

Ephesians: Practices to Become What We Believe

Identity Exchange

What is an identity exchange?

Throughout our lives we are labeled as many different things: son or daughter, mom or dad, accountant, entrepreneur, athlete, introvert or extravert, christian, atheist, etc; but what labels are the truest about who we are and who we are becoming as humans? Who holds the authority to give us our identity? The identity exchange process is a practice for us to stop living in the world's identity (false identity) and start living into the identity God has given us (true identity). Our true identity never comes from what we do or what others think about us. True identity only and always comes from God.

Ephesians 1:3-6

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

How to exchange your false identity for your true identity in Christ:

Begin in a comfortable and quiet place with a notebook and pen ready to journal about the thoughts, feelings and images that come to mind as you engage in the following exercise.

- Breathe:** To breathe is to experience God. The Hebrews have transliterated this expression of the body--the inhale and the exhale--into letter form. It may be understood in English as YHWH, the name that God spoke to Moses on the mountain as he was instructing him to champion the freedom of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 3:15). Breathe in. Breathe out. "He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs... the word that saves is right here, as near as the tongue in your mouth..." (Romans 8:28, 10:8 The Message).
- Be Filled:** As you are breathing, ask the Lord to fill you with all the fullness of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Relax and allow the Holy Spirit to permeate every part of your mind, body and soul. Surrender to Spirit and do not grieve (Ephesians 4:30) or quench (1 Thessalonians 5:19) the free movement of The Spirit within you.
- Be Connected:** Ask the Lord to bind your mind to God's mind, your heart to God's heart, your spirit to God's spirit and to unbind your mind, heart and spirit from the lies of the evil one (Matthew 18:18). Submit yourself to God and resist the enemy and the enemy MUST flee (James 4:7).
- Be Searched:** Ask the Lord to search you deeply and know you (Psalm 139:23-24) and reveal to you any and every name or quality or characteristic you believe about yourself that is NOT from God.
- Confess:** On a sheet of paper, write down every false/negative name, quality or characteristic you believe about yourself that comes to your mind as the Lord searches you. These thoughts can harm you. These names, qualities or characteristics are FALSE and you need to speak truthfully about them with the Lord. Confession means "truth-tell". This is not a time of dramatic apologies. This is a time of simply telling Jesus the truth about what you have come to believe about yourself, based on the deceptions and accusations of the world and the enemy (1 John 1:9; James 5:16). As Spirit brings each belief to mind, write each one down. Then, asking God to sanctify your mind and imagination (Isaiah 26:3) imagine Jesus standing before you. Just let this image come to your mind in any way Spirit directs...there is no right or wrong way to visualize an interaction with Christ. Now think about Jesus. It would be a good time to go to your "favorite place" with him. Visualize him right there with you. We visualize Jesus because Jesus is the exact representation of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3).

Confess Cont: Once you visualize Jesus, hand Him the list you have written down. Watch what Jesus does with the list. Write down what you sensed he did with your list.

Repent: Repentance is all about a dramatic shift in the way a person sees and understands life. It is a serious mind change (Greek -- metanoēō) that occurs after having been with Jesus (Mark 1:15). Whereas confession is you telling the Lord the truth about what you believe, repentance is God telling you his Truth that will set you free! Once you have given your list of false identities to Jesus and observed what he did with that list, ask him what He says about you:

Jesus, what do you call me?

Jesus, who do You say that I am?

Jesus, what else do you want me to know about my true identity?

Jesus, what gift do you want to give me that represents who I am in your sight?

Write down the first thoughts and images that come to your mind.

Be Transformed: “Beloved friends, what should be our proper response to God’s marvelous mercies? I encourage you to surrender yourselves to God to be his sacred, living sacrifices. And live in holiness, experiencing all that delights of his heart. For this becomes your genuine expression of worship. Stop imitating the ideals and opinions of the culture around you, but be inwardly transformed by the Holy Spirit through a total reformation of how you think. This will empower you to discern God’s will as you live a beautiful life, satisfying and perfect in his eyes” (Romans 12:1-2). Ask God what God wants you to know AND what God wants you to do today in the true identity that God has revealed to you. Be intentional to cease living in the false and begin living alive and free in the TRUE YOU.

Indicators of

False Self

Fearful

Competitive

Comparison

Shutting Down

Easily Offended

Aggressive / Accusatory

Want’s Everyone’s Approval

Avoid Direct Communication
(Backstabbing, Gossip, Drama)



True Self

Perfect Peace

Generous

Confident

Fully Connected

Forgives Quickly

Nothing to Prove

Knows Their Inherent Worth & Value

Pursues Honest Relationship