

December 28/29, 2024

"Anchored"

Pastor Aaron Buer



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2025 Challenge: 50 Key Truths

Each Friday, explore a key truth about our Christian faith and how we can live in light of this truth.

Day 1 [Ephesians 2:4-10](#) | Anchored

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

Paul writes to the Ephesians about their true identity. Rather than starting with commands, he spends three chapters explaining who they are in Christ before instructing them. This approach shows the Ephesian believers their identity isn't earned through effort but received as a gift through faith in Jesus. Like an anchor that needs to be set in something solid to prevent drifting, Paul wants these believers to secure their identity in something unshakeable. He knows transformation will flow from their new identity rather than striving to earn God's favor. They must be securely anchored before they can live out their calling.

We begin the new year by making resolutions and setting goals, often driven by a nagging feeling that we aren't enough. There are two ways to live: we can strive to achieve an identity through our efforts or let our efforts flow from our God-given identity. When we anchor our identity in temporary things like achievements, appearance or success, we're left constantly drifting and striving. It's like dropping anchor in shifting sand—there's no security. But when we anchor our identity in Christ, we find the solid ground we've been searching for. This security becomes the foundation for genuine transformation as we live out who God declared us to be.

TODAY: Reflect on where you've been anchoring your identity. Write what defines your sense of worth (achievements, relationships, appearance) in your journal or mobile device. Ask God to help you anchor your identity in who he says you are in Jesus throughout 2025. We've created a wallpaper for your phone to remind you of your identity in Christ. Download it [HERE](#).

Day 2 [Ephesians 2:4-5](#) | Anchored in Love

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions. Ephesians 2:4-5

Paul emphasizes a profound truth about God's love to the Ephesian believers. God's love precedes any human response or worthiness. God acted in love while they were still dead in sin, making them alive with Christ. This is revolutionary teaching. These believers live in a culture of earned favor and fickle deities. Paul reveals that God created them specifically to love them—it wasn't an afterthought but his primary purpose. Paul later prays they would comprehend the depth of this incredible love, acknowledging that human minds struggle to grasp its immensity ([Ephesians 3:17-19](#)).

We can struggle to believe we're truly loved, especially when we fail. We might think God recoils from us in disappointment or anger. But because of Jesus, God doesn't recoil when we sin. He moves toward us in mercy

and love. God's love isn't based on our performance or perfection but on his unchanging character and Christ's finished work. No achievement, relationship or number of social media followers will make us more loved in the coming year than we already are in Christ. When we anchor our identity in his love, we find freedom from the exhausting cycle of trying to earn what is already ours in Christ.

TODAY: As we close out 2024, spend time thanking God and praising him for his incredible love for you. Join Ada Bible Worship as they sing "[You Keep Your Promises](#)." Thank him that "It is written we're redeemed by your blood. All the old has passed away the new has come." Ask God to help you anchor your identity in his love in 2025.

Day 3 [Ephesians 2:6-7](#) | Anchored in Heaven

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:6

Paul reveals an astonishing truth to the Ephesian believers about their position in Christ. Using past tense verbs - made alive, saved, raised, seated - he emphasizes that these realities are already accomplished facts. The concept of being "seated with Christ" carries profound meaning in their culture. Seating arrangements at gatherings revealed status and rank. Sitting at the host's right hand meant the highest honor and closest relationship. Paul declares that through Christ, these believers now sit in the most important seat in heaven with Jesus—the position of beloved family members.

We begin this new year facing both possibilities and uncertainties. Many of us carry wounds from past rejection—times we weren't chosen for the team, the job or the relationship. What often influences us most isn't who chose us but who rejected us. Yet God invites us to anchor our identity not in earthly rejection but in heavenly acceptance. We have been chosen. What's most true about us isn't who abandoned or overlooked us, but that the King of the universe chose us as his beloved children. When we truly grasp our position—already seated with Christ in the heavenly realms—earthly setbacks and rejections lose their power to define us. We can face 2025 secure in our identity as God's chosen children.

TODAY: As you start this new year, make a list of what God says you are because of Jesus. Use [Ephesians 1:4-5](#) and [2:4-6](#) or other Scriptures to remind you of your identity in Jesus. Read the list out loud and pray, "Father, help me live this year anchored in my position as your chosen child rather than in past rejections."

Day 4 [Ephesians 2:8-10](#) | Anchored in Purpose

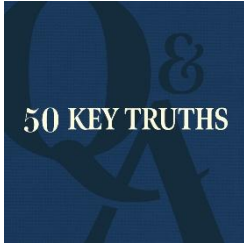
For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

Paul reveals to the Ephesian believers their true purpose, using the Greek word for "handiwork," which suggests an artistic masterpiece. God creates each person as a unique work of art. Through Jesus, he continues creating and transforming them into Christ's image. Their purpose flows from this identity as God's artwork. Their good works don't create their identity but flow naturally from who God has made them to be. This understanding frees them from the cultural pressure of earning worth through achievements.

We enter the new year seeking purpose, significance and meaning, potentially through resolutions and goals. However, true purpose doesn't come from our achievements—it flows from our identity as God's artwork created in Christ Jesus. When we anchor our identity in Christ, we're freed to do the unique good works he prepared for us. This is a pressure-free purpose. We don't serve to earn worth or prove ourselves. Instead, we serve from the secure position of being God's beloved masterpiece. We can joyfully live out the good works God designed specifically for us. These might be in our homes, teaching children to love Jesus, in our workplaces,

displaying Christ's character, or serving others with our unique gifts in our church. Our efforts don't create our identity; our identity in Christ empowers our purpose.

TODAY: Rather than making traditional resolutions, ask, "Father, what good works have you prepared for me in 2025?" Consider how God might use you in your home, workplace, school or church. Write down specific ways your unique gifts could serve others this year. Visit adabible.org/serving to explore opportunities to live out your purpose in our church community.



Day 5 [Matthew 16:13-20](#) | 50 Key Truths

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Matthew 16:15-16

We are going to explore fifty key truths about our faith through questions and answers this year in *Beyond the Weekend*. Each Friday, we'll examine one foundational belief supported by Scripture references. Questions are vital for helping people learn and grow. In ancient Israel, the religious education system was built on asking good questions. Good teachers taught by using questions. Jesus was a master teacher, asking over three hundred questions during his ministry. One of the most essential questions Jesus asked his disciples was, "Who do you say I am?" For years, they watched him heal and listened to his teachings. Simon Peter responds, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God" ([Matthew 16:16](#)). Peter clearly stated his understanding of Jesus. This moment is a turning point in the disciples' relationship with Jesus.

In a world of competing beliefs and shifting values, clearly grasping what we believe and why we believe it has never been more important. When asked, we might struggle to explain our faith or feel uncertain about core doctrines. These fifty truths will help us understand and explain core beliefs about God's nature, Jesus's work, salvation, the Holy Spirit, the church and our eternal hope. They provide a foundation for understanding our faith and sharing it with others. We pray that throughout this study, God will deepen our love for him, encourage further Bible study, and equip us to share our faith with others clearly and confidently.

TODAY: Commit to learning these 50 key truths throughout 2025. Ask a family member or friend to join you. Ask God to deepen your love for him and help you share your beliefs with others.