

This Sneaky Stronghold Can Quickly Upend Your Blessings in Christ

We've talked this whole month about our identity in Christ.

We've looked at what the Bible has to say about our identity in Christ and how to leave our past behind us and walk in freedom. We've examined Bible verses that speak about our identity in Christ and learned how the book of Ephesians can help us build that identity in our hearts. We've even looked at failure and how we can redefine failure so it is a momentary event and not an overshadowing production that takes over our whole lives.

But once you've embraced your identity in Christ, can it be destroyed?

Is it possible to walk in your identity in Christ, only to regress to a life of insecurity, hurt and disappointment under a weight of failure and bitterness?

Yes, it is.

There is one thing that will destroy your identity in Christ. There is one thing the enemy will use as a strategy to cause you to walk away from a life of freedom and grace and back into bondage.

Paul said, "For freedom Christ freed us. Stand fast therefore and do not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

The one thing that will destroy your identity in Christ is unforgiveness.

The Bible has a lot to say about the importance of forgiveness

in the life of the believer. In fact, in a few months, we will take an entire month to study what the Bible has to say.

But the reason unforgiveness will destroy our identity in Christ is because it shuts off the fountain of grace from flowing into our lives.

Without the continual receiving and giving of grace, our identity in Christ begins to wither and die. For our identity in Christ to grow and give life, both to our spirit and to those around us, we must have a constant flow of grace in and through us.

Unforgiveness stops that flow every single time.

Unforgiveness is literally a rejection of that grace.

That is why Jesus said in Matthew 6 that if we do not forgive our offenders, He cannot forgive us our offenses.

This presents a huge problem for us when we refuse to forgive. Harboring unforgiveness actually prevents our own sins from being forgiven.

As the weight of our own sins continual to pile up between us and God, the life of the spirit—the free grace of God—is shut off. Without the flow of grace into our lives, our identity in Christ experiences crisis, and we slowly begin to sink back into the bondage we lived in before He set us free.

The only solution for this is to embrace God's grace:

Not just so that we can be free, but so that we can set our offender free as well.

You see, in Jesus' parable of the unforgiving servant, the master not only forgave the servant a large amount of money, but he set him free.

Had the master not forgiven the servant, he'd have gone to

debtors' prison until he paid back the debt. And given the size of debt he owed, he would have been in prison for the rest of his life.

It has been said that forgiveness isn't something we do for others but for ourselves.

I disagree.

Forgiveness is something we do for others as well as for ourselves. Forgiveness is a spiritual act. It has to be, because it requires the grace of God to forgive.

And I am convinced that when we embrace God's grace and choose to extend that grace in a supernatural act of forgiveness, a miraculous freedom takes place in the other person's heart as well as in ours.

Perhaps they are not immediately aware of that freedom, but I do believe that our choice to forgive causes a spiritual release to happen inside them.

If we want to daily strengthen your identity in Christ, we must daily make a choice to forgive anyone who offends us. We must daily choose not to hold their offense against them, thereby releasing to them the miraculous freedom that Christ extends to us continually.

This choice, and our decision to follow through with it, ensures that grace is daily flowing in and through us in abundant measure.

We were created in the image of God. He has called us to be kingdom ambassadors here on earth. Our purpose is to reflect Him and glorify Him in all we do.

When we live and walk in this, we are living and walking in our identity as sons and daughters of God.

And we can only fulfill this when grace is flowing freely as

we daily walk in forgiveness.

Rosilind Jukic, a Pacific Northwest native, is a missionary living in Croatia and married to her Bosnian hero. Together, they live with their two active boys and she enjoys fruity candles, good coffee and a hot cup of herbal tea on a blustery fall evening. Her passion for writing led her to author her best-selling book *The Missional Handbook*. At A Little R & R she encourages women to find contentment in what God created them to be. You can also find her at Missional Call where she shares her passion for local and global missions. You can follow her on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Google +.