

Flint Hills Bible Church
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School
Identify With Christ!

I. Introduction

So far in our study we have been examining how we can interact and think Biblically about the issue of so-called “Gender Identity” and other similar identity issues. But for the majority of people we interact with, this is not something they personally experience in their own thinking and living. Does our identity, or our self perception matter to “normal” people with “normal” problems?

1. What does the term “self-fulfilling prophecy” mean? How is this related to the influence of our thinking?

2. What does “the placebo effect” have to do with our thinking about ourselves and others?

3. Why do we hold people or ourselves to high expectations or low expectations?

Consider the quote:

“Sew a thought, reap an action. Sew an action, reap a habit. Sew a habit, reap a character. Sew a character, reap a destiny.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson...or Steven Covey... Warren Wiersbe

All of these terms apply to the way we think about ourselves or other people. How we think about them does have a major effect on how we think, act, and speak.

Objectives:

- ***We will consider how Scripture teaches us to view ourselves.***
- ***We will apply these truths to daily struggles in our lives and in the lives of people we may disciple or counsel.***

As we read each passage of Scripture, identify what believers are called or shown to be. Then consider how that should affect our perception of God and ourselves:

a.) We are created on purpose

Genesis 1:26–27 (ESV) — **26** Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” **27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

4. How are we to think of God:
5. How are we to think of ourselves:

Psalms 139:13–17 (ESV) — **13** For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. **14** I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. **15** My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. **16** Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. **17** How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

6. How are we to think of God?
7. How are we to think of ourselves?
8. Which false identities could these verses help correct?
9. Considering the two passages above, how could we apply these truths to identity struggles?

b.) We are made new

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) — **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

10. How are we to think of God?
11. How are we to think of ourselves?

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV) — **17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

12. How are we to think of God?

13. How are we to think of ourselves?

14. How could these verses in 2 Corinthians (see also vv. 14-21) help us counsel a person who finds their identity in being a rebel? What about a person who wants everyone to see him as “the good kid”?

c.) We are forgiven

Romans 8:1–2 (ESV) — **1** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. **2** For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

15. How are we to think of God?

16. How are we to think of ourselves?

Ephesians 1:7–8 (ESV) — **7** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, **8** which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

17. How are we to think of God?

18. How are we to think of ourselves?

19. How can these verses apply to someone who believes they have gone too far into their sin (perhaps sexual sin, “gender transition” treatments, substance abuse, etc.)?

d.) We are children of God

1 John 3:2–3 (ESV) — **2** Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. **3** And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

20. How are we to think of God?

21. How are we to think of ourselves?

Galatians 4:4–7 (ESV) — **4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. **6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” **7** So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

22. How are we to think of God?

23. How are we to think of ourselves?

Ephesians 1:4–6 (ESV) — **4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love **5** he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, **6** to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

24. How are we to think of God?

25. How are we to think of ourselves?

e.) We are the people of God

1 Corinthians 1:2 (ESV) — **2** To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

Romans 12:4–5 (ESV) — **4** For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, **5** so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1 Peter 2:9–10 (ESV) — **9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

26. How do the three passages above encourage us to consider God

27. How should we think of ourselves?

28. What wrong thinking/wrong identity is addressed here?

f.) We are slaves of God

Romans 6:11 (ESV) — **11** So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:16–18 (ESV) — **16** Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? **17** But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, **18** and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

1 Corinthians 6:17–20 (ESV) — **17** But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. **18** Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **20** for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

29. What response do unbelievers have at the passages above?

30. How do these passages refute the opinions on sexuality and gender in our culture today?

31. What do these passages call us to believe about ourselves and God?

Ephesians 2:10 (ESV) — **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

32. How are we to view ourselves in light of Ephesians 2:10?

II. Application

All of this sounds wonderful. We love these truths of Scripture and many of us have those verses memorized. But how are we to apply this new identity in Christ?

Romans 12:2 (ESV) — **2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

33. What is Paul calling believers to do here?

34. How can this apply to our identity?

2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV) — **18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

35. How are we changed according to this verse?

Titus 2:11–14 (ESV) — **11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **12** training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, **13** waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **14** who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

1 Timothy 4:6–8 (ESV) — **6** If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. **7** Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; **8** for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

36. What effect does discipline and training have on our thinking and self perception?

37. What do we need to include in this training regimen?

Galatians 6:7–9 (ESV) — **7** Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. **8** For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. **9** And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

38. What is Paul teaching believers to do here?

39. How can the truth of sowing and reaping apply to how we think about ourselves?

Conclusion: We all must battle sin on the thought level - in our hearts and minds. In one sense, all of our sinning can be linked to a failure to understand, believe, or accept our identity in Christ. We must apply our minds and hearts to know what God says about us and repent of false ideas of who we are.