**The Identification Truths: The Front Door - Part IV**

The identification truths for Church age believers are not all expressed the same way, nor applied the same way, nor do they imply the same thing! Now, what do we mean by that sort of statement?

There are identification truth Scriptures that are expressed only in individual terms, such as:

Galatians 2:19-21

"For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. 21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

While understanding clearly what each of the ‘I’s are referring to would take some careful study, it is clear that the identification truths in Galatians 2:19-21 are expressed in the singular. Paul did not intend that we understand the truths in the passage as only true of him, but rather he personalized them to himself to emphasize them and so that each one of us could personalize them, too, that is, each one of us applying those identification truths personally.

Then there are those identification truths that are expressed in the plural, so as to express the truth as applying to in the body of Christ. A good example of this kind of identification truth statement would be:

Romans 6:1-11

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self [better, ‘man’ or ‘person’] was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

This identification truth passage is expressed in the plural, such as ‘we’, ‘us’, ‘yourselves’, etc. And as we trace our way through the passage, we find that the application of the identification truths is intended to be applied individually. The application is intended for all believers, but is applied to each individual believer.

Then there are those identification truths which are expressed collectively, and are intended to be understood collectively. Among the best examples of those are passages where the church is the bride of Christ, married to Christ, and identified with Christ:

Romans 7:1-6

Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? 2 For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. 3 So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined [NKJV, Wuest: ‘married’] to another man.

4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined [NKJV, Wuest: ‘married’] to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. 5 For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. 6 But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

In the above passage, the church is collectively identified with Christ, and pictured as the wife of Christ. In the passages below, it is the church, the bride of Christ, who is to be ‘holy and blameless’.

Ephesians 1:3-4

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 before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

Ephesians 5:25-27

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

So Ephesians 1:3-4 and 5:25-27 express the identification truths collectively, with the church as the wife or bride of Christ. See also the supplement ‘Holy and Blameless’.