



WHO AM I?

A six week small group Bible study
about understanding your identity
in Christ

created by
Shannon & Lisa Sandquist

Who am I?

A six week small group Bible study about
understanding your identity in Christ

Created by // Shannon & Lisa Sandquist

*Navigators Collegiate Staff at
The University of Northern Iowa*

© 2000 UNI Navigators

Contents

Week 1: Created in God's Image.....	3
Week 2: Our Identity Apart From Christ.....	7
Week 3: What Christ Has Done to Restore Our Identity	11
Week 4: Identity in the Family of God.....	18
Week 5: Our Identity In Christ	23
Week 6: Walking in Our Identity In Christ.....	28
Key Verse Analysis Directions	36

Week 1: Created in God's Image

Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. Introduce yourself to the group by sharing a little about yourself. Include your background, family, activities you enjoy, etc.
2. How would your friends describe you? What would they say are your strengths, gifts, and weaknesses?

Who am I? How do I see myself? How does God see me? What does God think of me? These are questions that require thoughtful study. The answers to these questions will impact all the areas of your life, including your work and career, who you will marry, how you relate to others, how you respond to life's situations and ultimately where you spend eternity.

Consider the list below and check three of the lines that best apply to you.

My opinion of myself is especially influenced by:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ what others think of me | ☐ my weaknesses |
| ☐ my grade point average | ☐ my physical strength or sports achievements |
| ☐ what I look like in the mirror | ☐ the friends I hang out with |
| ☐ my talents and abilities | ☐ my intelligence |
| ☐ what my family says about me and to me | ☐ my family's reputation |
| ☐ my attitude | ☐ what God says about me |
| ☐ the clothes I wear and the way I dress | ☐ other: _____ |

There are many books written on the topic of self-esteem and self-identity. Only one book, however, remains the same over time and is true for all situations and all people. This book is the Bible. Through it, God gives us His perspective on who we are and our relationship to Him. It lays a true foundation for self-identity. Are you relying on something or someone else to define who you are? During these 6 weeks we will be asking, "What is our identity?" We will answer this question based on what God says in His Word, the Bible.

As you go through this study, be prepared to take a tour of the Bible. You will have the opportunity to become familiar with it by looking up verses throughout the Bible, especially in the New Testament.

Open

1. What do you think of when you hear the word “image?” How would you define it?
2. Read this quote from *In His Image*, by Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey: “The word ‘image’ is familiar to us today, but the meaning of the word has leaked away so that now it connotes virtually the opposite of its former meaning of ‘likeness.’ Today, a politician hires an image-maker, a job applicant dresses for image, a corporation seeks the right image. In all these usages, image has come to mean the illusion of what something is presented to be, rather than the essence of what it really is.”

Do you agree? Why or why not?

What is the difference between “illusion” and “likeness” and how does it relate to image?

Dig

1. Read GENESIS 1:26-28, 31

Since God does not have a physical body, we are not made in His physical image (JOHN 4:24). What do you think are some ways that we are made in God’s image?

2. Your place in God's created order gives you value. Read **PSALM 8:3-9**. Where has God placed you in the line of created things? What else does this passage say about us?

Some people would suggest that a person has no more value than an animal or a tree, or that a person has less value because people destroy these things at times. What does God's Word say in response to this idea? Read **MATTHEW 6:26 AND 12:9-13**.

What happens to our value as humans when we believe animals, plants, and possibly things have equal or more value than humans? What kind of devastating results come from this view?

Read **GENESIS 1:27-28** again. As those who have been made in God's image, what is our relationship to other created things? What kind of a responsibility is this?

Is the fact that God places great value on you a new idea to you? How does it make you feel?

3. When we create something, we create it for a reason and with a specific purpose in mind. Therefore, we give purpose to whatever we create. God, your Creator, loves you and gives you

purpose. From the previous Scriptures, what are some of the things we are created for?

Read MATTHEW 22:37–38. What other purpose are we created for?

Reflect

4. How does your view of yourself change from going through this study? Do you usually think of yourself as having this kind of worth?

5. How does your view of others change when you start to see them in light of this study?

From *In His Image*: “We humans give inordinate regard to the physical body, or shell, that we live in. It takes a rare person indeed ... to look through that shell and acknowledge the inherent human worth, the image of God inside.”

Week 2: Our Identity Apart From Christ

Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. Share with the group something about yourself that nobody else in the group knows about you.
2. Describe one of your best vacations.

All people are created in the image of God and have great value because of this. However, because of sin, there is a break in our relationship with God. Through Jesus Christ our relationship with God is mended. This week we will look at what our identity is without Christ: created by God but fallen creatures.

Open

1. What evidence do you see in the world of sin and man's sin nature?

2. Compare and comment on these two statements:

"Man is basically good at the core of his being and is corrupted by his surroundings and experiences."

"We are far greater sinners than we ever dare to believe." (Jerry Bridges)

Dig

1. Read GENESIS 3:1-7. How did Adam and Eve sin and fall away from God?

How did this affect all people? ROMANS 5:12

How was the image of God in us marred by our fall into sin?

2. Before we can understand our identity **in** Christ, we must first understand our identity **without** Christ. Let's look at who we are apart from Christ. Write the words that describe the condition of a person **apart** from Christ.

ROMANS 8:5-8

ACTS 26:17-18

ROMANS 1:28-32

EPHESIANS 2:1-3 (RULER OF KINGDOM OF THE AIR IS SATAN)

COLOSSIANS 1:21

TITUS 3:3

JAMES 4:4

I TIMOTHY 1:15

JOHN 8:34

Write words that describe a future apart from Christ:

ROMANS 2:8-9

REVELATION 21:8

ROMANS 6:23

II THESSALONIANS 1:8-10

Reflect

Based on these verses, write a summary statement or paragraph about a person's identity apart from Christ.

What evidence do you see in your own life of a sin nature?

Look again at Question 2 in the Open section. How does your response to these statements change as a result of this study?

Key Verse Analysis for Optional Further Study.

Instructions on last page.

1. **Key Verse:** Write out EPHESIANS 2:3

2. **Observation:** What does it say?

3. **Interpretation:** What does it mean?

4. **Correlation:** What do other Scriptures say?

5. **Application:** What does it mean for me? What should my response be?

Week 3: What Christ Has Done to Restore Our Identity

Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. Share with your group what you like to do when you get some free time, such as a hobby or collection.
2. Share one concern or fear you have about being in this small group.

Open:

1. What were some of the words last week that described a person's identity apart from Christ?
2. What are some of the responses people give to the sin in their lives? How did Adam and Eve respond?
3. Do you think that God should pardon our sin? Why?
4. What do you think it takes to have eternal life and go to Heaven?

5. What are some of the responses people give to this question: “Why should God let you into Heaven?”

Dig

The result of sin is death (physical and spiritual). The Good News is that Jesus came to save us from this fallen state. In Jesus Christ we are **reconciled** to God, **redeemed**, and **justified**. Let’s take a look at what each of these words means and why they are important for salvation.

1. **Reconciled:** to change from enmity (deep-seated hatred between opponents or enemies) to friendship.

Read COLOSSIANS 1:19–22. (“He” and “Him” refer to Jesus.)

According to verse 21, what was our relationship to God before Christ?

How did God reconcile all things to Himself and make peace? How did He reconcile us?

How does God see us now?

Read 2 CORINTHIANS 5:18–21. How did God reconcile us to Himself?

Describe in your own words what the following statement means: “He made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us.”

What did we become because of this?

Righteous: One definition for righteous is “meeting the standards of what is right and just.” Because of our sin we can never be righteous on our own. The work of Jesus on the cross allows us to be right with God!

2. **Redeemed:** being released in return for payment or ransom.

What are we in bondage to? Think back to week two of this study.

Read HEBREWS 9:22. What must happen for sin to be forgiven?

According to these verses, what was the payment for our sin?

HEBREWS 9:12 & 15

REVELATION 5:9 ("YOU" REFERS TO JESUS,
THE LAMB OF GOD)

I PETER 1:18-19

EPHESIANS 1:7

Read GALATIANS 3:13. How did Christ redeem us?

3. **Justified:** to be declared free of blame and guilt; to be declared righteous.

Read 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11. In this portion of the letter to the Corinthians, Paul notes how some of the Corinthian people used to be. What changed their standing before God?

ROMANS 5:1-2 How are we justified?

According to the following verses, who is justified? What are they justified from?

ACTS 13:38-39

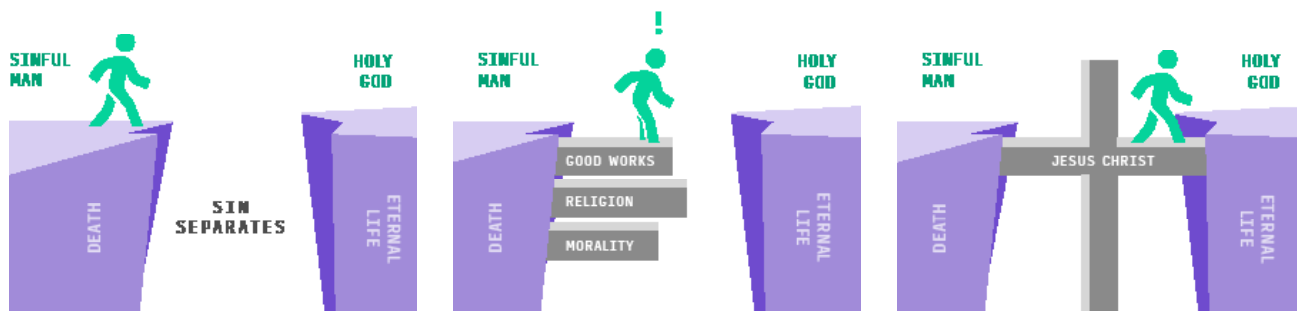
ROMANS 3:23-26

Is there any sin Christ has not forgiven?

4. In your own words and based on the verses above, answer the following questions: Why did Jesus die on the cross? What did His death accomplish for you? How can you take part in this? How does God see those who are justified?

C. Reflect (This section is to be completed during your small group meeting.)

This is the most important question: Are you **in** Christ right now? The bridge illustration will help you think through this answer. Write out **ROMANS 6:23** below the illustration.



Sin separates us from God. People try different ways in vain to gain a relationship with God. The Bible says that what we are to do is to believe in Jesus Christ. See **JOHN 6:28-29**.

Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father. (**JOHN 14:6**) He cancels our sin, and we enter into a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ. Read **EPHESIANS 2:8-9**.

5. **Application:** What does it mean for me? What should my response be?

Week 4: Identity in the Family of God

Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. Tell about a time you did something you were not proud of. Share what you learned from this experience.
2. Share about an award or an accomplishment you have received.

Welcome to the Family! As believers in Christ, we belong in the family of God! This week we will look at words and phrases that are associated with this family life and that help us understand our identity in Christ.

Open

1. What is something you appreciate about your own family?
2. Who is someone in your family that you have a close relationship with? Why are they special to you?

Dig

1. Children of God

Using the following verses, write some of the words God uses to describe how we become children of God.

EPHESIANS 1:3-6

GALATIANS 4:4-7 (ABBA, FATHER IS A WARM, ENDEARING TERM, LIKE "DADDY.")

JOHN 1:12-13

Why did God make us His children?

EPHESIANS 1:5-6

1 JOHN 4:10

1 JOHN 3:1

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus calls God by the name "Father." What does each of the following verses tell us about our Heavenly Father?

PSALM 103:13-14

MATTHEW 7:7-11

1 JOHN 1:3

HEBREWS 12:5-11

2. Heirs of the Kingdom of God

Read ROMANS 8:14-17 and GALATIANS 4:7. Who is considered an heir of God?

What is an heir?

As believers in Jesus Christ and children of God, we have a rich Daddy! God gladly gives to us everything of lasting value and true worth for our benefit. The verses below describe our inheritance as children of God. Read the following verses and write your observations.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9

REVELATION 21:1-7

EPHESIANS 1:13-14

REVELATION 22:1-5

1 PETER 1:3-5

3. **Members of the Body of Christ**

What does Jesus call those who do the will of His Father? MATTHEW 12:46-50

The Bible calls God's family the Body of Christ. Read ROMANS 12:4-5 and 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27. Why do you think God uses a picture of the body to describe our relationship with other Christians?

According to COLOSSIANS 1:15-18, what is Christ's position in the Body?

Reflect

1. How does being a child of God and an heir affect the way you live?
2. What are some of the challenges of family life in the family of God?
3. In what practical ways can you be a blessing to other members of God's family?

Key Verse Analysis for Optional Further Study.

Instructions on last page.

1. **Key Verse:** Write out JOHN 1:12

2. **Observation:** What does it say?

3. **Interpretation:** What does it mean?

4. **Correlation:** What do other Scriptures say?

5. **Application:** What does it mean for me? What should my response be?

Week 5: Our Identity In Christ

Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. Tell about someone who has been a role model in your life.
2. Share how you have been a role model in someone else's life.

Throughout the New Testament there are many verses that describe our life when we are in Christ. In this week's study, we want you to be overwhelmingly encouraged with what God, through the Bible, has to say about your identity in Christ.

Open

1. If we are not receiving information from God about who we are, where do we get this input?
2. What happens to our view of ourselves when we compare ourselves to others?

Dig

1. After reading each verse, write what God says about who you are or what you have in Christ. Write them in the first person such as, "I am the salt of the earth."

MATTHEW 5:13-14

2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-22

JOHN 6:40

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

ROMANS 5:1

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

ROMANS 6:5-6

GALATIANS 2:20

ROMANS 8:1

EPHESIANS 1:3-5

1 CORINTHIANS 2:12

EPHESIANS 2:5

1 CORINTHIANS 2:16

EPHESIANS 2:6

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20

EPHESIANS 2:18

COLOSSIANS 1:13

TITUS 3:5-8

COLOSSIANS 1:14

HEBREWS 2:11

COLOSSIANS 2:10

HEBREWS 4:16

COLOSSIANS 2:12-13

2 PETER 1:2-4

COLOSSIANS 3:1-4

ROMANS 8:14-15

2 TIMOTHY 1:7

ROMANS 8:16-17

2 TIMOTHY 1:9

Using the verses above, write a summary statement about who we are in Christ according to God's Word.

Reflect

Write a letter to God, thanking Him for making you new in Christ. (Use the back if you need more room). This will be a private letter that you will not have to share with the group.

Key Verse Analysis for Optional Further Study.

Instructions on last page.

1. **Key Verse:** Write out I CORINTHIANS 6:19

2. **Observation:** What does it say?

3. **Interpretation:** What does it mean?

4. **Correlation:** What do other Scriptures say?

5. **Application:** What does it mean for me? What should my response be?

Week 6: Walking in Our Identity In Christ

Questions for Small Group Discussion

1. Share with each member of the group something you have appreciated about them over these last 6 weeks.
2. Share about how you are a different person as a result of being in this group.

Open

1. How did reading the list of your identity in Christ from last week make you feel?
2. From last week, what are 2 or 3 of the aspects of your identity in Christ that you find incredible?

3. What are 2 or 3 aspects that you find difficult to understand or live up to?

4. What are some of the lies that you have believed about yourself? How does Scripture expose these lies and defeat them?

Dig

Who am I? This is the question with which we began our six-week study on Identity in Christ. As we learned in Week One, God created us in His image. When we had fallen away, He redeemed us by sending His Son, Jesus. If God created us in His image, what does that image look like? What are we to look like as believers in Jesus Christ? How do we walk in our identity in Christ?

In our last session, we will consider these questions.

According to ROMANS 8:28-30 (especially 29), what is God's purpose in Christ for you?

Do you want to know what you were created to be, what God wants you to be like? **Look to Jesus.**

Read the verses below and write your observations about the identity of Jesus Christ. Who is He?

HEBREWS 1:3

COLOSSIANS 2:9-10

COLOSSIANS 1:15

“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” 1 JOHN 3:2-3

As we look forward to the day when we will both be with Jesus and be like Him, we have the opportunity in our lives here on earth to become more and more like Him, to be identified with Jesus. This is God’s work in our lives.

Read PHILIPPIANS 1:6. What promise does God give to encourage us?

Let’s look at some of the keys to walking in our identity in Christ: Look, Listen, and Obey.

1. **Look.**

Read HEBREWS 12:1-2. Why are we to look to Jesus?

What does this phrase mean to you: “the author and finisher of our faith?”

What do you think is the “joy that was set before Him?”

In what ways can we “fix our eyes on Jesus”?

Read **COLOSSIANS 3:1-10**. Why do you think these verses say both “set your hearts” and “set your minds” on things above? How can we do this?

Why is it important for us to be renewed in knowledge according to God’s image? (verse 10)

How do you think this happens?

2. **Listen.**

There are many voices and noises in the world that distract us from God. God desires us to set our minds on Him and hear what He says. One way God speaks to us is through His Word, the Bible.

Read **ROMANS 12:1-2**. The “world” wants you to conform to its identity. How can you escape living a life conformed to this world?

Read **II TIMOTHY 3:16-17** and **HEBREWS 4:12**. In your own words, what do these verses tell us about listening to God’s Word?

How will the Bible transform us and renew our minds?

Read JOHN 8:31–32. How does knowing the truth make us free?

The following verses help us understand how to listen to God’s Word. Write in your own words what each verse says about listening.

PSALM 119: 9,11

ACTS 17:11, REVELATION 1:3

PSALM 1:2–3

ROMANS 10:17

3. **Obey.**

Read JAMES 1:22–25. What is the picture of the person who listens, but does not obey?

What does this have to do with our identity in Christ?

According to the following verses, how does Jesus say we show our love for Him? What promises does Jesus give to the person who loves Him?

JOHN 14: 15, 21, 23-24

JOHN 15:9-14

How will the Holy Spirit help us? Where does He reside? Read JOHN 14:16-17 and JOHN 14:26.

The Bible helps us know how to obey God. Below are some examples. Read the verses and write what God is telling us to do and give examples of how to do it.

II CORINTHIANS 10:5

EPHESIANS 4:29

EPHESIANS 4:26-27

MATTHEW 5:44

Reflect

1. In what ways can you look to Jesus in your everyday life?
2. What will you do to listen to God on a daily basis?

3. What is one area that you need to obey God in right now in your life?

4. Write a list of three ways that your view of yourself has changed through this six-week study on identity.

5. Write a prayer of thanks to God for what He has done in forming your Identity In Christ.

Key Verse Analysis for Optional Further Study.

Instructions on last page.

1. **Key Verse:** Write out Romans 12:2

2. **Observation:** What does it say?

3. **Interpretation:** What does it mean?

4. **Correlation:** What do other Scriptures say?

5. **Application:** What does it mean for me? What should my response be?

Key Verse Analysis Directions

For Optional Further Study

Observations — What does it say?

Look closely at the verse. Answer some or all of the following questions.

- **Who** are the people involved?
- **What** happened?
- **What** ideas are expressed?
- **What** resulted?
- **What** is the purpose?
- **What** is the stated reason?
- **How** are things accomplished?
- **How** well?
- **How** quickly?
- **What** images (pictures) are in the passage?

Interpretation — What does it mean?

Look for three things in the passage as you try to understand it.

- **Meaning** — What is the text saying?
- **Manner** — How is the text saying it here? How is the emphasis here different than other places in Scripture?
- **Motive** — Why is the text saying this? What is the intent, why is it here, and what is the appropriate response?

Correlation — What do other Scriptures say?

The best way to understand what a passage of Scripture is saying is to look for other places that the Bible talks about the same thing — Scripture won't contradict itself.

- What do the verses immediately before and after this verse have to say?
- Using a concordance, look up the key words in the passage to see where these same words are used elsewhere in Scripture.
- What light does this context shed on the passage?

Application — What should my response be?

Is there something I should start, stop, or do differently in my life? As you hear God's voice in Scripture, He often will want you to respond by doing or becoming something (or undoing or unbecoming something!) Hearing God's voice is the reason we study Scripture — make sure that you act on what you hear!