

IDENTITY SHIFT

WHO GOD SAYS
YOU ARE



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This book is dedicated to all of
God's people who need to know that
they are truly valued and loved
by their heavenly Father.

Identity Shift

Who God Says You Are

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Introduction

It is easy to define ourselves according to our occupation, our roles in our families, our accomplishments, or even our service activities. This is how many of us find or define our identities; according to the things of this world and our culture.

However, our true identities as Christians are found in Christ as His children. We need an Identity Shift, from seeing ourselves through the lens of our culture, to seeing ourselves according to how God sees us. According to the Gospel of John, “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12). If we believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ as His Son and as our Savior, we are children of God. We are adopted sons and daughters of God. That is our identity. **How powerful and fulfilling our lives would be if we saw ourselves and others in the context of this identity every day!**

Ways to use this plan

This devotional plan is based on nine descriptors of our identity as followers of Christ. You can use it as a 9-day plan, 27-day plan (roughly a month), or a 9-week plan. Each theme has a scripture reference, suggested prayers, and faith action steps.

Here are some suggestions of ways to use the plan:

- Spend one week on each devotional theme, then move on to the next theme (9 weeks)
- Spend three days in a row on each theme (27 days)
- Study a new theme each day for 9 days, optionally repeat the whole cycle two or three times (9 to 27 days)

There is also a helpful print out at the end of the book with all nine themes that is suitable for posting up on a fridge or bulletin board.

Theme 1: Chosen

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2:8-9 (NIV)

Do you remember how we used to pick teams for sports at recess or in the backyard? It always felt good to be picked by someone we respected, someone whose team we wanted to be on. It felt lousy not to be picked. Being chosen by someone implies that they WANT you. The God of the universe WANTS you. He has chosen you to be on His team!

I love in this passage how the fact that we are chosen means that we are called “out of darkness into his wonderful light.” We came off of the team of Darkness and Condemned, and onto the team of Light and Mercy. God has provided the way, through Jesus Christ, to be saved from our own sin and be on the team that has the guaranteed victory!

Prayer time: Spend some time praying to God and ask Him to reveal to you how special you are to Him, as someone chosen by Him to do things only *you* can do. Thank Him and “declare His praises” for choosing you to be part of His team and great plan.

Faith action step: Every time you think you are not “good enough” at something this week, say to yourself instead, “I am chosen by God to be a valuable member of His team!”

Theme 2: Loved

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John 4:9-10 NIV

In the last theme, we learned that God chose us because He wants us. He *wants* you and has *chosen* you because He **LOVES** you. The God who invented love, and *is* love, actually loves you individually. How do you know He loves you?

Because of what John tells us in the verse above, “He loves us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

Last week I was praying through a tough situation and desperately wanted to hear exact steps from God as to how I should move forward. After being quiet in His presence for a while, I thought I was just not going to get any guidance from Him. Then I simply sensed a two-word response, “love more.” He did not answer my question as to whether I should go this way or that way in my actions, He simply told me to **love more**.

Prayer time: Spend time being still and thanking God for loving you just as you are right now. Thank Him for loving you so much that He wants you to move from where you are and move closer to Him. Thank Him for sending Jesus to be a sacrifice for you to pave the way to a personal relationship with God. Finally, ask Him to show you how to see others and love others the way that He does.

Faith action step: Increase your love for others this week. Decide to simply “love more” and then do it.

Theme 3: Forgiven

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

Psalm 103:12-13 NIV

When God sees us, he does not see us the way that we see ourselves. We often see ourselves as just a sinner who is less than worthy. That is because we see ourselves as a total package that includes the sin of our past or the “junk in our trunk.” In this Psalm it is clear that sin, whether it was 15 years ago or 15 minutes ago, has been removed from us (as long as we repent and ask His forgiveness). The Lord has compassion on you the way that you have compassion on your own children.

Prayer time: Spend time in God’s presence truly repenting of sin in your heart. God does not like sin because it separates us from the ability to walk fully with Him in His plan for us. Pray especially about sin that has not yet been addressed or dealt with. Ask God to reveal to you areas of sin or unforgiveness with another person that may be holding you back from all that God has for you.

Faith action step: Repent to God. If He reveals someone you need to forgive or ask forgiveness from, be obedient to Him and do it-God will honor your obedience.

Theme 4: Called

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Romans 8:28-30 NIV

We are called by God for specific purposes that are unique to us and the way that He made us. I know this can seem very hard to believe and understand, but we must believe it in faith. As this verse says, He doesn't just call us; he justifies and glorifies us as well. God does not change and He does not make mistakes. This verse does not say that all things for us will be easy, but it does promise that He will work for the good of those who love him in all things.

Prayer time: Ask God to reveal to you some specifics of what He is calling you to do; it might be an action He wants you to take or it might simply be moving closer to Him. It might be surrendering something in your life that has actually changed from a hobby to an idol.

Faith action step: Take steps to put into action the calling God has for you now. These steps may be seeking the wisdom of

other Christian men or starting something that God put on your heart some time ago.

Theme 5: Adopted

Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.

Ephesians 1: 4-5 ESV

As Christians, we are adopted sons and daughters of God. Some time back, it really dawned on me what this meant. I thought about parents and adopted children. Adopted children are loved just as much and have the same rights and privileges in their home as any of their other children. This is the same for us; we are on equal footing to Jesus, as it relates to being a son or daughter of God. That is what is meant when it is said that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. But it gets better. Unlike parents like us who may hold grudges or see faults, God sees us as “holy and blameless in His sight” thanks to Jesus!

Prayer time: Give genuine thanks and praise to God for allowing you to be His adopted son or daughter. Spend time just being in the presence of such a loving Father.

Faith action step: If you have a son or daughter, see them and treat them as also being an adopted son or daughter of God, just like you are. Listen this week to the song *Good Good Father* by Housefires II and Chris Tomlin.

Theme 6: Equipped

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV

How good it is that God provided us with the scriptures to help train and equip us. He also provided us with worship music, pastors, books, other strong Christians, and prayer as ways to be equipped for what He calls us to do. Even with all of this, I understand that it can still be hard to see ourselves as equipped.

I struggled for a long time to believe that I was good enough or had the right skills to complete plans God had for me. However, one day during my prayer time, God cleared that up by telling me: **“You know what to do-quit doubting yourself; quit being fearful; quit beating yourself up. You are my beloved child. I love you and I am with you always. You have all the tools you need. You have learned much and exercised obedience. Now, come and follow me in faith. Trust Me,**

truly trust Me, and I will make my ways known to you.” I

share this as an encouragement for you. Perhaps, they may be words God also wants you to hear right now.

Prayer time: Tell God that you believe Him and trust Him with your life (if you truly do). Ask Him to equip you for every good work He has for you to do. Be completely honest with Him about ways you may not be feeling equipped right now.

Faith action step: Help someone else to be more equipped this week in some way. Perhaps, you will help teach them a skill or share a bible verse with them. Pray for direction, and God will show you how to help someone else be more equipped this week.

Theme 7: Holy

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written:

“Be holy, because I am holy.”

1 Peter 1:14-16 NIV

For a long time, I’ll admit, I just didn’t “get” righteousness and holiness. I thought it was about living up to impossible standards of perfection, which caused a lot of frustration. But we will never be perfect. More importantly, nothing we can ever do in our own power makes us truly holy or righteous in

God's eyes. Only our relationship with Jesus Christ and what He did can give us the opportunity to be holy in God's eyes. We certainly have a responsibility and a part to play in this as well, as the letter from Peter above indicates, but it is only through the sacrifice of Jesus that we can be seen as holy by God. As you grow closer to God and spend more time with Him in scripture and prayer, as you are doing now, you will naturally want to conform to new holy desires and not old sinful desires.

Prayer time: Pray for God to reveal to you some specific ways He wants you to be obedient to Him. Accept and receive these instructions in love and prayer as they are intended. (Note: It does not have to be some long list or complicated thing. Also, remember that God may correct us, but condemnation and criticism are not how God speaks to us. Condemnation would be from your own voice or the enemy).

Faith action step: Obey God in what He reveals to you.

Theme 8: Righteous

This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 3:22-24 NIV

In this excerpt of scripture, it is natural to focus on the fact that our redemption comes by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, which is fantastic news! But do not miss the opening of these verses, “this righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.” To be righteous means that we not only reap the benefits of being seen as righteous by God, but it means that we must have an active faith in Jesus. We must believe in Jesus and His promises to us.

Prayer time: Give thanks and praise directly to Jesus for being your Savior and for paving the way for you to be seen as righteous by God the Father. Tell Him that you believe in Him and tell Him how thankful you are that He is true to His promises.

Faith action step: Read more about grace through faith in Ephesians Chapter 2.

Theme 9: Redeemed

Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.

He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Psalm 130:7-8 NIV

In the dictionary, redeemed is defined in several ways, including to pay off, buy back, recover, exchange, convert or fulfill. I encourage you to substitute these words for the words redemption and redeemed in this passage of scripture. It will give you some different ways to think about redemption and, perhaps, bring some real meaning to this idea of being redeemed. Realize and believe that as a child of the one true King you are fully redeemed!

Prayer time: Ask God to show you how He sees you as redeemed. Pray like you really believe that you ARE REDEEMED through genuine repentance and through Jesus Christ. Pray like you mean it.

Faith action step: This week, make a redemption or an exchange of some kind. Here are some examples: Exchange an earthly reaction for a Godly reaction to being treated unfairly. Exchange a thought of this world for a thought from above. Exchange an action that you were going to take for an action you know that you should take instead.

Wrap Up

It is my hope that after going through this plan you are beginning to see and understand your true identity as a child of the one true King. Believe who God says you are, not who culture or others say you are. You are an adopted son or

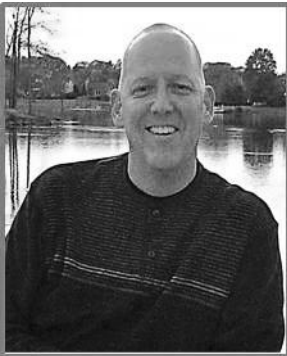
daughter of God. That is your identity. **I am hopeful that you are already beginning to experience a more fulfilling life by walking in that identity every day!**

Who God tells us we are is far better than who this world tells us we are or what we tell ourselves we are. I encourage you to read over the entire list below of what the bible says you are and believe it in faith even if you don't feel it yet. Post the list up and let it encourage you each day!

For more devotional plans and resources, our free *Changed Through Faith* app is available in the Apple Store and on Google Play. You can also find our blog, testimonials, and more at Changedthroughfaith.com.

I hope you continue to enjoy this plan and experience God's blessings in your life!

-Brian



As a Child of the One True King, You Are...

Theme 1: Chosen

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