

Who Do You Think You Are?

January 4, 2026

Ephesians 1:3-14

There has been a lot of talk about identity politics in the world around us. People tend to describe us by our race, religion, sexual identity, profession or political persuasion. They take one aspect of our being and make that the defining characteristic. I think that's the problem with society today.

We fall right into it. When someone asks, "Who are you?" The answer that we give will usually recall what we do, or something about our background. We say, "I am a plumber" or "I am a salesman or a nurse." We say where we are from. "I'm from New England or Florida or the West Coast." We point out our nationality. "I'm Italian, I'm Irish, or I'm a Native American." We define ourselves through our relationships. We say, "I am Rachel's dad, Lori's husband or Teddy's grandfather."

I am guilty. I take a lot of pride in my cultural background. When I was a teenager, my grandmother showed me this book all about our family history. Before she died, she gave me this book. I ate it up. You see, it dates back to the early 1600's when Thomas Lord crossed the Atlantic Ocean with his family and eventually established, and settled, in Hartford Connecticut. My family goes back to the earliest settlers in this country. A few years later, my great aunt Esther told me that we were descendants of the Mayflower. I thought that was so cool. Then as I was doing some research, I discovered that I had relatives who fought in the American Revolution. La-di-da!!!!

What's your story? What do you say when people ask who you are? Most of us don't give it much thought. We kind of live in our own little world and define ourselves in these broad strokes or

maybe even in secular terms. Even if we say "I am a Christian," it has become a label because too many of us don't really know **who we are in Christ.** We have a bit of an identity crisis and so we confuse our faith with our politics or our cultural roots or our intellectual leanings.

The truth is that the body of Christ, you and me, have been called and set apart as being distinct from the culture. We should never be embarrassed or ashamed to tell someone that we belong to Christ. In 1 Peter 2, it says,

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

That's the point that the apostle Paul is making here in his letter to the Ephesians. As a Christian, we are unique and special because God has chosen us as his own. Paul wants to emphasize, in case we have forgotten or have been misled by those around us, just who we are in relation to Christ.

At the Men's breakfast yesterday morning, we saw a video clip from Francis Chan. He asked the question, "Who Is God?" He pointed out that most of us don't appreciate who God is. He created the universe. He spoke a word and everything that has been made was made. That includes all of humanity. God is greater and bigger than we can even imagine. Here is the point: God chose us to be his children. He chose us! It is something we

shouldn't take for granted. It is a big deal. Paul says to the Ephesians,

"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—"

So when people ask you who you are... the first words out of our mouths should be, "I am a child of God." When God chose us, he was saying that our lives aren't random and meaningless. He chose us for a reason. That reason: He loves us. Just like you love your children and grandchildren, God loves us. You might be thinking "How can that be? Doesn't He know about..." whatever it is that is weighing heavily on your heart. The truth is that God knows all about us and he still chose us. He did that long before you and I were even aware of it. If nothing else, God choosing us makes us significant.

It is the world around us tries to tell us that we are nobodies. We don't matter. We don't count for anything. That's the devil talking. Ethel Waters was certainly inspired when her quote became popularized on posters and in books years ago. She's the one who said, "I am somebody because God don't make no junk." Paul echoes that and tells us in Ephesians 1 that if we weren't significant, Jesus wouldn't have given his life and gone to the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. His death brought atonement and the forgiveness of our sins. It gave us the opportunity to receive eternal life. His righteousness was passed on to us and

now when God sees us, he sees his son, Jesus. It says in the Gospel of John, Chapter 1,

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”

As children of God, we now have everything we need. We are no longer on our own. Through our faith in Christ, we are fully equipped to face life and all of its challenges, head on. If we need anything, we can call on God and He will stand in the gap and give it to us. Furthermore, Paul tells us in Ephesians 6 that when we go to battle, we can put on the whole armor of God. When we have the helmet, the breastplate, the shield and sword, there can be no mistaking who we are and to whom we belong. YOU AND I ARE CHILDREN OF GOD.

If that isn’t enough, I want to share a few other things that scripture says about us as Christians. In Matthew 5:13 it says we are the salt of the earth. Our presence in the world should make it a better place. In Matthew 5:14 it says we are the light of the world. We bring light to the darkness. In John 15:1 it says that we are the branches, connected to the true vine, Jesus, and are conduits to his grace. In John 15:15 it says that we are Christ’s friend and in vs 16 it says we are chosen and appointed by Christ to bear His fruit. In Romans 8:17 we are told that we are joint heirs with Christ, sharing His inheritance with Him.

We read in 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19 that each of us is a temple, a dwelling places for God. Now His Spirit and His life dwells in us. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 it says we are reconciled to God and are now ministers of reconciliation. In Ephesians 2:10 we are told that we are God's handiwork—born anew in Christ to do His work. Because of Christ, we are told in Ephesians 4:24 that we are righteous and holy. In 1 Peter 5:8 it says we are an enemy of the devil because we are a child of God as it says in 1 John 3: 1-2. Because we are born of God, as it says I 1 John 5: 1 and as a result, the devil cannot touch us.

Romans 5 tells us that we have been justified—completely forgiven and made righteous. And in Romans 6:1-6 we learn that we died with Christ and died to the power of sin's rule over our lives. Now, according to Romans 8:1 we are free forever from condemnation. We have received the Holy Spirit and according to 1 Corinthians 2:12 we can now know the things freely given to us by God. Finally, we have been established, anointed and sealed by God in Christ, and given the Holy Spirit as a pledge guaranteeing our inheritance to come because we have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer we who live, but Christ lives within us.

So when you say you are a Christian, it is not just a title. It is our identity. It is our essence, our being. When the Bible says "we are

a new creation" it describes the transformation that has taken place in our lives. So live into it. As the New Year begins, don't shy away from it. Embrace it and proclaim it to the world.

Who are you? Say it-"I am a child of God. Say it with me, "I am a child of God." God bless you. Amen.