



Week #3 – Identity

Living & Leading as Sons & Daughters

WE TRAIN PEOPLE TO LOVE GOD & THEIR BODIES.

DO YOU KNOW WHO JESUS SAYS YOU ARE?

Fearless confidence in leadership begins with identity—clarity about who you are and whose you are. In the Kingdom of God, identity is the hinge point from which all life and leadership flow.

One of the most critical conversations Jesus had with His disciples entailed Him asking this inescapable question— *Who do YOU say that I am?* (See Mark 8). Each person's life definition and identity flows, in significant part, from his or her answer to this question: *Who do you believe God is?* Proper belief in God and His character establishes personal identity and builds on the foundation of God-first leadership. AW Tozer in “The Knowledge of the Holy” says: *“The man who comes to a right belief about God is relieved of ten thousand temporal problems, for he sees at once that these have to do with matters which at the most cannot concern him for very long...”* We must seek to know Him accurately as His word and Spirit reveal Him. That is primary (God 1st, God only).

A second defining and inescapable question that requires an individual answer to move forward in leadership and personal freedom is – *Who do You (Jesus) say that I am?*

Many things influence how we understand ourselves—past experiences, family history, successes, failures, and relationships. Each of these shapes character, experience, and ability, but none has the authority to grant true identity. Events and relationships may inform our *perceived* identity, yet only Jesus and our heavenly Father are empowered to define who we are. The Creator always defines the created. *And it is in knowing His definition of us that we find freedom.*

Because I am His child, I can lead without insecurity or comparison. Because I am a child of God, I lead from a place of confidence, not performance.

Jesus came to reveal the Father to us, a world of orphans lost in sin and shame. We must know WHOSE we are to know WHO we are. If you do not have an understanding of your identity as a son or daughter of God, you may lead well, perform well, and accomplish things for the kingdom. Orphans can be motivated leaders! However, orphan-hearted leaders work hard to prove value, establish their place, and

lead out of insecurity instead of identity. Without being anchored to our God-given identity, we will continually need to promote and elevate ourselves because the basis of our identity has yet to be found in sonship.



Leaders who know who they are as a son or daughter of God walk free from the need to perform or prove their value; they understand who they are and have been positioned in leadership and relationships. God-first leadership is grounded in identity first. *Sons and daughters lead and serve from freedom, not earning or performance.*

When we are born again, we become children of God (John 1:12). He puts His nature in us and gives us the Holy Spirit as a deposit that we might know Him and commune with Him. His DNA becomes ours, and as we renew our minds and train our thoughts, we learn to live as His children.

As we spend time with Him and study what He declares about us, we come to know who He is and begin to understand who He created us to be. One of the primary arenas of leadership is our own minds and thought life—to renew our minds until our thoughts about God and about ourselves come into agreement with His (Rom. 12:2).

Do your thoughts about yourself align with what *He* thinks about you? This is the ongoing work of Kingdom leadership: daily intimacy with God and daily renewal of the mind, learning to think as He does.

1 John 3:1a states: *See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!* **This** is who we are. When we begin to relate to the Father as His children, freedom becomes our life message. Insecurity is settled when an understanding of identity in Christ is grasped. *“I am the one Jesus loves”* becomes our foundation for life, and we are freed to become fully ourselves- chosen, desired, and created on purpose FOR a purpose. This kind of freedom creates leaders who propagate the same- freedom, security, and identity.

The Identity of a Leader

We lead like Christ when we settle the issue of identity. Jesus led, first and foremost, out of His identity as the Son of God. He led with freedom, confidence, and power **because** He knew who He was and operated out of that. The same applies to every God-first leader.

How do we learn to define ourselves as God does? We begin by asking Him these questions – and listening for His answers.

- *Who do YOU say that I am?*
- *What do You love about me?*
- *Within the vision and mission You have given me, who am I?*

“When we know who we are to God, with God, and for God, we can enter any situation or circumstance confident that we will see victory, because we are walking out the destiny God created us for, called us to, and has empowered us to step into.”
Rob Hotchkin



Understanding our identity in Christ involves discerning our individual personality, spiritual gifts, and natural talents. Together, these elements of our design enable us to lead uniquely and bring glory to God.

Understanding your personality

Each person has a personality that God specifically designed for His glory and his or her good. Your personality allows you to influence others in unique ways that others cannot. Gaining insight into your personality grants insight into your calling. Vision, mission, and core values reflect and build upon the personality God has gifted you.

**“and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation.”
Acts 17:26**

Personality is defined as “the combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character.”¹ **No part of who you are is an accident.** Understanding, accepting, and beginning to enjoy who God created you to be will embolden your leadership. Knowing who God created you to be and then confidently acting out of it creates a life of victory. This understanding frees you from comparison and empowers you to live satisfied and secure in who you were created to be. Nowhere in the world is anyone like

you. When you understand who God created you to be, the striving to be anyone else falls away. You rest in the freedom of being yourself—designed by God, on purpose, for a purpose.

Understanding your spiritual gifting

Another important element of identity in leadership involves knowing your spiritual gifting. Each person has been given supernatural gifting from God for His glory and our good.

“Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers, and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed...There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” 1 Cor. 12:1, 4-7

Every person is specifically gifted for a specific function given by the Holy Spirit. Another amazing element regarding spiritual gifting is that we belong to one another! I am not complete without your gift; you are not complete without mine. As the body of Christ, we need one another to operate most effectively for the kingdom.

¹ Oxford Dictionaries



“For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ, we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” Romans 12: 4-5

Frequently, leaders struggle with insecurity by refusing to allow others—who may be more gifted in certain areas—to come alongside them. Yet this collaboration is both God’s design and the joy of the body of Christ: we are equipped to serve one another and be ambassadors to the world. A leader secure in who they are in Christ welcomes others to fill gaps where they may be weak, because insecurity no longer drives their actions. *No one person can do everything, be everything, or excel in every area.* A crucial aspect of leadership is humbly allowing others to serve in their strengths and rejecting the lie that we are less than because someone else is gifted where we are not.

When we begin to see ourselves as God made us to be, we will never, ever want to be anyone else.

Do you know the gifts God has put inside you? What are they? If you don't know what they are, can you guess? (Reference the verses above).

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

Each individual has been created on purpose for a purpose. Our God-given personality and gifting are inseparably linked to our vision and mission. Go back to your vision statement and dig deeper – see how your identity - personality & gifting- play into the God-given vision for our lives.

As you begin to explore the gifting that God has put inside you, you will discover where He has called you to lead and serve most effectively.

How amazing that the Creator of the universe created each of us for specific purposes- the first of which is to be HIS, and then put in us a passion and longing for fulfilment that is only satisfied in that created place. What a good Father!



*"O Lord, you have searched me and known me!
You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.*

*You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.*

You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it. Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

*If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,"
even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day,
for darkness is as light with you.*

*For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*

Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!

How vast is the sum of them!

If I would count them, they are more than the sand.

I awake, and I am still with you."

Psalm 139:1-18



Training Exercise—Day #1

*“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I set you apart;
I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” Jer.1:5*

*“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even
to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh
nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12-13*

Do you operate as an ORPHAN or a CHILD of God? After spending some time **BEing** with Him, listen to this podcast. Copy and paste the link into your internet browser or search for it by name on Youtube.

Heart Over Gift - Jonathan David & Melissa Helser

Apple - [Heart over Gift](#)

Spotify- [Heart over Gift](#)

Make notes – what did the Holy Spirit highlight for you? Do you operate from an orphan mentality or a son/daughter mentality?

If you have some extra time, here is another great podcast on identity and operating as His children -

The Presence is Greater than the Pressure!

Apple - [Presence is Greater than the pressure](#)

Spotify: [Presence is greater than the pressure](#)

Check in with your swim buddy. Share your thoughts, what you learned, and what challenged you.



Training Exercise—Day #2

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed."
1 Corinthians 12:1 ESV

Spiritual Gifts Test

Below are the links for two different spiritual gifts tests. Copy and paste the link into your browser. *It does require a bit of time. Please take these tests when you have the time to complete them fully. (If you only have time to do one test, please do the Five-Fold survey.) Having two tests gives you the ability to compare results.

<http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com/test/adult>

<https://fivefoldministry.com/>

What are your results? Record your primary gift(s).

Any surprises?

Do you see how your spiritual gifts align with what ignites your heart and makes you feel fully alive?

Where are you strong?

Where do you need to grow?

What will you do to develop these gifts?

Look back on your vision and mission statements. Can you see how these spiritual gifts tie into those God-given vision and mission statements?

Remember - He equips the called. He may call you into an area where you do NOT feel "gifted." Glory in your weakness, and allow your lack to show off His strength. 💕

Connect with your swim buddy. Share your experience, what you learned, and what challenged you.



Training Exercise—Day #3

*"For You shaped me, inside and out.
You knitted me together in my mother's womb long before I took my first breath.*

*I will offer You my grateful heart, for I am Your unique creation,
filled with wonder and awe.
You have approached even the smallest details with excellence;
Your works are wonderful; I carry this knowledge deep within my soul.*

*You see all things; nothing about me was hidden from You As I took shape in secret,
carefully crafted in the heart of the earth before I was born from its womb. You see all
things; You saw me growing, changing in my mother's womb; Every detail of my life was
already written in Your book;*

*You established the length of my life before I ever tasted the sweetness of it.
Your thoughts and plans are treasures to me, O God!
I cherish each and every one of them! How grand in scope! How many in number!"*
Psalm 139:13-17 Voice

Personality Test

God designed you on purpose, for a purpose, and that includes your personality.
Here are some great personality tests - pick ONE or do both!

Based on the Myers-Briggs - <https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new>

Based on DISC (Drive, Influence, Support, Clarity) - <https://www.truity.com/test/disc-personality-test>

Record your results –

What makes sense? What do you agree/disagree with?

How does your personality point to your spiritual gifts, and vice versa?

How does knowing your spiritual gifting and your personality help you in loving yourself as well as leading more effectively?

How does knowing God delighted in making you purposely the way He did enable you not to compare yourself with others?



Connect with your Swim buddy—share what the Lord showed you in this week’s journey. Pray for their journey in their personality and gifting.

Here are two questions to ask to go deeper - completely optional!

How is your soul?

Is there anything you are hiding?