

LETTER ELEVEN

The Identity Crisis of the Ecclesia

Who We Are Determines How We Live

Identity is not merely what we believe about ourselves. It determines how we live, what we expect, and how faithfully we fulfill the mission Christ has entrusted to us.

Before We Can Occupy, We Must Know Who We Are

In the previous letter, we examined Jesus' command to "occupy until I come." But before the Ecclesia can understand what it has been called to do, it must understand who Christ has made it to be.

For generations, many believers have been taught to see themselves primarily as pilgrims passing through a world destined for destruction—waiting to be removed before conditions grow worse. I believe this expectation has done more than influence our understanding of prophecy. It has shaped our identity, weakened our sense of responsibility, and diminished our confidence in the mission Christ entrusted to His people.

If we believe the earth belongs to Satan, the nations are beyond redemption, and the Ecclesia is merely waiting to escape, we will live according to that belief. We may be sincere believers and yet function as powerless spectators.

This letter therefore asks a foundational question:

Do we see ourselves as defeated survivors awaiting evacuation—or as sons and daughters of the King, citizens of His Kingdom, and ambassadors entrusted with His continuing mission?

During the early years of my walk with Jesus, I often heard the phrase, "It is important to know who we are in Christ." That statement is true, but it addresses only part of our identity. We must know not only who we are in Christ, but also who Christ is in us, why He has taken hold of us, and what He is forming us to become.

Paul expressed this desire in Philippians 3:12: **"I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me."**

Christ did not take hold of us merely to rescue us from judgment or assure us of a place in heaven. He took hold of us so that His life might be revealed through us. He gave us a new identity, made us citizens of His Kingdom, and entrusted us with a purpose within His redemptive plan.

Many believers know they have been forgiven, but they do not understand who they have become. They have received a new identity in Christ, yet they continue to live according to an identity formed by their past, their failures, the opinions of others, or the accusations of the enemy.

This is more than an emotional struggle. It is a spiritual identity crisis within the Ecclesia.

From the Old Identity to the New

In Romans 7, Paul uses marriage to illustrate our former relationship to the law. A woman is bound to her husband while he lives, but when he dies, she is released from that covenant. Paul then applies this truth to believers:

“You also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God” (Romans 7:4).

Through Christ, we have been released from our former condition so that we might belong to Him. We are no longer defined by the old life ruled by sin, condemnation, and the flesh. We have been joined to Christ and made alive by His Spirit.

Paul also describes the conflict he experienced. He sometimes did what he hated and failed to do what he desired. He recognized that sin still attempted to operate within him, but he refused to accept sin as his true identity.

He cried out, “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?” His answer was immediate: “Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:24–25).

Romans 8 then announces the victory: **“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”**

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death. What the law could not accomplish, God accomplished through His Son. This does not mean believers never struggle or sin. It means sin, failure, shame, and condemnation no longer have the right to define who we are. Our true identity is now found in Christ.

Paul makes this extraordinary statement: **“God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).**

Our confidence before God is not based upon our own righteousness. It rests upon the righteousness of Christ. We approach the Father not as rejected strangers, frightened servants, or condemned sinners, but as sons and daughters who have been received through Christ.

What God Says About Us

Our new identity must be built upon what God has declared—not upon how we feel, what others have said, or what the enemy wants us to believe. Ephesians 1 and 2 provide one of Scripture’s clearest descriptions of who we are in Christ.

We Are Chosen and Accepted

God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before Him. In love, He predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ. We are not spiritual orphans attempting to persuade God to receive us. Through Christ, we have been brought into His family.

We Are Redeemed and Forgiven

In Christ, we have redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of God’s grace. Our past may explain some of our wounds and struggles, but it no longer determines our standing before God.

We Are Sealed by the Holy Spirit

Those who believe have been sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. His presence is the assurance that we belong to God. We are not abandoned, defenseless, or left to accomplish God’s purposes through human strength alone. The Spirit of the living God dwells within us.

We Have Been Made Alive with Christ

Although we were once dead in sin, God made us alive with Christ. Salvation is not merely an improvement of the old life. It is the impartation of new life.

We Are Raised and Seated with Christ

God raised us with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms. This speaks of our spiritual position and our participation in Christ’s victory. We do not fight to obtain a victory Christ has not yet won. We stand in the victory He has already accomplished.

We Are God’s Workmanship

We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works that He prepared in advance for us. We have not been saved merely from something; we have been saved for something. Grace gives us both a new identity and a Kingdom purpose.

We Are Citizens of God's Kingdom

We are no longer foreigners and strangers. We are fellow citizens with God's people and members of His household. Our highest allegiance is not determined by nationality, political identity, denomination, occupation, or social position. We belong to the household of God and represent the Kingdom of His Son.

These are not motivational slogans. They are declarations of spiritual reality. The question is whether we believe them.

When a False Identity Takes Root

Every few weeks, a good friend and I would meet for coffee. Our conversations usually centered on God, life, and golf. We enjoyed playing together in charity tournaments, and he had always appeared to be a healthy, cheerful, and outgoing man.

After more than two months without seeing one another, I called him, and we arranged to meet the next day. When he entered the restaurant, I immediately knew something was terribly wrong. His normally healthy complexion was ashen gray.

I asked him what was happening.

He looked directly at me and said that he had purchased a gun and intended to end his life. He was thankful that he had an opportunity to say goodbye.

I was stunned. Nothing in the person I thought I knew had prepared me for what I was hearing.

As we talked, he told me he had battled depression for most of his life. When he was eight years old, his father accepted a job in another state, forcing the family to move. My friend was devastated to leave his home and friends. As the family drove away, he sat in the back seat weeping. Rather than helping him process his grief, his parents told him, in effect, to stop crying and get over it.

He buried the pain, but the pain did not disappear.

As an adult, he sometimes retreated into his bedroom for weeks, leaving only to eat or use the bathroom. Yet almost no one knew. Outwardly, he appeared happy and successful. Inwardly, his understanding of himself had become shaped by rejection, isolation, hopelessness, and despair.

He had pursued faith, medication, counseling, and other forms of help, yet he had become convinced that God had neither heard nor helped him. Over the years, he had accepted the belief that he would always be imprisoned by depression.

That belief was not the identity Christ had given him. It was a false identity built over many years.

We began meeting several times each week. We prayed and studied the Scriptures concerning who he was in Christ and who Christ was in him. We asked the Holy Spirit to remove the scales from his eyes so that he could see and believe the truth. We confronted every lie that contradicted what God had spoken over his life.

The first month was extremely difficult. The warfare was intense. During the second month, however, we began to see signs of new life and victory. By the third month, he was learning to stand upon the truth and engage in the battle for himself.

That was approximately fifteen years ago. He is still walking with and loving Jesus. God also restored a marriage that had been broken for more than a decade and reconciled him with his estranged son.

All I can say is, “Thank You, Lord.”

Later, I shared his story at a Christians in Commerce conference. Immediately afterward, a young man asked me to take a walk with him. He confessed that he was also planning to end his life. He believed he had failed his family, his business partners, the Lord, and himself. He had become convinced everyone would be better off without him.

Once again, the enemy had built a false identity around shame, failure, and hopelessness.

Although he lived halfway across the country, we began connecting regularly by telephone, going through the same process as with my good friend. Twelve years later, he continues to walk with and love Jesus. His family and business are doing well.

Again, I can only say, “Thank You, Lord.”

These stories do not suggest that prayer and Scripture should replace medical treatment, professional counseling, or emergency intervention. When a person expresses an intention to die, the danger must be taken seriously and immediate help must be sought. The whole person matters, and God can work through spiritual, relational, and professional care.

That being said, “How many Christians are suffering under a false identity, controlled everyday wondering where God is in all of it”. Brethren, it need not be this way. Applying truth, resisting the Devil and having some walk with you, can make all the difference in the world.

The enemy understands something many believers have failed to recognize: if he can distort our identity, he can hinder our purpose. If he can persuade believers that they are condemned, powerless, forgotten, or insignificant, he can render them ineffective in the service of the King and His Kingdom.

The Assault Upon Our Corporate Identity

What happens to individuals can also happen to the entire Ecclesia.

The enemy does not merely attack our personal identity. He attacks our corporate identity as the people of God. He wants the Ecclesia to forget whose people we are, which Kingdom we represent, what authority belongs to Christ, and what mission He has entrusted to us.

This brings us to the importance of understanding the time in which we are living.

Satan's "Little Season"

From my understanding of Scripture, Christ's coming in judgment against Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 brought the Mosaic age to its decisive end. Christ's Kingdom and the New Covenant order stood established, and the Gospel continued its advance among the nations.

I recognize that faithful believers interpret these passages differently. My purpose here is not to make agreement with my eschatology a condition of fellowship. It is to ask what every view teaches the Ecclesia about Christ's victory, our present identity, and our continuing mission.

Revelation 20 tells us that after the thousand years, Satan would be released for a "little season" and would go out to deceive the nations. From my perspective, this release did not restore Satan to his former position. Christ had already triumphed over him. The authority of the Kingdom had been given to the Son, and the saints had been called to share in His reign.

Adam's rebellion opened the door for Satan to exercise influence through human sin and disobedience. But Jesus Christ, the last Adam, came to destroy the works of the devil, bind the strong man, reclaim the nations, and restore mankind's Kingdom purpose through a redeemed people.

Daniel saw this victory prophetically. One like a Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and received authority, glory, and sovereign power. All nations and peoples were brought under His everlasting dominion. Daniel then declared:

"The saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever" (Daniel 7:18).

When Satan was released, therefore, he did not return as the rightful ruler of the world. He returned as a trespasser within a Kingdom that belongs to Christ.

Satan cannot overturn Christ's victory. He cannot remove Christ from His throne, revoke the New Covenant, or take the Kingdom away from the saints. His primary weapon is deception. His counterfeits depend upon our ignorance, fear, unbelief, and agreement.

His strategy is to convince the saints that Christ's Kingdom has not come, His victory remains incomplete, and the Ecclesia has received neither a Kingdom mission nor authority to fulfill it. To accomplish this, the enemy attacks both history and identity. He seeks to hide what Christ has accomplished and persuade God's people to see themselves as defeated, powerless, and waiting to be rescued.

This is why identity matters.

Authority Flows from Identity

If you do not know who you are, you will not understand what Christ has placed in your hands. You will not recognize what He has authorized you to do, nor comprehend what is possible through the power of His Spirit.

- If you do not know that you are a child of the King and a citizen of His Kingdom, you may live like a poor and abandoned orphan.
- If you do not know that you are an heir, you may live like a slave—captive to the systems of this world.
- If you do not know that you have been raised and seated with Christ, you may live beneath the spiritual position He has given you.
- If you do not know that you are part of a royal priesthood, you may remain a powerless spectator—waiting for the Lord to do what He has called and empowered His people to do.

Satan cannot take away what Christ has given, but he can deceive us into living as though we never received it.

- He cannot remove our sonship, but he can persuade us to live like lost and unwanted children.
- He cannot take our inheritance, but he can convince us that it cannot be possessed.
- He cannot silence our prayers, but he can cause us to believe that they have no effect.
- He cannot make Christ less victorious, but he can weaken our confidence in Christ's victory.
- He cannot cancel our mission, but he can persuade us that the condition of the world is hopeless and that nothing we do will make a difference.
- He cannot strip the Ecclesia of its Kingdom identity, but he can deceive God's people into abandoning the authority, responsibility, and mission that flow from it.

The great crisis confronting the Ecclesia is not that Christ has failed to give us identity, authority, or purpose. It is that we have forgotten who we are, what He has placed in our hands, and why we are still here.

Identity Must Lead to Mission

Knowing who we are in Christ is not intended to make us proud, self-sufficient, or spiritually superior. Our identity is rooted in Christ, sustained by His grace, and expressed through humble service.

Kingdom authority is not permission to control people. It is the responsibility to represent the character, truth, justice, mercy, and righteousness of our King.

To understand this identity, we must return to the beginning.

Mankind was created in the image and likeness of God. We were created to know Him, reflect His character, exercise faithful stewardship, and represent His rule within the earth.

Adam's rebellion did not erase the image of God from humanity, but it distorted and obscured it. Sin corrupted our desires, damaged our relationships, clouded our understanding, and brought us under the power of death. We remained image-bearers, but we no longer reflected that image faithfully.

Jesus Christ came as the perfect image of the invisible God and the last Adam. He came not merely to forgive individual acts of sin, but to deliver humanity from the corruption and death associated with the first Adam. Through His obedience, death, and resurrection, Jesus began the restoration of what had been distorted through mankind's rebellion.

The first Adam brought sin and death; the last Adam brings righteousness and life.

Immersed into a New Identity

This restoration becomes ours through union with Christ. Paul explains:

“Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Romans 6:3–4).

Our old self was crucified with Christ so that we would no longer remain enslaved to sin. We are united with Him in His death and raised with Him into a new way of life.

Baptism, therefore, is far more than a religious ceremony. It speaks of immersion, union, and identification. Like a cloth immersed in dye and brought out bearing a new color, those who are immersed into Christ come under a new identity. We are identified with His death, burial, and resurrection.

We no longer draw our identity from Adam's rebellion. We receive our new identity in Jesus Christ.

Yet this restoration is both an accomplished reality and an ongoing transformation. In Christ, we have already been made new, but we are also being renewed as His life and character are formed within us.

Paul writes that God has predestined us “to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29). He also tells us to put on the new self, “which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator” (Colossians 3:10).

The image was not destroyed; it was distorted. In Christ, it is being restored.

Restored identity is not merely a change in how we see ourselves. It changes how we live and what we believe Christ can accomplish through His people.

His Life Expressed Through His People

Jesus told His disciples:

“Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12).

Jesus was not saying His followers would become greater than He is. The works would be greater in reach because, after returning to the Father, He would send the Holy Spirit and multiply His ministry through His people among the nations. What Jesus began in one geographical region during His earthly ministry would continue through His Spirit-filled Ecclesia across the earth.

This is the practical consequence of our union with Christ. His life is not only given to us; His life is expressed through us. We do not replace Christ or act independently of Him. We participate in His continuing work through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This gives deeper meaning to Jesus' command in the Great Commission:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:18–20).

To baptize people in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is more than performing a ceremony. It brings them into a new identity, relationship, allegiance, and way of life. They are immersed into the truth of who God is and who they were created to be in Him.

The Great Commission, therefore, is not merely about gaining converts or preparing people to leave the earth. It is about making disciples whose identity, character, relationships, and conduct increasingly reflect Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus included teaching as part of the commission. The nations were to be taught to obey everything He commanded. Restored identity must produce a transformed way of living.

We enter the spheres of society as people whose identity is being restored in Christ. We do not enter them to dominate others or impose our will. We enter as ambassadors of the King—to serve, teach, influence, build, restore, and demonstrate what life under the rule of Christ looks like.

Who Are We?

Before we can understand our assignment within the spheres of society, we must settle the question of identity.

- We are beings created in the image of God.
- We are the redeemed people of God.
- We have died to the identity formed through Adam's rebellion.
- We have been raised into new life through Jesus Christ.
- We are being conformed to the image of God's Son.
- We are sons and daughters of the King.
- We are citizens of His Kingdom.
- We are members of Christ's Ecclesia.

- We are His workmanship, created for good works.
- We are ambassadors entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation.
- We are a royal priesthood called to proclaim His excellencies.
- We are salt in the earth and light in the world.
- We are not waiting helplessly for the King to receive His Kingdom.
- Our King reigns.
- Our identity is found in Him.
- His image is being restored within us.
- Our authority comes from Him.
- Our mission has been given by Him.

Until all things are finally placed beneath His feet, we are called to be about our Father's business.

Review and Final Challenge

I am not asking you merely to exchange one theological system for another. I am asking whether our understanding of prophecy has produced the identity Christ intended for His people.

Has it equipped us to make disciples of nations—or taught us primarily to await our departure?

Has it strengthened our confidence in Christ's present reign—or caused us to surrender the world to the enemy?

Has it taught us to live as heirs of the Kingdom—or as spiritual refugees awaiting evacuation?

Christ has not abandoned His Ecclesia, postponed His Kingdom, or withdrawn His commission. Our King reigns. His Spirit lives within His people. His authority stands behind His mission.

The question is no longer simply, “When will He come?” The question before us is: Do we know who we are, what He has placed in our hands, and why we are still here?



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The letter does not end here. Continue the journey as we learn to think biblically, live courageously, and faithfully represent Christ's Kingdom in every sphere of life. Enter the War Room at 11thHourWarRoom.org

