



The Christian Solution
for Addictions:
Jesus!

The Christian's Identity

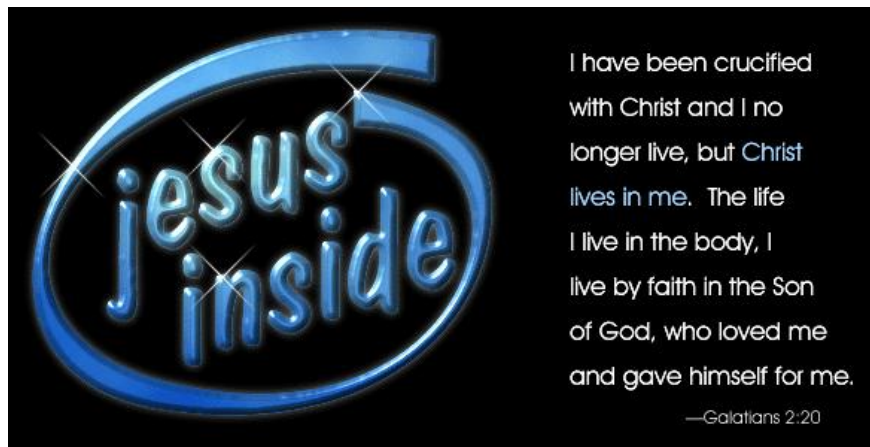
~ Nine Characteristics ~

"How should we live our lives in light of our identity in Christ?"

Our identity in Christ is first and foremost one of newness. We are new creations in Christ: *2 Corinthians 5:17 ~ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Identity is defined as **"the collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or known,"** so our new identity in Christ should be recognizable both to ourselves and to others. If we are "in Christ," that should be evident, just as being "in the world" is equally evident.

A further definition of *identity* is **"the quality or condition of being the same as something else."** In the case of our identity in Christ, our lives should indicate that we are the same as Christ. The name "Christians" means literally "followers of Christ."



Characteristics of the Christian's Identity

1. **In our new identity in Christ, we are no longer slaves to sin, but we are reconciled to God.**
 - *Romans 6:6 ~ ... knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*

- **Romans 5:10** ~ *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

2. This new identity completely changes our relationship with God and our families, just as it changes the way we see the world.

Our new identity in Christ means we have the same relationship with God that Christ has —we are His children. God has adopted us as sons. We are able to call Him “Abba! Father!”

- **Romans 8:15-18** ~ *For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

3. We are both JOINT HEIRS and FRIENDS of Christ. And this relationship is even stronger than those we have with our earthly families.

- **Galatians 3:29** ~ *And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and HEIRS according to the promise.*
- **John 15:15** ~ *Jesus said: “No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you FRIENDS, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”*
- **Matthew 10:35-37** ~ *Jesus said: “For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”*

4. Instead of fearing God as Judge, we have the great privilege of coming to Him as our Father. We can approach Him with confidence and ask of Him what we need.

- **Hebrews 4:16** ~ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

We can ask for His guidance and wisdom.

- **James 1:5** ~ *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

We know that nothing will take us from Him.

- **Romans 8:38-39** ~ *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 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.*

5. We also rest in His authority and respond to Him with trusting obedience, knowing that obedience is a key part of remaining close to Him.

- *John 14:23 ~ Jesus answered and said to 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."*

6. The family of God encompasses a vast body of believers who strive together to grow closer to God.

- *1 Corinthians 12:13 ~ For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.*

It's a family that is stronger for the gifts of each person in it.

- *Romans 12:6-8 ~ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Members of this new family seek the best for one another.

- *1 Corinthians 10:24 ~ Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.*

Members encourage each other.

- *Galatians 6:1-2 ~ Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

Members forgive each other.

- *Matthew 18:21-22 ~ Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."*

Each member has a specific role, but the roles are acted out with respect and grace.

- *1 Peter 5:1-5 ~ The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ²Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. ⁵Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."*

7. Most of all, we respond to each other in LOVE—not the feeling, but a selfless, conscious act of sacrifice, which is reflective of the *agape* love of the God who loved us and gave Himself for us.

- *Galatians 2:20 ~ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

8. We are no longer citizens of the world, but are apart from it.

- **2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1** ~ Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ⁵And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

¹⁷Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the LORD. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." ¹⁸"I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." ^{7:1}Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

We understand that we are a part of a heavenly, God-ruled kingdom. Things of the earth no longer draw us.

- **Colossians 3:2** ~ Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

We don't fear or over-emphasize suffering on earth or the trials we face.

- **Colossians 1:24** ~ I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, ...
- **1 Peter 3:14** ~ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."
- **1 Peter 4:12-14** ~ Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; ¹³but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. ¹⁴If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

We do not place importance on things the world values.

- **1 Timothy 6:9-11** ~ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ¹¹But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

Even our bodies and our actions reflect that our minds are no longer conformed to the world, but are now instruments of righteousness to God:

- **Romans 12:1-2** ~ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- **Romans 6:13** ~ *And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

9. And our new kingdom perspective means we understand that our enemy is not the people around us but the spiritual forces that endeavor to keep the people from knowing God.

- **Ephesians 6:12** ~ *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*



All of this is the ideal—the character of a mature follower of Christ. One of the greatest blessings about our identity in Christ is the grace we’re given in order to grow into the spiritual maturity that truly reflects our new identity.

- **Philippians 1:6** ~ *... being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; ...*

In light of our identity in Christ, our lives are filled with a heavenly Father, a large, loving family, and the understanding that we are citizens of another kingdom and not of this earth.



***May our Lord richly bless you as you live your life
in light of your identity in Christ?"***

Resource: www.gotquestions.org

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