

# Identity | Imago Dei

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## Introduction

Our culture is filled with individuals who look to a variety of sources to find their sense of belonging and express who they feel they truly are—"their truth." However, feelings are fleeting and therefore, one's personal "truth" is unreliable. We know humanity was created in the Image of God (i.e. Imago Dei). The Imago Dei in humanity is a declaration of *who* we are and *whose* we are, and gives us a glorious task in the world. However, since the beginning, that image has become, and continues to be distorted and desecrated by the adversary of God. Scripture tells us there is an adversary referred to as "*the satan*" that seeks to destroy everything that God has created, including our identity. Therefore, we are born trying to find our true self in idols—anything that gives us an identity in place of God. This creates a false self that cannot be the truth and will fail us over and over again. How do we begin to rediscover the true self?

## Summary Statement

Life Canton will Reclaim our Identity in Jesus individually and collectively. In Genesis 3:8, we were convinced to adopt a lie instead of true belonging *with* God, but it only resulted in shameful hiding *from* God. In Jesus, we discover truth and no longer have to hide. Through God's grace in Christ and by his sacrificial death motivated by love, our false self is also put to death. Through his resurrection, we reclaim our true self and are given an eternal hope of new life. No matter what the adversary tells us we are, our truth is rooted in Christ. Without Jesus, all of us will continue to live a lie and never discover who we were always meant to be—more like Jesus.

Reclaiming our identity is recognizing that humanity is uniquely different from the rest of creation. God designed the intricate parts of who we are with purpose—to receive love and to give love by calling out the true self in others. However, there is ongoing warfare within us, and so we don't always live into the truth. We are easily led astray by idols that cause us to become complicit in the distortion and desecration of the Imago Dei in ourselves and in others.

Therefore, God's Spirit is given to us in Christ out of God's great love for us to continue to Reclaim our Identity in Jesus. The Holy Spirit will lead us, guide us, and convict us when we are tempted to return to the idols of our false self. The Holy Spirit will redirect us back to Jesus to remind us of our status as children of God, and to experience freedom in the true self. The Spirit will also give us eyes to see the Imago Dei in others and help them to reclaim who they were created to be.

## Primary Texts

Genesis 1:27  
Psalm 139:1-18  
John 15:1-16

## Secondary Texts

Genesis 3:8-10  
Exodus 19:5-6  
Romans 7:14-8:17  
1 John 3:1