



EXPLORING
MY IDENTITY
IN CHRIST

A Bible Study

Inspired by Jerry Bridges' Book Who Am I?

by Lisa Horn

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Introduction

As a follower of Christ, realizing our position and identity is the foundation of our relationship with God and the basis of our transformation into the image of Christ. One of the ways we can grow as a believer is to know the truth and renew our minds with biblical truth. The goal of this study is to study and apply biblical truth regarding our identity in Christ that we might find freedom from sin, joy in nearness to God, and change in how we live.

“For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.”

Colossians 1:9-12

I am indebted to Dr. Jerry Bridges for his book, *Who Am I?* His book inspired me to create this study so that I might understand my identity in Christ in a deeper way. If you do this study on your own or lead a group, I encourage you to make the study your own. Do further research on the context of passages and the meaning of words. Take the time to create open-ended questions for discussion. (Hint: Start questions with either *what* or *how*.) Keep before you the focus that the goal of this study is to gain a fuller understanding of what it means that you, as a follower of Christ, are *in Christ* and this truth is the foundation of your identity.

All the Bible passages are in New American Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

Lisa Horn

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I am a New Creation

Becoming a new creation in Christ is the work of the third Person of the Triune God, The Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit at Work in People Before Christ

1. What do we learn about the Spirit in the lives of Joseph, Joshua and Daniel?

Genesis 41:38 Then Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?”

Numbers 27:18 So the LORD said to Moses, “Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him;

Daniel 4:8 But finally Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar according to the name of my god, and in whom is a spirit of the holy gods; and I related the dream to him, saying,

2. How is the Spirit described in the people mentioned in these verses?

Numbers 24: 2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

Judges 3: 10 The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

The implication seems to be that the Spirit was not present in people; the Spirit's presence in a person was temporary. After Jesus' death and resurrection, we as believers have a different experience. God has given us a great gift of His presence.

Jesus' Teaching on the Spirit

In each of these two passages from the gospel of John, answer the following questions about the Spirit.

John 15:26 When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me

John 16: 7-8 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

John 16: 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and he will disclose to you what is to come.

3. How does Jesus refer to the Spirit?

4. What is the Spirit's connection to the Father? What is the Spirit role concerning Jesus?

5. What will the Spirit do in relation to the world?

6. What will the Spirit do for believers in terms of guidance?

The book of Acts is often referred to as “the acts of the Holy Spirit.” He enters as the main character in the story.

Pentecost

In Acts 1, Luke wrote that Jesus “being led by the Holy Spirit” told the apostles to go to the upper room and wait. On the day of the Jewish festival of Pentecost, life as the apostles knew it changed.

7. What happened at Pentecost and whom did it affect?

Acts 2: 1-4 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

The apostle Peter then explained to everyone what had happened and how this was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Acts 4:14-24). Peter refers to two Old Testament passages:

Joel 2:28-29 “It will come about after this: That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. “Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Ezekiel 36: 26-27 Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

8. What will be the effect of the pouring out of God's Spirit?

9. Who will receive God's Spirit?

10. What does Jesus command, i.e. give direct instruction?

11. What new things will God give?

12. What will be the effect on people of "My Spirit within you?"

The Holy Spirit came and has a vital role in believers being new creations in Christ.

New Creation

13. What is the main idea/theme in these three passages?

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Galatians 6:15 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. 16 And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

We are a new creation because of God's Spirit dwelling in us. Because we still live in our body of flesh, a spiritual battle takes place as we live our lives. Jerry Bridges used the illustration of a prisoner of war escaping the POW camp but still being in enemy territory (59).

Romans 8: 9-11 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

14. How is the body or flesh described in this passage?

15. What words describe a person who has the Spirit of God (also referred to as Spirit of Christ)?

In Galatians 5: 16, 17 Paul implies that the desires of the flesh continue to influence each of us and we will often follow the flesh and not the Spirit. Even though this is true, we must remember that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

The apostle Paul used the phrase “put on” frequently in his epistles. The word means, “to sink into, to cloth, to be arrayed in, to enter.”

(<http://www.studylight.org/isb/view.cgi?number=1746>).

Consider that definition as you look at these verses.

Romans 13: 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Ephesians 4: 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Colossians 3: 10 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.

16. What are we to put on?

17. What are some characteristics of the new self?

18. How does Paul indicate that putting on the new self is not optional for those who are in Christ?

Application to My Life

What does your old self look like? What does your new self look like? Think of specific examples in your life.

What attitudes and actions in your life don't really reflect that you are a new creation?

What actions and attitudes in your life reflect that you are truly a new creature in Christ?