

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Gospel Fluency
TITLE: Identity
SCRIPTURE: Philippians 3.1-11
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The word *gospel* means Good News. When we read the word *gospel* in the Bible and in most other places, we know that it is referring to the Good News about Jesus. The idea of fluency is used most often in relation to being able to speak two or more languages. Yet the word *fluent* means to be able to express oneself easily and articulately, not necessarily just in foreign languages. So, when we talk about *gospel fluency* this summer, we are talking about being able to express and communicate the Good News about Jesus easily and articulately to yourself and others.

Who am I? This is a question that every person will wrestle with, whether consciously or subconsciously. At your core, behind it all, who are you at your essence?

People go about answering this question in a lot of ways. Some base it on a hobby like music or sports. Some base their identity on their accomplishments, their possessions, their family, or their romantic life. For some, it's not what they do but what's been done to them that gives them a certain sense of identity. And having a sense of identity because of something done to you is often unwanted (i.e. abuse, disease, etc).

What is the Christian response to these things? In terms of Gospel Fluency, how does the good news of Jesus help us approach this idea of identity?

Enter the Apostle Paul.

In Philippians 3:1-11, he talks about how he sought after his identity before he met Jesus, and about how Jesus not only changed his identity, but also changed the way he gained his identity.

Just like us, Paul's identity was a combination of what was done to him (3:5) and what he himself had done (3:6). He basically held to the equation that 'what I've done' plus 'what's been done to me' equals 'who I am.' But meeting Jesus changed this for Paul.

In 3:7-11, Paul says that he counts everything as trash compared to knowing Jesus. Why though? Because Jesus devours the haunting identity equation. If our faith is in Christ and not ourselves, then...

What Jesus did + What was done to Jesus = Who we are

- If we don't add up and Jesus does...
- If we don't have a good track record and Jesus does...
- If we sinfully deserve death and Jesus sinlessly took death on himself...

Then when we trust him, our identity changes from a self-help project to being securely found in Christ. Because of Jesus, you are not what you do or what's been done to you; you are whose you are. You belong to God. This is why Paul considers everything else as garbage "compared to knowing Christ Jesus as Lord."

For Discussion —

1. Where in your life do you try too hard to get purpose and identity? Why?
2. Personally, what is the most wonderful thing to you about having our identity in Jesus?
3. What was the big idea of the message?
4. If Jesus came back next week, what would be something that you might be upset to miss? Do you think this is an indicator of your priorities and your identity?
5. When is it the toughest for you to trust God and live out of your identity in Jesus?
6. From this message, how are you encouraged to think differently about how God sees you?
7. What are other ways to do Gospel Fluency as it pertains to your identity in Christ?