

Introduction

[Audio from sermon on video]

Good morning, again. It's great to be here this morning. I'm glad that you have chosen to join us this morning as well. Based on last week's sermon, I wasn't sure if it is BYOB now; but I just have water... (Laughter) I only drink water so we're okay. We'll have to find controversy somewhere else today. That wasn't really controversial, Steve. We are in a series called "Change," as you heard earlier this morning. We are talking about how Jesus changes lives. He gives new life; He transforms. He gives new birth where there is spiritual death. So the cards that we have for you to help pass to your neighbors or your co-workers say "It's never too late to change." ...Because as long as anyone is still walking this earth, Jesus can change their life and give them new life and become their life. We are looking through different encounters in the Book of John where Jesus changes lives or challenges people to change.

The Book of John is in the New Testament. The Bible is broken into two major sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament introduces us to a holy God and a people that He wants to set apart for Himself. He starts to promise a Redeemer for mankind because men are separated from Him. Humans are born into sin, and our sin separates us from that holy God so we start to see the character of God, the people of God, and this promised Redeemer throughout the Old Testament. In the New Testament, we get to see the Redeemer, Jesus. We get to see His life and His death, His resurrection, His ministry, His teaching... how He reveals the things of God to mankind, and then we also get to see how the Church, the followers of Jesus, live life. And at the very end, we get to see what is to come, Jesus returning and setting up a new heaven and new earth and making all things new. John is the fourth Book in the New Testament, after Matthew, Mark, and Luke. We will be in chapter 4 this morning. Let me pray for us.

"God, thank you for today. Thank you for a time and a place to gather in Your name, as Your people. God, I pray that You would just continue to minister to our hearts and minds... through Your Word and through the power of Your Spirit, God, that You would change us... that You would transform us to be more like Christ, that we would leave here being more like Christ than when we arrived, that we would be encouraged, that we would be ministered to... God, that we would be challenged, that we might be comforted, convicted... wherever we need the presence of Christ to just manifest itself. God, I pray that during this time... that You would speak through Your Word by the power of Your Spirit. Amen."

Today we are talking about change and how Jesus can change your identity or how He can change your identity.

[Audio-only starts here]

I want to read this encounter from John chapter 4. It's a long passage, but I want to get the whole conversation between Jesus and this woman at the well. Then we get to see some of the aftereffects as well, so we have to read quite a bit to see all that. John chapter 4, starting in verse 1... *"Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself did not baptize but only His disciples), He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. And He had to pass through Samaria. So He came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as He was from His journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.*

"A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give Me a drink.' (For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to Him, 'How is it that You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?' (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans) Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give Me a drink", you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.' The woman said to Him, 'Sir, You have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob? He gave us this well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.' Jesus said to her. 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.' The woman said to Him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.'

"Jesus said to her, 'Go, call your husband, and come here.' The woman answered Him, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said to her, 'You are right in saying, "I have no husband"; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband.' 'What you have said is true.' The woman said to Him, 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but You say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.' The woman said to Him, 'I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ). When He comes, He will tell us all things.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He.'

"Just then His disciples came back. They marveled that He was talking with a woman, but no one said, 'What do you seek?' or, 'Why are You talking to her?' So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 'Come, see a Man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?' They went out of the town and were coming to Him.

"Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, 'Rabbi, eat.' But He said to them, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' So the disciples said to one another, 'Has anyone brought Him something to eat?' Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. Do you not say, "There are yet four months, then comes the harvest"? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, "One sows and another reaps." I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.'

"Many Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me all that I ever did.' So when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His word. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.'"

1. Identity Gives Perspective.

So again, we are talking about identity. Identity is who you are. It's all the things about you that make you uniquely you, and identity plays a big role in the encounter we just read. First of all, identity gives perspective. This woman from Samaria has some things that she is identified by or identifies as... They shape not only how she sees the world but how the world sees her.

For instance, in my own life... I am a Texan. I am a native Texan. I have pride in Texas, because... well... obviously... Blue Bell and Whataburger... (Laughter) ...brisket and the Alamo and bluebonnets and Tex-Mex. Our state pride is legendary. "Everything is bigger in Texas"... "Don't mess with Texas"... etc. I've heard that Alaskans have tried to put Texas in their place because their state is so big... or whatever. They say if you cut Alaska in half, Texas would then be the third largest state... (Laughter) ...that's all fine and good, but if you started to even think about cutting Texas in half, you would have a fight on your hands. So you can see the difference in Alaskan pride and Texas pride. We don't talk about cutting our state in half... we talk about cutting our state away from rest of the states to be our own country. (Laughter) That's the difference between "I'm from Alaska"... but "I'm from Texas." I hear that Alaska is beautiful. I would love to go there. If you're from there, I welcome you. (Laughter) But, you know, "Texas, forever..." So my identity as a native Texan puts a filter on how I see the world around me. I feel sorry for people who aren't from Texas. I even feel a sense of shame almost, that my wife wasn't born in Texas. She moved here when she was six months old or something. It was almost a deal-breaker. (Laughter) I can see past that. That's not her main identity. So, my Texan-ness shapes how I see the world and how the world sees me, I'm sure.

Another source of identity for me is the fact that I have kids. So I have some "Dad" perspective. Everyone around me is driving too fast, or their music is too loud... those type of things. A couple of years ago, one of our young and cool staff members was walking by me in the hallway and was like, "Hey... nice 'Dad' shoes." (Laughter) I was like... offended for a millisecond, and then I was like, "Well... I am a dad and these are my shoes..." (Laughter) ...and I can't argue any of his points, I guess. I thought, "Yeah... yeah... Dad shoes all day." It beats trying to get skinny jeans on or something..." (Laughter) I'll rock "Dad" shoes... why not? I'm my memory, he almost said, "Cool 'Dad' shoes" but I doubt he said "Cool 'Dad' shoes." I think he said, "Nice 'Dad' shoes."

Our identities give us perspective to see the world and often how the world sees us. This woman at the well... this Samaritan woman... has a few identifiers which she identifies by and give her cause to see herself a certain way and for the world to see her a certain way. I want to look at some of those aspects of her identity. I don't know if you have the original Greek in front of you... maybe you can't tell this from the text, but she is a female. Again, man... I thought maybe it was just the first service that didn't laugh at that joke... (Laughter) I almost marked it out. I guess I should have. Okay... she is a female. (Laughter) At least I got some laughs **at** me... not with me. It's important that we understand the implications of this. Today it may not ring as important to us, but back then, in that culture, for a man to be alone with a woman was not going to happen. It was very taboo. Let alone to address her in public. So Jesus is not only alone with this woman, but He speaks to her and kind of catches her off-guard a little bit. You can see that that's because she identifies as a woman. Obviously, He is a male and so she is like, "This is how my perspective on how things ought to be in culture... this is not the way they should be." So Jesus is already breaking down some of these cultural barriers so He can start to minister.

Secondly, she is a Samaritan. We see in Scripture that Samaritans, in the New Testament... they are sometimes placed in a good light. They are cast in a good light. That was a scandalous thing, especially for Jewish readers, to see Samaritans playing the role of hero or anything like that. It was kind of unheard of. And the reason that is is because, way back in eighth century B.C., there were exiled Israelites who started

to intermarry with some Gentiles. So instead of keeping the bloodline... the racial Israelites' genealogy... pure, they intermarried. So the race is a mixed race. Samaritans are a mixed race of Jew and Gentile. Not only that... they also had a unique version of the Pentateuch... the first five Books of Scripture. So their Scripture was different than the Jewish Scripture. So they went a different way with their worship and their history. So for Jews to look on Samaritans, they would say they are not a pure religion... they are not a pure blood... so there is disdain there. Not just, "We have no dealings with them," as John says. It goes deeper than that; it was further than that. It was political, racial, and religious. So there was a schism there that is hard to overcome. It is important for us to realize that not only is this a man talking to a woman, which is taboo, but a Jew talking to a Samaritan which is not something that would have happened.

These first two aspects of her identity, they are inherited. She didn't choose to be a Samaritan. She didn't choose to be a woman. She was born with those identities, and yet they shape how she sees the world. They shape how the world sees her. It's really her eternal identity, the things we start to see unfold in this conversation, that Jesus is really trying to minister to. The temporary identities are not really what He is after. He wants to go further than that. As He addresses her, she responds from those natural identifiers... those which are most obvious. She responds to those in Jesus that were most obvious: He is male and He is Jewish. So she says, "Why are you asking me for a drink?" At face value, a Samaritan woman and a Jewish man... this conversation shouldn't be happening. "Why are you asking me for a drink?" But Jesus wants to address her eternal identity. He wants her to start looking past the natural to the spiritual... things that are eternal... things that are really important. Not only that, He wants to start revealing His eternal identity. She sees Jewish man, but He wants her to see, eventually, Son of God... Savior of the world. He said, "If you knew who was talking to you, you'd be asking Me for water, and I'd give you living water." He literally claims to be God's gift to mankind. If you knew the gift that was before you and who is speaking to you, you'd be asking Me for living water, but she is still not quite getting it. She says, "How can you offer water? You don't have a jug; you have nothing to draw from the well. And, by the way, who do you think you are? This is Jacob's well. This is from our forefathers. Are you too good for this water? Do you think you have something better than this water?" Again, He is trying to raise awareness... to get her to open not just her natural eyes but her spiritual eyes to see who she really is and who He really is." He says, "Anyone who drinks this natural water will have to come back for more." It's a worldly thirst that is temporarily satisfied by natural water. "But if you come to Me for living water, you'll never thirst again." Jesus knows this woman's greatest need, and it has nothing to do with her gender or her race. It has to do with her relationship to Him. He is painting a picture of the futility of the world... the things that are natural... the things that are temporary. If you seek satisfaction and fulfillment in these things, it won't last, and you'll have to come back to them for another temporary satisfaction. But if you will, by faith, trust in things that are eternal and be satisfied in Christ, you won't seek satisfaction again because you will be eternally fulfilled and satisfied in Christ. He is trying to paint a picture for her. He is offering Himself but she responds again... almost, you can see, in mockery. "Okay... give me this magic water you're talking about." I think if this was a genuine request in faith when she says, "Okay... give me this living water." He wouldn't go where He does with the rest of the conversation. I think He would have said something different. But He presses again, because He is Jesus. "Go... call your husband and come back." She may not know quite yet that He knows what He knows. So she says, "Oh, I have no husband." This is where Jesus starts to reveal more about Himself... not just a Jewish man but someone with the wisdom of God. He says, "You're right. You've had five husbands, and the man you are living with now is not your husband."

Now we get a little more understanding of why she is at the well at noon; the sixth hour of the day would be noon. It's not the common time to go to the well. She is there in the middle of the day because either people don't want to be around her, or she doesn't want to be around them because of her social outcast identity... because of the life she has lived and is currently living. Now we don't know if it's five divorces or being widowed five times. But either way, in that culture, more than three marriages was too many. She is kind of past the socially acceptable amount of marriages... even if they were widowed and she was released from those marriage vows. But if she had been divorced five times, it would be even more complicated. We don't know that exactly. But on top of all that, set those five aside, her current living situation goes against the laws of God and His plans for sex and marriage... cohabitating with someone who is not her husband. And Jesus knows this about her... because He is Jesus... and He lets her know that He knows this about her. He knows her identity. And she is starting to see Him at least as a prophet. Now she's like, "Okay... this guy knows things that He shouldn't know about me but He knows them." But instead of still pressing into, "Here... minister to my greatest need" she says, "Oh... here's a prophet with some great knowledge. Let me ask Him some theological questions." I don't know if this is necessarily deflection or if she still doesn't realize that her greatest need is to walk away from where she has been and fall into the arms of Jesus. But she says, "Where should we worship?" You see, the Samaritans had their own version of the Scriptures, so they built their temple to worship God, and the Jews had Jerusalem for their temple to worship God. She says, "Maybe You can answer this for me." It may be a form of "I don't want to talk about what You just brought up about my life. So answer me this."

I think this is common for a lot of us, even in the Church, to not want to deal with our heart issues but to be either entangled in some kind of sin or some kind of past or something that we don't want to deal with... because it's painful or awkward or maybe because we enjoy it so much. We don't want to expose it to the healing power of Christ. So we will fill our lives with maybe more Bible study or church activity or giving more... or those kind of good works that make us feel better about ourselves for a little bit but never really address the heart issue that's killing us from the inside... that's destroying us from the inside. So we'll start to numb it by good works or good company and say, "Now life is better because I can think about other things and I don't have to focus on my heart issue" and go through the painful process that it might be to really seek healing and restoration. I know that I have heart issues I need to surrender to the Lord, but that's really uncomfortable and painful and awkward. Maybe there's a part of me that doesn't want to let go of that part of my life. As long as we look good on the outside, we think now we are getting along... go along to get along and everything will be okay. He wants to address the matter of the heart. He wants to heal and restore and redeem.

Jesus' answer continues to point her to Himself. Even though He answers her question... kind of... He is still pointing her to something greater, in pointing her to Himself. He starts to tell her that worship isn't about geography. There will come a day where it's not here in the Samaritan temple or in Jerusalem in the Jewish temple. It's not about where you are. It's not about behavior. It's about your heart. It's about who you worship and how you worship Him. God is Spirit. We worship in spirit and truth. There is coming a day when that is where worship is. You don't have to be in a place to worship God. Your heart has to take on a certain posture to worship God.

Maybe you came here today and there is something in your past or something in your present that is a source of shame or hurt, and you're seeking healing for the circumstances. I want to encourage you that you need healing again from within. And it might be painful and it might take a while. It might be a process, but that's where true healing is going to come from. I also want... hopefully it's an

encouragement... to remind you that even though that is your past and you can't undo it, you can't go back and change it. It's part of who you are. God can redeem it.

The Christian hip-hop artist "Propaganda" has a line in a song that he has done, and it says, "There is no rewind; there is only redeem." So it doesn't matter what you've been through to get to today. Jesus can change your today and from today on, but you have to surrender your yesterday and all the days before that. You can't let them hang over you and keep you from moving forward in Christ and surrendering to Christ. You won't shock Him with what you've been through. You've not been through anything greater than He can handle. And He can change you and change your identity. Those things from your life, those hurts that you've endured or those choices you've made... they will always be a part of your story, but there's still time for a twist in the story. If you're still here... if you're still breathing, Jesus can change the story. It doesn't have to end the way you think it's going to end just because it started the way it started. Jesus can give you a new identity in Him.

Whenever I think about stories and I think about characters and shame... the "Scarlet Letter" came to mind. Someone who was physically forced to wear a letter that represented her sins so that everyone knew, "This is who you are; this is how we identify you... by your sin." Jesus can take a scarlet letter and wash it white as snow with the scarlet blood of the cross. So be encouraged... that whatever you've been through, whether it happened to you or was by your choice, you can surrender that and lay that down at the foot of the cross. Jesus can make you new.

Finally, the woman at the well... her spiritual eyes are starting to open. His answer reminds her "Oh... there's a Messiah that's promised who is going to reveal the things of God to us, and the answer You just gave sounds like that... a little bit." So she says, "I know that there's a Messiah coming..." And He says, "I am He. I am that Messiah." Right then, right at that mic-drop moment, the disciples come back. They are always getting in the way. They come back and we don't get any more dialogue between her and Jesus, but we see that she is changed. We see that she leaves her jug and goes to town to tell people about Jesus. "Come and see this person that I've met... who knew everything that I ever did. Could this be the Christ? Come and see who this person is." She had a few layers of identity that caused her to see herself and the world a certain way. But notice that it wasn't until she saw Jesus' true identity that her identity was changed too.

2. Identity Gives You Purpose.

Our perspective sometimes limits us because we see ourselves in such a way that we think, "Nothing can fix this; nothing can change this. I'm stuck like this." But if we will see Jesus for who He truly is... not just a man, not just a Jew, not just a prophet, but the Son of God... when we see that, we understand. It doesn't matter how heavy my baggage is. He can handle it. He can take it. He can throw it as far as the East is from the West. It may still be part of my history, my past, my story, but God can redeem the story and change your days from here on out. She not only has a perspective that is changing, but as her identity changes, her purpose changes.

Identity gives you purpose. The Samaritan woman, having been changed by her encounter with Jesus, leaves her water jug. How cool is that illustration that He just talked about the difference between earthly, natural water and how it leaves you thirsty and spiritual, living water that satisfies you forever. And once she is changed spiritually, she leaves the water and goes on and says, "I have a different purpose right now. My need was to fill up this water jug, but that was a really short-sighted need. My need now is to tell

others how I have been changed by this Jesus... by this Christ." So her purpose has been transformed as well. Her purpose is to know Him and to make Him known.

The disciples, of course, have returned and Jesus reminds them of this too... about purpose and identity. They are back with food from town. They say, "Eat... Jesus, eat something." I don't know if it played out funny like this or not, but Jesus responds with, "Oh, I have food that you don't know about." They're like, "What? Why did we go to town? Did you give Him some food? Did you bring Jesus food? How did Jesus get food? Did you sneak Him food? Who brought Him food? Why did we have to go all the way to town to get Him food if He had food?" Jesus was like, "Okay, guys... Listen." You'd think they would learn eventually, like Jesus talks in parables, and illustrations and there may be something more to this than He has got a Snack Pack in His pocket... (Laughter) He is trying to point them to something greater. He says, "Listen... the fields are white for harvest, and there is work to be done." And He says, "My food... spiritually... My fulfillment, My satisfaction is not in feeding Myself and satisfying My earthly hunger. My food is to do the will of the Father." Jesus' life was full, perfect obedience to the God the Father. That's the perfect sinless life that we talk about. He perfectly obeyed everything that God had sent Him to do. He knew His identity and He knew the purpose that came with His identity. So He reminds the disciples that the fields are white for harvest.

That's how this entire conversation even came to be ...that Jesus was still "on purpose"... still "on mission." If you read, again, at the beginning of chapter 4, it says that He walked a long way and He was tired. He was wearied from a journey, but that doesn't mean that He clocks out from ministry. You would think, naturally, that He said, "I am going to rest, I'm going to eat... nobody talk to Me. I need to recover and then I'll go back to some big crowds..." Right? "...the big platform, disciple-making, and baptizing and all those things too." But instead, He has a conversation with a Samaritan woman at a well. Not only is she changed but she goes and tells others about Jesus, and we read that they are changed too. They believe in Him. They come to faith because of her testimony and because her testimony points others to Jesus. Many Samaritans from that town believed in Him, it says, due to her testimony. And others who said, "Hey... we don't just believe because of what you said. We went to the source and now we believe in Him because of what He said as well." So multiple Samaritans believed... just because Jesus didn't rest and eat and take time out from ministering.

How often do we want to clock out from following Jesus or doing the will of the Father? To be honest, sometimes it's right when we get to the parking lot. "I can stop smiling now. My goodness... I don't have to pretend I'm happy to be here or anything." Maybe it's on a plane. If somebody wants to talk to you and you're like, "Read the signs... headphones, eye mask, 'don't talk to me' posture... clocking out. I'm not doing ministry right now. I'm not talking to anybody. I'm not having conversations." Maybe in our own homes... I struggle with this one. I know my neighbors need You, Jesus... but as Jim Halpert sagely asked... "Then who would watch my TV?" Right? (Laughter) "If I went outside..." It's up to you and the Lord when it's time to rest and recover. He has designed that into our humanness. We do need to rest and recover, but don't always assume that your tiredness or your thirst or your hunger... whatever it may be... is time to clock out. Because it may be the very moment when He wants to minister to someone else, and how much more the powerful the testimony is that in your weakened, tired, hungry, thirsty state, He used you to point someone to Jesus, because it's not about us... it's not about our temporary identity or our temporary needs... it's about eternal purpose in Christ. *"The fields are white for harvest."* They are not waiting for us to be ready to harvest them. They are white for harvest. We are purposed to work and do the will of the Father as well.

Because, only Jesus can take... if you remember last week in chapter 3, the religious scholar Nicodemus... and then in chapter 4 take the outcast co-habitater Samaritan woman, who both have very different lives and circumstances and environments and histories and backgrounds, but both have the same eternal need of Jesus Christ to transform their lives and make them new. Only Christ can do that.

When you are in Christ, He is your identity. Your perspective, your purpose... they line up with His will. This is why Paul writes in Galatians, *"It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me."* I don't cease to be uniquely me, right? All the things that it is that make me "me"... my identity, but Christ is now our identity... our main identifier. I stand here today... I am "in Christ." That's my main role. That's my main identity. I am still a native Texan... I am still a dad. Those things are still true about me, and yet I am in Christ. That is my primary identity. That is where my perspective should come from, and that's where my purpose comes from. It changes everything when you understand your identity in Christ. Life will never be the same because it is "New Life." It is life that wasn't there before. It's living water that satisfies the thirst of our parched souls. Knowing your identity in Christ is so powerful. A lot of believers do not even walk in these things. When Pastor Tom does "The Exchanged Life" – the "Freedom in Christ" seminar or conference, it has a lot to do with your identity in Christ. There are truths about you, because you are in Christ... but if you don't know them, it can be really limiting your walk with the Lord and the freedom that He wants you to walk in.

We used to have this handout... when I was in student ministry... we used to use this every so often to remind students... to remind those in the church who they are in Christ and what happened to them at salvation. One side is "What happened to me?"... and one side is "Who am I?" These are things that the Bible declares as true about you when you come to Christ. I am going to read through this. I won't give you chapter and verse, but I will try to give you the Book that these truths come from.

What happened to you when you trusted in Jesus?

In Romans we read that we have been justified, completely forgiven and made righteous. We read that we died with Christ and died to the power of sin's rule in our lives. We read that you are now forever free from condemnation.

In First Corinthians... you have been put into Christ by God's doing. You have received the Spirit of God into your life that you may know the things freely given to you by God. You have been given the mind of Christ. You have been brought with a price; you are not your own, you belong to Christ.

In Second Corinthians... you have been given the Holy Spirit as a pledge or deposit, guaranteeing your inheritance and redemption to come. Since you have died, you no longer live for yourself but for Christ.

In Galatians, as I mentioned earlier, you have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer you who live but Christ who lives in you.

In Ephesians... you have been blessed with every spiritual blessing. You have been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blame before Him. You are predestined to be adopted as a child of God. You have been redeemed, forgiven, and are a recipient of His lavish grace. You have been made alive together with Christ. You have been raised

up and seated with Christ in heaven. You have direct access to God through the Spirit. You may approach God with boldness, freedom, and confidence.

In Colossians... you have been delivered from a domain of darkness and transferred to the Kingdom of Christ. You have been redeemed and forgiven of all your sins against you. Christ Himself is in you. You have been firmly rooted in Christ and are now being built up in Him. You have been made complete in Christ. You have been spiritually circumcised. Your old un-regenerate nature has been removed. You have been buried, raised, and made alive with Christ. You have been raised up with Christ. You died with Christ. Your life is now hidden with Christ in God. Christ is now your life.

In Second Timothy... You have been given a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline. You have been saved and called according to God's doing.

In Hebrews... Because you are sanctified and are one with Christ, He is not ashamed to call you brother. You have a right to come boldly before the throne of God to find mercy and grace in a time of need. You have been given exceedingly great and precious promises by God, by which you are a partaker of a divine nature. That's what happened to you.

Now here is who you are in Christ:

In Matthew... you are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.

In John... you are a child of God... part of His family. You are a part of the true vine, a channel of His life. You are Christ's friend. You are chosen and appointed by Christ to bear His fruit.

In Acts... you are a personal witness of Christ, for Christ.

In Romans... you are a slave of righteousness. You are a slave to God. You are a son of God, a child of God. You are a joint heir with Christ, sharing His inheritance with Him.

In First Corinthians... you are a temple of God. His Spirit dwells in you. You are united to the Lord and are one Spirit with Him. You are a member of Christ's body.

In Second Corinthians... you are a new creation. You are reconciled to God and are a minister of reconciliation.

In Galatians... you are a son of God and one with Christ. You are an heir of God, since you are a son of God.

In Ephesians... you are a saint. You are God's workmanship, created in Christ to do His work that He planned beforehand that you should do. You are a fellow citizen with the rest of God's people and His family. You are a prisoner of Christ. You are righteous and holy.

In Philippians, again... you are a citizen of heaven and seated in heaven right now.

In Colossians... you are hidden with Christ in God. You are an expression of the life of Christ because He is your life. You are chosen of God, holy and dearly loved.

In First Thessalonians... you are chosen and dearly loved by God. You are a son of light and not of darkness.

In Hebrews... you are a holy brother, partaker of the heavenly calling... a partaker of Christ. You share in His life.

In First Peter... you are one of God's living stones and are being built up in Christ as a spiritual house. You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession to proclaim the excellence of Him. You are an alien and a stranger in this world where you temporarily live. You are an enemy of the devil.

In First John... you are now a child of God. You will resemble Christ when He returns. You are born of God, and the evil one cannot touch you. (Clapping)

I think lists like that are important reminders to tell us what is true about you right now, in Christ. Even on the days where you may not feel like a Christian... even on the days where you choose disobedience, you are eternally all of those truths, if you are in Christ. It's those truths and the power of Christ and the power of the Gospel that can take this shamed outcast woman at the well who goes to get water in the middle of the day so no one else sees her, and sends her running into the crowded market square so that she could proclaim the Christ who just gave her new life. That is the power of Christ in you. That's not what she thought she was going to do when she went to get water that day. How many times do we go about our lives thinking, "I'm working on my temporary natural needs. Here is what I see. Here is what's in front of me. This is what I am pursuing." And God is trying to lift your eyes higher. Look to Christ. Look to your identity in Him... your purpose in Him. When you go to the grocery store, it's not just to get your groceries. When you're mowing your yard or you're walking your dog, when you're going to school, when you're taking a test... whatever you are doing... it's not just to do that. That's temporary... that's short-term... but if you are in Christ, your purpose and your perspective have been transformed. God has changed you, made you new, and written on your life "Child of God" which gives you a whole new purpose and perspective on how you treat the world around you... because we are not living for this world. We are living for Christ and for eternity.

Let's pray. "God, thank you for today. Thank you for the truth of Your Word. God, I pray for those who don't know their identity, their true eternal identity. God, we know where we're from, we know what we like to do, we know how we vote... we know all those kind of things. We know where we go to church, but God do we really know where we stand in relationship to You? Make that evident to us, God, and when we find ourselves defying our true identity, God, may we be able to see Christ for His true self... that's when we will be changed. That's when we are reminded that it doesn't matter what baggage or history or past or hurts or sin I carry to this point. When I see Christ for who He is, I know that He can handle all that. He is bigger than all that, and He wants to redeem all of that. God, for those who came in here today looking for a 'rewind'... every day walking with regret, wanting to go back... God, I pray that You would show them, it's not about 'rewind'... it's about 'renew,' it's about 'redeem,' it's about You changing their story from here on out... and then us sharing that story with everyone else... God, that You may be glorified. God, for anyone in here who is a believer, but like me, God, they struggle with wanting to clock out every once in a while. Can't it just be about getting our needs met? Can't it just be about not worrying about those around us? God, give us eyes to see those around us the way You see them. Give us compassion for the lost. Give us boldness to speak. God, remind us who we are, whose we are, and the message we carry... that we might point others to You. I pray these things in the name of Jesus. Amen."

If today God is working in your heart, working in your mind... maybe with spiritual eyes you are starting to see who He is and you want to talk with someone, we would be happy to talk to you. We would be happy to encourage you. Whether it's "I need to surrender my life to Jesus; I've never done that. I've never tasted the living water and been satisfied eternally because I've just been seeking the things of this world." We have a team right over here in this wing to my left. After the service, you can go to them and talk to them. Let them know what questions you might have or what God is doing in your heart. If you want to mark on the response or info tab and carry that with you, whatever contact information you are comfortable giving us, we want to follow up with you after today... walk with you in that. Maybe you're in Christ but you're saying, "Man, God has spoken to me today through His Word and by His Spirit." Come and be prayed for, be encouraged, be pointed to Christ... be pointed to living water. If you are just looking to connect to our church or to our church family, we have a Connection Center right out those doors. There's a glass room called the Connection Center. We have a team there that is ready to get you involved and get you plugged in. It's not just to keep you busy but to get you into the life of the church, that you might be encouraged, that you might link arms with those who are also trying to live this life of faith. We would love to connect you today, if we can do that... or encourage you in the truth of God's Word. If you would stand at this time, I'll speak a blessing over us, we'll sing the Doxology, and be dismissed.

"May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He cause His face to shine upon you and give you peace... peace that only comes through Living Water... that satisfies for eternity our parched souls. And then, once you've tasted the Living Water, may you grow in the Gospel, grow by faith in Christ and go, just like the woman at the well, leaving behind her temporary purpose, to go and pursue her eternal purpose, that others might know the Christ that we know and the Christ that changes lives. Amen and amen."

[Doxology sung]