



# CONNECT GROUP NOTES

## Sunday 07.05.2023

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### “The Question of Identity”

#### **Preacher**

Rev. Adam Dodds

#### **Scripture**

“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,  
2 To God’s holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ:  
Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray  
for you, 4 because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love  
you have for all God’s people— 5 the faith and love that spring from the  
hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard  
in the true message of the gospel 6 that has come to you. In the same way,  
the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just  
as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly  
understood God’s grace. 7 You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow  
servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our[d] behalf, 8 and who also  
told us of your love in the Spirit.

9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped  
praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his  
will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, 10 so  
that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way:  
bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, 11 being  
strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you  
may have great endurance and patience, 12 and giving joyful thanks to the  
Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people



in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Colossians 1:1-14

### **Thought**

“To God’s Holy people”. Paul opens his letter by addressing the Church in Colossae with this declaration of their identity. He labels a group of imperfect people as “Holy”.

It raises an interesting question - and that is; What is our identity?

Most of us, if raised in a Christian home, were raised to understand that we are sinners. The challenge is that when we are tempted to sin, this identity doesn’t help us. In fact, it can actively work against us. Our odds of success are not good because we believe we’re battling against our true self identity as a sinner.

The question to ask is; Does my self identity help or hinder?

It’s true that we have a sin problem. We speak words which are not life, we love other things more than God - we know that we are sinners saved by grace. But the problem with this is that we are tempted to still fundamentally identify as a sinner.

The book of Colossians challenges how we view ourselves. It claims that as Christ-followers, our identity is one of holiness. This isn’t some form of superiority - it’s purely a gift.

Holy means that we are set apart, belonging to God, of His nature. As adopted children of God, we are not sinners any more as far as our identity is concerned, but we are indeed now found in Christ.

So while it’s true that we are sinners, we are in Christ and his status is bound to us. What’s His is ours, and what is ours is His. We live in the light of the beautiful exchange. Our identity is new, and our nature is changing bit by bit as the Holy Spirit does his gentle work in our hearts and minds.



Our identity is not defined by our actions, but by Christ's.

Therefore, we treat others in a way that shows honour as people adopted into the family of God, as holy and accepted brothers and sisters in Christ. Just as we, too, treat ourselves as holy and act in a way that fits our God-given identity.

Through the beautiful work of Christ and His grace poured out on the cross, we are no longer bound to the identity of sin - we are set free and called a Holy people. May this remain our identity until the day it is truly fulfilled in the fulness of eternity.

### **Discussion Points**

1. If I truly saw myself as holy in the eyes of God, would I behave differently?
2. If I truly saw others as holy and set apart sons and daughters of Christ, how would I treat them?
3. It's said that the modern western world is in a crisis of identity. How do you think this identity crisis can change, and what part do you think Christians play in this?

### **Personal application + Prayer**

Lord Jesus,

Help me understand the depth of what you did on the Cross. Grant me the wisdom of understanding that my identity is in You, even while I dwell in this in-between world of being damaged by sin, but redeemed through adoption into Your kingdom.

Amen