

IDENTITY

There is an ancient Indian story that tells of six blind men who attempted to describe an elephant based on what part of the elephant they were examining with their hands. Because of their blindness, they drew some pretty comical conclusions.

- One felt the leg and decided the elephant was a pillar.
- Another touched the tusk and determined it was a solid pipe.
- Another grabbed the tail and proclaimed it to be nothing more than rope.

The story states in the end, a man blessed with sight enters and sees that it is an elephant.

This story illustrates how incomplete our view and understanding of ourselves are. Often, we make the mistake of finding our *identity* without realizing that in our blindness we have seen only a tiny part of the big picture.

For example, a guy may play a sport well, so he finds his identity in the fact that he is an athlete. A girl might be really pretty and therefore she's finding her identity in her external appearance. The problem is, this is such an incomplete picture. **Jesus sees so much more when He looks at us. He sees the entire picture of us, and He does not make junk.**

Proverbs 23:7 So as he thinks in his heart, so is he. (NKJV)

Proverbs 23:7 For as he reckoneth within himself, so is he. (ESV)

What is wrong with finding your identity in the things that you can do, the way you look, the friends you hang out with, or so on?

For starters, everything I just mentioned in that sentence can be taken away from you. Your *actual identity*, the part of you that truly and accurately describes who you are at the core of your being, cannot change. Someday you may no longer be the athlete you once were. What you see as “good looks” may change.

Your true identity is an amazing gift from God.

Our identity is not what you or others see on the outside, nor what has or has not happened to you!

Allow Him to remove your blindness so that you can step into His wonderful light.

DISCUSSION:

In your own words, what is “identity”?

What are some of the “false” identities?

Why is it important to know what your identity is?

What is dangerous about finding your identity in something that can change or be taken away?

Who does God say we are?

1. A new creation in Christ

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!” (2 Cor. 5:17)

2. A child of God

“But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name” (John 1:12).

3. A branch of the true vine

“I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me” (John 15:5).

4. A friend of Jesus

“I do not call you servants anymore, because a servant doesn’t know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father” (John 15:15).

5. Justified and redeemed

“They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24).

6. An heir

“We are God’s children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him” (Rom. 8:17).

7. A sanctified saint

“To the church of God at Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called as saints, with all those in every place who call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord—both their Lord and ours” (1 Cor. 1:2).

8. A temple of the Holy Spirit

“Don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own” (1 Cor. 6:19)

9. A member of Christ’s body

“Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it” (1 Cor. 12:27).

10. An ambassador for Christ

“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us. We plead on Christ’s behalf: ‘Be reconciled to God’” (2 Cor. 5:20)

11. The righteousness of God

“He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21)

12. Chosen

“For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him” (Eph. 1:4)

13. Adopted

“He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will” (Eph. 1:5)

14. Redeemed and forgiven

“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7).

15. Sealed with the Holy Spirit

“In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed” (Eph. 1:13).

16. Made alive in Christ

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! (Eph. 2:4-5)

17. Raised and seated with Him in the heavenly places

“He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6).

18. God’s workmanship

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do” (Eph. 2:10)

19. A citizen of heaven

“But our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Phil. 3:20).

20. No longer a slave, but free

“For freedom, Christ set us free. Stand firm then and don’t submit again to a yoke of slavery” (Gal. 5:1).