

Identity in Christ

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[0 : 0 0] We read in Galatians chapter 3, verses 26 to 28, For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ are put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Most of you will be aware that over previous weeks, in the evenings, we've been looking at a short mini-series, which for want of a better description might be entitled Building for Growth.

And we've said how that growth is to be internal and personal and spiritual before it can be outward and practical. And we've looked in the previous weeks at the subjects of expectation and belief.

How we have to have the expectation that the Lord will act, the belief that He will act, that He will work in us and through us before ever we can hope that we can go forward in Christ.

[1 : 0 1] We looked at the subject of fasting, of self-discipline, and self-offering of ourselves up to the Lord. Even if we have so little and we have nothing that we can offer to Him, yet we can still, by self-denial, make a sacrifice to Him and discipline, and bring under our body that the Spirit may rule in our lives.

And we looked at the subject of prayer and the vital communication channel, the lifeblood of the believer in their relationship with the Lord. And now we conclude this short mini-series looking at the subject of our identity in Christ.

Our identity in Christ. And these verses that we read, verses 26 to 28, these deal with this identity. That it surpasses and it overrules all other identities that we may have in this world.

We are described in verse 26 as being children of God by faith. And later on in chapter 4, if we were to go on, we would see it as reference also to adoption.

Chapter 4, verses 5 and 6. Now, just as with human adoption, God's adoption of us is not something that is biologically brought about.

[2 : 2 6] If a child is adopted into a family to which it does not biologically belong, then it is because the parents and the family have chosen that child to adopt it.

Now, the child, of course, has a response to make. And nobody is really going to place a child with a family that says, No, no, I'm not going with them. I do not want to live with them. But there is a response from the child to the choosing by the family themselves.

And once all the legal process has been gone through, and the adoption is finalised, that child belongs within that family, and is regarded in every aspect as though they were as much their son or daughter as though they had biologically come from their own body.

There is no distinction in the eyes of the law between an adopted son or daughter and a biological son or daughter. They are completely, totally belonging to that family.

But it is not something that nature produces. It is a positive act of choice by one side, responded to by the other, and finally pronounced to be sealed in every matter of law.

[3 : 41] It is something done from the outside. So likewise, when the Lord adopts children into his family, it is not because they are his children by nature in the way that Jesus is the son of God, God the son, by his nature.

We are not children of God by nature. We are children of God by adoption. We're described in the authorised version as sons. And that's the literal translation of it, sons, rather than children in the generic term, because sons inherit.

Sons stand to inherit in the old understanding of the law in the way that daughters wouldn't. They would be married off into their husband's family, whatever their husband inherited, they would inherit that too.

But sons inherit it. And what the Lord is saying here is that you are made his children by adoption, and that whatever your gender may have been, whether you're Jewish or Gentile or Greek or whatever it may be, if you're made his child, you are inherited because you're adopted.

This is your identity in Christ. Now if we can run the clock back a wee bit to our own sort of situation, our own origins in life. The first identity we ever have in this world is that of the earthly family to which we belong and which we are born into.

[4 : 58] And it is usually, in the normal way of things, it is usually your father's family name that you will take on, even before perhaps your own name may be given. Remember, I forget which one of our children it was, but early on, I remember, before my wife and I, when one of our children had been born, before we finalised which name we were going to give it.

And after the baby was born, the nurse put on the wee wristband, and we didn't have a definite name to give, so they just put baby coggill on it and tied it to the wristband on, and then it went off to its wee cot or whatever.

And I genuinely don't remember which one it was, but that was its identity until such time as we gave it its Christian name over, the baby coggill. The last name is still there.

The surname is still there. The identity is still part of the family that we are born into. Our name and family is our identity throughout life.

And let's just say, for the sake of argument, that you do, your parents do know what name or names they're going to give you. Now, the moment the nurse writes that on the wee wristband, in the delivery room, in the hospital, or the home, or wherever the child happens to be born, from the minute that name is written down, on the wee wristband, that's what will go on the wee registration paper that then goes to the registrar, which is then officially registered.

[6 : 17] It's what goes on the birth certificate. It's what goes on school registers. And any certificates and exams that you pass, it's what will go on your national insurance. If you drive, it's what will go on your driving license.

It's what will go on the electoral roll, on your passport, if you have one. It will go on everything throughout your life. The name that you are given in that moment in the delivery room is the name that will stick with you throughout your life.

It is, to all intents and purposes, the name that will go on your gravestone at the end. There is your identity sealed in a moment in earthly terms.

Our identity for life is set by others. Nobody says to the baby, what name would you like to be called? What will we write down here on this name tag here?

Nobody asks the baby, and if they did, it couldn't answer. It is chosen and set by others, and recorded, and registered, and fixed long before you and I know anything about it.

[7 : 20] Now, of course, some people reject the name that they are given, and the identity that they have inherited. They may go to the courts and the registrars and have their names changed by Deep Pole.

I had a cousin who did exactly this. She hated it so much, not the name she was with, but her middle name. She hated it so much, she went to the courts, she got a decision by Deep Pole to have her name.

She'd have that middle name excised from her identity. Okay, that was her legal right to do so. I think everybody else thought, why bother? Why not just not use it?

But that was her decision. She wanted that name removed. Such was her dislike of it. Some people feel and act in not dissimilar ways with regard to their identity in Christ.

Because just as our personal identity begins with our parentage and what we inherit and the name that is put upon us at birth long before we know anything about it, so likewise our identity in Christ becomes part and parcel of our very being, our life, our breath.

[8 : 32] Our very name is subsumed under his name. Verse 27, as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Now when a baptism takes place, the minister will baptize a person or a child or the arrow with water and a savor. Whatever the name is, I baptize thee in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

It doesn't say, I baptize you in your own name. Your name is John Smith. I baptize you in the name of John Smith. No, whatever John Smith or whatever your name is, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It is God's name that is put upon us.

And then the blessing is pronounced upon some places, some branches of the church. It is sung, but it is that which likewise comes from Scripture in the book of Numbers, the so-called Aaronic blessing.

Numbers chapter 6 and verse 24, The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace.

[9 : 35] That is what we have in this blessing. And then, what isn't usually part of the blessing pronounced, but which for me is one of the most significant verses at the end of that chapter 6 of Numbers.

It says, They shall put my name upon the children of Israel and I will bless them. My name, the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Now, some seek to divest themselves of this holy name and identity with or without the help of their parents. They deny this holy name. They break with it.

They leave it. They blaspheme it with their mouths and with their lives and their actions. But just as we cannot alter the biological fact of our parentage or the facial or characteristic features which we inherit often, which display our parentage to the world.

You know, you can often tell by looking at someone which family they come from or who their parents are because it's there for all to see in their mannerisms or in their faces or whatever. You know, you can't hide that.

[10 : 39] We display our parentage to the world. So, no more can these individuals alter the inheritance which was theirs and for the loss of which they and each such individual must one day be called to account as covenant breakers.

If we enter into that covenant, whether or not we had a choice or a decision about it, if we are part of that covenant and choose to actively reject it, then we must give an account for that rejection as covenant breakers.

Now, as baptism teaches us, our identity in Christ is more important than our own name. So, the Lord says at the end of Numbers 6, they'll put my name upon the children of Israel and I will bless them.

just as our surname takes precedence over our first name. That tends to be if people are listed alphabetically, they list them alphabetically by their last name or surname. It takes precedence over the first name.

In other words, the family to which we belong is our primary identity and our Christian name or first name, as we might say, is only our secondary identity. But, in the sight of God, our identity in Christ takes precedence over everything else.

[12 : 03] Verse 28 in the chapter that we read lists three major divisions into which the world of St. Paul was divided when he wrote, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, you're all one in Christ Jesus.

So, let's look briefly at each of these. The Jew and Gentile divide was a racial and cultural clash with an embittered history and self-evidently the divide still existed or else he wouldn't be writing about it.

You don't write about something that is no longer relevant. You know, if I were writing about the political divisions in our country today, I wouldn't make reference to Jacobites and Hanoverians and so on because, however bitter those clashes might have been in the 1700s, they're not relevant now.

You write about what are the divisions and the distinctions now. Paul is writing about a live issue, Jew and Gentile, a potential source of conflict when he's saying, oh, they are one in Christ.

The divide still existed. But the point is that under Christ, it is secondary. and rather than a source of division under Christ, the Jewish and Gentile distinctions within the church become rather a complementarity, an enriching diversity which exists, yes, but enhances rather than disfigures the church of Christ which thereby becomes a demonstrably unifying force.

[13 : 47] Now, in some places, you know, whether in cities or whatever, you might go into a church and you look around you and you see there's people with yellowish skins from the Far East Orientals and people with black skins from an African background or whatever and white skins and maybe brown skins from India or whatever it may be.

you'll be people of all different nationalities and origins and backgrounds but there they all are worshipping in that church together and you can see that there's a rich tapestry of humanity in there but they're all united in their worship of Christ.

Now, where our local churches tend to be more homogeneous, we may perhaps lose sight of that unifying force in Christ, of the way that Christ brings together all these different backgrounds and so on.

It's not that one church is superior to another in these respects, it's just we are to serve where we are but if we think in terms of Christ as a unifying force, even if we don't see it that way, the devil certainly sees it that way.

If you think yourself I'd say a big sporting event, let's say you're at a cup fight and for the sake of argument let's just assume it's an old firm one for example and there you are, whichever side you're in, either with a sea of green or white or you see it blue and white at the other end or vice versa, there you are with all your firm fans your wee scarf and your flag and you see them all they see your faces at the other end, there they are with their different colours and scarves.

[15 : 13] Now, do you just stop and say, oh look, that one at the fence end there, he's from Cumberland and he's got ten people in his family and he goes to a particular club and he does bowling as well, yeah, he's different.

That one over there, that's a girl on the other side, yeah, she's from Sterling and she does this and she does that, oh, that one there, he's got a brown face so he's originally maybe Indian or something. You don't care.

As far as you're concerned, they're just the enemy up in that and you don't know which supporters clubs they come from or which parts of the country or what their family background is. There's them and us and in that big cup or whatever, you've got your own supporters on your side and that's them on the other side and you really don't care where they come from or what they did or what their family background is or which supporters clubs they belong to.

That's the enemy and this is you on this side. Now, as far as the devil is concerned, he sees the enemy up the other end. He doesn't really care whether the enemy has brown skin or white skin or black skin or yellow skin.

He doesn't care what language is their original tongue. He doesn't care what their family situation or background is. That's them up there. They are the enemy and he's not really worried whether their background is Presbyterian or Episcopalian or Methodist or whatever.

[16 : 32] If they are followers of Christ, they are the enemy and he regards them all with equal enmity and they will all have different individual traits but as far as he's concerned, they're all the enemy and if the devil regards us all as the enemy, then at the very least we ought to recognize and take a leaf, if I can say that hesitantly out of his book, recognize how real it is for him that we're all on the same side.

We ought to listen to what the Lord says to us, that we are all in fact one in Christ, whatever our distinctions might actually be. It is the team, it is the cause, the colours that matter in any of these sporting events, so it is for the devil with God's people.

They are the enemy. It is the other side who are the enemy and as far as he's concerned, his lot are on one side, Christ's lot are on the other side and all the other distinctions don't matter, so it must be for us.

The second distinction then, moving aside Jew and Gentile and all the other things, it says, bond nor free, slave nor free, and we think, oh, that's not something that really exists nowadays.

Well, of course, with the trafficking that is so rampant in many parts of the world and including, it exists in our own country too, of course, that is no longer the case. Slavery is a reality, but it's not, it's not an accepted institution the way that it once was.

[18 : 05] Now, in 1 Corinthians chapter 7, Paul writes to them, he says in verse 21, art thou called being a servant, and the word in the Greek means slave, care not for it, but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather, for he that is called in the Lord being a servant or slave is the Lord's free man.

You're free in Christ. Likewise, also he that is called being free is Christ's servant. You're bought with a price, you know, just like a slave was bought and sold in the marketplace saying, you've been bought with a price, the price is Christ's blood.

Be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man wherein he is called therein abide with God. Now, some people take huge sort of issue with the Bible and the New Testament say, why does it say slavery is wrong?

Why does it say what a bad, terrible thing slavery is? Well, we've dealt with this subject in the past when we've looked at the subjects of slavery and servitude and so on in the Bible but just very briefly to recant.

The one reason that neither Paul nor the New Testament nor the Old deals with the institution of slavery as such is because they are dealing with reality.

[19 : 18] They are dealing with people where they really are and what they are really going through. Nowadays, of course, the political response to something terrible that happens is to have a demo on a video by candlelight in Trafalgar Square or someplace in Belgium or Paris or whatever and sort of have a march against terrorism or a march against trafficking.

I'm quite sure that makes the traffickers all turn on their boots or whatever. It's a demonstration of people's feeling but it doesn't actually change anything. You know, people are just saying, oh, Paul should have tried to legislate to abolish slavery.

Well, apart from how long that might have taken, how does that help the individuals who are still stuck in it? You know, if people are the victims of terrorism, it's not really okay.

It's okay. Don't worry. You know, you may have suffered the loss of a loved one. Hey, we held a demo in Trafalgar Square so you should be okay now. We all protested and said, je suis Charlie, you know, after the Charlie hit the explosion in France.

So it's okay now. No, it's not okay. The reality of it is still that the people who have suffered under it are still suffering. The reality of slavery is not, oh, let's get Caesar to abolish it because what about all the ones who are still in chains?

[20 : 35] What does the gospel say to them? Their problem is not so much, oh, I wish the Roman Empire would abolish this but rather, this is the reality of where you are.

You are effectively a bond servant. You are effectively owned by somebody else. What does the gospel have to say to you? What does this God of reality have to do with you and to say to you where you actually are?

Not to say, oh, well, if only you could be free. What a better place the world could be and, well, thanks very much for the fact that I'm not free. So does that mean the Lord has nothing to say to me?

No, the whole point of the gospel is that whether you're a slave or whether you're free or whether you're rich or whether you're poor or whether you're Jewish or whether you're Gentile or male or female, the Lord has an infinite value that he places upon each individual soul.

You are precious in the sight of the Lord. If you are trusting and believing in Christ, whatever your status, Christ Jesus has died for your sins.

[21 : 41] He has shed his precious blood that you might be free. God is dealing in his word with the reality of where people actually are now and not with, oh, wouldn't it be nice if the political situation could change.

We can pass all the laws that we like but the reality is some people will still be locked away in slavery. What does the Bible have to say to them?

What does God have to say to them? What is the Lord saying about the value that they are to them? Let's not get too prissy about it.

Slavery has been the reality of life for the vast majority of the world's history. If we think in terms of, you know, recorded history goes back maybe 4,000 years BC and beyond that it's all getting a bit busy, 4,000 or 5,000 years maximum.

Slavery has been a reality in all that time. Slavery was abolished in the British Empire. Slave trade was only abolished in 1808. Slavery as an institution in the British Empire abolished 25 years later 1832.

[22 : 52] In the United States it was only abolished finally in 1865. In Saudi Arabia it was only abolished in 1962. That's how much of human history has been taken up with the reality of slavery as an institution.

So we're going to say, oh, this is the institution that's totally bad. Yeah, it is wrong. It is terrible. But what do you say to the person for whom this is their reality? They can't get out of it.

What does God say to them? Oh, you're only worth anything if you can be free. I'm only interested in you if you can get free. He says, if you can be free use it rather.

But if not, you're not worth less in the sight of God. It's not that Christ shed less of his blood. It's not that the rich man who's a property owner is less your brother in Christ or the rich woman who's got a large household that she is less your sister in Christ.

You are, as you sit around the Lord's table, you sit around it as equals. That's part of what Paul is writing about in 1 Corinthians 11 when he's tearing the Corinthians off a strip because the rich are getting drunk and fat before they even sit down and the poor have nothing to bring.

[24 : 09] And he's giving them a little trouble. He's saying, this is not how you celebrate the Lord's supper. Everybody should be waiting for each other because you're equal in the sight of the Lord. Your identity in Christ matters far more than economics or politics or being a bond or a slave.

We might say, well, in modern terms, if we leave aside that slavery isn't an institution that's now part of our ordinary society, we can translate this perhaps into employer and employee.

Now, employers and employees, maybe they're not animosity the way they once were. When I was a wee boy growing up, the news was full of industrial disputes between employers and employees.

The unions on the one hand, the bosses on the other, strikes constantly, three-day weeks, the whole thing. There was so much industrial conflict. The difficulties between employers and employees were massive.

And then we might have said, just as we've seen nowadays, that between employers and employees, between bond and free, between slave owners and people who are themselves slaves, it doesn't matter what your status is in this world.

[25 : 18] You are one in Christ. This is your ultimate identity. You are each of equal worth in the sight of Christ. That's the reality that Christ comes to deal with.

The third distinction then, male or female, in many ways, is the most basic division of mankind. Why do we say that? Well, it's the very first thing if somebody says, oh, so-and-so's going to have her baby.

Oh, right. Oh, she's had the baby now. Oh, what did she have? That's the first thing everybody wants to know. Was that a boy or a girl? That's the first piece of information everybody asks when a new baby is born.

Was that a boy? Is it a girl? It's what everybody wants to know at birth. It affects your name. It affects your choices, your personality. It does not affect your identity in Christ or one's value and worth before God.

It will affect so much else. It will affect the name you're given. It will affect perhaps the school that you go to. It might affect the classes you go to, which toilet you use, which clothes you wear, and the people you mix with.

[26 : 24] It will affect so much of your identity, but it will not affect your identity in Christ or your value or worth before God. For many years and in many cultures, there's no getting away from it.

In many cultures still, women are regarded as being the inferiors of men. But this is not something that is taught in the Bible. This myth can be maintained often only by force, either physical or mental or financial.

And the evidence is that given the freedom and equality of opportunity, many women can do pretty much anything that men can do. And in many cases, that is as it should be.

Being equal, however, does not mean being identical. For example, it matters a whole lot to God, whether a man marries a woman or marries another man.

The two are not interchangeable. And other parts of Scripture speak very clearly on that. Likewise, there are some functions in the church which the New Testament teaches that women should not exercise, such as the ruling eldership and being authority and authority over men or the teaching eldership in the ministry of the word.

[27 : 38] But the holders of these offices are neither better nor worse than any of their male or female fellow Christians. Each is of equal value in Christ.

Whatever function is fulfilled, whatever office may be held or not held. The point is that whatever distinctions there may be in the world, Jew and Gentile, employer or employee, free person or slave, woman or man, Scottish or English, these divisions are of no more importance than the distinction between, say, different leaves or twigs and branches on the same tree that bears one type of fruit throughout.

one may delight in the fruit of a tree and freely acknowledge that some examples of what is picked are bigger or riper or fuller than different specimens found in different branches.

But nobody thereby would conclude that one branch is inferior to another branch. It's just the overall fruit of the tree that counts. And so often such distinctions are due to say how much sunshine this branch gets but this one's more shaded or hidden or this one simply isn't as far developed as the other one or whatever the case may be.

It is the fruit of the tree as a whole that matters. What is its fruitfulness? That is the real question. Our identity in Christ is the most important identity we shall ever have.

[29 : 15] We may indeed recognize other distinctions as these verses have but they are secondary. It's not that they don't matter it's not that they're not real they are real distinctions but they are secondary.

And if this be our identity then it means that every aspect of our lives must be bent towards the furtherance of the kingdom and glory of Christ.

If we think in terms of our work how we discharge our duty our employment our faithfulness if we think in terms of politics and say oh well I'm not very interested in politics that's fine but it affects how you cast your vote.

You say oh well I don't really tend to bother to vote then that is a failing. This is a civic duty laid upon each of us and the Lord puts a little bit of power into the hands of each of its children as citizens of our own country at any rate.

We may only have the power of one little cross and one little bit of paper but that's it. But it is so important that you do it if you're a man and think in terms of there was a time when only the rich men could vote only the landowners only the powerful but you and I we've got the power to exercise that vote freely, equally.

[30 : 30] If you're a woman there was a time when you couldn't vote when your men vote could. There was people chained themselves to railings and threw themselves on their race horses so that you could vote so that you could have the opportunity.

and think okay fine don't get all het up about it and change its only politics. Okay you may only have a very little power and you may then forget about whatever it is governments choose to do for the next four or five years.

You won't be held accountable for what they do but you will be held accountable for what you did or failed to do. Such power such discretion such opportunity as is placed into your hand you have an obligation to use.

and if your identity is in Christ then every vote you cast should be thinking carefully prayerfully saying well Lord which of these parties and which of these individuals do I most respect or trust or their values or their priorities and Christians will differ.

Some Christians will be devoted to this party or that party or that politician or whatever because we're all different. It's not to say oh a Christian could never vote for this lot or a Christian could never belong to that party some Christians do but the point is that what we do we do under God.

[31 : 47] We do in the fear of the Lord and we do prayerfully and what we do we discharge as faithfully as we can because of our identity in Christ and then we leave it there.

God's not going to hold you responsible for further up the line what other people did with the power he gave them. He's going to hold us responsible for what we did or didn't do with the power he gave us.

It affects your identity it affects your political decisions it affects your employment it affects the way you do your work it affects your family life it affects everything every department of our lives under his headship in business how we conduct our affairs in sport how we behave towards opponents and teammates alike in home life how we treat those nearest to us because sometimes as we know it's a lot easier to be nice to people on the outside that are comparative strangers or neighbours and then the minute the door's shut oh we can really be nasty to those behind closed doors in our own family who we take for granted and we argue with and have tantrums with and so on but as soon as they don't oh we're outside again smiles come on again and we all do that to an extent I'm sure but it should affect how we behave not only outside the street but at home with those nearest and nearest to us how we treat every walk and aspect of life the knowledge that we are a walking breathing living example of Christ's kingdom that others will watch and witness whatever we do we sought to direct how we behave and how we discharge our duties and responsibilities this identity being paramount is no more and no less than the outworking of the great commandment of Jesus and the first commandment of the ten thou shalt have no other gods before thee and when they ask

Jesus what is the greatest commandment of all he'd say oh number one thou shalt have no other gods before me when he took another commandment farther down you might say in Deuteronomy which applies and expands and says the greatest commandment of all is this here on this meal the Lord our God is one Lord and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy mind and all thy strength this is the first and the greatest commandment and the second is what I come to it thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself this identity being paramount is the outworking of the great commandment of Jesus this is how we grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by bringing every detail and every department of our lives under his headship his rule his authority that everything we do and every day we live we live for him and we live in him and we live through him and our brothers and sisters throughout the world become our responsibility and our concern yes it matters to us and it should matter when our brothers and sisters in India get attacked and there are riots against their home and they burn down their churches or when in Pakistan a Christian gets murdered in the marketplace it should matter to us when the believers in Uzbekistan or Kyrgyzstan are getting constantly arrested and harassed by the police it should matter to us what the believers suffer in Nigeria where multitudes have been murdered it should be a matter for prayer it should be a burden upon our hearts because our brothers and sisters throughout the world are part of our responsibility and our concern and part of our identity for what happens to them happens in one sense to us 1 Corinthians 12 read verses 26 27 when a one member suffer all the members suffer with it a one member be honoured all the members rejoice with it now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular this then is

Christ's body and this is our family our identity now no family stays static children grow up despite our lack of awareness of it sometimes it happens almost under our noses they move on to jobs or university or college we expect them to it's natural some of them meet up with their complementary equal who will become husband or wife we expect that in due course there might be children and these children will in turn grow up we expect that no family remains static nor does the family of Jesus Christ if this is our family if this is our identity identity in Christ we must expect it to grow and to grow up we must expect it to be joined by others and to reproduce new lives being born again into Christ we must expect it to grow and expect that our faith will prove justified identity in Christ brings us round again and onwards and upwards to expectation and belief and this is where we came in this is how we began this we've styled it building for growth and we do so again only now as it were another story has been added another level has been added to the building and now it reaches up a little higher well how high can it go well remember what Jesus said of course when he spoke to his disciples about what they would see he said verily verily

[37 : 47] I say to you hereafter you shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man if we are building in Christ and make no mistake how high can it go it can go all the way all the way to glory this is our identity in Christ and it supersedes all other identities this is it this is building for growth let's pray