

Because most of us really have not seen who we are in Christ beyond just an initial level to be saved, we are suffering an identity crisis and we are looking in all the wrong direction to ease it.

All your relationship problems have to do with this! Marriage, parenting, family, church, on the job and neighborhood relations! Peer pressure goes out the door. Keeping up with the Jones's ends! Trying to buy happiness stops! The wounds you are nursing from past and present experiences of rejection heal!

This is what water baptism is all about. Stressing our identity with the life, death and resurrection of Christ! If I would have been nailed to the other side of the cross and died when Christ died, and if I would have been wrapped and placed in the tomb with Him and if I would have been risen from the dead and taken to Heaven with Him, **I would be in no better standing than I am in now because He did all those things for me in such a way it is just as though I did them!** In fact, it is just as though I lived a life without sin for 33 ½ years as He did!!!

That is the identity we need to realize! It is the only way to offset what the first Adam did to us in the Garden of Eden.

III. OUR STAGES.

Let's go back to Eden and see the first identity crisis and how Adam began to come out of it! Gen. 3:(1-6) 7-14, 15-21.

As a multi-stage rocket, we are to increasingly go to new heights of appreciating, appropriating and applying who we are in Christ!

Accordingly, there is the launch stage of salvation, with successive stages of surrender and consequential sanctification with a lightening of the payload as you go from stage to stage (Heb. 12:1-3).

Old Testament analogy for the 5 BASIC STAGES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: from Egypt, to the wilderness, to the Jordan River, to crossing over into the Promise Land, to being as a Levite where your inheritance is only Christ. Most Christians never leave the wilderness and at times long for Egypt (Num. 11:5; 14:4).

Summarization

Do you want to leave the orbit of this earth and have more of what God intended for you in those things above (Col. 3:1-3)?

BREAKTHROUGH CHRISTIANITY

"The Identity Crisis"

"by the obedience of one" Rom. 5:19

Introduction

In keeping with our rocket analogy for this Bible conference, let me ask you a question. How does it feel to have walked on the moon?

You first did it almost 40 years ago.

In 1969, in the midst of a space race with the old Soviet Union, the USA, in a sense won the race!

The first man to have walked on the moon did not officially proclaim it a victory for America – that was obvious but not internationally prudent...shall we say. His name was, Neil Armstrong and what he said was, "That's one small step for [a] man; one giant leap for mankind".

This phrase means that he was there on my behalf and your behalf! It was more than the fact that our tax dollars had paid for it – at least my parents did, I was only 10 years old at the time.

What he was saying was, I did not do this just for Neil Armstrong, but I am the first man on the moon and I am doing it on behalf of NASA, America, even mankind at large! When Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, **so did I** – in a sense.

I remember watching the images come through on TV. They were in B&W and they almost looked ghostly. You could almost see through him.

I remember later going outside and looking at the moon and thinking wow, we actually have been there. I did that several times in the months that followed. I still do it at times. It does not seem like it is some 250,000 miles away when you look up at it.

Yes, those were the days when I wanted Tang instead of real orange

juice, Space Food Sticks (1969) instead of plain old candy bars. Even the quasi-space age treat Pop Rocks (1975) instead of life savers.

Oh, by the way, at this time I was a Junior Astronaut! *A what?* – a Junior Astronaut. On Sunday evenings, our church had a program for children called Eager Beavers (1st-3rd) and Junior Astronauts (4th-6th). It was a packaged program from Baptist Publications which later became known as Accent Publications.

Our theme song was along the lines of being like an astronaut and one day going to heaven to be with Christ: “10 and 9, 8 and 7, 6 and 5 and 4, call upon the Savior while you may, 3 and 2 going through the clouds in bright away, the countdown is getting closer everyday.” It was the “Patch the Pirate” program of its day.

Well, I have something better than the fact I have walked on the moon by way of Neil Armstrong!

One that will do a whole lot more for your marriage, parenting situation, job situation, life, church and so forth!

Many of you identify with those early days of the space program. There was a national excitement in the air – especially as we pulled in front of the USSR in our accomplishments in space travel.

As much as I identified with Neil Armstrong, I can tell you there is someone else that has taken me much farther than the moon with whom I identify with. **This person has taken me all the way to the throne room of God!**

Can I also tell you that Christians all around the world are suffering from an identity crisis - some more so than others?

What the world means by the term “identity crisis”: The struggle to determine who I am and why I am here. Do I fit in or not? Is there something wrong with me? Am I inferior?

Let’s start with what our identity is before we are saved – or truly Christians.

READ: Romans 5:12, 18-19. I Corinthians 15:21-22.

I. OUR STANDING.

Let’s go back to Genesis 5:1-2 and read a very important, life chang-

ing passage if you have never truly recognized what it is saying.

There is a reason God started all mankind with only one man. (By the way, when you tell people they evolved, you worsen the identity crisis!) It was the most efficient way to provide salvation for us from His wrath for our sins.

He had created the animals en masse, but not only did He give to man a moral awareness that no animal has – that is, part of what it means when it says in Genesis that He created man in his image, He made Adam the source of all humankind.

Paul, in Acts 17:26 said, we all came from “one blood” (Adam).

By doing this, it can be accurately stated that one man got us in this mess and only one man can get us out of it.

The more you understand this principle, the more potentially life transforming this Bible conference will be for you.

Before you are saved, God sees you in Adam, after you are saved, God sees you in Christ. The Bible even refers to Him as the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45). Adam was a picture of Christ accordingly – Romans 5:14. **Christ is the Head of a new line of people!**

If God had not made all of us from one man, but let’s say, a dozen men, or a thousand men, we would have needed a dozen different or a thousand different saviors to do what Christ did.

Even more significant, by allowing me to freely inherit Adam’s fallen state, I could freely inherit Christ’s righteous state. This is what the “even so” of Romans 5:19 means!

When church going people are trying to earn God’s favor through their own good deeds, they are suffering an identity crisis.

When Christians are ignorant of how far God carries our identity with Christ, every facet of their lives suffers for it!

II. OUR STATUS.

Breaking through spiritually to new levels of grace, which I am especially going to preach on tonight, is all about our identity with Christ. It is about Holy Spirit caused awareness and understanding of whom you are in God’s eyes right now.