

Transforming Love Colossians 1:15 – 20

I. Intro

- A. **Statement:** [SLIDE] God's love for us is real and evident ... We are loved by God so that we might love the world in the same manner ... that we might make His glory known!
- B. Common questions asked by many people: Who am I?; What am I here for?
- C. Both are questions of identity; identity is one of those areas of life that is under attack today; look at all the lies being propagated in our nation/world related to sexual identity; even the identity of the church has been twisted/distorted by political and moral controversy
- D. **Important:** Our identity does not come from our own self-awareness
- E. [REFER back to opening statement]
- F. Who we truly are, our true identity and purpose in this life, has always been found in Jesus – Christ came into this world to give us life because of God's great love for us
- G. When we come to understand who Jesus is, then we can understand who we are: **READ Colossians 1:15 – 20**

II. [SLIDE] Christ's Identity Shapes Our Identity

- A. Question: What does passage say about who Jesus is?
 - i. **v. 15:** He is image of the invisible God, the firstborn of creation
 - ii. **v. 16:** He is the Creator
 - iii. **v. 17:** He's the glue that holds everything together [Picture of laminin protein molecule]
 - iv. **v. 18:** He is the head of the church – His body of believers; He is preeminent/supreme over all creation; not only is He firstborn of all creation but he is also firstborn from the dead – He has defeated death
 - v. **v. 19:** In him dwells all the fullness of God; Jesus Himself claimed - **John 10:30 (ESV)**
³⁰I and the Father are one.”
 - vi. **v. 20, 21:** Through His sacrifice on cross He has reconciled us to God/Himself; through this ultimate act of love He has made peace between God and all of creation including broken humanity
 - vii. **v. 22:** Through Him that we can stand before the Father holy and blameless, above reproach (blame, disapproval)
- B. **Back to v. 14** – it's only through Christ's death on cross and His resurrection that we are redeemed and forgiven of sin

C. It's Jesus where we find the answer to how much God loves you and me; God's love is so extravagant that He sent His one and only Son to die for us

D. Song of Solomon 2:4 (ESV)

⁴He brought me to the banqueting [*hall*], and his banner over me was love.

E. Ephesians 1:5–8 (NLT)

⁵God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

⁶So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.

⁷He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

⁸He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

F. God's love has distinctive purpose for all of us – we participate in His expression of love and life to the world; God loved us so that we would make known His love to the world; Paul understood this mission He was called to and that we are called to also - REFER v. 27, 28

G. Our identity, every person's identity, is found in Jesus Christ and His work; just as He revealed the love and glory of God in the world so we also exist to make God's love and glory known

H. [SLIDE] Our daily prayer of gratitude should be ... *Lord, thank you so much for loving me just the way I am. I thank you for sacrificing Your son to make a way for a loving and intimate relationship with me.*

III. [SLIDE] Christ is Love's Ultimate Hope

A. As believers in Christ, we experience a supernatural transformation from death to life

B. Participating/experiencing Christ's redemptive love for us and the world is love's ultimate hope; we make that hope known in very practical ways

i. REFER v. 28: In what we profess

ii. READ Colossians 3:1, 2: In how we live; how we live is centered around eternity not the temporary

iii. READ Colossians 3:12, 13: In how we treat one another

iv. READ Colossians 3:18 – 21: In our homes and how we treat our family

C. All these areas of our lives are to be surrendered to Christ; as Paul says (Ch. 3:9, 10) we are to *put off the old self ... put on the new self*; new self/person through this supernatural transformation is to look like our Creator, Jesus Himself

D. [SLIDE] So, our daily prayer of confession should be ... *Lord, forgive me please. My life has hindered my role as one who proclaims Your glory in my*

[home, office, school, church, relationships, etc.] because I have sinned against my fellow man and against You.

IV. [SLIDE] God Believes in Us

A. If you struggle with believing in yourself, understand that God believes in You

B. When we consider what God has done for us through His Son, consider His great powerful/transforming love for us, consider the ultimate hope of Christ's love for us then we gain the confidence/assurance that God does believe in you and me

i. He accepts us when we fail; Romans 15:7 (ESV)

⁷Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

ii. He encourages when we are down; 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV)

¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

iii. He supports us when we struggle; Galatians 6:2 (ESV)

²Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

iv. He comforts us when we hurt; 2 Corinthians 1:3–4 (ESV)

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

⁴who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

v. He delivers us in times of trouble – rejoices over us in song; Zephaniah 3:17 (ESV)

¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

C. Greatest, most wonderful news ever – God takes us wherever we are, wherever we are from, whatever skin color, whatever nationality, and from whatever family and names us as His own in Jesus Christ because of His great love

D. That is our true identity and our true purpose for life

V. Close

A. Psalm 103:2–5 (ESV)

²Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,

³who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,

⁴who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

⁵who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

B. [SLIDE] Lastly, our daily prayer of praise should be – *Lord, when I think about how much you love me, and all You've done and continue to do for me I feel joy, peace, confident in who I am in You and I am moved to share that transforming power of Your love with others.*