

## “Idols: Identity”

*Galatians 2:11-21*

### Introduction

One of the most heinous crimes that can be committed is identity theft. According to The Harris Poll, 60 million people in the US were affected by it in 2018, including children. As Christians, we must not only be concerned with this kind of identity theft, but also with spiritual identity theft. Satan is a rogue who prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (1 Pet 5:8). If we allow him to use idols to distract us, he will rob us of our identity in Christ.

The idol of identity occurs when we take images of contemporary culture and use them to define who we are. A person's race, ethnicity, gender, education, politics, economic status or social group can lead us to define ourselves by cultural ideologies. However, the Bible is clear that making these cultural identities the norm for us is not right. In his letter to the people of Galatia, Paul reminds us that we are, first and foremost, of Christ and that identity is what should define us.

In his sermon, Pastor Evans mentioned that we also have the tendency to identify ourselves by our sins and past mistakes. This tactic is another one of Satan's many tools to make us have a distorted view of ourselves and reclassify ourselves according to his evil standards. If we identify with anything other than Christ first, and then expect Jesus to adjust to our preferences, we will develop spiritual schizophrenia.

It is key for all Christians to position themselves under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and allow a biblical worldview to govern who we are. Throughout our lives, we can and will relate to cultural things and events, but our first commandment is to love the Lord with all our heart and place no other gods before Him.

### Getting Started

1. If you had to describe yourself to someone without stating your name or what you do for a living, what would you say?
2. As a culture, we will sometimes identify ourselves by our feelings, instead of Biblical standards. Think of a time you have done this, how would you respond differently in a situation where the Bible governed your response, not how you felt?

### Let's Get Personal

1. Additionally, we sometimes identify ourselves by our sin(s). Doing so can reinforce that sin in our life instead of eliminating it. Make a list of the sins or negative labels you have allowed to define you.
2. Next to the list you created above, create new “I am” statements that reflect who you are in Jesus Christ.

### Take the Next Step

Meditate this week on the following verses: 1 Peter 5:8 and 2 Corinthians 4:10.

### Renew Your Mind

*“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”*

*Galatians 2:20*

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