



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume VIII
Issue 186

Am I Having an Identity Crisis?

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Who am I? Who am I *really*? Some may respond to the question of who they are by giving an answer related to what they do, or based on their human relationships.



subject to change. How *fragile* such earthly identities are!

Yet is who I *really* am *constantly* changing, or at least subject to change at *any* time? Who am I anyway (I mean, *really*)?

Answers related to what I do are:

- “I am a carpenter.”
- “I am a housewife.”
- “I am a student.”
- “I am a secretary.”
- “I am a salesman.”
- “I am a foreman.”

Answers related to my human relationships are:

- “I am a mother.”
- “I am a father.”
- “I am a wife.”
- “I am a husband.”

Now, these answers are not “wrong.” There is some sense in which these represent a *part* of who I am; but these do not ultimately represent who I *really* am. They are not my *true* identity.

If these represent the way in which I define myself, what happens if my life changes? The circumstances of life are far from being stable. They can change in a moment; sometimes drastically, sometimes permanently. If I see my core identity in the *fragility* of what I do, and in my human relationships, then my identity is always

Before I can actually answer this question, I need to think about some biblical terms to help direct my thinking of just who I am, just what my true identity is. Here are just a few things that God says I am:

- Saved – II Timothy 1:9
- Blessed – Ephesians 1:3
- Forgiven – Colossians 2:13
- Complete – Colossians 2:10
- Reconciled – II Corinthians 5:18

There is a very common mistake that is made when it comes to seeing ourselves as who we really are. It is a religious teaching that could be called “*the Filter*.” Here is how this teaching goes: God is holy. I am a sinner. For God to have a relationship with me, or even look at me, He must place a filter between me and Himself. This filter

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Dear Precious Family,

Tender greetings in the steadfastness of our Father's love, and in the anchor of our Brother's faith, the Lord Jesus Christ!

We have had such full pages in the BSN for the past few issues, that we have not been able to take the space to write a few personal words. I always miss being able to do that, and to share with you from my heart just how much it means to me to be able to fellowship with you in this way.

Spring is now in the air, as the beautiful daffodils are blooming here, along with opportunities for those much needed projects. Each season brings its own unique reasons to be thankful that we are the children of such a benevolent Creator. What a joy to be alive and to bask in His creative bounty, for all around us, as in ourselves, we see the unmistakable evidence of His masterful handiwork!

New Series

We have a new series. A couple of years ago we did a series of truths in the Bible Student's Notebook entitled *I Choose!* These were eventually collected into a book by the same title.

Here we begin a new series *I Am!* These are my personal confessions of faith. I believe, and therefore I speak. There should be nearly 50 installments in this series over the next few months.

In this issue of the *BSN* we will carry the introduction to this series, as well as the first two installments.

New Book

We have a new book. Look for the ad in this issue for our latest work, *Heaven's Embassy: The Divine Plan and Purpose of the Home*. This challenge of society's concepts of marriage and the home represents twenty years of diligent study and understanding on this vital subject. Not only does this book provide much needed biblical instruction and encouragement for day-to-day living, it will also prove to be a valuable reference for the family library for years to come.

My love to each of you,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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Patriarchs

Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

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CRISIS (continued from page 1813)

is Jesus Christ. After the filter is in place, when God looks at me, He doesn't really see "me" anymore; instead, He sees me *through* the filter so that what He really sees is Christ. God sees His Son and His record of righteousness, not me (the sinner and my record of unrighteousness).

What would happen if this filter were removed? What would God see then? He would see the *real me* for who I truly am: a sinner. In other words, "the Filter" teaching leaves me **unchanged** – I am still "just a sinner." That is who I am. Or, at least that is how this "Filter" doctrine is taught.

Little wonder that so many seek to find their identification elsewhere, for this understanding does **nothing** about one's **identity**!

Here is one of religion's tragic flaws: that I just **RECEIVE** something new (like "righteousness") instead of **BECOMING** something new (like "righteous"). There is a vast difference between *having* righteousness and *being* righteous. Notice what the Scripture has to say about this:

*For He hath made Him to be sin for us,
Who knew no sin; **that we might be
made the righteousness of God in
Him** (II Corinthians 5:21).*

This passage does not say, "that we might *have* the righteousness of God in Him"; instead it says, "that we might be **made** the righteousness of God in Him" – the magnitude of such a distinction! To be righteous is to be holy; and I am holy because God says I am.

*... the elect of God, **holy** and beloved ...
(Colossians 3:12).*

*... all the **holy** brethren (I Thessalonians
5:27).*

*... the temple of God is **holy**, which temple
ye are (I Corinthians 3:17).*

To be holy is to be a saint, and I am a saint because God says I am. The tragedy of "the Filter" teaching of the religious system is expressed in the old familiar adage "I'm just a sinner saved by grace." A "sinner" is not who I **am** now. This is not my *true* identity. My *true* identity is: a *saint*.

"Sinner" was my *former* identity in Adam. Notice how Paul speaks of it in the past tense:

*But God commendeth His love toward us,
in that, while we **WERE** yet sinners, Christ
died for us (Romans 5:8).*

Now, instead of calling me by my *former* identity, Paul calls me by my *new* identity – "saint" (c.f. II Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1). The fact is that I *am* a New Creature:

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, **he is
a new creature: OLD THINGS ARE PASSED
AWAY; BEHOLD, ALL THINGS ARE BECOME
NEW** (II Corinthians 5:17).*

This brings me back to my original question, "Who am I, *really*?"

Simply put, I am who and what God says I am! That's who I really am. I'm not just a father, or a salesperson; I am righteous – holy – a saint – a new creature. These are all my *new* identity! My *former* identity would not work in a relationship with God, so it has died – it has "*passed away*."

I am not God's rehabilitation project or remodeling work. I'm not God's fixer-upper; a sort of divine handyman special. I am God's New Creature – a member of His new divine species!

I need to stop struggling with my *former* identity. I am called to bask in my *true* identity – the one that God has given me. I need to let my identity crisis be over.

I Am ...

Who and What God Says I Am

(The Divine Reckoning of the Renewed Mind)

Part 1

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak (II Corinthians 4:13).

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FAITH

Here is the Divine Record of who and what God says I am. This is an encyclopedia of faith; it is the truth about me. It is the truth about me simply because it is God Who has said it. God has spoken these truths concerning me – the *real* me. I will believe His record.

I AM ...

Accepted	(Ephesians 1:6)
Adopted	(Galatians 4:5)
Alive	(Colossians 2:20)
Ambassador	(II Corinthians 5:20)
Ascended	(Ephesians 2:6)
Beloved	(Romans 1:7)
Blameless	(Ephesians 1:4)
Blessed	(Ephesians 1:3)
Bought	(I Corinthians 7:23)
Buried	(Colossians 2:20)
Called	(Romans 8:30)
Chosen	(Ephesians 1:4)
Circumcised	(Colossians 2:11)
Christ	(I Corinthians 12:12)
Complete	(Colossians 2:10)
Crucified	(Galatians 2:20)
Dead	(Romans 6:2, 11)
Delivered	(Colossians 1:13)
Elect	(Colossians 3:12)
Fellowcitizen	(Ephesians 2:19)
Foreknown	(Romans 8:29)
Forgiven	(Colossians 2:13)
Free	(Galatians 5:1)
Glorified	(Romans 8:30)
His Body	(I Corinthians 12:27)

His Temple	(I Corinthians 3:16)
His Workmanship	(Ephesians 2:10)
Holy	(Ephesians 1:4)
In Fellowship	(I Corinthians 1:9)
Indwelt	(Ephesians 4:6)
Joint-Heir	(Romans 8:17)
Justified	(Romans 8:30)
New Creation	(II Corinthians 5:17)
Predestinated	(Romans 8:30)
Reconciled	(II Corinthians 5:18)
Redeemed	(Galatians 3:13)
Rich	(II Corinthians 8:9)
Righteous	(II Corinthians 5:21)
Risen	(Colossians 2:12)
Sanctified	(Romans 1:7)
Saved	(Ephesians 2:8)
Sealed	(Ephesians 1:13)
Seated	(Ephesians 2:6)
A Son of God	(Romans 8:14)
Translated	(Colossians 1:13)
Triumphant	(II Corinthians 2:14)
Victorious	(I Corinthians 15:57)

I AM ... ACCEPTED

This is what the Father says I am.

Regardless of how I feel about it, the Father has made me accepted in the *person* of His Son.

*To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us **accepted in the Beloved*** (Ephesians 1:6).

I am “accepted in the Beloved.” My Father is fully

satisfied with me, because I am in living union with His “*Beloved Son*.”

My union is not just in His “*Son*,” but in His “***Beloved Son***,” – “*accepted in the Beloved*.”

So amazing, as I think of the union into which He has brought me. Paul’s usage of “*Beloved*” as a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ is phenomenal. Twice in Christ’s earthly life – once at the beginning of His ministry, and once at the end – the Father spoke from Heaven and said of Him,

This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).

The Father did not just call Him His “*Loved Son*.” No, He called Him His “***Beloved Son***.” Noah Webster defines “*beloved*” as “*greatly loved; dear to the heart*.”¹

The words “*made ... accepted*” (“*hath **made** us **accepted** in the Beloved*”) are translated from the Greek word *charitoo* (Strong’s Greek Lexicon #5487), meaning to “*indue [endow, or invest] with special honor*,” which is also translated “*highly favored*” in Luke 1:28:

*And the angel came in unto her [Mary], and said, “Hail, thou that art **highly favored**, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women”* (Luke 1:28).

All of this speaks volumes to my heart – the fact that I am *highly favored* “*in the Beloved*.” For what is associated with this “*beloved*” between the Father and the Son? The Father’s full *pleasure* in His Son! – “*in Whom [the Beloved] I am well pleased*.”

Paul uses this term “*Beloved*” so that I may be able to appreciate that this is where my acceptance lies. The Father has accepted me, and is pleased with me, because I am in His “*Beloved Son*.” His unconditional acceptance of me is found in my secure union with His “*Beloved*.” I have been *highly favored*!

Even though I do not always do those things which are acceptable, I myself am however always accepted in Him.

A.J. Gordon (1836-1895) wrote concerning this
1. *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828.

divine acceptance,

What we are in Christ is something that is completely detached from all the fluctuations of Christian experience. It neither rises nor falls with the tide of feeling. It knows nothing of degrees. Christ is the standard by which it is gauged, it becomes absolute and without the possibility of change, since Jesus Christ is, “*the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*” (Hebrews 13:8).

Since we are in Him and one with Him, we share His place in the Father’s heart, and we may know, without a doubt, that we are “*accepted in the Beloved*” (Ephesians 1:6).

What a blessed phrase is this, “*in the Beloved*.” In that voice that came down from heaven and said, “*This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased*” (Matthew 3:17), we may now hear God’s approving sentence upon ourselves, as well as upon our Lord. For being in Christ, the beams of eternal love falling upon Him must fall upon us as included in Him. To be in Him is to be loved of the Father, because it is to be in the very focus of the divine affection.

Is not the occasion of much of our distrust and darkness to be found in the fact that we estimate ourselves by ourselves, according to the measure of a man, instead of according to the measure of Christ? He is the true example of our standing before God.

*... We may have boldness in the day of judgment: because **as He is, so are we in this world*** (I John 4:17).

Jesus Christ not only represents God to us in His own being, “*the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person*” (Hebrews 1:3), but He represents us to God. We see God in Christ. God sees us in Christ.

We may without contradiction join the confession of a weak faith and much guilty unbelief with the triumphant confidence, “*If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself*” (II Timothy 2:13).²

I am what the Father says I am. ►

2. A.J. Gordon, *In Christ* (Boston, 1872).

I am accepted.

I Am... Adopted

This is what the Father says I am.

*To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive **the adoption of sons** (Galatians 4:5).*

Through my union with the Lord Jesus Christ, I have been brought into His Sonship. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, "**the firstborn among many brethren**" (Romans 8:29). I am Christ's brother, as well as a "*son of God*" (Philippians 2:15).

This is a wonderful reality that is often missed because of the more modern usage of the word "*adoption*" – that of taking someone from outside the family and making them a member. This is *not* the scriptural concept; instead, it is that of one's placement into a full-adult (sonship) position.

The word translated as "*adoption*" is the Greek word *huiothesia*. This is *Strong's Greek Lexicon #5206* meaning the "placing as a son", *i.e.*, "sonship," or son-placing. It is defined as:

Sonship, literally son-placing, the station in life accorded a son ..."³

C.I. Scofield says regarding this,

Adoption is the act of God whereby children of God redeemed by Christ are made adult sons, whose full manifestations as such awaits the resurrection.⁴

The Bible doctrine of "*adoption*" means that I am not just a *child of God*, wonderful enough as that thought is. I am much more than that: through my union with Christ, as a member of His Body, I'm a *son of God*. My standing before God is not that of a minor "*child*," I have the divine position of a full-grown son.

The word "minor" is defined as "while in a state of infancy; one who has not attained the age of a major." The word "minor" is in contrast with the word "major." The word "major" is defined as "one who has attained his full age, and has acquired all his civil rights; one who is no longer a minor; an adult." This is a concept known as "majority" – "The state or condition of a person who has arrived at full age. He is then said to be a major, in opposition to a minor, which is his condition during infancy."⁵

Speaking of this distinction, A.E. Knoch writes:

In the Scriptures, those who are too young to have a voice in affairs, who need a guardian, are minors ... The *Authorized Version* renders this "babe," "child" and "childish" ... It is in contrast to the wise and intelligent ... mature man (I Corinthians 13:10-11) ... In Israel a male was mature physically when he arrived at the age of twenty (Leviticus 27:3, 5). Then he was drafted into the host, or army, and was liable to military service, being considered a mature member of the nation ...⁶

This Sonship position that I have is that of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We have been placed into union with His full adult sonship. *This* is the glorious principle known as "*adoption*."

*To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive **the adoption of sons** (Galatians 4:5).*

*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received **the Spirit of adoption**, whereby we cry, Abba, Father (Romans 8:15).*

Of course the world does not yet know who I am. My divine sonship has been completely hidden from them at this time; but one day I will be made manifest. In the resurrection God will reveal to

(See **I AM**, next page)

3. A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), *Babe, Child, Sonship, and Firstborn*.

4. C.I. Scofield, *The Scofield Bible Correspondence Course* (1907), Vol. III, page 412.

5. Definitions are from *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*, 1856 Edition.

6. A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), *Babe, Child, Sonship, and Firstborn*.



Reader's Question Box #8

"Wait Upon the Lord"

Q. What have you found to be the Scripture's definition of "wait upon the Lord"? When I think of that phrase two very different meanings come to mind. One is patiently waiting for God to act, following Him and not jumping ahead. The other is serving God, as a waiter waits on tables or "waiting on someone hand and foot."

*But they that **wait upon the LORD** shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint (Isaiah 40:31).*

A. This is a very good question. Although our English word "wait" allows these distinct definitions, such is not the case with the Hebrew word *qavah* that is being translated.

Qavah (Strong's Hebrew Lexicon #6960) carries the meaning:

To hope strongly, to trust, implying firmness and constancy of mind. – *Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies*, William Wilson (1783-1873).

To trust, hope. – *Dictionary of Old Testament Words* (1845), Aaron Pick.

To look eagerly. – *Brown-Driver-Briggs Old*

I AM (continued from previous page)

all of creation who His sons are. This will be my glorious coronation day.

*For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the **manifestation**⁷ of the sons of God (Romans 8:19).*

Until my manifestation with "the sons of God," the rest of God's creation doesn't know who I am. As I walk through life, the circumstances will not

7. *Strong's Greek Lexicon* #602, *apokalupsis* – defined as "disclosure" and translated elsewhere in the *King James Version* as – "appearing" and "revelation."

Testament Hebrew Lexicon.

Qavah is also translated by the *King James Version* translators elsewhere as "looked" and "tarrieth":

*And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he **looked** [qavah] that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes (Isaiah 5:2).*

*And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that **tarrieth** [qavah] not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men (Micah 5:7).*

As we can see from the definitions above, and from these other *King James Version* translations of *qavah*, the first of your phrases, "patiently waiting for God to act," is the actual train of thought in the passage. Although, we can also tell that the thought conveys more than just simply "waiting" as we would normally think of it. It expresses a firm waiting in hope, trust, in expectation of God.

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
Windber, PA

reflect my true identity. In fact, I am not exempt from all the apparent vanities of this *dark-land*. I'll have my share of the *dark-side*: suffering, pain, discouragement, difficulties, weariness, pressure, and the like; but I'm not defined by these details. Although I'm beckoned to the contrary on every side, I have a higher life – the *high-life* from above, from the *light-land* – the *light-side* of divine life. I am called to walk in this radiant light as my Father's full-grown, adult son.

I am what the Father says I am.

I am adopted.



Our Mailbag

The best thing that I have done in a long time was to sign up for the *Daily Email Goodies* and also the *Bible Student's Notebook*.

I am currently teaching through the full armor of God and the current treatment of that subject [in the Daily Email Goodies] has been of great help to me personally, as well as illustrations for the subject matter.

I look forward to your daily as well as your weekly postings. These are the true "Daily Bread." – *VT*

Just wanted you to know your *Daily Email Goodies* don't fall on deaf ears. We enjoy them and pass them along to friends and family. – *TX*

I do thank you once again for your work and stepping forth and being counted in these falling away times. I appreciate you and your family. I read some of your books every day. Our prayers are with you and please keep us in yours. There is no time or distance in the Spirit of the Lord. Praise be His name. – *SC*

You are one of the few people out there who are actually HERALDING the Word – speaking of your excellent newsletter. Keep up the good work. We need you. – *OH*

A breath of fresh air! I have been sitting under the teaching of Calvinism for a long time. I have even become bitter with God over it. What you are teaching brings me some peace. Thanks! – *FL*

Here are a few short responses we have received from our blogs:

This blog's great!! Thanks :)

I love your site. Keep it up!

Just passing by, your website has great content!

Great blog and hope to have some time soon to come back and read more!

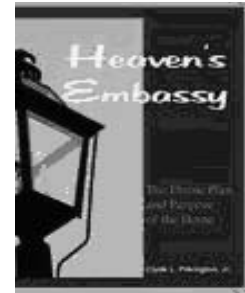
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Heaven's Embassy

The Divine Plan & Purpose of the Home

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.



Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it (Psalms 127:1).

This book represents many years of work. The author believes that it is one of the most important books that he will ever be privileged to write, simply because it is about one of the most vital scriptural subjects that could ever be addressed.

The home is central to all of God's dealings with man throughout the course of time. It is His Divine "institution" and "organization" upon the earth; and for the believer, it is the *Embassy of Heaven*. An embassy is "**the residence or office of an ambassador.**" Since the believer is an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:14-21), his home is thus the *Divine Embassy* of heavenly ministry.

Pauline ministry is center in the homes of believers. This is even the true sphere of the Body of Christ; for this reason our apostle speaks of "*church in thy house.*" This book doesn't focus upon the *external* specifics of the ministry of *Heaven's Embassy* (such as *hospitality*); that will be saved for another volume. Instead, it looks at the inner-workings of the *Embassy* itself, focusing upon its very nature and *internal* purpose and function.

(#5675) 250 pages, paperback, **\$16.²⁵** (+ **\$3.²²** s&h = **\$20.²⁴**)

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