what they say and what they do is just what the father does?" This is the depth of the Epistles which is rarely taught. "How can they know without a preacher?" What we intend to do in this series is teach this in depth!

The Doctrine of Identification

Having Christ in us is a big deal. It is what enables us to choose to live like Christ, instead of by our old man nature. This is what is referred to in theological circles as the doctrine of identification wherein I identify myself with Christ and his accomplishments. To really understand this, it will take each of you reading it and the Lord working in you enlightening your understanding and you then actually beginning to live it out. Then you will be able to see and experience what it really means.

Colossians 3:1-2

1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

I was raised with Christ? I don't remember that happening? How can I set my mind on things above where Christ is at the right hand of God?

2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. **3** For you have died,

Is anyone taken aback by that? YOU HAVE DIED. But I am still here and breathing. But God's word declares "You have died".

and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ who is your^a life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

What does it mean that we died? In order for us to have the option not to live by our body and soul and by our flesh we have to have another option which is Christ in us, the hope of glory, a spiritual man. It is a new man. You can't see it, but you can see the manifestations of its presence within. I have an option to live according to it rather than according to my sinful, dead flesh.

The doctrine of identification is that spiritually upon believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, his resurrection and making him Lord, "we," meaning our old man nature, did all this with him:

- When Christ died, we died with him.

- When Christ was raised, we were raised with him.
- When Christ ascended, we ascended with him.
- When Christ was seated at God's right hand, we were seated with him.

That is why we are directed to seek the things that are above because spiritually that is where we are as well.

Romans 6 is a pivotal section on our identification with Christ.

Romans 6:1-14

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? **2** By no means!

The emphasis is...what are you crazy? That is ridiculous! Read Romans 5 where it speaks of by one man's disobedience [Adam] we have sin entering the world and by another man's obedience [Christ] we have the free gift of eternal life.

Romans 5:21

21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

From this verse one might conclude okay then we can go on sinning because we have eternal life. So, Paul is emphatically countering that thought here!

Romans 6:1-14

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? **2** By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? **3** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

When we hear the word "baptism" many people automatically think of water. But the word actually simply means "immersed." So, when the Word speaks of baptism in the holy spirit it means "immersed." Here when we were immersed into Christ we were immersed into his death.

4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death,

So, this old man nature that continues to sin was buried with him by immersion into death...

in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Here is stated the purpose ... in order that ... just as Christ was raised from the dead we also might walk in **newness of life**.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. **6** We know that our old self^a was crucified with him

Again, hallelujah, my old self was crucified with him (died!) ...

in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing,

The purpose, once again, that the body of sin that Paul described in Romans 7 might be “brought to nothing.” Other translations render this Greek word as destroyed, made unemployed, done away with, crushed. Do we still have our flesh? Yes, so it has not been destroyed yet. The sense of the word [[katargeó](#)] is that it no longer has authority over us. We don’t have to live by that old man nature anymore, we have another option i.e., Christ in us.

The key is how do I learn to live by the Christ in me, rather than by my old man nature? That is a lens through which we can view the Epistles. They teach us how to die to sin, die to the flesh, die to the old man nature, die to the world, and live in newness of life according to the new nature.

If this is new to you it may seem very ethereal. But this is the heart of the gospel. Teaching us how not to live by the flesh and how to live by the spirit that is in us.

[7](#) For one who has died has been set free^b from sin.

Think of when you have attended an open casket funeral service. There is the body of the deceased person. Can they sin anymore? No, they can’t because they are dead. We have also died. Our old nature died with Christ. So how am I going to live? I am going to live by the Christ in me. How, oh how, do I get that into my brain? That is why we need to baptize ourselves and our brains in the Word! Spiritually we have the mind of Christ in us. We have a new spiritual heart. But I have to “put on” in my brain the thoughts of Christ. How he lived. What he did and how to live according to the new nature.

[7](#) For one who has died has been set free^b from sin.

We don’t like to see ourselves as dead. Think of Gethsemene. Did Christ want to die? No, he sought God three times and asked if there was any other way.

[8](#) Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

(Just in case we didn’t get it the first 3 times he said so.) He had to believe that by giving his life and dying he would be raised again. He trusted God to that extent.

We have to believe that when we walk by the spirit God is going to deliver for us.

[9](#) We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. [10](#) For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives **to God**.

That phrase “to God” is important!

[11](#) So **you also must** consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

“You must,” this is the first command in the Epistles.

[12](#) Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body,

If we let it, it will! Don’t let sin reign, don’t let it play king. We have a new King, Christ, and he is now our Lord!

to make you obey its passions.

Passions is not necessarily lustful or sexual. All of us have “desires,” things we want to do.

13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. **14** For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

This is the most astounding miracle that God has ever performed! He ingeniously devised a way for us to die yet to still be alive. In Noah's time to get rid of sin He had to get rid of the people. So, this is a way for us to die but still be alive and have the opportunity to live and walk like Christ did.

A class member brought up [Watchman Nee](#) with an anecdote about when he first learned this identification with Christ's death—he went running through the streets of Shanghai shouting “I'm dead!, I'm dead! Which is the same as shouting “I'm free! I'm free.” Dying to self allows us to live for Christ. Free to be all that we can be!

If you are disciples, you shall be free indeed, then you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. People misquote this all the time omitting the essential first part. It is if you are disciples that this freedom is available to you.

Daily self-talk is required to remind yourself of who you are and what is your real identity.

- I am the Christ in me.
- I am the new nature.
- I am the new man.

To do this guess who has to go. “I gotta go.”

Daily reminders are helpful. Put on a cross and remind yourself. Reset the grandfather clock and do your daily reset. We will be getting into the renewed mind and what we must do with our minds. We wander. We go off on tangents. We get filled with fear and anxiety especially if we look around us at the condition of the world.

People actually did this in the book of Acts. Think of Paul and his transformation from cruel and persecuting to kind, gentle and persecuted.

The doctrine of identification is encapsulated in these two verses.

Galatians 2:19, 20

19 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. **20** I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

I am going to live by the Christ who lives in me and believe God. We will see traits of our parents emerging in ourselves as we grow older. But at any age we can still live by the spirit and be changed!

The Christ in You is Called by Many Names

The Christ in you is called by many names but it is just one thing.

It is called:

- Christ in you
- The new nature
- The new man
- It's all in all
- It's Christ's eyes behind your eyes, Christ's ears behind your ears

Revelation can come to you through any of your spiritual senses.

Ephesians 4:20-24

20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!— **21** assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, **22** to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,

23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **24** and to put on the new self,

I am to put on in my mind the thoughts from the Word that correspond to the identity and the ability and the power and the fruit of that new nature. This is putting on the new self!

created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

This new self is created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness! Genesis 1 says the God created Adam in the image and likeness of God with spirit. He lost it! Now it is restored in TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS and HOLINESS. That holy spirit in me is holy, it is righteousness, it is in the image of God. I have to put that on in my brain. That is the great challenge.

We have the comfort of eternal life. We have the challenge of becoming Christlike.

The Word details how and what to do. That is why Christ said, "count the cost."

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

People may say this is talking about legalism and perfectionism. It is not. We will still fall short. We will still sin. But we don't need to spend time wallowing in guilt because Christ took care of that. We keep pressing on. But there will still be consequences. This can be a great motivator to walk the Word, so we don't have to live with consequences.

After Teaching Discussion

The goal/end game is not to sin. Peter talks about going back and engaging in habitual sin is like a dog returning to vomit.

Metaphorosis came up as an example but will be covered when we get to Transformation. Point was made that the butterfly is COMPLETELY different from the caterpillar.

Be Ye Transformed! We don't transform ourselves.

Romans 12:1-2

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a

living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.^b **2** Do not be conformed to this world,^c but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Living sacrifice – sacrifices are generally dead. We are called to be a LIVING sacrifice. What is dying? The old man! Holy and acceptable to God which is our daily spiritual worship.

Reminders – whatever works for you to remind yourself of the need for a daily reset. Paul said, “I die daily.” God will not change you. We have a responsibility in our transformation.

Seeking God, Falling in Love with God—motivates us to leave sin behind. Things we used to enjoy like off-color jokes for instance aren’t funny any more etc. As you spend time in the Word reading it meditating upon it transformation happens.

Grateful heart comes from the peace God gave us.

Look at your flesh like a spoiled child. Speak to temptation: “No! We’re not going there!”

Responding to God and His Word with love blesses God enormously.