

Resistance

Victory in Identity • Message 5

Bryan Jones

February 23, 2025

Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- Pray for people to walk in the authority of their identity in Christ.
- Ask God to deepen your understanding of his love for you.
- Pray for strength to resist the enemy's attacks.

A. Introduction

If you are directly involved or affected by foster care and adoption...

One of the things I heard a foster parent say is... the kids they adopt, although they adopt them in a moment, they must learn to live into the family...

But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children.

Galatians 4:4-5 (NLT)

When you become a Christian, in a moment... this verse tells us that you are a part of the family of God, but you have to learn to live into that identity...

And the reason you have to learn to live into it... is because the world's definition of identity and God's are way different...

At an early age, people talk about what they want to be... I asked Tristan a little while ago, and he said he wanted to play video games and have people carry him around...

Worldly identity (self-created)

Identity-> work ->love **(work for an identity)**

Godly identity (God-given)

Love-> identity -> work **(work from identity)**

But you have to learn how to live from this identity... and it's not always easy because the number one thing the enemy will attack is your identity... he will try to get you to question who you are in Christ...

As we are in this **Resistance** series... what I wanted to do was give you the first 5 weeks as an overview of Spiritual Warfare... then specific areas the enemy attacks...

And in these next 5 weeks, here's the big idea I really need you to get...

We don't fight for victory; we fight from it...

Think of what the Nazis did. They attacked the identity of the Jewish people. They took their names and gave them a number. Here's one holocaust survivor's story...

"Right after arriving to the concentration camp, we were herded into a room where all our clothes were taken off. It went so fast, everything, and all the work was done by other prisoners. See, the guards would stand by, but all the work was done by fellow prisoners. We took a shower and then I did get my number tattooed, which is 117022. This was supposed to be my name. I had no name anymore. That was it."

- Holocaust Survivor

Satan tried to overthrow God, and he couldn't do it... so he attacks what is most like God ... you and me ... and he tries to destroy our understanding of who we are.

So, Galatians 4 helps us understand some truths about what it means to be adopted into the family of God. To help you live from this identity, I want you to understand a few things...

B. When you're adopted into the family of God...

1. Immediately, you gain a NEW FATHER. (Galatians 4:5-6)

God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children.
Galatians 4:5 (NLT)

So, the first thing we learn about our adoption is that we gain a new Father... now the ESV, which I think translates it better, says this...

To redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
Galatians 4:5 (ESV)

Notice it says *sons*... you think... *That feels unfair*. But you have to remember, women didn't really have rights in that culture. It was an unhealthy culture that treated women unfairly...

So, when it says *Sons of God*... women weren't valued... males and females have the same legal status and honor... this was amazing...

In Roman adoption, the adopted person lost all rights to his old family and gained the rights of their new family. In the most literal sense, they gained a new father. It's like you were a part of the family the whole time... you are an alternate. It's like being biologically born into a family.

I was talking with someone who had an adopted sibling, and he said to her: *Your parents had no choice with you, but I was chosen.*

And because we are His children, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father."

Galatians 4:6 (NLT)

The term “Abba” literally means “Dad.” It’s a term of intimacy. When Jesus is teaching the disciples to pray in Matthew 6, he starts off by saying, “*Our Father in Heaven.*” Jesus spoke Aramaic, and in Aramaic, the word means “Daddy.” So, think about it ... “*Daddy, your kingdom come.*” “*Daddy, your will be done.*” “*Daddy, provide for me.*” “*Daddy, today, give me this daily bread.*” This is a huge shift.

The term “Father” is used 15 times in the Old Testament, referring to God as a father. Most of these references are around terms like *Father of Israel* or a specific prophet. In Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, “Father” is used 165 times. Jesus himself used the word 65 times.

Notice the term “call out.” ... it’s best translated to cry out... When Tristan was about 3 years old, he crawled out of his crib and ended up locking the bedroom door from the inside. When Steph and I got there, there was no way we could explain to him how to unlock the door. But my son was screaming and wiggling the door. He just kept crying, and then I kicked it into Dad mode ... like I just had a one-track mind. I grabbed my tools and nearly knocked Steph over. I kept reassuring Tristan, “*Dad’s going to get you out.*” I loosened up the door handle and then just ripped it out. We swung open the door, and I went to grab Tristan, but he ran straight past me into his mom’s arms. But here’s the thing... Nothing ... nothing ... nothing ... was going to keep me from the cry of my son.

Think about it.

- Sin once kept you from God ... God broke down that door.
- Hell once kept you from God ... God broke down that door.
- Satan tries to keep you from God ... God broke down that door.
- Law once kept you from God ... God broke down that door.
- Death once kept you from God ... Paul says, “*Death, where is your sting?*” ... God broke down that door.

You can cry out in confidence, not to a powerful being, but to a daddy. Let me issue a warning ... a challenge to fathers in the room. Isn’t it obvious that Satan tries to destroy fathers? It really seems to be a strategy of his. Why? Because Satan realizes that if he can corrupt or pull fathers from their children, he can twist our understanding of God as a father.

No matter how good or bad your earthly father is, he’s nothing compared to your Heavenly Father. So, cry out, knowing that you have full access to your Heavenly Father.

2. Immediately, your old life was DEAD. (Galatians 4:7. C/R: 1 John 4:18))

Old life was gone.

Now you are no longer a slave but God’s own child. And since you are His child, God has made you His heir.
Galatians 4:7 (NLT)

Notice *no longer*. It means the old life was wiped out.

In Roman law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out. For instance, legally, all debts were canceled; they were wiped out as though they had never existed. The adopted person was regarded as a new person entering a new life that had nothing to do with the past.

Notice it says a slave... slave to what? Verse 5 says *the law*...

The commands and requirements in the Old Testament? They are good, but they are impossible to keep.

What Jesus did was take your identity as a sinner on the cross and give you His identity as a son...

You don't do anything to earn it. It's what one theologian calls "The Great Exchange." You bring your sin, and God brings his righteousness. Jesus takes your identity and gives you His. Isn't that amazing?

So, if you aren't a Christian, you will live out of a self-created identity... but it's also possible to be given a God-given identity and go back to a self-created one.

How do you know if you are living from a self-created identity or identity as a child of God?

Self-created identity

Lives in performance
Lives in fear
Can change anytime

God-given identity

Lives in perfect love
Lives in peace
Permanent

Satan doesn't want you to live in this God-given identity; he wants you to live in a self-created one.

The reason a self-created identity is dangerous is that it changes... What if your identity is mom or dad? What if you don't get married? What happens when kids grow up? You begin to think... *Who am I? What's my purpose?*

What if your value is in your beauty? I'll tell you this! Gravity wins! It always does.

What if your value is married? What if it's divorced or widowed? ... If you attach your identity to a role and it changes... your identity is destroyed...

I'll never forget what Perry said when he stepped out of this role. He said he could step out because his identity isn't in this job; it's in Jesus.

You see, self-created identity creates fear. God-given identity creates peace. A groundedness.

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced His perfect love.

1 John 4:18 (NLT)

We must wake up to the enemy's attacks on our identity.

Without understanding the enemy, you will have self-hatred instead of spiritual warfare.

You ever heard anything like this? *You are a failure. You are hopeless. You are not a real Christian. God is tired of you.*

Sometimes, what we call negative self-talk, low self-esteem, or low self-confidence is actually demonic.

Identity can stick with us... *She is the smart one; I'm the dumb one. He is the successful one; I'm the mess up. She is the responsible one; I'm the wild one. He is the favorite; I'm the next best thing.*

When you get around family or old friends, you start to assume your previous identity... because there is some name that's sticking with you. You're still living out of the past.

But when you are adopted by God, you can live in perfect love. You have deep peace and permanent joy. This is so freeing. You have been made new... but this only happens in Jesus. You must be made new.

God has set you free, but you must live free. The only way to do that is to know your identity.

3. Immediately, you are a CO-HEIR with Christ.

(Galatians 4: 1-7. C/R: Matthew 6:26-27, 31; 1 Peter 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:16; Ephesians 1:7,19)

Think of it this way. If a father dies and leaves an inheritance for his young children, those children are not much better off than slaves until they grow up, even though they actually own everything their father had. They have to obey their guardians until they reach whatever age their father set.

Galatians 4:1-2 (NLT)

This verse is drawing reference to what happens in Roman culture and Roman adoption.

Under Roman law, the year in which a boy grew up was not definitely fixed, but it was always between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. At that time, the boy took off the toga praetexta, which was a toga with a narrow purple band at the foot of it and put on the toga virilis, which was a plain toga adults wore. There was a Roman custom that on the day a boy or girl grew up; the boy offered his ball and the girl her doll to Apollo. This was a sign to show that they had put away childish things. They are ready to be an heir.

But look at this verse... it shows how different God's adoption is from Roman culture... Listen.

So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces of the world. But when the set time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

Galatians 4:3-5 (NIV)

You are a co-heir with Christ. Remember, Augustus Caesar was Julius Caesar's great-nephew whom he adopted as his son and heir.

People reading this would have watched Augustus Caesar inherit all of Rome—the power, the glory, the fame, the recognition. Yet Paul wants us to see that inheriting all of Rome, in all its glory, doesn't compare to what it means to be a co-heir with Jesus ... to be a stakeholder in the kingdom of God, the power of God, the joy of God, the peace of God, and the blessings of God.

Could you imagine if you had a well-off relative die, and you were told that this Saturday, there is a reading of the will, and you need to show up to claim your inheritance. Could you imagine someone saying, *"You know, Saturday isn't good. I have some people coming over. I'm going to see a movie. Just go ahead without me."* No one would be foolish enough to do that. But might I submit that a lot of us are just too busy and distracted to show up and really claim our inheritance as a son or daughter of God. We aren't combing this book and understanding that we are stakeholders in the kingdom.

Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are His child, God has made you His heir.
Galatians 4:7 (NLT)

God will provide for your:

1. Physical needs (job, money, clothing)

God will provide. It isn't always in our timing or how we want it, but you can trust him.

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

Matthew 6:26-27 (NIV)

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

Matthew 6:31 (NIV)

2. Spiritual needs (intangible)

Significance.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

Peace.

Ever wake up with low-grade anxiety? ... Have some fear about the future? ... I had this the other day... I'm leaning into this verse... and instead of thinking: *What bad things are going to happen...* I am asking... *What good things do you have for me?*

Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.

2 Thessalonians 3:16 (NIV)

Power.

I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 1:19-20 (NLT)

Lure it out... He's super strong, and I knew the wisdom of the Lord was in him.

Forgiveness.

In him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

Ephesians 1:7 (ESV)