

FAITH MATTERS



TRANSFORMATION

The current situation with Covid 19 seems to change on a weekly basis especially in the North East. The concept of change/ transformation is familiar to all those who follow Jesus Christ. The transforming power of God works daily in our lives changing us to reflect more of Christ. God changes us, he however is constant. Circumstances change but God is unchanging . His love, mercy, grace, faithfulness, provision and so much more is eternal.

Every Blessing

Pastor John.

Keeping in touch

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Reflections: Our Identity in Christ



Victorious Christian Living is what every born again Christian should be walking daily in. However, it is vital that we know what our identity in Christ is before we can reflect that identity our lives.

Who do you think you are? What is your identity? What influences, shapes your identity?

Genesis 1:27 states: "So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of

God, he created them; male and female he created them."

We were made "in God's image" and God is spirit. Adam's spirit, his inner person, the core of his being, was connected to his body (physically alive). But his spirit was also connected with God (spiritually alive). The spiritual connection to God gives 3 very significant things which every human being longs for.

"Victorious Christian Living: not a theory to be admired, but a reality to be experienced."

Current Programme

Sunday 10am and 12noon
in our Church building

10 am Service Streamed
on Facebook

11am Catch up via Zoom

Tuesday 7.30pm
Prayer Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday 7.30pm
Reflections on Facebook

Thursday
Throwback Thursday

Mon to Fri
Daily Devotionals

Daily Verse

Acceptance – An intimate relationship with God. He could talk with Him at any time and have His full attention.

Significance – A purpose. Genesis 1:26 records 'to rule over the birds of the sky, the beasts of the field and the fish of the sea.'

Security – Access to God's presence. Everything he needed was provided for – food, shelter, companionship.

Disobedience led to that their spiritual connection being broken and separation from God. Subsequently, all their descendants were born physically alive but spiritually dead. **Acceptance** changed into a sense of rejection. **Significance** was replaced with a sense of guilt and shame. **Security** was replaced with fear. Adam's first expression of emotion in Genesis 3:10 was, "I was afraid".

We have all been born into an environment that's not at all like the one we were originally designed for. There is an inbred instinct to find our way back to the acceptance, significance and security we were meant to have. Sadly so often, we are looking to the wrong people or the wrong things, in the wrong places. We only find our true identity, contentment and peace in Christ, that's when we have arrived back home!

Jesus came to restore, we can be spiritually alive again. Ephesians 2:1-3. Like Adam, Jesus was physically and spiritually alive. Unlike Adam, Jesus never sinned. Why did Jesus come? To forgive our sins, yes, but also to give us life.

Our Identity in Christ cont.,

John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." Adam lost life, Jesus gives life. Through Jesus the relationship and connection with God is restored. We can now experience true acceptance, significance and security which is only found in Christ.

Saints - Those who believe in Christ Jesus, accept Him as their Saviour and seek, to follow Him as their Lord, are saints. Being a saint isn't based upon how we feel, how much we understand about sainthood or what others say about us. Our relationship with Jesus Christ qualifies us to be saints. Yes, we sin, but God is faithful and forgives us. We are no longer 'sinners' but saints, not because of anything we have done but all because of Jesus.

In Christ - 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come!" There is nothing that we bring to the table so to speak. It is all in and through the Lord Jesus. God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Read Ephesians 1:1-14 where Paul uses the phrase In Christ, In Him on numerous times.

Chosen - We are chosen and adopted into the family of God. "Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure." (Ephesians 1:4-5)

Beloved Child of God - We are part of the Beloved, we are loved because we are in Christ Jesus and God loves Jesus. God loves what God makes, including you! So how should we respond to God's love? 1. Accept God's love. 2. Live in God's love (Jude 21; 1 John 4:16). 3. Love others (John 15:12-13). Paul prayer in Eph 3:14, 17-19 is that we experience more of God's love.

Redeemed. Eph 1:7, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace." Praise God we have been "redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ." We have been totally forgiven (Psalms 103:2-4, 11-12; Isaiah 38:17). There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ John 8:36, Jesus said, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Are you living with a forgiven identity? We are called to not only to live in that identity but to proclaim God's forgiveness and offer of salvation.

We are to live as forgiven saints, walking boldly not arrogantly, into the life that God has for us.

Please join us on Wednesdays as we continue in our series of our identity in Christ.

WAIT ON THE LORD

In God's waiting room,
I sometimes have to stay
it where He teaches me
the whys for His delay.

He wants me to know,
waiting has its due season
and soon I will gather
the answers to His reason.

He uses this waiting time,
for me to focus on His face
so that I can experience
the full measure of His
grace.

He wants me to learn,
how to depend on Him
why my pride and conceit
He has to pare and trim.

In God's waiting room,
I've learned all about de-
lay
it's where He taught me to
trust Him
for my tomorrows and
today!

Deborah Ann Belka

Psalms 27:14

*"Wait on the Lord:
be of good courage, and
he
shall strengthen thine
heart:
wait, I say, on
the Lord."*

Saturday Bible Smiles

1. Who is the greatest babysitter mentioned in the Bible?

David. He rocked Goliath to a very deep sleep.

2. Did you know they had cars in Jesus time?

The Bible says the disciples were all in one accord

On a personal note...

It is with great sadness that due to ongoing family health circumstances, Pastor John has made the difficult decision to resign as our Pastor. This decision was made after much prayerful consideration. He will continue to lead us during October with his last Sunday Service being 1st November.

The Leadership Team have already had discussions with Paul Hudson, our Regional Leader. Further information will be forthcoming. We ask that at this time you pray for Pastor John, Tracy and Louise as they navigate the journey ahead.

Community Projects

The last couple of months have seen our Community Projects ministry hugely blessed financially. Sunderland City Council have provided us with a new fridge/freezer so that we can start offering fresh produce in our foodbank. Sunderland City Council, in partnership with Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group launched the 'Creating Resilience within Sunderland Communities Appeal' to support our most vulnerable residents during the Coronavirus outbreak and beyond, to not only support residents in crisis but also support them to move out of crisis, to become more resilient and improve their overall health and wellbeing. By providing direct support via a 'more than food' approach the plan is to enable people to directly access the help they need to improve their financial, personal or other situations. Our grant application to this fund has been successful and some of this money will be used to partner with Fareshare to provide fresh fruit/vegetables over these winter months. An improved diet is known to improve health.

We have been exploring various ways in which we can further reach out to our community and had some encouraging conversations with several organisations especially Christians Against Poverty.

We give thanks to the Lord for financial resourcing and now seek him for manpower. Can you also please prayerfully consider whether you can support this area? Do you have a few hours to spare and a heart for people. We firmly believe God equips those he calls. Is he calling you?

Thanksgiving

We thank God for His financial provision and for your continued financial support. General income and expenditure for Sept was as follows.

General Offerings £4507.57 General Expenditure £4699.12

We want to especially thank those who have contributed to the Roof fund. We now have the funds to give the roofers the go ahead . They are planning to start work on 12th October. Once the roof repairs are carried out we will investigate the electrical repairs needed to the side room.



“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”

Children’s Church and Sunday Youth Church

September commenced with Children’s Church looking at The Greatest Commandment - to love God. We then had the parables: The Wise and Foolish Builders, The Parable Son and The Great Feast. We had some great art work sent in. SYC have reflected and expanded on what it means and looks like to live out the commission they agreed to during Kairos Christian Youth Camp. We’ve considered why and how to love people, even people we don’t like. We’ve seen how God has a plan for our lives and what it means to live that out. We’ve also created stories using story dice and enjoyed the content from In-

tro Outro (Youth for Christ) and Off Brand Culture (Tees Valley Youth for Christ), The last few weeks have seen big changes in the children’s and young people lives, the main one being going back to school. Our Zoom meeting gave us the opportunity to chat about this and pray with them.

It has been great to see some of our children/young people back in the building. They each have their own individual pack with notebooks, pencils or pens to record reflection points or prayer points.



Elim Pentecostal Church
Sunderland

We passionately believe that God has a plan and purpose for you. He loves you and wants you to come to know him through Jesus. We are a Christian community for all generations and nationalities.

We would love to hear from you too, so please send in any news, stories, prayer requests or praise reports.

Thank You..

And Finally..

A young man applied for a job as a farmhand. When the farmer asked for his qualifications, he said, "I can sleep through a storm." This puzzled the farmer... but he liked the young man. So he hired him.

A few weeks later, the farmer and his wife were awakened in the night by a violent storm ripping through the valley. He jumped out of bed and called out for his new hired man, but found him sleeping soundly in the midst of the storm.

He quickly began to check things to see if all was secure. They found that the shutters of the farmhouse had been securely fastened. A good supply of logs had been set next to the fireplace. The farmer and his wife then inspected their property.

They found that the farm tools had been placed in the storage shed, safe from the elements. And wheat bales had been bound and wrapped in tarps. The tractor had been moved into its garage. The barn was properly locked tight. Even the animals were calm and had plenty of feed. All was well.

The farmer then understood the meaning of the young man's words, "I can sleep through a storm."

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