

THE RESULTS OF BELIEVING THE GOSPEL

Ephesians 1:13 TLB

And because of what Christ did, all you others too, who heard the Good News about how to be saved, and trusted Christ, were marked as belonging to Christ by the Holy Spirit, who long ago had been promised to all of us Christians.

Christianity is not merely a new way of life, or a new set of beliefs; although it includes this, it's much more. Christianity is a whole new life. The moment we believe the message of the gospel (the good news of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus), our lives radically change. In that very moment, God through His Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us for eternity and many spiritual realities are birthed in us. In that moment we are reborn, we become His children, we are united with Him, filled with His presence, and we can now enjoy uninterrupted fellowship with Him based on our faith in Him.

2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

When we believe the gospel, we experience instant radical change. Believing in the gospel is seeing that when Jesus died, He died for you, and so when He died, you died (Romans 6:5-10). It is also seeing that when He was raised from the dead, it was for you, and so when He was raised to life, you were raised to life (Romans 6:5, 8). The moment we believe, we are changed. But as radical as this change is - for the most part, it is hidden change that takes place deep within us. We will only experience or see this change as we discover it (through being taught the Word), and as we start thinking in accordance with it.

Romans 12:2 NKJV

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.

Philemon 1:6 NKJV

that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the

acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

If we want to experience the change that took place in us at salvation, we need to start renewing our minds (changing our thinking) to the truth of the Word. As believers, we need to discover and accept the good things that are now in us because we're in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 NKJV

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You are made up of a spirit, a soul (mind, will, intellect) and a body (the physical; what we see). The spirit is the part of you that is eternal and perfect. The radical transformation of salvation occurs instantly, in your spirit, when you receive Christ. Your physical body does not change. Your actions don't necessarily change. Your thinking and your emotions don't instantly change. The radical change of salvation occurs in your spirit. Now, as a Christian, in order to experience that change, you need to renew your mind (change your thinking) to the truth of what happened to you when you received Christ. You will never live above your level of revelation. As you start to discover who you are in Christ, you will be enabled to rise up to think and live according to the truth.

YOU ARE NOW A NEW CREATION

2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Colossians 2:11 NLT

When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature.

Belief in the gospel transforms you into a new creation. This is referring to a radical change in your nature; your sinful nature is now cut off and gone, and now you have a born-again righteous nature in Christ.

GOD'S SPIRIT DWELLS IN YOU FOREVER

1 Corinthians 3:16 NLT

Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?

From the moment you believed the gospel, the Holy Spirit took up permanent residence within you, ensuring an eternal and uninterrupted union with Him (Ephesians 1:13). You are God's address! Christ lives in you (Colossians 1:27). This indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit opens the door for us to enjoy God's constant companionship.

YOU ARE NOW A CHILD OF GOD AND A PART OF HIS FAMILY

John 1:12-13 NLT

But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. [13] They are reborn - not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

When you believe the gospel, you become a part of God's family. You have a loving heavenly Father, and a family (brothers and sisters in Christ) that can be found in the church.

Ephesians 2:19 NLT

So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family.

YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE

Eternal life begins the moment you believe the gospel. Eternal life is the Spirit of God dwelling in you forever; it is a relationship with God.

John 17:3 NKJV

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

1 John 5:11-12 NKJV

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. [12] He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

ALL YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN

Ephesians 4:32 NKJV

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Colossians 3:13 ERV

Don't be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If you feel someone has wronged you, forgive them. Forgive others because the Lord forgave you.

The good news of the gospel is that God has dealt with your sin (John 1:29) and offers you total forgiveness of all your sins — past, present, and future.

Hebrews 10:10 NLT

For God's will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.

God no longer deals with you based on your sins, but relates to you based on your faith in the Savior.

THE KEY TO THE VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIFE

Knowing and understanding our identity in Christ is essential for living a victorious and purposeful life. We need to renew our minds to the truth of who we now are (as a result of believing the gospel). The Word is like a mirror – as we focus on what the Word says about us (as we behold who we are in the mirror of the Word), we start to transform, and we are enabled to rise up to live at that level.

Below are some identity statements: things that are true of you because you are a Christian. Look up the verses, meditate (ponder)

on them and speak these truths out loud. Allow them to sink deep into your heart, so that faith and boldness can rise up and cause you to live a transformed life.

Questions for reflection

1. What stands out for you from this lesson?
2. Why is it important for believers to know their identity in Christ?
3. Read through the identity statement below out loud.
 - a. After reading through the statements below, what stands out for you or strikes a chord in your heart the most?
 - b. Which statements do you struggle to accept? Why do you think that is?

I am a precious woman/man of great value and worth because Jesus, the King of kings, died and paid a great price for me. I am a royal daughter/son, for I have a crown of glory and honour on my head, and I am wearing Jesus's royal robes of righteousness. (Isaiah 61 v10; Psalm 8 v5). **God accepts and approves of me.** (Jeremiah 1 v 5). **I am fearfully and wonderfully made.** (Psalm 139).

There is now no condemnation for me in Christ. (Romans 8 v1). **Therefore I accept myself, and love who I am and the way I am made. Father, I am who You say I am: I am called by God.** (2 Timothy 1 v 9). **I was chosen by God before the foundations of the world to be set apart for Him.** (Ephesians 1 v 4; 1 Peter 2 v 9; 1 Thessalonians 1 v 4; John 15 v 16). **I am God's child.** (Romans 8 v 15 -16). **I am born again of the incorruptible seed of the living Word of God that endures forever.** (1 Peter 1 v 23). **I am forgiven of all my sins and the blood of Jesus has washed away my guilt and shame.** (Ephesians 1 v 4 & 7; 1 John 2 v 12; 1 John 1 v9; Colossians 1 v 14). **I am a new creation in Christ.** (2 Corinthians 5 v 17). **I am holy and blameless in God's sight, even above reproach, before Him in love.** (Ephesians 1 v 4). **I am the righteousness of God, which means that I am approved, acceptable and in right relationship with Him.** (Romans 8 v 21).

I have full access to the Father. (Ephesians 2 v 18) **And because I am in Christ and Christ is in me, I live in His presence fearlessly, confidently, and boldly.** (Hebrews 4 v 16). **I am blessed and I am God's favourite** (Galatians 3 v 9). **I am the apple of God's eye and my name is inscribed on the palm of His hand.** (Zechariah 2 v 8; Psalm 17 v 8; Isaiah 49 v 16). **I am stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit.** (Ephesians 1 v 13). **I am established to the end.** (1 Corinthians 1 v 8). **I am being changed into His image and He Who began this good work in me will bring it to completion.** (2 Corinthians 3 v 18; Philippians 1 v 6) **I am God's workmanship, recreated in Christ for good works.** (Ephesians 2 v 10).

I am an ambassador for Christ. (2 Corinthians 5 v 20). **I am complete in Him.** (Colossians 2 v 10). **I am the temple of the Holy Spirit – God Himself lives in me.** (1 Corinthians 6 v 19). **I have the mind of Christ.** (1 Corinthians 2 v 16; Philippians 2 v 5). **I am a joint heir with Christ and He has qualified me to share in His inheritance.** (Romans 8 v 17; Colossians 1 v 12; Ephesians 1 v 11).

I am redeemed from the curse of the law and the promise of the Spirit (the blessing of Abraham) is now mine. (Galatians 3 v 13). **I am redeemed from the futile way of life inherited from the tradition of my forefathers and am purchased with the precious blood of Christ.** (1 Peter 1 v 18-19). **I have been delivered from the control and dominion of the devil and have been translated into God's kingdom of love.** (Colossians 1 v 13).

I am set free. (John 8 v 36; Galatians 5 v 1; John 8 v 31 – 34). **I am dead to sin and alive with Christ.** (Romans 6 v 11; Ephesians 2 v 5). **I am raised up with Christ and am seated with Him in heavenly places.** (Ephesians 2 v 6). **Because I am born of God, the evil one cannot touch me.** (1 John 5 v 18). **I have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness, and I am a partaker of His divine nature.** (2 Peter 1 v 3-4). **I am blessed with every spiritual blessing that heaven has to offer.** (Ephesians 1 v 3). **I am firmly rooted, built up and established in my faith** (Colossians 2 v 7) **and I have faith that can move mountains.** (Matthew 16 v 20).

Father, I can do what You say I can do: I am a victorious over-comer (1 John 5 v 4; Revelations 2 v 11), **a mighty woman/man of valour, a champion overcoming warrior, who possesses dignity and honour.** (Judges 6 v12). **I am more than a conqueror.** (Romans 8 v 35). **All circumstances are under my feet.** (Psalm 8 v 6). **In all things I gain a surpassing victory** (Rom 8 v 37) **and in all things God leads me to triumph in Christ.** (2 Corinthians 2 v 14). **Through my union with God, I am strong in the Lord and the power of His might.** (Ephesians 6 v 10). **I have strength for all things in Christ who empowers me. I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency.** (Philippians 4 v13).

Everything I put my hand to prospers. (Psalm 1 v 1 – 3). **I am the head and not the tail, above only and not beneath.** (Deuteronomy 28 v 13). **Greater is He that lives in me than he that is in the world.** (1 John 4v 4). **Because I believe in, lean on, trust and rely on God, I do the things that Jesus did, and greater things will I do, for His Spirit within me knows no limit.** (John 14 v 12 – 14). **Therefore, I believe that all things are possible and limit not the Holy One within me.** (Philippians 4 v 13).

I have the power of the Holy Spirit in me and so every place I go and in all I do, I do in the power of the Spirit! I have power to lay hands on the sick and see them recover (each and every one), and at my command, in the Name of Jesus all demonic powers are cast out and all people are set free; I have authority over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt me. (Mark 16 v 17 – 18). **As Jesus is, so am I in this world** (1 John 4 v 17) **and the immeasurable, unlimited and surpassing power of God is on the inside of me!** (Ephesians 1 v 19). **The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in me!** (Ephesians 1 v 20).

Adapted from Dr M K Strydom's "Healing begins with the sanctification of the heart."