



# IDENTITY



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# Identity

2 Corinthians 1:1-2

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## Sermon in a Sentence

A clear identity is crucial for both the individual believer and the church.

## Question

What can we learn about our identity that will help us to be a good witness for Christ?

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### I. We have an individual identity.

- A. As was the custom, Paul identifies himself as the sender in his letter to the Corinthians.
- B. In his greeting, Paul presented 4 factors that influence our identity as individuals.

#### 1. Our mission - "an apostle"

- a) Apostle meant one who was called.
- b) Apostle meant one who was commissioned.

- Acts 26:15-18

*<sup>15</sup> And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.*

*<sup>16</sup> But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you,*

*<sup>17</sup> delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles— to whom I am sending you*

*<sup>18</sup> to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'*

- c) Apostle meant one who carried authority.

#### 2. Our Master - "of the Christ Jesus"

#### 3. Our mandate - "by the will of God"

#### 4. Our mates - "and Timothy, our brother"

## II. We have a corporate identity.

- A. Paul was writing to the church at Corinth and to all the believers in the region of Achaia.
- B. Churches do not exist in a vacuum.
  1. **We have been purchased by God. "The church of God"**
  2. **We have been planted in this community. "That is at Corinth"**
  3. **We are part of the larger body of Christ. "All the saints in the whole of Achaia"**

## III. We have a spiritual identity.

- A. Paul concluded his greeting with a benediction to the church.
- B. Even in the benediction, there are reminders specifically about our spiritual identity.

### 1. We all have a spiritual parentage.

- **John 8:39-47**

*<sup>39</sup> They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did,*

*<sup>40</sup> but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did.*

*<sup>41</sup> You are doing the works your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God."*

*<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me.*

*<sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.*

*<sup>44</sup> You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

*<sup>45</sup> But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.*

*<sup>46</sup> Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?*

*<sup>47</sup> Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."*

## 2. We all have a spiritual patronage.

- Matthew 7:21-23

*<sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

*<sup>22</sup> On that day, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'*

*<sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

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