

**“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,
in which you formerly walked according to the course of this
world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit
that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”**

Ephesians 2:1,2

Pretend that your life is like a house. Pretend that you can place old sin in storage boxes in the basement. Some sins are bigger than others and take up more space, but you still have plenty of room. Now, fast forward a few years. A few more. A few more. The basement is full and you are storing sins in other places...your den and bedroom, and kitchen and closets. Your house is filled with boxes and they are spilling into the yard and street. You are desperate and constantly reminded and tripping over your sin; it plays in your mind like a broken tape, over and over with no escape. Your life feels cluttered and dirty.

When you accept Christ as your personal Savior and ask for forgiveness, He brings a moving van and takes EVERY SINGLE box away. He doesn't look inside the boxes; He

The question, **Who am I?**, was a question often asked during the past three decades. It was followed with the question, **“What is my place in life, my purpose for living?”** As our society becomes more centered on material values, a secular world view, and as we try to find ourselves in our work, careers, material things, and the ever-seeking next thrill, these questions become more and more important. Indeed, many people try to stay so busy, with radios and TVs

playing all the time, with instant communication via the telephone, with cellular phones that we carry with us everywhere we go, and now with access to computers and the Internet that they leave no time for just being alone, quietly thinking, praying or developing relationships with people (family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, etc.), to say nothing about developing a relationship with God.

1. Take a moment and describe who you are. _____

2. Now that you have become a Christian, describe your Christian life. _____

3. If you had the opportunity, what would you say to an unsaved person about the joys of Christian life? _____

4. Some people separate their Christian or religious life from their secular life. Indeed, as stated in Roberta Bondi's book, ***To Love as God Loves***, she talks about the problem that some people have with this issue. "The job of the church and its clergy is to save souls, not meddle in secular affairs. Christians who believe this do not believe that God is the metaphorical center of creation, drawing all things to that center. Instead they place God in another, spiritual realm, the realm of faith, separate from the flesh-and blood world we actually live in." Roberta Bondi goes on to say, "We all expect to love our neighbor from the day we become Christian, and we also expect to love God. Unfortunately, our expectations usually have almost nothing to do with what happens. Many of us have no sense of God at all, or if we do, it is more like a sense of duty or even fear toward God. Then, because we believe we should love God, we judge ourselves to be religious failures."

Our ancestors made no such assumptions about Christian love. Gregory of Nyssa, for example, characterized the life of the monk in three stages. At the beginning, she or he serves God out of fear, like a slave; next, the service of God stems from the desire for a reward, like that of a hired hand. Only in the final stage does this person serve God out of friendship with God, or out of the pure love of God, as a child of God's household.

Take a moment and reflect on where you are in your relationship with God.

Fear. _____

Reward. _____

Friendship. _____

Love. _____

5. **Describe your identity before becoming a Christian.**

5.1. Colossians 1:13 _____

5.2. Ephesians 2:1-2 *“AND you were dead in your trespasses and sins, /in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”*

5.3. Acts 16:18

6. In John 3:3, Jesus made it clear that **spiritual rebirth is essential for us to have a new identity**. This new identity is based upon the change that occurs within us with the birth of our spirit. God is now our father in a very real sense and we have a direct relationship with Him.

6.1. Romans 8:16-17



7. **In every way we are God's children.**

7.1. Ephesians 1:5 _____

7.2. Galatians 3:26 *“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”*

7.3. 1 Thessalonians 5:5 _____

7.4. Hebrews 2:11-16 *“For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, / saying, ‘I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE.’ / And again, ‘I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM.’ And again, ‘BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.’ / Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, / and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. / For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham.”*

8. **If we are children of God and God is a King, what is our status? Who are we?**

8.1. Read Psalm 47. The theme of this Psalm is, King of all the Earth. *“O CLAP your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy. / For the LORD Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth. / He subdues peoples under us*



And nations under our feet. /He chooses our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom He loves. /God has ascended with a shout, The LORD, with the sound of a trumpet. /Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises. /For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm. / God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne. /The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted.

8.2. Psalm 45:16

9. **As children of God, is there anything we cannot ask Him directly?**

9.1. Matthew 7:7-11

9.2. Does God always give his children anything they ask?

10. **God loves you.** Some people cannot believe that God can love them unconditionally. Many say that they have sinned so much and done so much harm, that it is impossible for God to love them. Nothing could be further from the truth. God loves all of His children. Roberta Bondi in her book ***To Love as God Loves***, states; “God loves beyond our dreams, extravagantly, without limit. Whatever we might imagine God’s love for us to be, it is far deeper, steadier, gentler. It cannot be manipulated or bargained with. It cannot be earned or lost. In the words of Psalm 125, it surrounds us as the mountains surround Jerusalem. It fills the whole creation with light. It shines with a kind of joy in the heavens, and it illuminates each blade of grass, each tiny bug, opening our eyes to see them. It is the air we breathe, the ground we walk on, the food we eat.”



“This love draws us to God in ways we know and in ways we do not know, for God made our universe in such a way that everything created is attracted to God its creator and lover. Nothing exists whose deepest being is not turned toward God. Everything that exists only becomes what it is meant to be as it moves toward God. The movement toward God is the movement of the planets and the tides, the sun and the moon, the birth, growth, and decay of animals and plants, the loving movement of human beings toward other human beings.”

10.1. As children of God, Jesus gave us a new commandment. Read John 13:33-35

11. Because we are not our old selves, but children of God, we should begin to behave differently.

11.1. Galatians 2:20

11.2. Colossians 3:3 - For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

11.3. Romans 6:6

12. When we experienced our new birth, we were given the power to act as God’s children.

12.1. Romans 6:18



12.2. Colossians 3:9-10 *“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, /and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”*

13. What is our identity in Christ? Jesus gave us an important view of this new identity in the following verses.

13.1. John 15:1-11 *“I AM the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. /Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit./ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. /Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. / I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. / If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. /If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. / My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. / Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. / If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. / These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”*

13.2. Ephesians 2:6



14. When does our new identity become a reality?

14.1. 1 John 4:13-15 _____

14.2. Ephesians 1:13 *“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation - having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.”* _____

14.3. 2 Corinthians 5:17 _____

15. In Ephesians 1:4-8, God tells us how he chose us before the world was created.

16. **We are saints.** The world would have us believe that who we are is dependent upon how we dress, which products we use or what we drive. The advertisers tell us what brands we are suppose to wear, which fat free foods we should eat and the kind of tennis shoes we have to wear. To many people, if you do not measure up to these artificial standards, you are not acceptable.

On the other hand, how do we introduce people? If you are the owner of a business or at the top of an organization, you might be introduced as the CEO or president. If you are in the education profession, you would be introduced by listing your degrees. If you work for a corporation, you might be introduced as manager, director or vice president. If you look at a person’s resume, it will reveal all sorts of things including a list of your accomplishment and life’s work. What does God say about you? Who does God say that you are? Enter the appropriate word from the verses preceding the blank.



16.1. **I have been** (Ephesians 1:4) chosen **and I am** (Ephesians 1:4) blameless, a precious adopted (Ephesians 1:5) son/daughter **through Jesus Christ. I am** (Romans 5:1) justified **through faith and have** (Romans 5:1) peace **with God. I have been** (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14) redeemed **through His blood and have** (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14) forgiveness **of sins. Therefore, I am no longer** (Romans 8:1) condemned. **I am now a** (Ephesians 1:1) saint **and no longer a sinner saved by grace and a** (1 John 3:1) child **of the Living God.**

17. **As a member of God’s family you are apart of God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved. How should we conduct ourselves?**

17.1. Colossians 3:12 *“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience”*

17.2. Colossians 3:5-10 *“Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. /For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, /and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. /But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. /Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, /and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”*

17.3. Ephesians 4:25-31 *“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE OF YOU WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another. /BE ANGRY, AND YET DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, / and do not give the devil an opportunity. /He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. /Let no unwholesome word pro-*

ceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. /Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. /Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.”

17.4. Ephesians 5:3-4 *“But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; /and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.*

17.5. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality”*

During the week read/sing the following song as a reminder of this lesson.

Power of Your Love - Geoff Bullock

Lord, I come to you, let my heart be changed, renewed, flowing from the grace that I've found in you. Lord I've come to know the weaknesses I see in me; will be stripped away by the power of your Love. Lord unveil my eyes, let me see you face to face, the knowledge of your love as you live in me, Lord renew my mind, as your will unfolds in my life, in living everyday by the power of your love. Hold me close, let your love surround me, bring me near, draw me to your side, and as I wait, I'll rise up like the eagle, and I will soar with you, your spirit leads me on in your power of your Love.