

# discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living  
Study Guide

## OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

### LESSON 1: OUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

#### INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Disciple Essentials module titled Our Relationship with God. This series of lessons examines the relationship we have with God. It begins by understanding our identity in Christ which is a result of our becoming a child of God. This series of lessons looks at the attributes of God, how we learn about God and know Him better, and how we develop this personal relationship. Understanding ourselves in God's eyes and having a clearer picture of who God is will help us live the life that God designed for us.

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on [www.discipleshipessentials.org](http://www.discipleshipessentials.org).

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# OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

## LESSON 1: OUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

### WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

How is our identity changed when we become a Christian? This lesson explains the Biblical foundation for our identity in Christ and the benefits of clearly understanding that identity.

### JUST SO YOU KNOW...

Our identity in Christ is one of the most precious things that a believer can possess! God has called us, rescued us, and made us new! And yet many Christians continue to live as if nothing at all has changed in their lives, and that they must combat the sin in their lives on their own. This only leads to discouragement and shame. This understanding of all God offers us can be almost as wonderful as the Gospel itself! It is important to take some time to see how precious we are in God's eyes, and how He wants us to grow spiritually in His strength. Galatians 2:20 tells us that it is no longer our own life that we live, but that Christ lives in us! Read on to find out more about what this means.

## GETTING STARTED

1. What are some of the labels you use to define your identity? (mother, son, student, employee, abilities, hobbies, talents, etc.)

2. Where do our ideas of identity come from? Do they come from what we say about ourselves or what others say about us?



# STUDY

❖ **WE HAVE A NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST:** Our identity defines who we are. Each of us has a need to belong and have a sense of identity. When we belong to God through faith in Jesus Christ we receive a new identity as a child of God.

- What does 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 say about our identity in Christ?

- What does it mean that we are a new creation? If our physical self does not change, what does? What has gone, and what has come?

- In order to understand the change that occurs when we become Christians we need to look at what the Bible says about it. Look up the following verses and write down what they say about our old self and our new self:

Verses	Old Self/Former Identity	New Self/Identity in Christ
Galatians 2:20		
Romans 8:29-39		
Philippians 3:8-10		
Romans 6:11		
Colossians 1:13		
Romans 5:3-5		



❖ **WE LIVE OUR NEW IDENTITY BY FAITH IN CHRIST:** Before Jesus Christ, people had to draw near to God through following the Law of Moses. Our new life is lived by faith, not by keeping the law (Romans 10:17; Romans 6:1-18; Colossians 1:21-22; Galatians 5:22-23). This change will begin when we put our faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and become a Christian. There are four steps to living out this new identity:

➤ **Know the truths of your identification with Christ. Because we are in Christ:**

- We are transformed from darkness to light.
- We are changed by Christ's death and resurrection.
- We now belong completely to Christ, we are in God's Family.
- We have been crucified with Christ.
- We are dead to sin and alive to God.
- We have received Christ's righteousness.
- The Holy Spirit of Christ lives in us.
- We have new hope for our lives.
- We are completely loved and accepted by Christ.
- We have victory.

➤ **Believe what God's Word says about oneself and act on this truth.**

- We make the choice to believe what God says about us – not what the world says about us. It is a daily battle with our own thoughts.

➤ **Offer oneself to the Lord.**

- Choose to make God our Master, and make His priorities our priorities.

➤ **Obey Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

- We are not required to obey in our own strength. We are given a new heart. We have access to the power of the Holy Spirit!

➤ From the above list, what are some things that you need to do in order to live your new identity in Christ by faith?

❖ **BECAUSE WE ARE IN CHRIST:** There are some important things we need to know about who we are as Christians. All this is not because of anything we have done, but rather because of all God has done for us. Write down what each of the verses tell us about these points:



<p><b>We are Part of the Body of Christ (the Church) which is made up of all believers.</b></p> <p>1 Corinthians 12:13</p>	
<p><b>We are completely accepted by God because we belong to Christ,</b></p> <p>Romans 8:1; Galatians 2:20</p>	
<p><b>We can live in victory over sin.</b></p> <p>John 16:33; 1 Corinthians 15:54-57, 1 John 4:4</p>	

❖ **BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN RESURRECTED TO NEW LIFE, WE CAN LIVE IN VICTORY:** We no longer have to wage war against these things in our own strength. We have the power of God, and He has delivered us from darkness. We no longer have to sin. Because we now belong to God, our new Master, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. We can have victory over three sources of temptation:

- Temptation from the world.
  - Temptation from the flesh.
  - Temptation from the Devil.
- Read Colossians 1:13 and Romans 8:37. What do they say about our ability to have victory? Why is this important to know as a Christian? How does it change the way we live?



## IN SUMMARY

- ❖ Each of us receives a new identity in Christ when we receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour.
- ❖ This new identity means that our old self dies and our new self comes to life!
- ❖ We are a new creation in Jesus Christ
- ❖ Because of our identity in Christ, we are transformed from darkness to light, we are changed by Christ, the Holy Spirit of Christ lives in us, and we have new hope and victory.
- ❖ We are completely loved and accepted by Jesus Christ
- ❖ We must believe what God's word says about us, and offer our lives to Him.
- ❖ Because we have been resurrected to new life, we can live in victory over temptation.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What two things about your new identity in Christ mean the most to you? Why?

2. Why is it sometimes difficult to believe what God's Word says about you? What other things is the Bible competing with in your life?