



## Reflection: Understanding Your Identity in Christ

by Beth Jones

Each new year we take a good look at the past year, evaluate what was good and what was not. We resolve to break bad habits, or to establish new ones. One of the most common resolutions each new year's is to lose weight. Many times, women look into the mirror and feel very dissatisfied with their appearance, even if other areas of their lives are going quite well. They don't like what they see in the reflection. We need to understand our *true* image and identity in Christ.

I believe our enemy satan stays very busy causing women absolute havoc in this area. In today's size-0 to 2-beautiful- air-brushed-perfect-model world that we live in, we struggle with not only our appearance but with our very identity. We equate our worth with the way the woman looks in the mirror. And we feel like we can't quite *measure up* to that ever-elusive, too high standard of magazine cover women!

It is vital that we as women of God understand our identity. Because everything in our lives that happens will hinge on that revelation. We must know *who* we are to fully *become* who we are destined to be.

The enemy will bombard us with lies about everything, from our lips not being big enough like Angelina Jolie's, to that excess weight around our mid-section making us a good candidate for liposuction or a stomach stapling surgery. We will look at the magazine covers in the check-out line, and constantly feel "less than" – unless we *know who we really are*. This doesn't just happen to pre-menopausal, middle-aged women who are seeing more gray hairs and wrinkles, but even to drop-dead gorgeous teenagers and women in their 20's and 30's, who severely compare themselves to these "perfect" ones!



What they don't realize is that makeup and hairstyle artists spend *hours* on these models, and then the final selected photo is "tweaked" – eyebrows lifted, excess skin on the cheeks or neck trimmed, eyes widened, etc. It's not even *really her* by the time they finish! And nobody can compete with this! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcFlxSIOKNI>

We also struggle with our identity based on how much money is in our bank account, the car we drive, our clothes, our education, the home we live in, our job title, how many comments are on our blog, the amount of followers we have on Twitter, the number of books or audios we sold, our husband's and children's accomplishments, and other such ridiculous standards. Financial expert, speaker and writer Dave Ramsey says, "I'm not against people having new cars. I'm against them having you."

We are not what we drive! We are not what we look like! We are not what people think of us! But we are bought with a price – very precious in the sight of God,

even priceless! Jesus died for us so we could be reconciled to God the Father! Our true identity comes directly from our relationship with God. We are His beloved child. We need to really GET this!

Using the acronym I'M HIS, let's look at this true identity in Christ in more detail from God's word.

- I. In his presence is fullness of joy. (Psalm 16:11) When we spend regular, consistent time in prayer and worship of God, He will reveal our identity to us. We will grasp the measure of His grace, mercy, love and forgiveness toward us, and how priceless that is. We will come to understand that He knew us even before we were in our mother's womb (Jeremiah 1:5), and has a great plan for our lives (Jeremiah 29:11).

As God reveals to us that we are not some random accident, some kind of strange, unplanned, unexplainable creation that evolved from a lower life form - but instead we were made on *purpose* and with a tailor-made destiny for greatness for his glory - we will be filled with overflowing joy. We will come to understand who we really are – created to be worshippers of Him. His child whom He died for, so we could live with Him forever and ever!



M. Masterpiece. God is the potter, and we are the clay – His masterpiece of creation. “Then the Lord gave me this message: “O Israel, can I not do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As

the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand." (Jeremiah 18:5-6)

God's hand is upon us. He will never leave us or forsake us. Hebrews 13:5) Just as a potter is working the clay to make it into a beautiful vessel, God is working in our lives to create us into a vessel for honor. "In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble.." (2 Timothy 2:20, NIV)

The potter knows just what the clay needs to form it into the vessel that he desires to make. Sometimes he takes excess parts off the clay (God's pruning). Sometimes he increases pressure with his hands (conviction, "sandpaper people" who refine us). Sometimes he adds more water (The Word of God). And finally the clay goes in the fire of the kiln (trials, tribulations to form us into the image of Jesus).

Finally, the masterpiece is ready for display! God wants to show you off! You have gifts and talents inside of you that He wants to use for His glory. You are a one-of-a-kind, beautiful work of art!



H. Heaven-bound. This life is not our final destination. We are pilgrims on this earth. (Hebrews 11:13-16) When we get this, we will realize that we are not defined by our looks, our homes, our cars, our bank account, our career success, our mailing list, our chil-

dren's accomplishments, etc. As Barlow Girl sings in their song *Mirror*, "He defines me."

<http://www.barlowgirl.com/discography/album/barlowgirl/mirror>

Life is good and is precious. However, this world can never offer us everything we really need. We can only find true satisfaction, peace and joy in God. This world and its lusts for pleasure will leave us empty.

Only God can truly fill us up. As we spend time in prayer, worship, and studying His word each day, He will give us the longings of our heart. He will show us who we are in Him...His radiant, spotless Bride. (Ephesians 5:27, Revelation 22:17)



- I. In progress. God isn't finished with us yet. Isn't that GREAT news? It gives us hope on those days when we really blow it! We don't have to feel like failures, because tomorrow morning we are going to be served a fresh plate of mercy straight from heaven's kitchen!

Yes, we have areas of our lives where we struggle with sin. No, it's not fun – especially when it seems that you have victory over a certain area, and suddenly one day you say something that you shouldn't have to somebody! That is where God's grace and forgiveness step in. ☺

Day by day, as we draw nearer to Jesus in intimacy through prayer, Bible reading and worship, He is changing us from "glory to glory." (2 Corinthians 3:18) God sees the final

page of the book of our lives. And the end of the story is going to be just amazing!

“But as it is written, “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1 Corinthians 2:9, NKJV)



S. Sealed. You are and I are sealed by God’s Holy Spirit. “<sup>13-</sup>  
<sup>14</sup>It's in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. This signet from God is the first installment on what's coming, a reminder that we'll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life.” (Ephesians 1:13, The Message)

It’s a done deal! Signed, sealed, and delivered by God! You belong to Him! You are His workmanship.

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10 , NASB) God is going to finish what He started in you, too! (Philippians 1:6) You are wonderfully, fearfully, beautifully made in His sight. (Psalm 139:14)

The next time you glance into the mirror, really see that woman looking back at you. She’s God’s very own creation. His Bride. A Royal Diadem.

“The Lord will hold you in His hand for all to see – a splendid crown in the hand of God.” (Isaiah 62:3, NLT)

Know who you really are. Know your identity. And then walk in your God-given position and authority, giving all glory and honor to Him, your King. Because it’s all for Him!

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