

# Faith Talk - April 19, 2026

**Series:** The Utter Relief of Holiness

**Sermon:** The Identity of Holiness

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 51:5; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ezekiel 36:26; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:10; Galatians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20

## 2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!*

## Sermon Summary

This sermon explores how holiness flows from identity, understanding who we are in Christ rather than striving to be obedient in conduct. The message begins with the sobering reality that in our natural state, we have "deceitful" and "desperately sick" hearts (Jeremiah 17:9) that cannot understand spiritual truth. However, through faith in Christ, God gives us a heart transplant (Ezekiel 36:26), and we become "new creations" with Christ living in us. Christ in us is the identity God gives us. Our identity as a person is found in who I am in Christ.

**The key insight:** how you identify as a person is how you live in practice. The enemy's greatest tactic is to make us believe the lie about who we are in the flesh rather than the truth about who we are in Christ. True holiness comes not from trying to live like someone we are not in the flesh, but from maturing into who we truly are in Christ, redirecting our effort from improving behavior to nurturing our new identity through renewing our minds according to God's truth.

## Main Points

- **Identity drives behavior** - how you identify as a person is how you live in practice.
- **The enemy attacks identity** - his greatest tactic is making us forget who we are in Christ.
- **Natural hearts are terminally sick** - we're born deceived by sin, unable to understand spiritual truth.
- **God gives a heart transplant** - through faith in Christ, we receive a new, living heart aligned with God and who He created me to be.
- **Renew your mind** - transform thinking from natural man to spiritual man, think like saved people, not lost people.
- **Nurture and mature in identity** - The more I identify with who I am in Christ, the more I mature into who I am in Christ, and the more I experience the holiness of Christ.
- **Remember who you are!** - You are a Christian, therefore/remembering this is the power and passion to glorify God with your life.

## Discussion Questions

### Conversations with Adults

1. The sermon says, "the enemy's greatest tactic is for you to believe the lie of who you are in the flesh rather than the truth of who you are in Christ." What specific lies about your identity do you struggle to reject?
2. Paul corrected the Corinthians not because they weren't Christians but because they "forgot who they are in Christ." When have you acted in ways that don't match your identity in Christ? What caused you to forget?
3. The message emphasizes redirecting effort from "trying to be holy" to "nurturing identity in Christ." Practically, what would this shift look like in your daily spiritual practices?

### Conversations with Students

1. The sermon says identity is under major attack in our culture, especially around gender. How does understanding your identity as "new creation in Christ" help you navigate cultural confusion about who you are?
2. Romans 12:2 says don't "conform to this age" but be "transformed by renewing your mind." What messages about identity from social media, school, or friends do you need to reject in order to think as God thinks?
3. How important is it to remember who you are in Christ, even if people around you are not, or forget they are? How can you remind yourself and your Christian friends who they are in Christ when facing temptation?

### Conversations with Kids

1. The sermon says our old hearts were "sick and couldn't be fixed"—they needed to be completely replaced with a new heart. Can you think of something that was so broken you couldn't fix it and had to get a new one? How is that like what Jesus does for our hearts?
2. When you make a mistake or do something wrong, do you think "I'm a bad kid" or "I'm God's kid who made a mistake"? Why does remembering "I'm God's kid" help you do better next time?
3. God says you are His child and He made you special. What does God say is true about you?

## Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the heart transplant, for taking our sick, dying hearts and giving us new, living hearts through faith in Christ. We're grateful that we are new creations, that the old has passed away and the new has come.

We ask for help in renewing our minds to think like spiritual people, not natural people. Help us reject the enemy's lies about our identity and embrace the truth of who we are in Christ.

We commit to redirecting our effort from trying to prove our holiness to nurturing our identity in Christ. May we discover that as we focus on who we are in You, the power and passion to live for You naturally flows. Thank You that holiness is not about trying to be someone we are not, but maturing into who we truly are. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Identity Scriptures

We have to embrace the truth of verses like:

- **Psalms 139:13-14** – you were fearfully and wonderfully made
- **Genesis 1:27** – you were created in the image of God
- **Colossians 1:16** – you were made through Christ and for Christ
- **Zephaniah 3:17** – He rejoices over you with shouts of Joy

Even though **Romans 3:23** says we have all sinned, marred the image, and fallen short of God's glory...

- **Ephesians 2:4-5** – once dead but now have been made alive
- **Titus 3:5** – washed and regenerated by the Holy Spirit
- **John 14:17** – Spirit of Christ in with you and in you
- **Ephesians 5:18** – you are filled with the Holy Spirit
- **Romans 6:4** – baptized in the death and resurrection of Christ
- **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** – you are sanctified and set apart in Him
- **2 Corinthians 5:17** – new creation, old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new.
- **2 Corinthians 5:21** – reconciled to God, imputed with the righteousness of Christ

You are not the same person!

- **Colossians 2:13** – forgiven of all your sins
- **John 3:16** – born again
- **John 6:47** – given eternal life
- **John 17:3** – experiential relationship with the Father
- **Ephesians 2:10** – His workmanship created in Christ for His purposes

We could walk through the book of **Romans**:

- **Romans 3** – justified before God
- **Romans 4** – credited with righteousness
- **Romans 5** – at peace with God
- **Romans 6** – dead to sin and alive in Christ
- **Romans 7** – set free from the Law
- **Romans 8** – adopted into His family and secure in the love of God
- **Romans 9-11** – no matter how far and how long you wonder God's promise to you never fails.
- **Romans 12** – you are uniquely gifted to edify the body of Christ

But there's more...

- **1 Peter 2:5** – become acceptable to God
- **Ephesians 2:13** – brought near to Him

- **Romans 5:10** – you are the object of His “much more” care and love
- **Colossians 1:13** – rescued from darkness, transferred into the Kingdom
- **Matthew 7:24-25** – our lives are placed on the solid rock of Jesus Christ
- **1 Corinthians 12:12** – Fellowship of the saints
- **2 Corinthians 5:20** – ambassador and representative of Christ in the world
- **John 17:6** - You are now a gift from God the Father to His Son Jesus Christ...*you are a gift!*

**And all of these things are forever secure for us...**

- **Ephesians 2:8-9** – Salvation is the gift of God to us
- **Romans 11:29** – the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable
  
- **John 10:28** – in the hand of the Father, and no one can snatch us out
- **John 6:39** – Jesus is standing guard, making sure none get lost
- **Ephesians 1:13** – sealed by the HS, a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance
  - The Trinity is a work keeping you secure in Christ
  
- **1 Peter 1:4-5** – recipients of an inheritance that is imperishable and will never spoil or fade, reserved in heaven for us, guarded by God’s power
- **Philippians 3:20** – our permanent citizenship is as citizens of heaven
- **Romans 8:1** – no condemnation for those of us who are in Christ Jesus...
  - You have escaped condemnation of God and should be free from the condemnation of others as well.

You are not who the enemy says you are.

**You are who Christ says you are!**