



Rethink

[Ephesians 1:1-14 \(NIV\)](#)

Fifth in a 9-part series titled: *Reset*

Pastor Matt Friend – July 15 & 18, 2021

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– OUTLINE –

Today's Big Idea:

The truest thing about you is what God says about you.

According to Ephesians 1, a Jesus-follower Can Say:

I am...

- #1 – Blessed with every spiritual blessing in Jesus ([v. 3](#))
- #2 – Chosen ([vv. 4-5, 11](#))
- #3 – Holy and blameless in God's sight ([v. 4](#))
- #4 – Loved ([v. 4b](#))
- #5 – Adopted ([vv. 4b-5](#))
- #6 – A trophy of God's grace ([vv. 6-8a, 12, 14](#))
- #7 – Redeemed and forgiven ([v. 7-8a](#))
- #8 – United with Christ ([vv. 8b-10, 13a](#))
- #9 – Sealed with the Holy Spirit ([vv. 13b-14a](#))
- #10 – God's ([v. 14](#))

Today's Takeaway:

Remind yourself every day of your true identity in Jesus.



Resource Recommendation

[Reset: Living a Grace-Paced Life in a Burnout Culture](#)

By David Murray



Rethink

Ephesians 1:1-14 (NIV)

Fifth in a 9-part series titled: *Reset*

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– NOTES –

Today's Big Idea:

The truest thing about you is what God says about you.

Why this message is important:

Today's message is primarily for Christians—for those who've decided to follow Jesus. Thankfully, the gospel changes everything about us. We are radically and eternally changed by the work of Christ. Though our character is *progressively* transformed over time in a process we call spiritual formation, our identity is *instantly* changed based on the finished work of Christ on our behalf. The first half of Ephesians highlights this new identity in Christ.

When I was a newer Christian, I didn't like reading all the *doctrinal stuff*. I would skip over the first half of Ephesians to get to what I called *the good stuff*. "Just tell me what I'm supposed to do," I thought. However, I've since learned that I'll never do what I'm supposed to do until I know who I really am. Knowing our core identity is everything!

The world seems to be "eating our lunch" when it comes to the discussion of identity. The world has turned up the volume so loud on political identity, social identity, gender identity, sexual identity, ethnic identity, and even online identity that as Christians, by and large, we have recoiled in fear from the topic of identity. However, it burdens me to hear about the labels the world is trying to put on us, our kids, and our grandkids. It is forcing our kids to choose unhealthy identities.



This identity threat that I'm talking about today is greater than any Russian phisher, any imposter posing as the deposed prince of Nigeria, or any hacker from China. The identity thieves I'm going after today are far more difficult to detect. Pride, commercials, Netflix, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, parental pressure, success, disappointment, failure, the Devil, aging, bereavement, and even religion have been far more successful at stealing our identities than any online thief.

If you were to get out a pen and paper and answer the question "Who am I?" what would you write? Our answer to that question impacts everything else in life: our self-image, health, ethics, spirituality, roles, relationships, careers, our life stories. Actually, consciously or subconsciously, we write the answer to this question each day. Every day we design, build, or act out an identity—a way we intentionally/accidentally think about ourselves and how we want others to think about us.

How do you identify/see/feel about yourself? I've known some Christians who primarily self-identify as *adulterers* (because of some mistake they made), *failures* (due to a bad decision in their past or circumstances beyond their control), *sinners*, or *nobodies*. Others of us identify ourselves with good things, all the while missing the best things.

So, in this sermon, I invite all Christians to go on a journey with me to pinpoint their true identity. I believe this concept can be life-changing for us all.

According to Ephesians 1, a Jesus-follower Can Say:

I am...

#1 – Blessed with every spiritual blessing in Jesus ([v. 3](#))

Have you seen that bumper sticker that read, "Too blessed to



be stressed”? I like it. However, our blessings extend infinitely beyond things of this life.

All the favor, love, and access that God the Father gave to Jesus, he has now given to you. At Jesus’ baptism the Father said, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” According to the New Testament, the Father says the same thing about you because of Jesus Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).

#2 – Chosen ([vv. 4-5, 11](#))

Sometimes we read passages like this one and think, “Wow, that is really deep.” But when we say that we’re like the little boy who runs out into the ocean and goes out to where his feet can’t touch and he says, “Oh, it’s so deep!” In 7 feet of water he feels like it is really deep, but he has no idea that the ocean gets much, much deeper. Let’s remember that God is much deeper.

Before the world was ever established, God knew you and loved you. There has never been a time when God did not know you and love you. For as long as God has been in existence—from eternity past—he has known about you, cherished you and planned to redeem and save you. In eternity past, God had you on His mind! He planned the intricate details of your salvation!

Jesus taught the same thing. The sheep don’t seek the Shepherd, but the Shepherd seek the sheep.

All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. –John 6:37 (NIV)

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. –John 6:44 (NIV)

“I have no questions that God chose me, because I am quite sure that if God had not chosen me I should never have chosen him; and I am sure he chose me before I was born, or



else he never would have chosen me afterwards; and he must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why he should have looked upon me with special love. So, I feel like I am forced to accept this doctrine.” –Charles Spurgeon

“The subject of God’s choosing immediately raises questions. But after a thorough study of the subject of God’s choosing, I can safely tell you what it means: God chose us! If words have meaning (and they do), then that is what the Bible means when it says, ‘He chose us in Him.’ No one can comprehend or explain how or why some were chosen and others were not. It is a mystery. All we can say is that God’s choosing is a matter of His wisdom and grace—and rejoice if we find ourselves among the chosen.” –David Jeremiah

How does this truth make you feel? Do you find it difficult to believe or understand? If so, don’t worry. If it causes you to feel a bit uncomfortable, let me encourage you with several things:

- Trust God’s Word more than you trust a theological system. Realize every system is inadequate.
- Realize some things are impossible for humans to understand. Deuteronomy 29:29 says, “The secret things belong to the Lord our God.”
- Remember the goal of [Ephesians 1](#) is praise and worship. For thousands of years prior to the enlightenment (prior to us thinking we could fit God into a test tube), humans simply revered and worshiped a God they knew they could never understand. Let’s get back to that!

After a service I was once asked, “Matt, do you believe you brought anything to the table for your salvation?” My answer was, “Yes. I brought a lot to my salvation... a lot of sin. I did all the sinning, and Jesus did all the saving!”



#3 – Holy and blameless in God’s sight ([v. 4](#))

The Bible does not say, “We were holy and blameless, so the Father chose us.” Rather, it says, “He chose us before the foundation of the world—sin and all—so we could be holy and blameless.”

The word “holy” or “holy one” is sometimes translated “saint.” They are from the same root word. Over 60 times the New Testament calls you a saint. When God the Father sees you, he sees you just as righteous as Jesus Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).

#4 – Loved ([v. 4b](#))

The phrase “in love” at the end of verse 4 actually goes with verse 5. God’s predetermination and adoption was motivated by his particular love.

How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! –Psalm 139:17 (NIV)

#5 – Adopted ([vv. 4b-5](#))

Adoption means that we weren’t part of God’s family, but he made us part of his family. Why did he do this? Verse 5 says because it gave him pleasure. In other words, God enjoyed saving you! God not only enjoys saving you, but he enjoys the security you get knowing you’ve been adopted.

#6 – A trophy of God’s grace ([vv. 6-8a, 12, 14](#))

The phrase “to the praise of his glory” is used over and over again in Ephesians. God didn’t chose us because we were lovely. We become lovely because he chose us.

#7 – Redeemed and forgiven ([v. 7-8a](#))

Child of God: Jesus purchased your salvation with His blood, with his death. He “redeemed” you. Redemption is used all the



way back in the Old Testament book of [Exodus](#). It means to be bought out of slavery. In Exodus, we see that God the Father buys slaves out of slavery and begins to call them a family: sons and daughters. What did the Israelites do next? [They put the blood of the lamb over their doors](#). What Paul has in mind here is that a Second Exodus has happened in Jesus Christ. He is the lamb of God that takes away our sin.

What else did Jesus' salvation accomplish for you? Total forgiveness!

How much redemption and forgiveness does Jesus provide? He lavished it upon us!

#8 – United with Christ ([vv. 8b-10, 13a](#))

What is the mystery of God? It's not referring to something we don't understand, but in the Bible, it refers to something that was formerly hidden in the Old Testament but has now been revealed in the New Testament.

From eternity past, the Father has purposed to choose and bless a covenant family. In [Genesis 12](#), we see this started with the physical family of Abraham. Now, through Jesus, anyone can be adopted into that family. Jesus' death covers our worst sins, our worst failures, and in Jesus we find God's grace. In fact, Paul says, that grace has opened up a way for us to understand every part of our lives. In verse 10 he says that God's purpose has always been to unify everything, in heaven and on earth, under the Messiah (which is the Jewish term for Christ). God's plan was always to have a huge family of restored human beings that are unified in Jesus the Messiah. We can see the start of this event in [Acts 2](#) when God calls out a people of multiple languages and nations.

This is God's goal for all things—unity in Christ. In the church, God brings together people who don't think alike, vote alike, eat alike, drink alike, vacation alike... all under the banner of



the gospel. God's plan was always to have a huge family of restored human beings who are unified in Jesus.

#9 – Sealed with the Holy Spirit ([vv. 13b-14a](#))

Think about how you became a Christian. Someone shared the truth of the gospel with you. You were convicted over your sinfulness. You saw that Jesus is the only righteous person to ever live. He died and arose! You saw yourself under God's judgement. God opened your heart and you believed! At that moment, something spiritual happened. The Holy Spirit came, lived inside, and sealed your salvation secured for eternity.

The literary imagery here is like a king who has a ring on and gives his insignia in wax to say, "You have been sealed with a seal that will never be broken, because God's seal is unshakable and immovable. There's no way for this seal to be broken." This is eternal security!

#10 – God's ([v. 14](#))

You can remind yourself, "I am God's!"

Today's Takeaway:

Remind yourself every day of your true identity in Jesus.

Why? Because...

The truest thing about you is what God says about you.