

Clarify Your Identity

Authority in the Heavens

World Outreach Church
Sermon Discussion Guide
Palm Sunday Sermon: **March 24, 2024**



We've been discussing the current confusion in our culture regarding "how we identify" and the importance of those in the Church world to identify with Christ. Identifying with Jesus is the single most important thing that defines our existence because He is the One to whom we belong. We belong to Jesus, and our primary goal in life is to define ourselves as Christ-followers in every aspect. Jesus is our Lord. He is seated at the right hand of Almighty God in Heaven, and because of our relationship with Him—because we belong to Jesus—we can approach the Creator of Heaven and Earth with confidence. There is also a responsibility that comes with belonging to Christ. It is no longer my time, my decisions, or what I want. We serve the King, and we serve Him at His pleasure. Church, we belong to Christ, and it is a tremendous privilege!

I. THE BENEFITS OF BELONGING

Galatians 3:29 ***If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.***

Proclamation

I belong to Christ, I am Abraham's seed and an heir according to the promise!

- **Pastor Allen challenged us to begin memorizing scripture. Have each member of your group read Galatians 3:29 aloud. Then, see if you can say it together from memory.**

A. Abraham

Genesis 18:18 *Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.*

Galatians 3:14 *He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.*

Galatians 3:8–9 ⁸ *The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and **announced the gospel in advance to Abraham:** "All nations will be blessed through you." ⁹ *So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.**

John 8:56–59 ⁵⁶ *"Your father **Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.**" ⁵⁷ *"You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"**

⁵⁸ *"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" ⁵⁹ *At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.**

- **How can you use your gifts and talents to bless the people around you and strengthen God's Kingdom?**
- **How can someone listen to God? How can you tell the difference between God's voice, your own voice, and other voices?**

B. Authority "In the Heavenly Realms" (Ephesians)

1. "In The Heavenly Realms with Every Spiritual Blessing"

Ephesians 1:3 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who **has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.***

AUTHORITY GIVEN

2. "Seated Him at His Right Hand in The Heavenly Realms"

Ephesians 1:19–23 ¹⁹... and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when **he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms**, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

3. “Seated Us with Him in The Heavenly Realms”

Ephesians 2:6–10 ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and **seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus**, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us **in Christ Jesus**.

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

- **List some places where Jesus was once welcomed but is now no longer welcome. How can you use your authority in Christ to begin pushing back in those arenas?**
- **Have you thought much about the Heavenly Realms? What imagination do have of them?**

OPPOSITION

4. “Rulers & Authorities in The Heavenly Realms”

Ephesians 3:9–12 ⁹ ...God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to **the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms**, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished **in Christ Jesus our Lord**.

¹² **In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.**

5. “Spiritual Forces of Evil in The Heavenly Realms”

Ephesians 6:10–13 ¹⁰ Finally, be strong **in the Lord** and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world **and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms**.

¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

- **Why is it important to understand that Jesus is the High Priest? How can knowing this bring freedom and confidence to our daily lives?**
- **What benefits have you experienced from reading your Bible on a regular basis? What would you say to someone who has not yet established this practice?**

PRAYER

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸ I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of His mighty strength, amen. (adapted from Ephesians 1:17–19, NIV®)