

5. IDENTITY: WHO AM I? (*SENSE OF SELF*)

How does Paul identify himself when asked - *Who are you?*

Acts 21:27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, **Acts 21:28** Crying out, Men of Israel, help: **This is the man**, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. **Acts 21:29** (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) **Acts 21:30** And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

Acts 21:31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. **Acts 21:32** Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. **Acts 21:33** Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded **who he was, and what he had done.** **Acts 21:34** And **some** cried one thing, **some** another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle. **Acts 21:35** And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. **Acts 21:36** For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

Acts 21:37 And as **Paul** was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, **May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek?**

Acts 21:38 Art not thou that Egyptian (**ὁ Αἰγύπτιος**), which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers (**ἄνδρας τῶν σικαρίων**)?

Acts 21:39 But Paul said, I am a man (**Εγὼ ἄνθρωπος μὲν εἰμι Ἰουδαῖος**) which am a Jew of **Tarsus**, a city in **Cilicia**, a **citizen** of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

Acts 21:40 And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them **in the Hebrew tongue (τῇ Ἑβραϊδι διαλέκτῳ)**, saying,

Acts 22:1 Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.

Acts 22:2 (And when they heard that he spake in **the Hebrew (τῇ Ἑβραϊδι διαλέκτῳ)** tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) **Acts 22:3** I am verily a man (**ἄνθρωπος**) which am a Jew (**Ἰουδαῖος**), **born in Tarsus (γεγεννημένος ἐν Ταρσῷ)**, a city in **Cilicia (τῆς Κιλικίας)**, yet **brought up in this city (ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ)** at the feet of Gamaliel (**παρὰ τοῦς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ**), and **taught (πεπαιδευμένος)** according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. **Acts 22:4** And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

Acts 22:24 The chief captain (**ὁ χιλιάρχος**) commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. **Acts 22:25** And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said **unto the centurion (πρὸς τὸν ἐστῶτα ἑκατόνταρχον)** that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman (**Ῥωμαῖός**), and uncondemned? **Acts 22:26** When the centurion (**ὁ ἑκατόνταρχος**) heard that, he went and told the chief captain (**τῷ χιλιάρχῳ**), saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman (**Ῥωμαῖός**). **Acts 22:27** Then the chief captain (**ὁ χιλιάρχος**) came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman (**Ῥωμαῖός**)? He said, Yea. **Acts 22:28** And the chief captain (**ὁ χιλιάρχος**) answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. **Acts 22:29** Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain (**ὁ χιλιάρχος**) also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

How does Paul self-identify?

Acts 21:37	Greek speaking & probably Greek culture
Acts 21:38	Not an Egyptian... assassin!
Acts 21:39	A Jewish person
Acts 21:39	From Cilicia
Acts 21:39	A citizen of a decent sized city – Tarsus

Acts 21:40; Acts 22:2	Hebrew (Aramaic) speaker
Acts 22:3	A male
Acts 22:3	Jew/ a Jewish male
Acts 22:3	Born in Tarsus
Acts 22:3	From Cilicia (so from the diaspora)
Acts 22:3	Brought up in / reared in Jerusalem
Acts 22:3	Taught / trained as a Pharisee
22:4-16	A Christian – against all his inclinations and background
22:4-16	Called by grace
22:4-16	Commissioned by Christ to the gentiles (nations)
Acts 22:24-29	Roman citizen

IDENTITY FOR THE CHRISTIAN: INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

SOURCES OF IDENTITY (Not in a particular order):

A. Relationships: Building & maintaining your relationships

Proverbs 17:17 A friend loveth at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.

Proverbs 27:10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; Neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: For better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.

Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpeneth iron; So a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

B. Roots: Finding your roots

Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies (καὶ γενεαλογίας), and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

1 Timothy 1:4 Neither give heed to fables (μύθοις) and endless genealogies (γενεαλογίας ἀπεράντοις), which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

Thoughts:

- **Roots are important**
- **Roots can give us a sense of place & probably time**
- **Roots give us a part of who we are**
- **More distant roots can be interesting**
- **Roots cannot fix us / root us → only Christ can do that**
- **Roots should be two-dimensional**

Philippians 3:20-21

For our **conversation** (τὸ πολίτευμα) is in heaven;
from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:
Who shall change **our vile body** (τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν),
that it may be fashioned like unto **his glorious body** (τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ),
according to the working whereby
he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

- **Having roots is better than being rootless**
- **Finding your roots will *always* find some / discover some bad roots**

A Paradigm concerning roots: possibilities

Fish -- parents

Fowl -- kids

Neither fish nor fowl

This is commonly called 3rd culture kids
Don't really belong to either culture
Lost, in-between cultures
Don't fit in either place / with either group

Both fish AND fowl

The best of both worlds
So languages, cultures, foods, ways of being....
Fit in / into both AND like both
Brings more to the table (much more)