



**WEEKEND SERIES**

***I.D. RENEWAL***

**JAN 8 - JAN 22**

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# I.D. RENEWAL

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## Welcome to the ID RENEWAL Digital Devotional!

Over the next three weeks, all of the Kensington campuses will be exploring what it looks like to find our identity in God by studying the book of Ephesians.

Our world often defines people by social status, financial situation, relationships, careers, and many other labels, characteristics, or traits. If you think about it, you might even identify yourself by these things as well.

But what happens when one of these things changes? What happens when we lose our job, money starts to get tight, our relationship status changes, or when we have to move to a new city and find a new community?

*We might start to experience an identity crisis.*

Luckily, God has given us an identity that can never be changed or taken away! And an important part of becoming a follower of Jesus is the realization and acceptance of that identity.

As we jump into the new year, we want our church to process, understand, and accept what it means to find our identity in Christ. This digital devotional is a companion piece to the Sunday services and the *ID Renewal* sermon series. It can help you to think about who God says you are, and what that means for your life.

Everyday for the rest of the month, you will receive something to read, listen to, or think about. It might be a blog post, a guided prayer, a worship playlist, or an activity that you can do to draw you closer to God.

We understand that some of you may do your quiet time with God in the mornings, while others might do it at lunch, before you go to bed, or at some other point during the day. We will send them out each morning so you have access to that days devotional so you can choose time that works for you! If you can't get to it right away — that's okay — save it for a time when you can!

If, at any point, you'd like to stop receiving the devotional, just text *UNSUBSCRIBE* to (248) 781-2757. If you have any questions, concerns, or something to bring to our attention, feel free to email our Discipleship Team ([discipleship@kensingtonchurch.org](mailto:discipleship@kensingtonchurch.org)).

Our hope and prayer is that as we jump into a new year together, we can be transformed and mobilized by Jesus, and live into our identity as image bearers of God.



# I.D. RENEWAL

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## Imago Dei: Identity

January 9, 2023 - Part 1 of 3

There is an ancient theological concept called *imago Dei*, which is Latin for “made in the image of God.” It comes from the very first chapter of the Bible at the peak of the creation story, where God says,

*“Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us... So God created human beings in His own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”*<sup>[a]</sup>

God created every last bit of the world, and filled it with beauty and wonder. But the sky, mountains, oceans, bugs, animals and birds are not marked by God’s image. Only humanity was given the inherent gift of being *imago Dei*.

This was a declaration of God’s love, built into our very DNA. With this specific label, you were named as a child of God, blessed with a unique standing and station at the apex in the created world. Without presenting any of our own abilities, skills, or accomplishments, we were made with love and given significance just because of who we were made to be.

This powerful declaration of love marks each one of us with an identity, purpose, and place of belonging that can never be revoked, ignored, or diminished.

# Identity

When we talk about our identity, we're asking, "Who am I, and why do I matter?"

It can be easy to think that our identity is just made up of our abilities and skills, our career, our relationships, the things we've accomplished, our physical features, our tax bracket, or a myriad of other identifiers.

The problem with this is that all of these things are just helpful descriptions of our circumstances, choices, and preferences: they do not determine our value, worth, or dignity.

Each of these identifiers can be changed, removed, or added to us. If our identity is rooted in our career, and we lose or change our job, how does that change who we are? Or if our identity is rooted in our relationships, and we go through a breakup, divorce, or loss, who does that make us now?

We need an identity that is anchored in something that does not change, something that no circumstances can unravel, something that maintains self-worth and value regardless of performance or circumstance.

Thankfully, the *imago Dei* answers this question for us. Because of God's great love — abundantly declared over you from the beginning of time<sup>[b]</sup> — you are worthy. You have dignity because God has distinguished you through his love. You have value, simply because you are a beloved child of God.<sup>[c]</sup>

## Think about this

Take some time to read and reflect on this passage from [Psalm 139:1-16](#).

In this Psalm, King David proclaims God's love for Him, and how intimately He is known and cared for.

Consider what this might mean for you:

What verse stands out the most to you? Why?

How does it make you feel that God knows and loves you this deeply?

How might this Psalm help you understand your identity as someone who is made in the image of God?

Is there something in this Psalm, or about *imago Dei*, that doesn't make sense? Who might you be able to talk to, or where might you be able to find answers to your questions?

## **Pray**

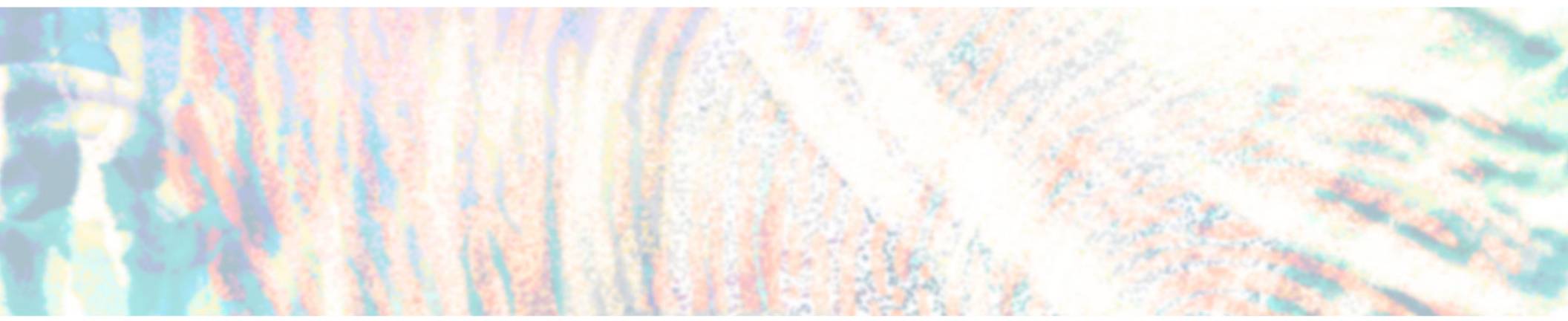
As you wrap up today's devotional, talk to God about your identity as someone made *imago Dei*.

**Thank** God for making you *imago Dei*.

**Describe** what it means to be loved by God, regardless of anything you do, say, or think.

**Ask** God to teach you more about how your identity is formed by how you have been made in His image.

**Look** for moments in the next week where you reflect God's image to the world by exhibiting the attributes of God [\[d\]](#)



# I.D. RENEWAL

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## Imago Dei: Purpose

January 10, 2023 - Part 2 of 3

*This is the second part of a three part devotional about the theological concept called imago Dei. Click here to read [Part One about Identity](#).*

### Purpose

Have you ever asked yourself, “What is my purpose in life?”

We all have different ways that we might answer this question. Your individual response probably depends on what you were taught growing up, what vocation you have, and what kind of life you lead. Maybe it’s tied to your personality or skillset — maybe your education, or your dreams for the future.

But underneath our own goals, aspirations, and sense of calling, we all have an underlying purpose, given to us by our Creator through our *imago Dei* identity.

Jesus, when asked what is the most important thing in life, replied with a two-part answer:

*“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”*

This is our foundational purpose. It may seem too simple to be so important, but to God, this is *everything*.



The only thing that God wants for us is a loving relationship with Him, and for that love to spread to one another. [\[a\]](#)

Purpose naturally flows out of our identity because what we do is dependent on who we are. If *imago Dei* answers the question, "Who am I?" it also answers the question, "What am I here for?"

Colossians 3:12-14 says,

*Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.* [\[b\]](#)

As image-bearers of God, We have been called to pass along the love that has been bestowed on us.

Everything else that we do, and every role that we take on, is done under the mandate of love. [\[c\]](#)

For example, maybe you are a student. When you go to school, one purpose might be to get good grades or earn a diploma or degree. However, if we consider our identity in God, a greater purpose at school is also to showcase the love of God to the people around you.

The same is true in the workforce, in your relationships, and around your community. We are to bear witness to the nature of God, by exemplifying His love to those around us.

Because of our local contexts, personality types, skills, spiritual gifts, and history, how we achieve this purpose might look different from one person to another. But we all together make up the body of Christ, on mission to show the love of Jesus to all people. [\[d\]](#)

## Think about this

How does someone show that they love God with all their heart, mind, and soul?

What might it look like for you to love your neighbor?

Which of the traits listed in Colossians 3 come easy for you? Which ones are more of a challenge?

How does God's greater foundational purpose of love interact with your dreams, vision, and hope for the future?

## Pray

As you wrap up today's devotional, talk to God about your purpose as someone made *imago Dei*.

**Thank** God for giving you an ultimate purpose that flows out of your identity as a Child of God.

**Describe** how your gifts, talents, skills, and personality can be used to pass along the love of God to the people around you.

**Ask** God to open your eyes, ears, heart, and mind to new opportunities to show love to the people around you. Ask Him to make you aware of circumstances, situations, and people that you might not usually notice.

**Look** for moments in the next week where you reflect God's image to the world by exhibiting the attributes of God [lel](#)



# I.D. RENEWAL

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## Imago Dei: Belonging

January 11, 2023 - Part 3 of 3

*This is the third piece of a three part devotional about the theological concept called imago Dei. Click the following links to read [Part 1 about Identity](#) or to read [Part Two about Purpose](#).*

### Belonging

Human beings are social creatures. We are naturally wired to seek out places and people that make us feel like we “fit-in.”

Sometimes this desire can tempt us into changing who we are in order to be accepted and liked. We crave belonging, so we are willing to sacrifice and change our identity to get it.

Brené Brown — author, social worker and researcher — says in her book, *Imperfection*, [la](#)

*“If we want to fully experience love and belonging, we must believe that we are worthy of love and belonging.”*

When our identity is not anchored in something stable and permanent, like *imago Dei*, we believe that our value comes from the approval of others. This means that our idea of self-worth and ability to find connection and belonging also becomes tied to what others think of us.

Although we are called to love the people around us, the approval and adoration of others does not define us

or determine whether or not we are worthy of dignity and acceptance.

As we said in [Part 1](#), only God can define you, and he calls you his beloved child, and royal heirs in the kingdom of Heaven.<sup>[b]</sup> Just as God's love gives us a foundational sense of worth and purpose — regardless of anything else in our life — we have also been given a place of belonging in the family of God.

What if we want to believe we are loved and accepted by God, but our thoughts and feelings are obstacles? Often, changes in the pattern of our thinking happens in small shifts, day by day. As image bearers, we have the ability to change the way we think. We can acknowledge the inner conflict, release it to God, and keep telling ourselves the Truth until it becomes familiar.

God made you, just as you are, and wants you to be yourself. When we accept who God has made us to be — and live as our authentic selves made in the image of God — we find belonging. Just as we might look like our parents, we look like our Heavenly Father. God, by making us in his image, has claimed us as a part of his family.<sup>[d]</sup>

## **Think about this**

Have you ever tried to change who you are in order to fit in? How did it go?

Is there a difference between *fitting in* and *belonging*? Why or why not?

Who is your most authentic self? What traits, characteristics, and attitudes come to light when you are that person?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17<sup>[e]</sup>

*This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!*

What do you think the writer means by “The old life is gone; a new life has begun?”

What does it look like to have a new life in Christ?

## **Pray**

As you wrap up today’s devotional, talk to God about how you find belonging as someone made *imago Dei*.

**Thank** God for giving you a place to belong that flows out of your identity as a Child of God.

**Describe** what it means to you to belong to God, regardless of anything else going on in your life.

**Ask** God to help you be the person he created you to be. Talk to God about places in your life where you are still living “the old life,” and how you might accept the “new life” in Christ.

**Look** for moments in the next week where you reflect God’s image to the world by living into your belonging as a Child of God. [If](#)

## **Additional Resources**

- To find out more about being made in the image of God, [check out this video](#) from the Bible Project.



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## ***“Did God Make Me Ugly?”***

January 12, 2023

A few years ago, our friend, Karen Nicholas shared a little of her identity story on the Kensington blog, and we'd love for you to check it out:

[kchur.ch/ID112](https://kchur.ch/ID112)



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## Identity Prayer Exercise

January 13, 2023

Take a few minutes and make a list of all the ways that you identify yourself. If you can, make a list on your phone or on a sheet of paper — seeing all the little ways you define yourself can really add up!

Here are a few suggestions that can help you get started. Be specific when making your list:

- *Faith & Worldview*
- *Family*
- *Gender & Sexuality*
- *Race & Ethnicity*
- *Relationship Status*
- *Friend Group*
- *Education Level*
- *Economic Status*
- *Political Preference*
- *Job & Career Path*
- *Skills & Abilities*
- *Achievements & Awards*
- *Neighborhood/Community*
- *Hobbies*
- *Favorite Sports Team*
- *Personality Type*
- *Physical Attributes*
- *Clothing Style*
- *Personal History*
- *Goals & Aspirations*

Now consider what that list means to you by reflecting on these questions:

What stands out? Are there things on your list that surprised you?

Are there any particular themes or narratives that show up in your identity?

Do you identify yourself more by who you are and the things you have, or by who you are not and the things you do not have?

If one of those things changed or was taken away, how would that impact you?

Do the things that are most significant to you determine your value as a person? Should they qualify the level of dignity or respect you have? Do these things quantify how much you are worth? Does the way you live reflect the way you answered?

What might God think about the ways you identify yourself? Would He put the same significance on these things?

## **Think about this**

All of the ways that you identify yourself are important. They are what make you unique!

However, they are not the things that determine your identity — that is — your standing and significance in the world.

Because you are made in the image of God, you have fundamental value and dignity. You bear the image of God and are a reflection of his love, creativity, grace, mercy, and justice in the world. Those qualities that you inherently possess give you an identity and purpose before anything else that you might have listed above.

The things that you have achieved are not what gives you implicit worth. Your relationship status does not automatically define your station in life. Your history does not determine your dignity.



You are made in the image of God, and therefore are a person of divine status, value, and honor. Nothing you do or say — nor anything said or done against you — can change this fact. Because God loves you for who you are; you are desired, important, and influential.

We encourage you to spend some time in prayer today, reflecting on how your list of identities can describe you, but only God can define you.

If you need, here's a worship song called [Jireh by Maverick City](#), that talks about how God loves and cares for us through the lens of Matthew 6:26-32 [\[a\]](#). The chorus says,

*I'm already loved. I'm already chosen. I know who I am; I know what You've spoken. I'm already loved more than I could imagine. And that is enough.*

Use this song and these words as a prayerful reflection on who God says you are, and how we cares and loves for you.



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## ***Identity Worship***

January 14, 2023

Take some time today to listen to these songs, and consider what they might say about your identity and purpose in Christ:

[kchur.ch/IDworship](https://kchur.ch/IDworship)



# I.D. RENEWAL

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## The identity of me & YOU

January 15, 2023

Being made in the image of God not only provides us with an identity, purpose, and belonging; it demands that we treat one another with a love and dignity that the image of God deserves.

Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once wrote, [\[a\]](#)

*“This innate worth referred to in the phrase the image of God is universally shared in equal portions by all men. There is no graded scale of essential worth; there is no divine right of one which differs from the right of another. Every human being has etched in his personality the indelible stamp of the Creator.”*

Dr. King and the civil rights movement strove to help people see the image of God in one another. In his writing and public theology, Dr. King frequently referred to the work of German philosopher Martin Buber and his concept of *I-Thou Relationships*. [\[b\]](#) [\[c\]](#)

Buber found that in an *I-Thou* relationship, people see each other for who they are: as wonderfully complex and unique reflections of the divine image of God. This means that they treat each other with love, dignity, respect, grace, compassion, and charity.

This is in contrast to an *I-It* relationship, where an individual relegates another to an object. They neglect to see the person in front of them for anything other than a thing to be ignored, neglected, conceptualized, influenced, or manipulated.

It can be surprisingly easy, whether we like to admit it or not, to see other people in this *I-/It* view. It's not something that we do intentionally — but usually, without a personal relationship with someone — it can be hard to see others as unique, beautiful, individuals that are equally and overwhelmingly loved by our creator God.

Jesus talks a little bit about this in Matthew 25:34-40. [\[d\]](#) While talking with his Disciples before he goes to the cross, he gives them a vision for the future, when all the nations gather before the throne of God for the final judgement.

*“Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’*

*“And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’*

God made *all people* in the image of God, and we all bear his likeness to the world around us. This is not just something that gives us identity, purpose, and belonging: it gives us a vision and mission for how we treat one another.

## **Think about this**

Being made *imago Dei* allows us to identify our brothers and sisters through the lens of God's love — acknowledging their respective dignity, purpose, and inclusion in the Kingdom of God — and extend the compassion, care, and love of Christ to one another.

1 John 3:16-19<sup>[el]</sup>, James 2:14-26<sup>[fl]</sup>, Romans 12:9-21 <sup>[gl]</sup> and John 13:1-12;35<sup>[fl]</sup> all give insight into what it looks like to live in this way.

Reflect on these passages, then consider these questions.

Which of these verses stands out the most to you?

What themes or virtues do you notice running through these four excerpts of scripture?

How might your life change in light of these instructions?

Have you ever experienced an *I-It* relationship from the perspective of the *It*? How did it feel?

What might an *I-Thou* relationship with you look like?

What makes *I-Thou* relationships so challenging?

## **Pray**

As you wrap up today's devotional, talk to God about how you see others in the light of the *imago Dei*.

**Thank** God for sharing His image with the human race. Express your gratitude for the ability to have *I-Thou* relationships with others.

**Describe** to God the meaningful *I-Thou* relationships in your life. Talk to Him about specific *I-Thou* connections you have made with others.

**Ask** God to open your eyes, ears, heart, and mind to the people around you who might tend to have an *I-It* relationship with you.

**Look** for moments in the next week where you reflect God's image to the world by approaching other people with a radical love, respect, grace, mercy, and compassion.<sup>[fl]</sup>

# I.D. RENEWAL

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## Being Yourself

January 16, 2023

It can be easy to play the comparison game.

Especially in a world where social media and “personal branding” are all about presenting our best selves to the world. As we scroll on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok we are — consciously or unconsciously — comparing ourselves and our lives to one another.

You might find yourself saying;

*“I wish I wasn’t so \_\_\_\_\_.”*

*“Why can’t I \_\_\_\_\_.”*

*“How come I didn’t \_\_\_\_\_.”*

*“If only I was more like \_\_\_\_\_.”*

These jealous narratives are easy to listen to and incredibly difficult to tune out. That makes it even more important to make sure that we are clinging to the truth — what God says about who we are.

In 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul uses a metaphor of a body to explain how we are all uniquely created and designed with significance and purpose.

*“Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your*

*whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?*<sup>[a]</sup>

When we play the comparison game and wish that we were different from the person we are, it's like we are saying "I am a foot but I wish that I was an eye."

God has created you exactly as He intended.<sup>[b]</sup> He gave you a unique personality, skill set, sense of humor, passions, desires, traits, and more. He did not want you to be anyone other than yourself.

If we try to change who we are into something other than what God created, we are cheating ourselves out of our divinely directed identity.

Even if there are parts of our lives that we wish were different and looking to change, we need to make sure that the person we are becoming is the person that God wants us to be. Sometimes we wish we were made in the image of our friends, celebrities, or an image of ourselves we've created in our minds, instead of in the image of God.

This is what it means to be a follower of Jesus: to continually discover what it looks like to live a transformed life as ourselves.<sup>[c]</sup> As we learn more about Jesus, we find out more about God. As we grow in our understanding of God, we take on the characteristics of the one who created us. As this change takes root in our hearts, we discover more about how our individual gifts, skills, passions, and personalities reflect and glorify the Lord.

This allows us to be ourselves — just as God intended. We don't have to try to be anyone else: not our friends, not our siblings, not the celebrities and influencers we see on our social feeds. We don't even have to pretend to be a perfect version of ourselves.

We are fully known and fully loved just as we are.

## **Pray**

Here is a prayer by John O'Donohue about coming to realize how deeply loved and uniquely created you are. In everything that God made, He chose to make you exactly as you are, with greater plan and purpose.

As we close today's devotional, use this prayer to reflect on your identity, and how you belong to the body of Christ.

*May you recognizing in your life the presence, power, and light of your soul.*

*May you realize that you are never alone, that your soul in all its brightness and belonging connects you intimately with the rhythm of the universe.*

*May you have respect for individuality and difference.*

*May you realize that the shape of your soul is unique, that you have a special destiny here, that behind the façade of your life there is something beautiful and eternal happening.*

*May you learn to see yourself with the same delight, pride, and expectation with which God sees you in every moment.*

*A Blessing of Solitude by John O'Donohue.*





# *I.D. RENEWAL*

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## ***Identity Guided Prayer***

January 17, 2023

For today's devotional, take a listen to this guided prayer and meditation and consider, "Who Am I?"

[kchur.ch/IDprayer](https://kchur.ch/IDprayer)



# I.D. RENEWAL

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## ***“Little Miss Perfect”***

January 18, 2023

Today, we'll hear from Kristin Pelletier as she reflects on her identity as a perfectionist, and the comfort she found in God as a loving creator.

[kchur.ch/ID118](https://kchur.ch/ID118)



# I.D. RENEWAL

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## Knowing Yourself

January 19, 2023

There is an ancient Greek expression attributed to Socrates;

*"To know thyself is the beginning of wisdom."* <sup>[a]</sup>

Many philosophers, artists, musicians, and deep-thinkers over the course of history have explored and expounded upon this very thought. <sup>[b]</sup> As Christians, we can find similar themes throughout Scripture.

God has revealed many aspects of Himself throughout all of creation. <sup>[c]</sup> However, He has shown Himself most through the attributes that humans possess that reflect His characteristics. <sup>[d]</sup>

Since we are made in the image of God, it is imperative that we understand ourselves. Because when we know ourselves, we can better comprehend who God is.

Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk <sup>[e]</sup> once wrote,

*The secret of my identity is hidden in the love and mercy of God.*

*But whatever is in God is really identical with Him, for His infinite simplicity admits no division and no distinction. Therefore I cannot hope to find myself anywhere except in Him.*

*Ultimately the only way that I can be myself is to become identified with Him in whom is hidden the reason and fulfillment of my existence.*

*Therefore there is only one problem on which all my existence, my peace, and my happiness depend: to discover myself in discovering God. If I find Him I will find myself and if I find my true self I will find Him.* [\[f\]](#)

What Merton found is that the more he explored God, the more he discovered about himself. And the more he explored himself — his identity, purpose, and sense of belonging — the more he saw God.

It can sometimes be easy to think that the goal of the Christian life is to only grow in knowledge of God. But what He really wants is for us to also understand ourselves in the light of who He is. [\[g\]](#)

David G. Benner, psychologist and author of *The Gift of Being Yourself*, says;

*We are graven on the palms of God's hands and never out of the Divine mind. All our knowledge of God depends on God's sustained initiative in knowing us. We know God, because God first knew us, and continues to know us.* [\[h\]](#)

To “know ourselves,” like Socrates encouraged his followers to do, we must start by knowing God. When we understand how God sees us — with an abundance of love, care, grace, and mercy — we understand who we were designed to be.

## **Think about this**

David G. Benner also wrote,

*“An identity grounded in God would mean that when we think of who we are, the first thing that would come to mind is our status as someone who is deeply loved by God.”* [\[i\]](#)

Consider these questions;

When you think of you who are, what comes to mind first?

How does your *“status as someone who is deeply loved by God”* change or impact the way you view yourself?

How do you know that you are deeply loved by God?

## **Prayer**

St. Augustine of Hippo, a theologian and philosopher from the fifth century, prayed,

*“Grant, Lord, that I may know myself that I may know thee.”*

Repeat this prayer throughout the day as a simple guide to meditate on what it means to know God and be known by God.



# *I.D. RENEWAL*

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## **Identity Worship**

January 20, 2023

Take another listen to the worship playlist around our identity in Christ. What themes, lyrics, or messages stand out to you this week?

[kchur.ch/IDworship](https://kchur.ch/IDworship)



# I.D. RENEWAL

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## Your Spiritual D.N.A.

January 21, 2023

Ephesians 4 says,

*Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ...*

*He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.<sup>[a]</sup>*

You are an essential part of the body of Christ because no one else can do what you do. All of us in the body of Christ can use our unique gift-set as an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, or teacher.

### So which one are you?

For today's devotional, we encourage you to take the Five-Fold Ministry Test by [clicking this link](#).

The Five-Fold Ministry Test only takes about 10 minutes. It will ask you a series of questions about yourself, and can help you find which of these five ministries (found in Ephesians) might fit you best.

You can find out more about the Five-Fold Ministry Test by [clicking here](#).

# I.D. RENEWAL

WEEKEND SERIES

JAN 8 - JAN 22 

## The Armor of God

January 22, 2023

In the book of Ephesians, the Apostle Paul writes about the armor of God:

*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. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. [\[a\]](#)*

This metaphorical armor is a reference to the prophetic depiction and characteristics of the Messiah (Jesus) drawn from the book of Isaiah. [\[b\]](#) Through the imagery of armor Paul is imploring the followers of Jesus to “put on” our identity in Christ, and take on the characteristics of Jesus.

When we put on the belt of truth, we are reminded of our identity in Christ as children of God, made in His image and loved unconditionally. [\[c\]](#) The breastplate of righteousness reminds us that through faith in Jesus, we have been made righteous in God's eyes and are no longer defined by our sins. [\[d\]](#)



The shoes of peace remind us that in Jesus, we have been given peace with God and the ability to experience peace in our hearts and minds, regardless of our circumstances.<sup>[e]</sup> The shield of faith reminds us that through faith in Jesus, we can overcome any obstacle the enemy throws our way.<sup>[f]</sup>

The helmet of salvation reminds us that in Jesus, we have been saved from eternal death and given the gift of eternal life.<sup>[g]</sup> And the sword of the Spirit reminds us that through the power of the Holy Spirit, we have been given the ability to stand firm in our faith and resist the enemy's temptations.<sup>[h]</sup>

As we put on the armor of God, let us remember our identity in Christ and the power and protection that is ours through faith in Him. Let us stand firm in our faith, hold fast to our identity, knowing that we are belong wholly to the Lord.

May this devotional encourage you to put on the full armor of God and to know that you are victorious in Christ.

## **Think about this**

As you think about the armor of God and your identity in Christ, consider the following questions:

What questions do you have about the armor of God?

Which of the pieces of armor stand out most to you?

How does this armor protect your identity in Christ?

Of all the pieces of armor in this metaphor (belt, breastplate, shoes, shield, and helmet) which are the easiest for you to put on? Which is the most difficult?

The armor of God is more defensive protection than offensive weaponry: why might that be?

Why might all of these pieces of armor be important? What happens if you are able to put on some of these pieces, but not all of them?

## **Pray**

We are going to pray through the armor of God. If you are reading this in a group, pray this prayer out loud or take turns reading over the various paragraphs.

“Heavenly Father,

Today, as I put on the armor of God, I ask that you surround me and assure me of my identity in you. Thank you for giving us this armor to protect and comfort us as we face uncertainty, doubt, temptation, and fear. Help me not to forget them in times of health, prosperity, and joy.

***Belt of Truth*** - God, help me remember the truth: that I am your beloved child, made in your image. Remind me throughout the day that I belong to you, regardless of my circumstances, situations, and actions.

***Breastplate of Righteousness*** - Father, help me to follow your guidance to live like Christ. Give me the opportunity to show love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

***Shoes of Peace*** - Thank you, Lord, for the Gospel of peace. Help me to walk everywhere with the assurance of your freedom and comfort, knowing that you are with me as a protector and provider.

Allow me to be a peacemaker: sharing your Gospel wherever I go.

***Shield of Faith*** - Lord, as I pick up this shield of faith, I declare that I will trust you will provide all I need. I trust that you will strengthen me to overcome temptation and deliver me from evil.

***Helmet of Salvation*** - Jesus, I am so grateful that you redeemed me of my sins and are continually restoring me in righteousness. Grant me the courage and strength to embrace this gift daily, and allow your compassion and love to transform who I am to look more like you.

***Sword of the Spirit*** - Thank you, God, for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Through your Spirit I can understand, know, and discern who you are, who I am, and what you want me to do. I pray that you continue to reveal yourself to me, guiding me, and giving me wisdom; so that I may continue to grow into my identity in you.

Amen



# *I.D. RENEWAL*

WEEKEND SERIES

JAN 8 - JAN 22 

## ***Identity* Guided Prayer**

January 23, 2023

Take another listen to the Guided Prayer, "WHO AM I?"  
What comes to mind as you listen and reflect today?

[kchur.ch/IDprayer](https://kchur.ch/IDprayer)



# I.D. RENEWAL

WEEKEND SERIES

JAN 8 - JAN 22 

## ***"More than a Conqueror"***

January 24, 2023

Today, Christopher Cook shares how our perspective creates a posture of worship when we embrace our identity with Christ.

[kchur.ch/ID124](https://kchur.ch/ID124)



# I.D. RENEWAL

WEEKEND SERIES

JAN 8 - JAN 22 

## Known by your Fruit

January 25, 2023

Over the last few weeks, we've talked about what it means to have our identity in Christ, and how we can embrace that identity. But how do you know if your identity has truly taken root in God?

Jesus, in Matthew 7, says that his disciples will be *known by their fruit*.

*"You can identify [true disciples] by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions."*[\[a\]](#)

The goal of the Christian life is to be transformed and to take on Christ-like characteristics and traits. We move from being made in the image of God — as all humans are — to a tangible reflection of Christ Jesus here and now.

When He says that His followers will be known by the *fruit they bear*, Jesus is referring to the fruits of the Spirit, which the apostle Paul explains in Galatians 5:

*"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,*

*faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control... Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.* [\[b\]](#)

The more we live into our identity in Christ — rather than our own identity or vision for ourselves — the more we will see these traits take form. This is what Jesus means when He says, *"my followers will be known by their fruit."*

When we accept our identity in Christ and allow ourselves to be shaped and transformed by the Holy Spirit, we will find that we become more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled.

That doesn't mean that we automatically become the most loving, or most patient, or most gentle person of all time. It simply means that we are growing in these areas. The Fruits of the Spirit are a good litmus test for spiritual transformation.

We can ask ourselves:

- *Do people know me for my love and joy?*
- *Have I shown patience when it would be easy to be angry or frustrated?*
- *When have I kept or made peace with others recently?*
- *How does "gentleness" show up in my personality?*
- *What does the self-control of Jesus look like in my own life?*

As we exemplify the fruits of the Spirit in our lives, we accept our identity and purpose in the body of Christ. We are witnesses of the love, mercy, and grace of God to the world around us: representing the transforming

power of a life with Jesus. Through this witness, we participate in the re-creation and restoration of creation, and help bring the Kingdom of Heaven to earth.

## **Think about this**

Which fruit of the Spirit comes most naturally for you? Which is the most challenging? Why might that be?

When is it easy to show the Fruits of the Spirit? When is it more difficult?

When was the last time you portrayed one of these fruits? What did it look like?

How can you continue to develop these Fruits of the Spirit? Read [John 15:1-17](#), and consider what comes to mind for you.

How does showing the Fruits of the Spirit help bring the Kingdom of Heaven to Earth?

Can you name someone who portrays each of these fruits? Make a list and let those people know you see Jesus through them.

## **Pray**

Take some time to pray about these fruits of the Spirit.

LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, GENTLENESS, FAITHFULNESS, SELF-CONTROL

**Thank** God for giving us access to His characteristics and attributes.

**Describe** to God how you have seen these Fruits of the Spirit in Him, in others, and in yourself.



**Ask** God to help you to continue to grow in the Fruits of the Spirit, and to be known by these actions. Specifically, name the Fruits that may be more challenging for you.

**Look** for moments in the next week where you have the divine opportunity to showcase the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithful, and self-control of Jesus at your work, in your home, or in your community.

Amen.



# *I.D. RENEWAL*

WEEKEND SERIES

JAN 8 - JAN 22



## **Remember This**

January 26, 2023

Shawna Shawninger, who wrote the ID RENEWAL series, wants you to remember one thing:

[kchur.ch/ID126](http://kchur.ch/ID126)



# I.D. RENEWAL

WEEKEND SERIES

JAN 8 - JAN 22 

## Who Are You? Prayer Activity

January 27, 2023

As we conclude our ID Renewal Devotional, please take some time to look over these phrases. Each one is found in the Bible and describes *YOUR* identity in Christ.

Pick a few of these phrases, and repeat them in prayer throughout your day. If there is a time when you find yourself frustrated, angry, isolated, impatient, depressed, anxious, or lost, use these passages and identifiers to remember who you are.

*You are God's child*  
John 1:12

*You are Christ's friend*  
John 15:15

*You are His disciple*  
John 13:15

*You are united with other  
believers*  
John 17:20-23

*You are justified*  
Romans 3:24

*You are not condemned*  
Romans 8:1

*You are set free*

Romans 8:2

*You are more than a  
conqueror*  
Romans 8:37

*You are sanctified in  
Jesus Christ*  
1 Corinthians 1:2

*You are pure and  
holy in Christ*  
1 Corinthians 1:30

*You possess the  
mind of Christ*  
1 Corinthians 2:16

*You belong to God*  
1 Corinthians 6:20

*You are a member of  
Christ's Body*  
1 Corinthians 12:27

*You are are made alive*  
1 Corinthians 15:22

*You are a new person*  
2 Corinthians 5:17

*You are made right  
with God*  
2 Corinthians 5:21

*You are God's coworker*  
2 Corinthians 6:1

*You are one in Christ with  
all other believers*  
Galatians 3:28

*You are blessed with every  
spiritual blessing in Christ*  
Ephesians 1:3

*You are holy and  
without fault*  
Ephesians 1:4

*You are adopted as  
God's child*  
Ephesians 1:5-6

*You are forgiven*  
Ephesians 1:7

*You are brought under  
Christ's authority*  
Ephesians 1:10-11

*You are marked as  
belonging to God by the  
Holy Spirit*  
Ephesians 1:13

*You are raised up to sit  
with Christ in the  
heavenly realms*  
Ephesians 2:6

*You are God's masterpiece*  
Ephesians 2:10

*You share in the promise  
through Christ*  
Ephesians 3:6

*You can come with  
freedom and confidence  
into God's presence*  
Ephesians 3:12

*You are a member of  
Christ's body*  
Ephesians 5:29-30

*You have been given  
fullness in Christ*  
Colossians 2:10

*You are set free from your  
sinful nature*  
Colossians 2:11

*You will have eternal glory*  
1 Timothy 2:10

*You are hidden with  
Christ in God*  
Colossians 3:3

*You are victorious*  
1 John 5:4

*You are chosen and  
dearly loved*  
Colossians 3:12



**WEEKEND SERIES**

# ***I.D. RENEWAL***

**JAN 8 - JAN 22**



# *I.D. RENEWAL*

WEEKEND SERIES

JAN 8 - JAN 22



## **Afterward: Next Steps**

January 28, 2023

Need a resource to help you continue to study and grow with Jesus? Follow Kensington Church on the YouVersion Bible App!

[kchur.ch/youversion](https://kchur.ch/youversion)

# ID RENEWAL Digital Devotional

**Series Summarized:** Who are you? What does it mean to be you? I am...a spouse, parent, musician, artist, athlete, educator, unique, strong, beautiful, healthy, grateful, kind, insecure, fearful, failure, worthless, insignificant and the list can go on and on. Two small words that define us but two powerful words for what comes after them can shape our reality. And as Christ followers, we have been given a new identity based on who God says we are. In this series we'll lean into the book of Ephesians and what it reveals about who we are in Christ, some of the struggles we have and how we can live out our new identities with purpose and passion. This will be a series about discovering who we are in Christ and the life we are to live in this identity.

**Why is this a necessary series:** We live in a culture that defines our worth through status, materialism, finances, our jobs and other outer based. But all of these things at one point or another will fade away and crumble. We'll be left with the shambles and pieces of what we put our identity in and questions of worth and value. An important part of developing fully devoted followers of Jesus is the realization and knowledge of who we are in Christ – discovering and living in our new identity.

**Saturday Worship Playlist:**

- No Longer Slaves - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWCS\\_2uICjU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWCS_2uICjU)
- Who You Say I Am - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lKw6uqtGFfo>
- Grace Alone - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SrTOc2TijM>
- I Thank God - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LM1qrx0Huds>
- You Say - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slaT8Jl2zpl>
- With You - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdgMPa8C-dc>
- All Creatures - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eawGMVkpXw0>
- Rest on Us - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8MZbl-GRdY>



	Sunday: 1/8	Monday: 1/9	Tuesday: 1/10	Wednesday: 1/11	Thursday - 1/12	Friday - 1/13	Saturday - 1/14
<b>Sermon</b>	<p><b>ID Not Recognized:</b> What defines you? So many of the things that we put our identity in are temporary. We live in a world that defines our identity by what we do or produce, by status or money – things that are conditional and short-lived. This can leave us feeling erratic about ourselves, insecure, uncertain, and worthless. We'll lean into the first part of Ephesians and discover our intrinsic worth that God has given us.</p> <p><b>Big Idea:</b> To find our identity in Christ</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Who we are in Christ</p> <p><b>Scripture:</b> Eph 1:1-14, 2:1-10, 2 Cor 5:17</p>						
<b>Text Message</b>	Auto Response to "Identity"  Thanks for joining the ID Renewal Devotional! Click the link below to get more information! <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID">kchur.ch/ID</a>	How might "being made in the image of God" give us identity, purpose, and belonging? Click here to read the first devotional in our series: <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID109">kchur.ch/ID109</a>	Today, consider how being made in the image of God (imago dei) gives you meaning and purpose. <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID110">kchur.ch/ID110</a>	How do your identity and purpose as someone made in God's image impact belonging? Click here for the third part of our imago Dei series. <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID111">kchur.ch/ID111</a>	A few years ago, our friend, Karen Nicholas shared a little of her identity story on the Kensington blog, and we'd love for you to check it out: <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID112">kchur.ch/ID112</a>	We want to invite you into a prayer activity, where you can talk to God about how you define yourself & reflect on how God defines you. <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID113">kchur.ch/ID113</a>	Take some time today to listen to these songs, and consider what they might say about your identity and purpose in Christ. <a href="http://kchur.ch/IDworship">kchur.ch/IDworship</a>
<b>Link</b>		<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID109">kchur.ch/ID109</a>			<a href="https://kensingtonchurch.org/did-god-make-me-ugly/">https://kensingtonchurch.org/did-god-make-me-ugly/</a>		
<b>Short Link</b>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID">kchur.ch/ID</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID109">kchur.ch/ID109</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID110">kchur.ch/ID110</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID111">kchur.ch/ID111</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID112">kchur.ch/ID112</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID113">kchur.ch/ID113</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/IDworship">Kchur.ch/IDworship</a>
<b>Devotional</b>	(Auto Response)Welcome & Vision for Digital Devotional	The Bible Project - Imago Dei	How does the imago Dei create identity, purpose, and belonging		Karen Nicholas' Blog - <i>Did God Make Me Ugly?</i>	Devotional & Prayer Activity: list all the ways you identify yourself	Worship Set

	Sunday: 1/15	Monday: 1/16	Tuesday: 1/17	Wednesday: 1/18	Thursday - 1/19	Friday - 1/20	Saturday - 1/21
<b>Sermon</b>	<p><b>The War Between Our Ears:</b> It's one thing to learn or read about our new identity in Christ, but how do we shift our minds and hearts to reflect our new identity in the way we live? It can be challenging to really believe that we have a new identity due to the war of words and thoughts that are scrambling through our minds. Paul gives us some insight in the middle of Ephesians about living life in our new identity and getting rid of our old ways and thoughts</p> <p><b>Big Idea:</b> Our old way of thinking about ourselves must go</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Putting on the new self, Truth vs Lies, Thought-life</p> <p><b>Scripture:</b> Eph 3:14-19, 4:20-24</p>						
<b>Text Message</b>	Last week we explored what the imago Dei means for you. But what might it mean for the people around us? <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID115">kchur.ch/ID115</a>	Have you ever wished you were like someone else? Or wondered why you are the way you are? Paul addresses these questions in 1 Corinthians 12. <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID116">kchur.ch/ID116</a>	For today's devotional, take a listen to this guided prayer and meditation and consider, "Who Am I?" <a href="http://kchur.ch/IDprayer">kchur.ch/IDprayer</a>	Today, we'll hear from Kristin Pelletier as she reflects on her identity as a perfectionist, and the comfort she found in God as a loving creator. <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID118">kchur.ch/ID118</a>	God has known and loved you since before you were born. He knows you better than anyone & loves you more than you can imagine. Do you believe it? <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID119">kchur.ch/ID119</a>	Take another listen to the worship playlist around our identity in Christ. What themes, lyrics, or messages stand out to you this week? <a href="http://kchur.ch/IDworship">kchur.ch/IDworship</a>	God created you with unique strengths, tendencies, and passions. This gifting can be used to help people be transformed and mobilized by Jesus <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID121">kchur.ch/ID121</a>
<b>Link</b>			<a href="https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/who-am-i-meditation/">https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/who-am-i-meditation/</a>	<a href="https://kensingtonchurch.org/little-miss-perfect/">https://kensingtonchurch.org/little-miss-perfect/</a>			<a href="https://fivefoldministry.com/">https://fivefoldministry.com/</a>
<b>Short Link</b>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID115">kchur.ch/ID115</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID116">kchur.ch/ID116</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/IDprayer">kchur.ch/IDprayer</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID118">kchur.ch/ID118</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID119">kchur.ch/ID119</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/IDworship">kchur.ch/IDworship</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID121">kchur.ch/ID121</a>
<b>Devotional</b>	What does the Imago Dei mean for my neighbor?	What If I want to be someone else? 1 Corinthians 12:1-27  ALSO BOOK RECOMMENDATION: Have you considered that it's a gift to be yourself? Or that the better you know yourself, the better you will understand the one who made you?	Who Am I - Guided Meditation from Ignition Spirituality	Kristen Pelitier Blog - <i>Little Miss Perfect</i>	Finding & Understanding the self as a part of worship and transformation. (Jesus in Matthew 16:26.) Rohr	Worship Set (Repeat)	JR Woodward & the Prophetic DNA of a person (Spiritual Gifts)

	Sunday: 1/22	Monday: 1/23	Tuesday: 1/24	Wednesday: 1/25	Thursday - 1/26	Friday - 1/27	Saturday - 1/28
<b>Sermon</b>	<p><b>Identity Theft Protection:</b> What does it mean to embrace your new identity in Christ? But not only that, how can we protect it? There are many things coming at us that can distract us, deteriorate, and destroy us. We'll lean into the final two chapters of Ephesians and look at how God equips us with His armor for daily living a life as a fully devoted follower of Christ.</p> <p><b>Big Idea:</b> Living equipped in our new identity</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Confidence, Christ-like living, full armor of God</p> <p><b>Scripture:</b> Eph 5:1-2, 15-20, 6:10-24</p>						
<b>Text Message</b>	What does it mean to put on the Armor of God? And what does that have to do with our identity? <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID122">kchur.ch/ID122</a>	Take another listen to the Guided Prayer, "WHO AM I?" What comes to mind as you listen and reflect today? <a href="http://kchur.ch/IDprayer">kchur.ch/IDprayer</a>	Today, Christopher Cook shares how our perspective creates a posture of worship when we embrace our identity with Christ. <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID124">kchur.ch/ID124</a>	When we embrace our identity in Christ, our lives start to transform into Christ-likeness. But what does that change look like? <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID125">kchur.ch/ID125</a>	Shawna Shawninger, who wrote the ID RENEWAL series, wants you to remember one thing: <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID126">kchur.ch/ID126</a>	As we wrap up the ID RENEWAL Series we want to say thank you for joining us! Here's a final prayer activity to help you reflect on your Identity. <a href="http://kchur.ch/ID127">kchur.ch/ID127</a>	Need a resource to help you continue to study and grow with Jesus? Follow Kensington Church on the YouVersion Bible App! <a href="http://kchur.ch/youversion">kchur.ch/youversion</a>
<b>Link</b>		<a href="https://open.spotify.com/episode/0NVloAlozMDVgrQPvF9Ew4?si=Rg-at2tbTzqKOfiy582SjQ">https://open.spotify.com/episode/0NVloAlozMDVgrQPvF9Ew4?si=Rg-at2tbTzqKOfiy582SjQ</a>	<a href="https://kensingtonchurch.org/more-than-a-conqueror/">https://kensingtonchurch.org/more-than-a-conqueror/</a>	<a href="https://open.spotify.com/episode/0NVloAlozMDVgrQPvF9Ew4?si=Rg-at2tbTzqKOfiy582SjQ">https://open.spotify.com/episode/0NVloAlozMDVgrQPvF9Ew4?si=Rg-at2tbTzqKOfiy582SjQ</a>			
<b>Short Link</b>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID122">kchur.ch/ID122</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/IDprayer">kchur.ch/IDprayer</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID124">kchur.ch/ID124</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID125">kchur.ch/ID125</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID126">kchur.ch/ID126</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/ID127">kchur.ch/ID127</a>	<a href="http://kchur.ch/youversion">kchur.ch/youversion</a>
<b>Devotional</b>	Integrating the armor of God into our identity	Who Am I - Guided Meditation from Ignition Spirituality (Repeat)	Christopher Cook Blog - <i>More than a Conqueror</i>	Fruits of the Spirit as a gauge for spiritual growth and transformation	Final Word from Shawna - If you walk away from this, remember 1 thing	Final Activity & Thank you for coming with us on this journey	YouVersion Next Step: Follow Kensington Church