# The Identification Truths: The Front Door - Part I

# An introduction to identification: You’re in!

Identification is a principle taught in Scripture, directed principally to believers in the body of Christ (see biblical synonyms in next paragraph). Identification is explained most fully by the apostle Paul, but evidenced in the writings of John and Peter, as well as other authors of Scripture. These truths of identification are revealed entirely by the will and actions of God (1 Corinthians 1:30), and the blessings of our identification with Christ are accomplished entirely by God’s infinite, eternal and amazing grace. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places ***in Christ***, 4 just as He chose us ***in Him***…” Ephesians 1:3-4a. . While we can find examples of this identification principle applying to all people, and to other people groups, the teachings that we will focus on here are the identification truths that apply to believers who are in the body of Christ, from Acts 2 to the Rapture, when Christ comes for His bride, the Church.

**Identification synonyms**

We have used the word ‘identification’ so far, since that is a convenient ‘handle’ for what Scripture teaches. But the actual words used in Scripture that convey this intimately related family of biblical truths include:

* In - being placed entirely in, so as to share an identity
* With or joined - intimately joined in action and consequence
* Together with – as above, with ‘together’ underscoring the same identity & action
* United with – ‘united’ implies a oneness, so a spiritual oneness is communicated
* Baptized into – ‘baptized’ means to be immersed or entirely placed into, so as to be permanently changed by that immersion or entire placement

Later we will address the words and terms that God’s word uses to describe the multiple spiritual outcomes from identification.

**What God’s warning in Genesis tells us**

God said several things to Adam in the 6th day, but the critical one for our study is found in Genesis 2:17[[1]](#footnote-1):

Genesis 2:15-17

Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. 16 The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for ***in the day that you eat from it you will surely die***."

It was this last line that was the subject of the serpent’s deception of Eve (Genesis 3:1-4). First the serpent questioned what God said, then denied what God said, and finally the serpent couched the ultimate human tragedy as some sort of a benefit or advantage that God was denying them.

The big question is, “What did God mean by ‘die’, and how does that definition of ‘die’ fit with the death that happened *on the day that Adam ate*?” Mankind is spiritually separated from (i.e., dead to) God by sin, and that death of separation has a variety of different expressions and some very important consequences.

**Death is separation**

The insight that death is separation would mean that God was telling Adam, “…in the day that you eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you will be spiritually separated from Me, your Creator”.

That separation because of sin was expressed to Israel by the prophet Isaiah:

Isaiah 59:2

But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God,

And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.

The above passage, as part of the Isaiah 59:1-15 content, expressed separation between God and the people of Israel because of sin. But most of the passages that clearly reveal that death is separation come from the letters of the apostle Paul. Here are some clear instances where Paul says that *death is separation*:

Ephesians 2:11-13 (Paul used ***formerly*** twice)

…***formerly***…you were at that time separate [***chōris***] from Christ, being aliens [***apallotrioō***] …without God [***atheos***] in the world. …***formerly***…

Ephesians 4:18

“…excluded [***apallotrioō***] from the life of God…”

Colossians 1:21

“…you were ***formerly*** alienated [***apallotrioō***] and hostile in mind …”

The word ***chōris*** means to beseparate from or apart from, and ***apallotrioō*** means to beseparate or alienated.

**Death is separation – being alive is union**

Death is separation, and being alive is union, meaning, ‘dead in relationship to and alive in relationship to’. This is also taught in these other passages in the apostle Paul’s letters:

* Romans 6:1-11 – dead to sin, alive to Christ
* Romans 7:1-6 – death releases from marriage; died to the Law, joined to Christ
* 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15 – dead to ourselves, alive to Christ
* Galatians 2:19, 20 – died to the Law, to live to God
* Colossians 2:20 – died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world
* Colossians 3:5, 20 – dead to sin, died with Christ to the world

This same set of truths, that death is separation, and being alive is union, meaning, ‘dead in relationship to and alive in relationship to’, is taught in 1 Peter 2:24:

“…and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”

## The Genesis 3 pattern of God’s questions and consequences

When God came to walk with Adam and Eve, they attempted to cover themselves and to hide themselves from God (now there’s evidence of separation). God began with questions and ended with consequences, and in summary, the interactions went as follows:

## God to Adam - questions

###  God to Eve – a question

 God to the serpent – no questions, but consequences & the promise of a Savior

###  God to Eve - consequences

## God to Adam – consequences

God prepares a covering for them (the ones that they made would not do), and an animal was sacrificed to do so – God’s sacrifice. Regarding the consequences of the fall for mankind and its personal impacts, Eve’s consequences would be in childbearing and in relationship to her husband (“…your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you”). Adam’s consequences would be to this earth, his toil in gaining a yield from it, and in returning to the dust from which he was created.

Notice that while the passage lays out consequences for Eve and for Adam, they are *consequences* of the separation from God that has already taken place because of Adam’s sin. And the consequences are not yet complete at this point. Adam and Eve will be driven from (from = separation) the Garden of Eden in order to keep them from (from = separation) the tree of life. The separation from God because of Adam’s sin has resulted not only in a change in mankind’s relationship with God, but also a change in mankind’s relationship with everything that God had made, a change within human beings and their bodies, and ultimately a change in every human being’s future from that time forward – except for the mercy and grace of God.

**First, the bad news**

God’s word says that when Adam sinned, we were in Adam in that sin, so were identified with fallen Adam, including the consequences that God said would result from that sin (death – see below):

 1 Corinthians 15:22a

 “For as **in Adam** all die…”

It is critical to understand that death in Scripture means spiritual separation. Even physical death is a separation from earthly relationships and a separation of body from soul and spirit (Romans 7:1-6). Being ‘in Adam’ (per 1 Corinthians 15:22a, above) means spiritual separation from God, and all the ghastly earthly and eternal consequences that go with it. That’s the bad news, and if God had left things there, it would be nothing but totally hopeless, really depressing, eternally bad news.

At first the bad news only gets worse – much worse:

John 8:24

"Therefore I said to you that you will **die in** your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will **die in** your sins."

Ephesians 2:1-2, 5a

And you were **dead in** your trespasses and sins, 2 **in which** you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience….even when we were **dead in** our transgressions…

Colossians 2:13a

When you were **dead in** your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh…

But to God’s eternal praise and glory and honor, He did not leave us there **in Adam** and **dead in** our trespasses and sins and transgressions.

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**Schedule for the Unfathomable Riches of Christ**

Jan No Subject Teacher

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1. Scripture quotes are from the New American Standard Updated, unless noted otherwise. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)