

What is your identity?

We have so many forms of identification that it is hard to keep track of them all. We have social security cards, driver licenses, and passports just to name a few. All this information just to be able to identify who we are. And just think about all the extra information you have to give if you lose a piece of identification, sometimes I wonder if it might be easier to give a pinky finger. But we do understand the importance of being able to identify ourselves and the importance of protecting that information. But how many of us are concerned about losing our Christian identity? We will go to great length and jump through many hoops to protect our personal identity and then do absolutely nothing in protecting our Christian identity. It is my hope that with this article we can examine ourselves and make sure we are able to show our Christian identity as one that is protected by the gospel.

I Timothy 4:12-16 NKJV “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in The word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”

Paul had no problem in making sure that Timothy understood how he was to identify himself. Paul told Timothy to conduct himself in love, spirit, faith and purity and to give attention to reading, exhortation and doctrine. These are the things that will show our true identity as a Christian. It is hard to say that someone doing these things privately and publicly is someone who does not want to identify as a Christian. Paul tells Timothy to continue in them, meaning that he was not to neglect any opportunity to show his allegiance to Christ. Is it any different for us today?

Paul tells another faithful companion Titus that he had a responsibility to set things in order by speaking the truth to the church in Crete Titus 1:5 NKJV **“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—”** Paul later in his letter emphasized the point that Titus was to constantly affirm the position that those who believe in God should be careful to maintain good works. Titus 3:8 NKJV **“This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”** This should clearly give us an understanding that when we identify as Christian we exhibit a lifestyle that reflects the pattern of Christ.

Philippians 1:27-28 NKJV “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.”

This passage shows that when we identify as Christians we are to be united through the gospel. While

also proving there is no greater identity protection than faithfulness to the gospel of Christ. While we know that physical protection is not a guarantee we are fully aware that our spiritual protection is. Paul at this time was in prison and yet still using it as an opportunity to preach Christ. We can see this as a challenge for us to meet in the fact that in difficult circumstances we can rise up and be bold in the truth. Because being faithful to the gospel is the only fool proof way to identify as a Christian. Anything else is a false identification and acting as an imposter to the truth. So church how do you identify?