

ID'd

YOUR GOD-GIVEN IDENTITY IN CHRIST

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*In memory of
Casandra Martin,
a precious daughter of God
who looked just like His Son*

*With special thanks to
21st Century Christian;
for so honoring Casandra
by perpetuating a legacy of the
good work the Lord began through her.*

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I D'd

CHOSEN OF GOD

CHAPTER 1

ID'D PRINCIPLE #1

CHOSEN-OF-GOD IS PART OF WHO YOU ARE



What does it mean to be ID'd? I can think of three possible definitions. It could mean that your identification has been checked for verification of your identity. It could mean that someone has identified, or recognized, you. Or, finally, that someone has given you an identity.

Well, Christian, you have been given an identity—a new identity. It is a gift of God's grace, from the heart of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is one lavished in love and brimming with hope. That is but a small part of what we will explore in our time together. Because, contrary to popular opinion, we are not defined by what we do, feel, or own. Our identity is not how we are perceived by others (or even by ourselves). There is much more to it than that.

Several vital components make up your identity. In the chapters ahead, we'll look into those God-issued components that make up your identity in Christ, as a citizen of the kingdom of heaven—for that is your true identity. To discover your true identity, we must look only to truth, the truth of God's Word. And we'll do it in the ASK format—a format born of the creative, Spirit-led genius of Casandra Martin. In study of this topic, we will use the ASK pattern she designed by Asking the hard questions; Seeking answers in God's Word; and Knocking on heaven's gate in humble, yet honest, prayer. Because don't you want to know who you are? Really?

ASK

In seeking our identity,
it's important to look to
the Bible to see what God has
to say about us.

What do you discover from

Genesis 1:27

Psalms 8:4-8

SEEK

Abraham was chosen
by God, and Genesis 18:19
tells us why:

How can this apply
to your life?

KNOCK

As the Hebrew people
were slaves to Pharaoh,
we were slaves to sin
(see Romans 6:22).
Is freedom part of your
ID in Christ? Explain.

IDENTITY – A HISTORY

God breathed our identity into Adam, an identity lost in the Fall. An identity tainted by sin and corrupted by the world. An identity, however, so valuable to save that He promised to renew it.

God would restore the lost identity of man and He would bring the Restorer into the world through a chosen people.

He called a man, Abraham, out of the land of Ur to Canaan. His family line would perpetuate the promises of God's covenant through time and history, eventually forming a nation with an identity all its own.

The families of the chosen patriarchs of God—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—grew to be 70 in number and went down to Egypt to survive a famine. There, they became enslaved for 400 years. God delivered the Hebrew people in the most miraculous rescue of all time. They would no longer be ID'd as "slave," but free citizens of the land He would give them.

The Old Testament books of Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Numbers tell of the ways and means God handed down that would give His people their identity (namely the Law). God instructed them, in great detail, what it looks like to live as His people, a nation for His renown.

A CHOSEN DWELLING

The Israelites were God's "treasured possession." God chose them to be His...to be holy. That state of having been chosen was a primary element of their identity. They were chosen, treasured, holy. They were God's.

The Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament),

along with the rest of the Old Testament biblical record, tell of the rocky road and many detours the Israelites traveled. They were a rather rebellious lot (an identifying feature of all members of the human race). But God was faithful to His every promise—extending mercy, grace, favor, love, and patience toward them.

God won the victory for them, in conquering the land and driving out their enemies, and prospered the nation. In the course of time, a temple was built in Jerusalem, and the Lord declared, “I have chosen and consecrated this house so that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time” (2 Chronicles 7:16).

The Temple would bear His Name. It was consecrated, belonging to God and set apart for the service of God, as His chosen dwelling place. The surrounding nations would know the people were Jehovah-God’s as He blessed them and dwelled among them. This foreshadowed the day when God, the Holy Spirit, would come to dwell within His people, His holy temple among men.

CHOSENNESS

Down through the ages, God reminded His people of the Coming Messiah. The prophets were God’s chosen servants to deliver His messages of prophecy and promise that, through the Jewish people, salvation would come—specifically through the line of the tribe of Judah. It was through them God chose to reveal the mystery that Christ Jesus, God Incarnate, would dwell within His people (Colossians 1:27).

That is the glorious part of our identity: Christ in you.

ASK

What three ways does God refer to the Israelites in Exodus 19:5-6? Can you “hear” Him say the same to you?

SEEK

How did God define them in Deuteronomy 7:9? Now rewrite that verse, but personalize it.

KNOCK

Not only is “chosen” a part of your identity in Christ, so is “temple.” How does that knowledge affect how you view yourself as His dwelling place?

ASK

What does our ID
look like as God's chosen
according to
Colossians 3:12? We wear:

SEEK

Often we look for our identity
in all the wrong places:
externally (relationship,
career, experience,
the opinion of others) or
internally (within ourselves
through self-discovery).
Where have you looked?

KNOCK

How does knowing you are
chosen shape your identity?

And, as if that were not already enough, we read in Colossians 3:12 that we are "God's chosen ones, holy and beloved." Soak that in a minute. Bask in the identity bestowed upon you. Chosen. Holy. Beloved.

Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, makes it clear that it was God who chose us to be in Christ and that our having been chosen has purpose. We were chosen to be holy, set apart, and blameless before Him (Ephesians 1:4).

Israel was the holy nation of God, chosen as His treasured possession. And that same identity has been assigned the Body of Christ. Look to the words of the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:9. There, too, you learn that we are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his [God's] own possession." That verse not only tells us of our identity, but what we are to do as such: declare His praises. Peter goes on to say that as His children, we no longer live in the dark, but dwell in His glorious light—because He is Light and dwells within, shining through these chosen vessels for all the world to see. And it is that Light that identifies you as His...His chosen.

CHOSEN FIRST

Wired in all of us is an inherent need to be chosen. You've known it (likely all-too-well)—whether it was as a child on the playground at recess, on a sporting field in high school, or maybe in a high-powered job interview. Maybe we have a strong proclivity to feel that way precisely because we have been *chosen*. What would it change for you if you knew that you were chosen first? God chose you long before you chose Him. In fact, God chose each one of us before the foundation of the world to be in Christ (Ephesians 1:4).

That longing to be chosen just might be what compels us to seek the One for whom we were chosen to live. And when we do seek Him, God promises we will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13). Then, baptized in Christ by faith, we become a new creation—with a new identity. We are no longer what we were; we have a new ID. That's not all. Paul explained to the Corinthians: "...he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him" and He takes up residence within so that we then become temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17, 19). All those in Christ, put on Christ and become one, all heirs according to the promise given Abraham (Galatians 3:26-28). And when we receive Him, by faith, we become children of God (John 1:12). The Spirit "bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16); therefore, our identity by association has also changed as added members to His household. And the further work of the Spirit transforms these temples as chosen vessels, consecrated to bear His Name.

May "His eyes and heart always be there."