



All Saints Day

Finding our identity in Christ



Main verses:

And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.

(Ephesians 1:13-14)

Main Point:

How often do we either lose or forget to wear our 'name badge'!
No! Not just the one we wear at church, but the one which identifies us as a Christian?
A Christian is a person who has discovered their new God-given identity, having been brought into union with God, through his Son Jesus Christ.

However, the world is constantly shouting at us to believe lies about who we are.

That's why Paul wrote to the believers in Ephesus -
to remind them of their new identity as saints of God
who are signed, sealed and secure in Jesus Christ.

Intro |

Last Sunday, I had a little conversation with Margaret on her way into church. At the time our conversation seemed pretty insignificant. But it nevertheless began to simmer in my mind.

Margaret had mentioned that she had lost her name badge. Because she searched everywhere to find it, she was later to church than usual.

I chuckled and asked, 'where did you eventually find it?'

She replied, 'Oh, it was on the kitchen bench all the time.'

'What a great illustration', I thought! It is so easy to think important things are lost when actually they are in plain sight.

Then, as a throw away line while she walked into the service, she added,

'I found it under a mask I had made'.

Well! Because I was aware that today's reading was going to be about 'knowing our identity in Christ' – this seemingly little, insignificant conversation was simply too good not to use!

A name badge is a form of identity. We wear it so that others know who we are. But when we go home, we take it off, put it down and before long it becomes buried under all the other stuff in our lives – and we forget where we put it!

Now, some of you are saying ... 'Hang on ... even if I lost my name badge, I'm hardly going to forget what my name is!' Actually, I wouldn't be too confident about that. Life can become pretty hard, and it usually doesn't take too many hard blows, before we end up disorientated and confused about who we really are, where we fit in and what God really thinks of us.

In reality, God's word tells us, it is very easy for us to forget the special name God gave us when He granted us a new identity as His child.

Before you say, I've never read that in the bible! Jesus told the believers at Philadelphia that He promised those who were victorious would not only become pillars in God's holy Temple, but that he would also "write on them" a "new name." (Revelation 3:12, also see Revelation 2:17, and 14:1)

Today, I'd like to bring our attention towards what this new name or identity is. For it is a name that we received from God, when God chose and adopted us to be in His family.

Point 1 | You are a SIGNED saint! Loved and chosen by God to be declared holy and without fault in his eyes. But this is not based on your piety, it was because God adopted you into His family.

Paul, in fact, wrote so much about what should be written on our God-given name badge, it is questionable whether any supplier could make a badge big enough to include all it needs to say. Even in Paul's opening remarks, which we read today, there are dozens of different names that need to be included. Today, however, we'll just look at three of these names. I do encourage you to look at the list I've provided at the end of this message. Or you may like to use the devotional I've provided for further reflection.

Let's start right at the beginning of Paul's letter. *"I am writing to God's holy people in Ephesus, who are faithful followers of Jesus Christ."* (1:1) Now, if we were to read Paul's words in Greek it would say, *"I am writing to the saints who are in Ephesus"* (1:1 Youngs Literal Translation. Also see 1:15, 18, 2:19)

So, the first name which needs to be listed in your name badge is "Saint of God".

Now before you say, "Now, hang on. I'm no saint! Sure I may have days when I look pretty sharp, but most days ... well you don't want to know the mess that lurks beneath these Sunday clothes!"

But that is exactly what makes the Gospel such great news! It is not about what you have or haven't done ... it was all about to what God has done, and what He has promised to do in the future. That's what Paul goes on to explain. He writes, *"For [God] chose us in him [that is in Christ Jesus] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight."* (1:4)

And it is not as though Jesus had to plead with God to accept us. We shouldn't imagine that Jesus had to twist God's arm saying, 'Holy Father, even though we both know how rotten these humans are ... would you please accept them?'

Because Paul goes on to say, *"This is what [God] wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure"* (1:5 New Living Translation)

So, when we look down at our spiritual, God-given name badge, we see printed "Saint: holy and blameless in the sight of God." (If you need further convincing, the word 'saint' is used 67 times in the New Testament, and every one of them is a reference to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 26:10; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2))

But I hope there is room for more on your name badge, because these words are just the beginning. Together with the name 'SAINT' we need to include the words 'SIGNED' by God.

For many of you, the experience of being 'signed' occurred at your baptism, perhaps as a child or as an adult. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward spiritual transformation which God performs in a person's heart. In the Anglican church, we mark the new believer with the 'sign' of the cross – naming them as Christ's own possession.

Do you remember when we had to 'sign in' before we were allowed entry into certain places? Well, it is a little bit like that. This is what Paul reminds the saints, "... *When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ...*" (1:13)

Before we move on to look at the second part of that verse, we notice that we were 'marked' or 'signed' in Him. The way I like to think of it is that before we can be accepted by God, or be approved for inclusion in His family, we need His 'signature' – His stamp of approval. That's what happened! We've received God's stamp of approval and have been approved as adopted into God's holy family.

Point 2 | You are a SEALED Saint of Jesus Christ – one who has been purchased as Christ's own special possession.

But, I hope there is more room on that badge! Because there is another name that needs to be added!

In addition to being a Saint who is SIGNED by God Himself, we have also, Paul tells us, been SEALED. In verse 13 "*When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*" (1:13-14)

The stamp or seal that we spoke of before, is the Holy Spirit inside our heart. The Holy Spirit has been given to us as deposit of our future inheritance that is kept safe for us in heaven. That leads us to the third name on our spiritual badge:

Point 3 | You are a SECURE Saint! The seal of the Holy Spirit guarantees our eternal inheritance that is securely stored for us in God's kingdom.

We are a SECURE saint. Now, while this security certainly means we have a secure eternal future – our God-given identity has tremendous ramifications for our life in the here and now. There is no other way to say it – it is dangerous to lose or forget to wear our God-given name badge! We need to be wearing it every day.

Now, remember where Margaret found her name badge – it was buried under a mask that she had made. Oooh! That is a picture I just can't ignore!

If we let our God-given identity get buried under the junk of our lives, we can easily start believing things about ourselves that are lies – or we can give into feelings that are not according to how God speaks of us.

For example, when we feel rejected, abandoned, and alone – we may put on a mask that attempts to hide these feelings behind distractions, addictions or efforts to be accepted by certain people.

But all we need to do is look down at our name badge, for it reminds us who we are – and it empowers us to confront these lies with God's truth. For our God-given name badge tells us "I am not alone, for Jesus has told me he will never leave me nor forsake me" (Hebrews 13:5)

Or when we fail, and feel condemned – we look at our name badge that says "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)

Or when we are confused, hopeless and don't know what to do – we look at our name badge that tells us "You have been showered with God's kindness, along with all wisdom and understanding" (Ephesians 1:8)

Application |

That's why it is so important to remember to wear our God-given name badge - it is like we are consciously reminding ourselves of who God says we are.

So whatever the season of life we are living through ...
Whatever the mood we are in when we wake up ...
Whatever the news our son or daughter calls and tells us ...

Let us ensure that we keep our God-given name badge close to our heart.
Let's keep it pinned on so we can constantly remind ourselves that we are Saints of God who are signed, sealed and secure in the arms of our Saviour.

Oops! I've forgotten who I am! It is time to remind myself:

- I am complete in Him Who is the head over all rule and authority—of every angelic and earthly power ([Colossians 2:10](#)).
- I am alive with Christ ([Ephesians 2:5](#)).
- I am free from the law of sin and death ([Romans 8:2](#)).
- I am born of God, and the evil one does not touch me ([1 John 5:18](#)).
- I am holy and without blame before Him in love ([Ephesians 1:4](#); [1 Peter 1:16](#)).
- I have the mind of Christ ([1 Corinthians 2:16](#); [Philippians 2:5](#)).
- I have the peace of God that surpasses all understanding ([Philippians 4:7](#)).
- The Spirit of God, who is greater than the enemy in the world, lives in me ([1 John 4:4](#)).
- I have received abundant grace and the gift of righteousness and reign in life through Jesus Christ ([Romans 5:17](#)).
- I have received the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus, the eyes of my heart enlightened, so that I know the hope of having life in Christ ([Ephesians 1:17-18](#)).
- I have received the power of the Holy Spirit and He can do miraculous things through me. I have authority and power over the enemy in this world ([Mark 16:17-18](#); [Luke 10:17-19](#)).
- I am renewed in the knowledge of God and no longer want to live in my old ways or nature before I accepted Christ ([Colossians 3:9-10](#)).
- God supplies all of my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus ([Philippians 4:19](#)).
- In all circumstances I live by faith in God and extinguish all the flaming darts (attacks) of the enemy ([Ephesians 6:16](#)).
- I can do whatever I need to do in life through Christ Jesus who gives me strength ([Philippians 4:13](#)).
- I am chosen by God who called me out of the darkness of sin and into the light and life of Christ so I can proclaim the excellence and greatness of who He is ([1 Peter 2:9](#)).
- I am born again—spiritually transformed, renewed and set apart for God's purpose—through the living and everlasting word of God ([1 Peter 1:23](#)).
- I am God's workmanship, created in Christ to do good works that He has prepared for me to do ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).
- I am a new creation in Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)).
- In Christ, I am dead to sin—my relationship to it is broken—and alive to God—living in unbroken fellowship with Him ([Romans 6:11](#)).
- The light of God's truth has shone in my heart and given me knowledge of salvation through Christ ([2 Corinthians 4:6](#)).
- As I hear God's Word, I do what it says and I am blessed in my actions ([James 1:22, 25](#)).
- I am a joint-heir with Christ ([Romans 8:17](#)). I am more than a conqueror through Him who loves me ([Romans 8:37](#)).
- I overcome the enemy of my soul by the blood of the Lamb and the word of my testimony ([Revelation 12:11](#)).
- I have everything I need to live a godly life and am equipped to live in His divine nature ([2 Peter 1:3-4](#)).
- I am an ambassador for Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:20](#)). I am part of a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people ([1 Peter 2:9](#)).
- I am the righteousness of God—I have right standing with Him—in Jesus Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).
- My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit; I belong to Him ([1 Corinthians 6:19](#)).
- I am chosen by God, forgiven and justified through Christ. I have a compassionate heart, kindness, humility, meekness and patience ([Romans 8:33](#); [Colossians 3:12](#)).
- I am redeemed—forgiven of all my sins and made clean—through the blood of Christ ([Ephesians 1:7](#)).
- I have been rescued from the domain and the power of darkness and brought into God's kingdom ([Colossians 1:13](#)).
- I am redeemed from the curse of sin, sickness, and poverty ([Deuteronomy 28:15-68](#); [Galatians 3:13](#)).
- My life is rooted in my faith in Christ and I overflow with thanksgiving for all He has done for me ([Colossians 2:7](#)).
- I am called to live a holy life by the grace of God and to declare His praise in the world ([Psalm 66:8](#); [2 Timothy 1:9](#)).
- I am saved by God's grace, raised up with Christ and seated with Him in heavenly places ([Ephesians 2:5-6](#); [Colossians 2:12](#)).
- I am greatly loved by God ([John 3:16](#); [Ephesians 2:4](#); [Colossians 3:12](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:4](#)).
- I am strengthened with all power according to His glorious might ([Colossians 1:11](#)).
- I am not ruled by fear because the Holy Spirit lives in me and gives me His power, love and self-control ([2 Timothy 1:7](#)).
- Christ lives in me, and I live by faith in Him and His love for me ([Galatians 2:20](#)).