CORNERSTONE

DISCIPLESHIP

GROUPS

CHAD GONZALES AT CORNERSTONE CHURCH SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2026

NEWS & EVENTS

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

- November 15 Operation Christmas Child Collection
- November 21 - SERVE: One Gen Away
- November 25 - No Service; Happy Thanksgiving!
- December 5 - Ladies Christmas Event
- Be sure to check our News & Events page for a full list of Christmas Events!

OVERVIEW

Core Scriptures: Genesis 3:1-7; John 14:19; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:1-10; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; Ephesians 1:3, 15-23; Colossians 2:9-10

Overview

Chad's message explores what it truly means to be spiritually alive in Christ, how Satan's primary weapon has always been deception about identity, and why renewing the mind is essential to walking in the fullness of what God has already provided. Drawing from Genesis 3, John 14, Romans 12, and Colossians 3, the message challenges believers to stop living by the world's normal and start living by heaven's normal.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Satan could not force Eve to do anything. She was righteous, so all he could do was bring a thought. The same is true for believers today.
2. What changed for Eve was not what she saw physically but what she saw in her imagination. Meditation on the wrong thought changed her perspective, and her changed perspective changed her actions.
3. Jesus did not come primarily to change our destination. He came to change our position — from spiritually dead to spiritually alive, from disconnected to united with God.
4. The normal that most people accept — fear, anxiety, limitation — is the normal of spiritual death, not the normal of spiritual life.
5. Paul's prayers in Ephesians were not asking God to give believers power or resources. He was asking God to help believers see what they already have.
6. Satan's primary strategy has never changed. It has always been an attack on identity. If a believer does not know who they are, they will not know what they have or what is possible.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Opening Question — Getting Started
Can you think of something you once considered completely abnormal that you now accept as just the way things are? What caused that shift?

The Power of a Thought — Eve and the Tree
Chad pointed out that this was not the first time Eve had physically seen the tree. It was the first time she saw it differently in her mind because of what she had been meditating on. Have you ever noticed your perception of a situation shift simply because of what you had been thinking about? What does that reveal about the power of meditation?
Eve was working to become something she already was. In what ways do you think believers today are still doing the same thing — striving to obtain something God has already provided?

Alive vs. Dead — Heaven's Normal
Jesus told his disciples in John 14:19 that they were about to become alive, even though they were already physically breathing. What does it mean to be spiritually alive, and how should that kind of life look different from spiritual death in practical, everyday terms?
Chad drew a distinction between heaven's normal and earth's normal. What are some things you have accepted as normal in your own life that, when held up against heaven's standard, may not actually belong there?

Renewing the Mind — Perspective, Not Just Conduct
Romans 12:2 is often applied only to behavior — stop sinning, act better. But Chad argued that Paul was actually talking about perspective and identity, not just conduct. How does that reframe what transformation is supposed to look like for a believer?
One of Chad's key points was that Paul's great prayer in Ephesians 1:15-23 was not asking God to give believers power. He was asking God to help believers see the power they already have. How does that distinction change the way you pray for yourself and others?

Identity as the Root Issue — The Enemy's Oldest Strategy
If you do not know who you are, Chad said, you will not know what you have, and you will not know what is possible. On a personal level, which aspect of your identity in Christ do you find most difficult to actually believe and walk in? Why?
Chad also described the difference between Jesus being your excuse and Jesus being your possibility. What is the difference between those two postures, and which one tends to show up more in your own thinking?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Make the list. Take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the middle. On one side write "Heaven's Normal" and on the other write "Earth's Normal." Fill in both sides honestly. Then go through the heaven side and ask yourself: do I actually believe this is my normal? Begin to bring your thinking into agreement with what belongs on the heaven side.

Audit your prayer life. Review how you typically pray about your needs and the needs of others. Are you asking God to give you something he has already provided? Begin adding thanksgiving to your asking, and alongside your requests, declare what is already true in Christ.

Spend time in Ephesians 1:15-23 this week. Read it slowly and repeatedly. Let Paul's prayer become your own. Ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your understanding of who you are, what you have been called to, and what power is already at work in you.

Identify one area of your life where you have accepted a "sinner's normal." Write down what heaven's normal looks like in that area based on scripture. Begin meditating on that truth daily and notice how your perspective begins to shift.

Study Jesus as your standard, not your excuse. Pick one account from the Gospels this week where Jesus heals, delivers, or demonstrates authority. Read it asking the question: what does this show me is possible for someone who is spiritually alive? Journal what you discover.

CLOSING

Close your time together by praying the same prayer the Apostle Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:15-23 — that the eyes of everyone's understanding would be enlightened to know the hope of God's calling, the inheritance available to the saints, and the exceeding greatness of the power that is already at work in and for those who believe. Invite group members to pray this over one another by name.

Pray together:

Father, I thank you that I am a new creation in Christ. The old is gone, and the new has come. I am alive because Jesus lives. I am complete in him, and I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places. Open the eyes of my understanding to see what I already have. I will set my mind on things above and live by heaven's normal. In Jesus's name, amen.