

**A. NEW WINE**

- We believers have gaps between our actual lifestyles and what we say we believe. Our thoughts, words, and actions don't always agree with our doctrine.
- The problem is that we have old wineskins containing old ways of thinking. Very often this is the case and we aren't even aware of it.
- Jesus' New Wine will challenge these thought structures so that we can bring any counterproductive thinking into the light and replace it with His truth.
- The beliefs we hold about who we are, our identity, are incredibly important – they largely impact our behaviors, relationships, and just about everything else.
- Most of us could use an infusion of New Wine in the area of how we see ourselves.
- **LISTENING EXERCISE:**  
*Holy Spirit, please help me to see how I see myself. Search my heart now and show me my true beliefs about the question, "Who am I?"*
  
- Insights:

**B. WHO AM I?**

- When asked about their identity, most people respond in terms of what they do, their relationships, their history, or prominent characteristics about themselves.
- The different aspects of who we are can be helpful when getting to know someone. But when it comes to knowing ourselves, we must look beyond these externals.
- God made us and is intimately acquainted with all our ways. To live in integrity about who we are, we must discover how He sees us! (Ps 100:3, Ps 139:3)
- His Word says there's an old me and a new me: Eph 4:22-24 ERV—The old self gets worse and worse, because people are fooled by the evil they want to do. You must be made new in your hearts and in your thinking. Be that new person who was made to be like God
- Often, even though we know we are in the New Covenant and not under works, we still have convictions about ourselves based on how we perform or measure up.
- Our performance is not God's primary focus because He looks at the heart. Our hearts are new in Christ and they are pleasing to the Father. (2 Sam 16:7; 2 Cor 5:17, 21)

- Even when we grieve Him with our unbelief and sin, God's love remains the same because it is based on *His* perfect love and the perfect record of Jesus.
- In fact, the phrase "in Christ" may be the most helpful way for us to understand who we really are. The New Testament uses this phrase to describe us about 100 times.
- God has lavished each one of us with His amazing, perfect love! As we come to know and appreciate each facet of His love, our hearts will be transformed.
- Insights:

### C. THE ME HE SEES?

- Many Scriptures speak of our identity in Christ. Here is a foundational passage that provides many insights about how God sees us: Eph 1:4-13 NLT-- Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. <sup>5</sup> God 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. <sup>6</sup> So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. <sup>7</sup> He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. <sup>8</sup> He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding. <sup>9</sup> God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. <sup>10</sup> And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth. <sup>11</sup> Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan. <sup>12</sup> God's purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would bring praise and glory to God. <sup>13</sup> 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.
- God has New Wine for us in the area of identity. He wants us to drink deeply of these truths and be made new in the way we see ourselves. In Christ I am:
  1. Chosen, loved unconditionally and adopted into God's royal family. He delights in me and I am the object of His favor and grace.
  2. Holy and blameless in God's eyes. I'm forever forgiven of the guilt and penalty of my sin.
  3. Part of God's eternal plan. He has united me with Jesus and provided me with an inheritance.
  4. Sealed with the Holy Spirit. This means I belong to God and He is always with me to help me know Him more and to live out His truth.

- We have been made new in Christ. God has provided all this to us because of our relationship with Jesus.
- If we were to believe everything this Scripture teaches us about how God sees us, it would protect us from so much unnecessary fear, guilt, shame, and accusation!
- LISTENING EXERCISE:  
*Briefly look over the 4 aspects of how God sees us in Christ (p. 2 of this handout). Is there one of these that really rings true to you? Which one? Why?*

*Which of these is the hardest for you to deeply accept as the truth?*

*Ask the Holy Spirit to show you why it is so difficult. (His answer may come later.)*

- Receiving and deeply believing the truth about our identity in Christ will require us to investigate our current mindsets that may not be readily apparent.
- The handout “Tools & Techniques: Be Renewed” is an effective method for exposing lies and replacing them with God’s truth. Prayerfully consider its use for a season.
- Another powerful way to bring our hearts into alignment with the truth is through thanksgiving and praise. This puts our focus on all that Jesus has done for us vs. old wineskins that are composed of lies, misinformation, or painful events of the past.
- As we seek to deeply believe the truth of what God says about us, our lifestyles will increasingly overflow from our true identity in Christ.
- Insights:

#### D. PERSONAL APPLICATION

- ONE THING  
The One Thing that I’d like to take away from today’s class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

- PONDER THE TRUTH

Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH

Use our supplemental (blue) handout "Tools & Techniques: Be Renewed" to help you identify the source of old wineskins in the area of your true identity. This will require about 15 minutes of processing each day + locating Scriptures to replace these mindsets.

Prayerfully consider the investment: Would it be worth the investment if it were to change the way you see yourself and your beliefs about how God sees you in the long-term?