

Who Are You Really?

Who are you? A father? A son? A brother? A friend? An employee? An American? An immigrant? A member of a minority? A member of a silent majority?

Do we decide who we are or does someone else decide for us? In all honesty, it's a mixture of both.

Since this is a sermon, and we're studying the Bible, let's ask, "How does God define who you are?" That brings us to a very ancient definition that is strange to our modern ears, and our modern ideas. Instead being defined by our separate individual goals and personalities, God defines us by what has sometimes been called "the one and the many."

How does the "one and the many work"? Everyone who is born a human being is born into the line of Adam. One man, Adam, defines everyone who has descended from Him. That's the one and the many. But believers are defined by a different "one" than Adam. They are defined by Jesus Christ. So from God's point of view, every human being is either merely "in Adam" or has come to be "in Jesus."

We will explore what this means for everyone, both those who have chosen to be in Jesus and those who are in Adam but not in Jesus.

Two “Ones” of the Old Testament

“son of man”

Probably everyone who has heard about Jesus knows that He often identified Himself as the "Son of man". This phrase, as it was used by Jesus, had its origin in the writings of Daniel.

- [Daniel 7:13](#) “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a **son of man**, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.”

This "one like a son of man" descended from heaven. He would return to heaven later, and be presented to "the Ancient of Days".

- Jesus often said that He was "sent" by His "Father" ([John 5:36,37; 6:44,57](#): 8:16, 18, 42; 10:36; 12:49; 17:21, 25; 20:21).
- Jesus referred to Himself as the "son of man" 74 times in the Gospels. ([Matthew 8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 11:19; 12:8; 12:32](#), etc).
- In [Psalm 8:4](#) David asks, "what is man that you are mindful of him, and the **son of man** that you care for him?" When David wrote it he probably intended it to refer to all human beings. In hindsight, though, we can see that Jesus also a fulfillment of this verse. God, the Father, certainly cared for Jesus, and was mindful of Him.

The "son of man" can refer to all descendants of Adam in general, or it can refer to Jesus who fulfilled the role God had created for human beings in a way that far exceeded what any other human being has done, before or since. The "son of man" can refer to the one, Adam, who was the father of all humanity. Or it can refer to the one, Jesus, who fulfilled the role God set for humanity to fulfill.

“son of God”

Did you know that Adam is called, "the son of God"? Take a look at [Luke 3:38](#), and [Genesis 5:1-3](#).

- Jesus - [Luke 3:38](#) "the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of **Adam**, the **son of God**."
- Adam - [Genesis 5:1-3](#) "This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created **man**, he **made him in the likeness of God**. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth."

The nation of Israel is also referred to as God's son. That is because Israel fulfilled the role God set for Adam, and God's specially chosen people.

- [Exodus 4:22](#) "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, **Israel** is my firstborn **son**,'"
- [Hosea 11:1](#) "When **Israel** was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called **my son**."

There is one other title given to God's people Israel, "firstborn". This title is related to "son of God," because Israel is called the firstborn son of God. This means that above all other human beings the people of Israel held a very special, primary place in God's plan for human beings.

- [Exodus 4:22](#) "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, **Israel** is my **firstborn** son,'"
- [Jeremiah 31:9](#) "With weeping they shall come, and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back, I will make them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble, for I am a father to **Israel**, and Ephraim is **my firstborn**."

Even here, Jesus fulfills this role that was set for Israel. Jesus, one person, fulfills the role set for an entire nation, Israel. It is sort of a reverse of the "one and the many." What was expected of a nation, is fulfilled in only one person, Jesus.

- [Psalm 89:27](#) "And I will make **him** the **firstborn**, the highest of the kings of the earth."

Jesus is the new "one" who will choose from all the nations.

This was stated in the Old Testament.

Some of the following verses from the Old Testament, I have to admit may seem like a bit of a stretch. These Old Testament verses could be legitimately interpreted in other ways than the way I interpret them.

- [Isaiah 49:6](#) "he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as **a light for the nations**, that **my salvation** may reach to **the end of the earth**."
- [Psalm 87:2-6](#) "the Lord loves **the gates of Zion** more than all the **dwelling places of Jacob**. Glorious things of you are spoken, O city of God. Selah **Among those who know me** I mention **Rahab** and **Babylon**; behold, **Philistia** and **Tyre**, with **Cush**— "**This one was born there**," they say. And **of Zion** it shall be said, "This one and that one were born in her"; for the Most High himself will establish her. **The Lord records as he registers the peoples**, "**This one was born there**." Selah"
- [Isaiah 19:18](#) "**In that day** there will be five cities in the land of **Egypt** that **speak the language of Canaan** and **swear allegiance to the Lord of hosts**. One of these will be called the City of Destruction."
- [Isaiah 19:25](#) "whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying, "**Blessed be Egypt my people**, and **Assyria the work of my hands**, and **Israel my inheritance**."
 - In 25 other places in the Old Testament, "**my people**" refers only to Israel.
 - In 3 other places in the Old Testament, "**the work of my hands**" refers to Israel.

The Clear Revelation of the New Testament

When we get to the New Testament it becomes much clearer what God thinks of His chosen people, and His chosen Messiah. What becomes very clear is that God intended for Israel to provide a light that would draw people from all nations to know the God of Israel as their God. Paul uses the word "mystery" for the previously unknown meaning of God's revelation about Gentiles being welcomed into God's kingdom.

- [Ephesians 3:3-6](#) "how the **mystery** was made **known** to me **by revelation**, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the **mystery of Christ**, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has **now been revealed** to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This **mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs**, members of **the same body**, and **partakers of the promise** in Christ Jesus through the gospel."
- [Ephesians 2:17](#) "And he came and preached peace to **you who were far off** and peace to those who were near."

- [Ephesians 2:20-22](#) “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him **you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**”

And You

- [Ephesians 2:4-7](#) “But **God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ**—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and **seated us with him in the heavenly places** in Christ Jesus, **so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**”

You and I are defined, by God, as either being in Adam or in Jesus Christ. If you are in Adam, then you are guilty of sin because you were born into sin. As a sinner you cannot save yourself.

However, if you are in Jesus Christ, you are covered by His blood shed on the cross, and your sins are forgiven.

How do you transition from being in Adam to being in Christ Jesus? You believe in Jesus and the sufficiency of what He did when He died on the cross to pay for your sins. You believe that the power that raised Jesus from the grave is at work transforming you into the likeness of Jesus Himself.

Do you want to believe in Jesus? Pray with me. You can either reaffirm your commitment to Jesus as Lord and Savior, or come to Him now as one who receives Jesus as your Lord and Savior.