

Small Group Guide: Freedom from Self - Understanding Our Position in Christ

Opening Question: How do you typically view yourself as a Christian? Do you struggle with feeling worthy or righteous before God?

Key Takeaways:

1. Our perception of who we are drives our decisions and life.
2. God changes us from the inside out, not the outside in.
3. As believers, we are considered saints and righteous in God's eyes because of our position in Christ.
4. Understanding our true identity in Christ is crucial for transformation and living out our faith.

Bible Study & Discussion Questions:

1. Pastor Dan used the analogy of a trained elephant:
 - How does this analogy illustrate the difference between perception and reality in the life of a believer?
 - How might we, as Christians, sometimes act like that elephant - not realizing our true strength and freedom in Christ?
 - What are some "chains" in your life that you feel unable to break, and how might your understanding of your position in Christ help you gain freedom?
2. The sermon emphasized that God works from the inside out. How is this different from how the world often approaches personal change?
3. **Read John 8:31-32.** In this passage, Jesus speaks about holding to His teaching and knowing the truth. What does it mean to "hold" to Jesus' teaching, and how can this lead to transformation from the inside out?
4. **Read Ephesians 1:1-6.** How does Paul describe the believers in Ephesus, and what does it mean to be a "saint" in this context? How does understanding your position as a "saint" impact your daily life and self-image?
5. React to this statement: "Arrogance is not accepting what God says about you." How might rejecting our identity as saints actually be a form of rebellion?
6. **Read Romans 4:4-8.** How does understanding our position in Christ (as saints, blameless, righteous) differ from trying to earn righteousness through our actions? Why is it important to understand that our righteousness is credited to us through faith in Christ, not our actions?
7. Pastor Dan said, "Until you see who you are, you're not going to think of yourself like you should, and therefore you're not going to behave like you ought to behave." How might truly believing (or accepting) our identity in Christ change our daily lives?
8. **Read Colossians 2:9-10.** In this passage, the Apostle Paul speaks of the fullness we have in Christ. What does it mean to be "complete" in Christ, and how should this truth affect the way you approach challenges and opportunities in your life? Share examples

of how recognizing your completeness in Christ can influence your decisions and actions.

Practical Applications:

1. Take time this week to read and meditate on the Bible verses provided in the handout about our position in Christ (for additional Scripture handouts, contact the church office or visit <https://laurelridgechurch.org/reading-plans> to download “Wounded: My Identity In Christ” handout).
2. Write down any false perceptions you have about yourself that contradict what God says about you as a believer. Pray over these, asking God to help you embrace your true identity in Christ.
3. Practice speaking God’s truth to yourself daily. For example, start your day by saying, “In Christ, I am a saint—blameless and righteous.”
4. Look for opportunities this week to encourage other believers by reminding them of their position and identity in Christ.

Closing Prayer: Lord, thank you for the incredible gift of righteousness and holiness that we have in Christ. Help us to truly understand and embrace our identity as your saints that comes through the righteousness of Jesus. May this truth transform our thinking and actions so that we can live lives that honor you. In Jesus' name, Amen.