

Who we are in Jesus

God knew us before we were born. He knew who we would be and our birth was no accident.

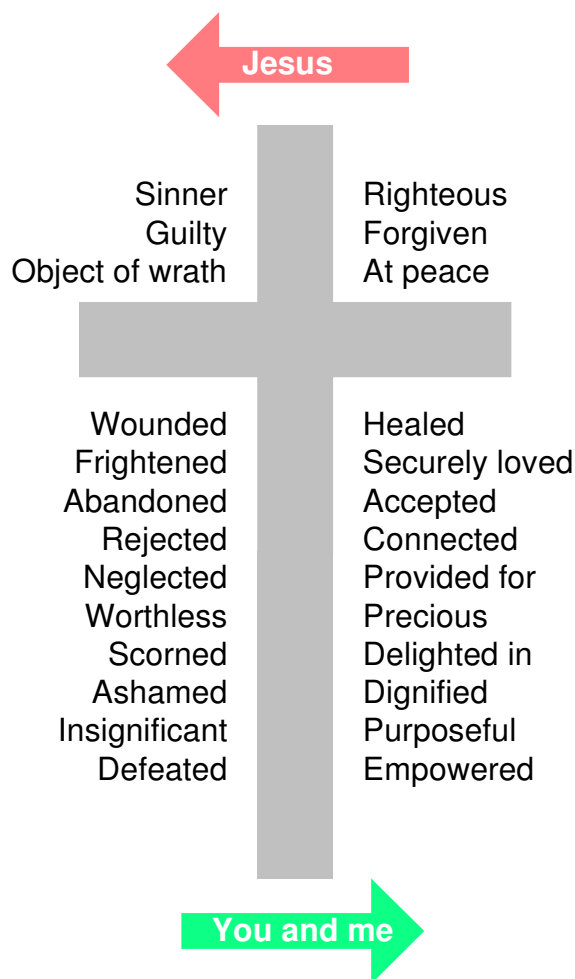
Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations. **Jeremiah 1⁵**

The Father sent the Son to die in our place, so that we might have the penalty for our sins paid. He loves us that much.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 6²³**

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **2Corinthians 5²¹**

This is sometimes known as the divine exchange at the cross.



The death and resurrection of Jesus on the cross made it possible for us to be totally new creatures. Our motives and the way we live our lives has turned around completely. This is once and for all, and permanent.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! **2Corinthians 5¹³**

Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. **Hebrews 7²⁷**

... God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"
Hebrews 13^{5&6}

Nobody has the right to condemn us because the price has been paid for all of our sins (past and future) by Jesus, so God's law is satisfied.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. **Romans 8**¹⁻⁴

This is all God's doing. We could not do it for ourselves. We are set free to be what we were made to be.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. **Ephesians 2**⁸⁻¹⁰

He has made us and we are wonderful in his sight. He has a plan for each one of us.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. **Psalms 139**¹⁴⁻¹⁶

We can have help from the Holy Spirit to live our lives and peace in our hearts

But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. **John 14**^{26&27}

And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

Joel 2^{28&29}

Jesus has promised us a life of fullness and he will help us when we are weary. He understands us and knows our weaknesses.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. **John 10**¹⁰

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. **Hebrews 4**^{15&16}

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. **Matthew 11**²⁸⁻³⁰

Jesus won so much more for us on the cross than the right to go to heaven (as if that were not enough). As we realise the extent of what he has done and take this into our hearts, we can walk in a freedom and with a confidence that we could not even imagine.

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. **1Peter 2²⁴**

We have been set free to be who we were intended to be.

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. **John 3⁶**

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. **Galatians 5³**

In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. **Ephesians 2¹²**

We are no longer slaves to sin but children and heirs of our heavenly Father. We will inherit eternal life in both quality and duration.

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. **Romans 8¹⁵⁻¹⁸**

The death of Jesus on the cross has given us access to the Father. It has given us the capacity for healing in our bodies, minds and spirits.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. **Isaiah 53³⁻⁶**

We have all we need to live significant lives in security knowing self-worth and confidence, because all of these things are rooted in God our loving Father and in what Jesus has done for us rather than being dependent upon other things or people who will inevitably fail to provide for our needs.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. **2Peter 1^{2&3}**

We are special in God's eyes, not because of what we have done, but because of what Jesus has done and who we now are in him.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. **1Peter 2^{9&10}**

We can live a life of love without fear.

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. **1John 4**¹⁶⁻¹⁹

And when we grow tired he is there to sustain us

So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! **Romans 7**²¹⁻²⁵

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. **Isaiah 40**²⁸⁻³¹

When all is said and done, what the Lord wants from us is very straightforward.

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men. **Romans 14**^{17&18}

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. **Micah 6**⁸