

Who Am I?

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] The book of Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians chapter 5. And we're going to be reading the first 21 verses. This is the word that is a lamp to our feet and a light for our path. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love just as Christ.

Just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you, there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality or any kind of impurity or greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For this for this you can be sure no immoral, impure or greedy person. Such a man is in an idolater has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things, God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore, do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

Live as children of light for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth and find out what pleases the Lord.

[1 : 32] Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them for it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.

But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said, wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead and Christ will shine on you.

Be very careful then how you live, not as unwise, but as wise, making the most of every opportunity because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord. Always giving thanks to God, the father for everything. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

[2 : 41] Consider with me this morning two of the most life shaping questions. And the first is who is God? Or as Jesus put it to his own disciples, who do you say that I am?

It is the most important question you will ever answer. And it is the most telling thing about you. Because it tells us what is shaping your life.

And shaping the way you live. Either with him or without this savior. So who is Jesus Christ to you? And you answer, he is God. He is man.

He is the only mediator between God and man. He is the only way to the father. He is my savior. He is my lord.

He is my prophet. My priest. My king. My friend. My very best friend. And it is his identity. Who he is.

[3 : 48] That has a powerful effect upon how you live. So as God, you worship him. And as savior, you cling to him. And as lord, you honor him.

And you obey him. As prophet, you listen to him. As priest, you trust in his sacrifice to forgive you. As king, you bow down and honor him.

And obey him. And you hide under his protection of you. And as friend, you just pour out your heart to him. You see, if that's who Jesus is and is to me, well then, my life is being shaped by his identity.

How important then is it for us to know Christ? Who he is. We never get beyond that cry of the apostle Paul. Who himself never got beyond it.

I want to know Christ. I want to know Christ. There's more of him to know and to be shaped by. So on Sunday evenings, we're studying the similar question.

[5 : 02] Who is God? That's the first question, you see, that shapes our life. Not just who is God, but who is God and how does that change my life?

How who he is perfectly matches who I am in terms of my needs. So how his power matches my weakness. And how his patience matches my besetting sin.

And his eternity corresponds to my mortality and brevity of life. And how his wrath answers my struggles with evil in high places and longing for justice to be done.

You see, who is God? Is anything but an impractical question. The answer is changing the way that we live if we are in Christ. Now, second only to that question in terms of exercising a shaping influence upon our life.

Is how you answer this question. Who are you? Who are you? So who is God? And who are you?

[6 : 15] Now, the question is your identity. Your self-perception. How you think of yourself. There's more than one factor that fills out our identities.

You ask me, who are you? And I might say I'm a son. But I'm also a father. I'm a husband. I'm also a brother.

I'm a Christian. I'm a church member. I'm a pastor. I'm a neighbor. I'm an American. I'm a Hoosier.

I'm a Republican. Can I say that word here? Most of the time. I'm a Calvinist. I'm a gardener.

An ornithologist. That's a fancy word for bird watcher. What am I doing? Well, I'm answering your question. Who are you? I'm telling you who I am.

[7 : 12] And as I do, I'm telling you how I think about myself. And how I think about myself not only describes and defines me, but it's also shaping me.

It's motivating and affecting me to live in certain ways that line up with my identity. And according to the Bible, knowing who we are shapes how we live.

Let me say that again. If you don't get anything today, that's what I want you to get. That according to the Bible, knowing who we are shapes the way we live.

That's why in the Bible, God is continually reminding us of who we are. And then telling us to act like it. Or the phrase, be what you are.

You weren't born in a barn. How many of you have ever heard those words from a mom or a dad?

[8 : 15] Okay, this might date you. But I heard those words. The first time I heard my mother say that, I thought, what a penetrating insight into my identity.

No, I didn't. But what was she trying to get across to me? My identity.

That I wasn't born in a barn. She's saying, you're not an animal, John. So don't live like one. Have some manners.

Don't eat like the pig. Don't climb on the furniture like the monkey. Remember who you are. Not born in a barn. You're a civilized human being.

You were born in a hospital. Now act like it. Be what you are. And she said all of that with just six words. You weren't born in a barn.

[9 : 12] That's the method of God in dealing with us. So if you have your Bibles, turn to Ephesians chapter 5, the passage that was read. And I just want to point out for you from this passage, three places at least, where we see that's God's method.

He tells us who we are. And then he just says to us, now be what you are. Act like what you are. So in Ephesians 5, we begin, be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love.

What are we? If you're in Christ this morning, what are you? Dearly loved children. That's what you are.

So live like it. Live a life of love. Like the Father. Like the Son. You see his method. Your identity as a dearly loved child is to shape how you live.

Verse 3. But among you, there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality of any kind of impurity or of greed.

[10 : 24] Why not? Well, because these things are improper for God's holy people. What are we? If we're in Christ, we're God's holy people.

And these things are completely improper for God's holy people. He says in the next verse, these things are out of place.

They're out of place for holy people. And then in verse 8. For you were once darkness, but now you are.

Those are the words for identity. Those are the words describing what we are. You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Lord, live as children of light.

So yes, you once were darkness and you live like it. You gravitated towards dark things, towards sin and toward lies.

[11 : 28] But that's past. But now you are light. Therefore, live as children of light. And he goes on to explain that as doing what is good and right and true.

And finding out what pleases the Lord and doing that. This is what it means to be light and then to live as children of light. Put aside. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness.

Instead, walk in the light as he is in the light. Walk with God. Live with him in whom there is no darkness. No, none at all. Be who you are.

Live up to your pedigree. You are children of light. You are dearly loved children. You are God's holy people. Do you see how God's method is just this?

That our identity is to shape our behavior. You find the same in Romans 6 where believers are told their new identity in Christ is that we are dead to sin.

[12 : 32] That's the reality. You are dead to sin as to a master to reign over you. You are no longer its slave. So consider yourself dead to sin.

Think of yourself as dead to sin. And then don't offer the members of your body to sin as a master to serve him. You see, but it all comes back to what we are.

You are free from sin's mastery. So be who you are. Live as a free man, a free woman. The better we know who we really are, the more it will shape our living.

And our self-conscious identity then becomes a formative power in life for good or for ill. Let a parent tell their child from age 2 to age 10, you are worthless.

You can't do anything right. You're a total failure. Is that going to have any influence upon how that girl lives her life? You bet it will.

[13 : 37] If she buys into what you have told her she is, that will affect how she lives. Or take another parent who from 2 to 10 has only been saying, you are wonderful.

You are wonderful. You can accomplish anything you ever set your heart to do. You're great. Will that, if he buys into that and sees himself as Mr. Wonderful, will that affect the way that he lives out his life?

You bet. Those are both extremes that are damaging. But you see then how identity shapes the life.

Well, that's why it's important for parents to be telling their children what God says about them. How God defines them.

So what does God say that you are? Little boy, little girl. Well, God says you are a creature made by God. You're his creation.

[14 : 44] And you're a special creation. You're the highest of all God's earthly creatures. You're different from all the rest of the creatures because you are made in the image of God with a wonderful capacity for a relationship with God.

A capacity to know him, to enjoy him, to love him, to be loved by him, to imitate him. You're special in that way.

And what else does God say about you, son or daughter? Well, he says that you are male or female. For in the image of God, he made them.

Male and female, he created them. Now, for many years, we might have thought in our country that, well, that goes without saying. Why do we need that verse in our Bibles?

Well, those days are over. What a joy it was for me just weeks ago here to hear a little two-year-old girl tell me, I'm a girl.

[15 : 47] And pointing to her mother, she's a girl. And to daddy, he's a boy. And to her brother, he's a boy. Way to go, mom and dad. Keep at it.

That's exactly what we're talking about here. Shape their identity from what God says about them. That's critical. Root their identity in the Bible.

And then a thousand times throughout your training and upbringing of them, what will you be doing? You'll be reminding them who they are. And telling them to live like it.

Be what God created you to be. You're a creature of God. You're male or female, as he has decided. You're a sinner with a sinful heart that wants to do evil.

That's why you lied to mommy. And you have a sinful record in heaven. You have a report card in heaven. And God's keeping track of your lies.

[16 : 50] And he will punish them one day. That's why you need to be born again. To get a new heart. And why you need to trust in Jesus' blood.

To wash your record clean in heaven. You see, you're giving that little one a God-given identity. What God says they are.

They are his creature. They are male or female. They are sinner. And they are made for God. And need God's saving work in Christ to be what they were made to be.

And apart from Jesus Christ, they will ever be trying to fill that God-shaped void with the things of creation. That will never satisfy the soul.

All this to say our children need to know who they are. What they are. They need an awareness of their true identity. So parents, do your kids need to be reminded often of who they are?

[17 : 48] So do God's kids. So do you. So do I. To read our Bibles is to see just how often we are reminded of who we are.

That's his method with us. Now there's many streams that fill up the pond of our self-identity. So here's the pond. And flowing into it are many different streams that help us come to some understanding, whether right or wrong, of who we are.

Parental upbringing is just one of those streams. Now it's a big stream, but it's just one stream. There's other significant people in our lives who are speaking into our lives and telling us who we are.

That's for good or ill, wise or foolish friends, church family here. That's filling up a sense of who am I. Then there's my own thoughts as well.

I've got my own ideas about who I am. And as I'm born into this world, my view of myself is usually overinflated because of my pride that wants to think more highly of myself than I ought to think.

[19 : 01] In his own eyes, he flatters himself too much to detect his own or hate his own sins. So we can have a distorted self-image and knowledge of who I am.

Why? Because I have this high view of myself due to my pride. But that's one of the streams, my own thoughts. Coming into this pond. And then there's the devil who's ever whispering into our ear who you are.

Of course, he's lying to us. It's his native language. But it sounds so good because it matches what I like to think about myself as a sinner. And he tells us we don't need to live slavishly dependent lives upon God.

We don't need to always check first with God before we do something. We don't need to be looking to him for help in everything that we do. We're big boys and girls now.

We can think for ourselves. We can decide for ourselves who we are. And what we are. As if our identity was just a blank sheet of paper.

[20 : 02] And we come into this world and there's the blank sheet of paper. And only you, looking deep within yourself, can determine what you are. Listening to yourself.

You see, the devil is hiding from us our true identity. He's trying to get us to forget what God says we are. And there's the world, also a stream that's flowing into this pool of identity.

The world's constantly telling us who we are. In one way or another. We heard it in Sunday school the last month, haven't we? Through the media. You see, the devil's been telling his lies for thousands of years.

And so his lies penetrate society. Institutions of higher learning. The media. All these higher institutions and voices in the world, you see, are telling us who we are.

How confused people are on their true identity. Especially young people today. Young grade school children are now being told that God did not create you.

[21 : 22] In his own image. You've evolved from lower animals. In other words, you were born in a barn. Then we should not be surprised by barnyard behavior from children who've been told they were born in a barn.

They're just an animal that's more highly developed. They're being told you get to choose who you are as to male or female.

You can be a boy or you can be a girl. You get to choose. Or a half a dozen other mixtures of those two. No wonder they're confused about their identity.

They're confused about the most important things of life. So knowing the life-shaping power of our identity and how we think of ourselves, it is critical that we get it right.

If that's what shapes our life and the way we do things, then it's imperative that we come to God himself and let him define who we are.

[22 : 31] Take your identity from what he says. Whatever else the world say. Whatever else I am saying or feeling about myself.

We must plug our ears to self and Satan and the world and come to our Bibles and say, God, tell me who I am. Tell me who I am. In my pre-Christ life, if I'm not a Christian, I need to come and ask God, tell me who I am.

And if I am a Christian, I still need to come and ask him, tell me who I am. And he'll tell you, you're not what you used to be. You once were darkness, but you are now light and now live like it.

You see, we need God to tell us that. Who knows you best anyway? Yourself? A fellow creature? Or the one who knit you together in your mother's womb?

The one who made your body and soul? Who knows what sin and the fall has done to you? And if you're in Christ, who knows what Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit has now made you?

[23 : 42] Surely he is the one to tell me who I am. And he's written a best-selling book in which he tells me.

So the Bible is a book first and foremost to answer the first question, who is God? But it also answers the second question, who am I?

And so we must come to God himself to answer that. Notice that this week as you're just reading your Bible, wherever you're at in your Bible reading plan, maybe just have a little piece of paper and put on there on one side, who is God?

And on the other, who am I? And see how many times God is telling you, Christian, who you are. And he's telling you who he is. So we come to the first psalm, Psalm 1, introduction to the whole Psalter.

And what does it do? It lays down the importance of God's own word as being our source of self-knowledge, our source of knowledge of God. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the mockers, those who poke fun at God's ways.

[24 : 58] No, that's not where he gets his information for life. That's not where he gets his information for who God is and who he is. But his delight, rather, is in the law of the Lord.

And in his law, he meditates day and night. And that's why all that he does prospers, because he's got roots that go down deep into the water. And he's getting truth from God, you see.

And that's what introduces the whole Psalter. In other words, he's saying, you're going to bump into this fact throughout this book of 150 chapters. But this is the nub of it all.

Where do you get your information? About who God is. About who you are. Blessed. The blessed man is one who gets his view of God, shaped by God himself, through his word.

The blessed man is the one who gets his own identity, shaped by God, through his word. And it's not a one and done thing, he says. It's a day and night thing. He meditates day and night upon this law.

[26 : 04] This word from heaven that explains these big issues of life. Every day, all day, thoughts. God's thoughts informing and shaping my thoughts.

About himself. About myself. So that's not a minor thing in the Bible. It's a clear pattern throughout God's word. You are this, now be that.

Be what you are. Live consistently with what you are. And you know, that's not only true of our duties. Because of what you are, you need to do this and do that.

But it's also true of our privileges. You need to not only live up to your duty, live up to your privileges. What are your privileges? Because you're a child of God.

You're one of God's holy people. It's both duty and privilege. So on Friday afternoon, I stood here and told Christy Wessner from Genesis chapter 2. That the God who made her and brought her to Nate has defined her identity in this marriage as Nate's suitable helper.

[27 : 07] I tried to hammer that home in our premarital counseling and I had one shot left on Friday. Why? Why is that important for her?

To know I am Nate's suitable helper. Because as she embraces her identity as God has given it and begins to think of herself as God has stated it.

Well, that will start to shape her life. Her new life as a married woman. It should stop her in her tracks someday.

When she almost instinctively, without thinking even, starts to think of herself alone and not thinking about Nate.

Oh, that's right. I'm God's helper to this man. That's my identity in this marriage. That's now part of who I am. And that remembrance will force her to think outside of the box of who or what I want.

[28 : 16] I see my identity shapes my life. My life as a wife to this man. The power of her new identity is further reflected by the fact that when she left this stage, that she went with a different name.

Her name was changed from Christy Wessner to Christy Goodwin. And so every time she now sees or signs her name, she'll be reminded of her identity in this marriage. Who she is.

She's the helper of one certain Mr. Nate Goodwin. And her new name reminds her of her new identity and lifestyle. Nate, too, has a new identity as a husband.

And we talked to him about that. Again, why are these names and titles given to them? Well, to shape their lives.

It's a new identity for them. And it is to be a shaping identity. The better they know and embrace their identity, the more power it will have over them.

[29 : 21] So who are you? Who are you? That's a fair question. Who are you? Who are you? Not according to the world, the flesh, or the devil.

But according to God, your maker, and in Jesus Christ, your redeemer. How has God defined you? What does he call you? Does he give you any names? In the Bible.

Does he give any descriptive terms about you? Those are to fill out your identity. Those are all things that are to help you understand.

That's who I am now in Jesus Christ. Now, there's a learning curve when we're given a new identity. Your new identity, if you're a Christian, is that you are now a child of light.

You are now one of God's holy people. You are now no longer a slave to sin. But it takes time to learn to walk in line with your new identity. Christy.

[30 : 26] I suppose in signing her name, there will be times when Christy writes, Christy West. Oh, that's right. And she'll scribble it out and she'll write Goodwin.

And it won't be pretty, but she'll get the point. And I never had to change my name. Maybe you ladies know whether or not that happens. I would imagine it would happen if my name was changed.

What's she doing? She's learning to catch up in her living with her new identity. And it's like that in the Christian life. We are God's holy people. But there are times we make messes.

And we say, oh, that's inappropriate for God's holy people. God forgive me.

We come and we humbly confess. And we ask him to cleanse us by his blood. And we get up and we go again. There is this learning curve to growing into our new identity.

[31 : 28] It's happening with Christy and Nate. It's still happening with John and Jose. As we're still married. Still growing into this new identity of loving her as Christ loved the church.

And her submitting to me as the church submits to Christ. All of this stuff, you see. There's this. It's not just, okay, you're a new identity. And now you're perfectly just that.

But no, it's not that way. It's growing into it. And it's a lesson that we're never done learning this side of heaven.

Now, what are you then? We're going to see many things from the scriptures. I guess I overlooked telling you that we're beginning then a new series is what I was trying to get to.

That we're starting a series then today on the Christian's identity. Just looking at all that God has said to tell us who we are in the scriptures. It's not just a few things.

[32 : 47] It's many things. And yet we need to realize that we don't become that in lifestyle just perfectly immediately.

So, in this series, Christian, we'll be seeing then our call to know who you are and then to be what you are.

Not only the duties that flow from who you are, but also to live up to the privileges of what you are. And what I want you to realize is that this is what the Father chose you for.

He chose you to be this. He chose you to be his dearly loved children. His holy people. All the rest. To be light instead of dark. God the Father chose you to this new identity.

And God the Son died on the cross to purchase this new identity for you. To make you God's people.

[33 : 51] And God the Holy Spirit dwells in you. To bring your life more and more in line with your new identity.

That should encourage you. I want to finish by turning you to 1 John chapter 3. Where we're given one of our new identities.

One part of our new identity. And then we're encouraged with what he tells us about it.

1 John 3. Let me just read the first three verses. And there's a behold here that's missing in the NIV. But it's behold. Take note of this.

There's something staggering here. How great is the love the Father has lavished on us. That we should be called children of God. And that is what we are.

[34 : 48] The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends. Now we are children of God. And what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears we shall be like him.

For we shall see him as he is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he is pure. Look for the identity of the Christian.

What's the new identity? That we should be called children of God. And that is what we are. Are you a believer in Jesus Christ?

You are the children of God. You're a child of God. That's the reality of it. That's your identity. A new identity. Now we need to think of ourselves as that.

And we need to live up to the duties and privileges of that. But there are times when we say things. And there are times when we think things.

[35 : 54] And we do things that are totally inappropriate for the children of God. It's not the whole pattern of our lives. No.

No, we are children of God. We are walking a new life. But there's times when we do things that are inappropriate for the children of God. And we see this gap between what we are, God's children, and how we live.

Unlike his children. So we need to be told to behave as God's children. To reflect the likeness of our father and our elder brother, Jesus. Remembering what we are.

But then for our encouragement, verse 2 tells us what we will be. Dear friends, now we are God's children. And what we will be has not yet been made known.

There are aspects of your being a child of God that have not yet been realized. There's more to your being a child of God than what is yet seen or felt or experienced in your life.

[37 : 01] And what we will be hasn't been made known to the world yet. Hasn't been experienced by you yet. But when Jesus comes back, it will be revealed.

So there's an already, I'm a child of God right now. And there's a not yet. I'm not yet what I'm going to be. When Jesus comes back, this child of God is going to be different from what I am now.

You see, that's meant to encourage you. Because when I see the eternal one and only son of God, this son of God, this child of God is going to be made just like him.

And every last remnant of sin will be gone from me in an instant. And I'll enter into heaven. To never again have an unclean thought, a spiteful thought, an unclean word, an unclean act.

That's ahead for me. Me who am now a child of God. But will one day as a child of God be perfected? So John is wanting to encourage us with this.

[38 : 09] Yes, we are already the children of God. But there's a future phase to our sonship that will be the delight of heaven.

To not only see Jesus, but to be made like him. To never again sin against him. To love him with unsinning heart. To live the way we've wanted to ever since we were first born again.

There was that desire born in our hearts. We want to love you with an unsinning heart. We want to be done with sin altogether. That was the desire planted in our hearts when we first were born again.

And one day, child of God, you're going to experience it. You see? That's part of the privilege of being a child of God. You get to be sinless forever. And live in a sinless world.

So be encouraged. And that fact doesn't make us sloppy in how we live. Well, I guess when I see Jesus, he'll finish the job. So it doesn't matter how I live. That shows you're not a Christian. You're not a child of God.

[39 : 08] You notice what he says in verse 3. Everyone who has this hope in him. Everyone who has a child of God is hoping and looking forward to the day Jesus comes back to make me just like him.

And everyone, without exception, is now purifying himself even as he is pure. You see, the hope that we are one day going to be perfectly clean is what gives us encouragement to be climbing further and further into likeness to Jesus.

By the power of his spirit that he's put in our hearts. So, this is meant to encourage us. We find Paul doing the same thing with the Philippian believers.

He says, I'm confident that he who began a good work in you will continue that work until the day of Jesus Christ. So, he started a work in your heart.

You've been born again. He's planted his spirit in you and given you a new nature that wants to be sinless. Because that work is going to be finished.

[40 : 18] Just as Jesus could say in bearing the punishment of man's sin. It is finished. There will be a day, Christian, when you will be able to shout. It is finished. The work that Jesus began in me is now finished.

I see Christ. I'm like him. I'm sinless. So, it's meant to encourage you. As you're still in the struggle. You're still in the struggle. With sin.

Back in the 60s or 70s, there used to be bumper stickers and witness wear and pins. With all kinds of names.

I think it all came from the Jesus people in California. But one of the things that we had was just capital letters. P-B-P-W-M-G-I-N-F-W-M-Y.

Just a confusing jumble of capital letters. Well, of course, it meant, please be patient with me. God is not finished with me yet.

[41 : 17] And that's what John is telling us. That's what Paul was reminding us. The job has been started. You are right now a child of God. But God's not finished with you yet.

He's got more work to do. To bring your life to where it perfectly matches your identity. You are now a child of God.

You sometimes live contrary to the way children of God should live. But there's coming a day when he'll finish the work and it will be exactly the same. Your identity and your lifestyle.

Forever and ever and ever. So struggle on. There's still things that come to your mind that make you say with Paul, and you will say it to your dying day, Oh, wretched man that I am.

Wretched man that I am. That thought should have found its place in my head. Wretched man that I am. That those words should have come across my lips. That that behavior should have been the wretched man that I am.

[42 : 31] But he's not done working with me yet. You see, that's not the only thing that is reality. He will be finished with me one day. And that's the hope I have.

And that's what presses me on. You know, it should give us a realistic view of ourselves in the present. I am a child of God. But let's be realistic.

We're not perfect children. And that should help me in understanding why I have this struggle within. That when I want to do good, evil is present with me.

Okay, he's not done with me. You know, if it were me, the moment I was born again, and my identity is now a child of God, I would have my lifestyle match it perfectly.

But that's not what God decided. He says, you're going to have to wait for that, John. And for now, you're going to have to humble yourself and confess your sin and depend upon my spirit working in you.

[43 : 35] You're going to have to cry out to me and pray for help that through the spirit you can put to death these sinful desires. You see, that was God's idea, not mine.

It was the better idea because God knows what best humbles me and glorifies him. And so that's how we're going on, children of God.

But remember where we're going. That should help us in the proper sense of ourselves and our identity. Okay, I am a child of God. This doesn't mean just because I'm struggling that I'm not a child of God.

That's part of the reality that he's not finished with me yet. And it should also help us to be patient with each other. That I must say to you, please be patient with me.

God is not finished with me yet. And just as I want you to be patient with me, you want me to be patient with you. Because God's not finished with you either.

[44 : 35] And all this should build a loving gentleness and a patience into the family of God as we remember our identity and yet the fact that we're not home yet, we're not finished yet.

And it should lastly fill us with praise to the Savior that I should ever be more than my identity in Adam. Sinful, condemned, and unclean.

You mean I'm a child of God? Do you mean I'm no longer a slave of sin? Do you mean I'm one of God's holy people? That ever those things should be said of me?

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Father. Thank you, Holy Spirit. And that's what we want to do as we close. Praise the Savior, you who know Him. Who can tell how much we owe Him.

Gladly let us render to Him all we are and have. We're not what we ought to be. We're not what we want to be.

[45 : 46] But thank God we're not what we were. Let's stand and sing it from the overhead. Praise to our Savior. That is our joy, Lord Jesus, that you have saved us to a new identity, that we are no longer what we once were.

And we have you alone to thank for that, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So send us forth, then, and the amazement of it, that this kind of love should be shown to us, that we should be not only called the children of God, but that is what we are.

And this is the heaven, and this is the perfection to which you are shaping us and calling us. And one day it will be so. Send us, then, on our way, rejoicing in our Savior, purifying ourselves because He is pure.

And one day will make us spotlessly pure. Not only in our record in heaven, as it is this moment, but in our very hearts and lives forever and ever.

Thank you, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.