



# YOUR *TRUE* IDENTITY

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# LESSON ONE

## TRUE IDENTITY

- What does identity mean to you?
- Where do you look for the answer to what defines your identity?
- Who am I to God?

q&a



**God created us as vessels that could embody His spirit. He can be physically active in this world through us. The fact that He would choose me to reside in, and give His power to me is mind-blowing.**

Now I know that some of you reading this right now have experienced and seen terrible things that I can't even begin to imagine. Your present and your past look nothing like a page out of a royalty novel, much less of a godly, spotless bride. So, you might be sitting there thinking 'why does my story not line up with all the beauty of God's word for His chosen creations?' And that's okay! I firmly believe that God didn't create us to be a bunch of "yes women" that just blindly and unintentionally go through life "doing" what we are told to do by someone else.

He wants us to KNOW for ourselves who we are in Him and why we live the way we do! Your story may look very different from other girls in your church, but that in itself is the beauty of God's redeeming grace! Sin has ravished our lives, sometimes because of our parents' bad decisions and sometimes because of our own. But God died on a cross for ME! He chose to lay down his life so that through Him our past and current disaster could be the catalyst that drives us to His redeeming grace.


If we can truly grasp the importance of the fact that we are the "body" that God himself, with all His power and authority, resides in us, then we can see that no matter what our life looked like before, our future is incredibly secure because He is in control. I don't live and serve and seek Him because I have need of nothing, but I do so because I NEED God every day of my life, and living with him is worth any struggle this world could ever throw my way! Your road and life story will be different than mine and any other person you come in contact with, but who you are in Christ is forever settled in heaven!

We are sinners destined for a life of pain and hopelessness, but we have a merciful God that so desires a relationship with His creation that He paid the price on Calvary so that we could KNOW Him and one day live in eternity with Him.

Have ever asked or wondered what your identity is? Maybe you've had similar thoughts to these: Who am I really? What is my purpose?

Well, the Bible says that God created me in HIS image and that means I am perfectly crafted and beautiful in every way no matter what culture says. His grace is sufficient when I am not. When I am weak and mess up, and give in to sin, HIS grace is sufficient. His mercies are new and fresh every morning so no matter how messed up yesterday was, my today has enough mercy to erase it and keep me going.

"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" - Jeremiah 1:5



He has known you and appointed you before you were ever formed in your mother's womb. To what purpose? To be a prophet or a decreer of his word to the nations! He says in Psalm 113:14:

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."

The Bible is packed with verses that speak directly to how God sees us and therefore provides us with our identity in God, and I urge you to take personal devotional time to search these verses out for yourself. Someone telling you will never be the same as you searching it out for yourself and allowing God to confirm His word to you individually.

What I do want to leave you with is this, do not allow yourself or others to define you by anything that doesn't align with the word of God. His word is forever settled in heaven and there is nothing new under the sun. That means everything we ever need to know will be able to be explained directly from a specific passage or principle found in God's word. There should be a profound conviction and resolution in our spirit to identify ourselves as God does and therefore:

Before I am a Woman, I am an Apostolic

Before I am a Latina (fill in the blank), I'm a child of the King

Before I am a professional, I am called to a Kingdom, not of this world

Before I am fashionable/artistic/creative/Enneagram # 3, and the list can go on, I am the bride of Christ set apart for the bridegroom that is coming for a spotless bride.

This is equally true for you! Please do not allow circumstances or people or the culture of this world be the voice to define your identity and for that to become louder than what God defines you as.

#### Discussion questions:

- What are some ways you have identified yourself that are contrary to God's word?
- What are some verses that really speak to you on your identity in Christ?
- What do you need to do to start seeing yourself the way God sees you?



#### ***about the writer: Rocio Beebe***

Rocio Beebe is the mommy of three adorable and rambunctious children, Sofia, Jake, and Lily. She and her husband, Cole Beebe, attend The Pentecostals of Cooper City where they have served as Youth Pastors for the last six years. They currently serve the UPCI Florida Youth Ministry as Youth President.

## LESSON TWO

# TRUE IDENTITY: WHO AM I AS A YOUNG GIRL?

- What does being a Woman of God mean to you?
- How would you describe a strong, Godly woman?



Let's be honest. Sometimes being a girl seems like a lot of weight to carry. We worry and stress about things boys would never even think about. We have to ask ourselves really difficult questions like: Should I wash my hair today or use dry shampoo one more time? Despite all the things that could be seen as disadvantages, I believe being a woman is a special privilege. God may have created man first, but when He looked around He realized there was something, or rather someone, missing. In Genesis 2:18, God said,

"It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable of him."

Most times we translate that Hebrew word (Ezer) to mean a helper or someone subservient to the one being helped. However, if you look at the context of the word, you will see a much different and very powerful translation.

If you look into the uses of 'Ezer' in the Bible, you will note that two times it described women, three times it was in reference to military support, and sixteen times it talked about the saving help of God for His people. God used a descriptor for women that he used for Himself.

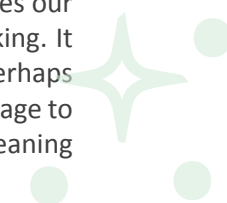
Not only did 'Ezer' mean savior and is used in reference to a saving/strong presence, but it is also a word that is continually used to describe military aid in battle. It is actually a military term. (See verses: Deuteronomy 33:29 and Exodus 18:4 as examples). Therefore, many interpretations of Ezer have explained that 'Ezer's' meaning is not just a "helper" it describes a warrior.

Wait- did you catch that? We, as women, are seen by God as strong helpers and warriors for Christ! Jesus had many women that he called to battle. One of these was his own mother, Mary. Mary gave up everything to follow God. She was strong and able. Ruth and the Proverbs 31 woman are called women of valor. Both women are described using the term 'chayil' (virtuous). This term is also a military term used to describe strength, might, armies, and force.

How you "fight" may look different than other young girls around you, but that's what makes our kingdom work. If everyone was gifted in the same exact areas, we would be seriously lacking. It takes each person doing their part to win the battle. Maybe you fight by leading prayer. Perhaps you war by singing or playing an instrument. You may raise your sword as you deliver a message to the people of God. Your fighting might take place behind the scenes preparing a meal or cleaning up after an event.

Whatever way you decide to fight, do it with all your might! Don't let the lies of the enemy deceive you and make you feel less than you are. You aren't "just a girl." You are a girl created by God to do important work for the Kingdom of God.

Now as warrior women, it might be easy to think we must always be strong and ready to go to war. We must always have it together. If you look around in our world, you will quickly see



the influencers who reinforce these beliefs with their perfectly filtered photos highlighting their perfect day.

However, when we find our identity as women in Christ we learn that not only can we be strong, but we can also be weak, weary, and even weird and yet be perfectly okay. 2 Corinthians 12: 9 reassures us by saying,

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

We shouldn’t be ashamed of our weaknesses. That verse goes on to say,

“Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

We don’t need to obsess with being perfect because we trust in the One who is. Here we find the need to learn balance in our lives. As girls, we have days where we feel strong, like mighty conquerors ready to fight on the front lines! We have other days where we feel a little weak and need to reach out for help. In both instances, God gets the glory. When we are feeling strong, it is because of the confidence He gives us by being His daughter. When we are feeling weak, it allows us to rely on God and trust in Him to be our strength.

What a privilege and an honor to be a young woman of God! Be encouraged that He created you for a special purpose and He believes that you are strong, able, and a force to be reckoned with!



#### Discussion questions:

- In what ways would you describe yourself as a warrior?
- What areas of the church can you get involved with to join the fight?
- On the days you feel not as strong, what can you do to find strength?




#### *about the writer: Jessica Hudoff*

Jessica Hudoff is an Urshan College alumni, teacher, and dog mom. She loves to serve alongside her husband as youth and hyphen pastor in Ocala. She is also passionate about proving Taco Bell is underrated.

## LESSON THREE

# TRUE IDENTITY: WHO AM I AS AN APOSTOLIC?

- Are you an Apostolic? If so, how do you know?



It is not uncommon today to see or hear someone identifying as an Apostolic. We often see social media posts sharing the cutest Apostolic gal's style followed with a popular hashtag created to proclaim to every viewer that they are Apostolic. While hashtags can be a means to share the greatest happenings in the Apostolic movement, this label cannot define what it truly means to be Apostolic.

To identify as an Apostolic simply means someone has chosen to believe and obey the biblical teachings of Jesus and His apostles. The author of the book of Acts begins with the clearest understanding that Jesus truly has a plan and purpose for mankind.

“The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, 3to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” – Acts 1:1-3 NKJV


After His resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days giving instructions to His apostles followed with the promise that they would soon be baptized with the Holy Spirit. And in chapter two, we see this promise unfold through the outpouring of His Spirit in the upper room on the Day of Pentecost. One can almost visualize this historical moment through biblical binoculars as you read. You can see the joy on each face as you scan the crowd. Hear the roar of various languages being spoken as God's Spirit gave the utterance. Feel the excitement and hype of the crowd as they respond to the Apostle Peter's anointed message fulfilling scriptural prophecy. What an amazing moment in time! And all this started because Jesus taught and instructed the apostles.

This experience was only the beginning for those in attendance that day. In verse 42, the writer then states:

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” – Acts 2:42 NKJV

To be an Apostolic, one must grow beyond the initial experience of salvation. We must persistently obey the instructions and teachings of Jesus and His apostles. While the book of Acts teaches us how to become a Christian, it is in Romans through Jude where we find instructions on how to live an Apostolic life.

Today, we experience powerful prayer meetings and services just like the apostles did on the Day of Pentecost. However, that is just the beginning in our walk as a Christian. We, too, must continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. We must love, obey, and teach the Apostolic message of the bible.





Just like we are intentional in maintaining our relationships with those closest to us, we must be intentional in our pursuit of a true relationship with Jesus. Consider your closest friend. Why do you care for this person? Would you be close to them if they never read or responded to your texts? Would you consider them a friend if they only spoke to you in passing twice a week?

We often easily declare how much we love Jesus. But can we truly love Him if we do not study His Word? Can we really love Him if we do not communicate with Him daily? Can we really know Him if we do not allow time for Him to speak to us? Apostolic living requires a desire for a personal relationship with Jesus. It is through consistent prayer and biblical study one can truly learn how to identify as an Apostolic child of God. Let us encourage one another in our pursuit of Apostolic living. Let us all “continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”



#### Discussion questions:

- On a scale of 1 to 5 (highest), how would you rate yourself as an Apostolic? Why?
- In reviewing your weekly schedule, are there any activities you’re willing to give up or times you can designate for more prayer and biblical study?

#### Recommended Reading:

- Mary, the mother of Jesus (Acts 1:12-14)
- Tabitha a.k.a. Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43)
- Rhoda (Acts 12:6-19)
- Lydia (Acts 16:11-40)
- Damaris (Acts 17:16-34)
- Priscilla (Acts 18:1-28)
- Philip’s Four Daughters (Acts 21:8-9)

Additionally, there are many Apostolic women whose lives have impacted the world today through their unfaltering faith and commitment to serve Jesus. Below are just a few books of amazing testimonies that will encourage, inspire, and increase your faith in the Lord.

- *Pioneer Pentecostal Women* series by Mary Wallace
- *The Adventures of Bug and Me* by Nona Freeman
- *The Life and Ministry of Billy and Shirley Cole: A True Story That Reads Like the Book of Acts* by Billy Cole, Shirley Cole, and Doug Joseph



#### *about the writer: Stephanie Rogers*

Stephanie Rogers has been involved in youth ministry for nearly 10 years in various capacities, including serving on the Florida Youth Ministries’ team alongside her husband, Justin. The Rogers currently live in Ocala where they attend and love Cornerstone UPC. On a personal note, Stephanie enjoys fishing, snorkeling, Disney trips, and a good cup of coffee!

## LESSON FOUR

# TRUE IDENTITY: WHO AM I AS GOD'S CREATION?

- Describe yourself. What are your favorite personality traits or attributes?
- Who are your greatest influences?



**I don't know about you, but there are very few things that make me feel more important or valued than when someone intentionally does something for me. You know what I mean - your BFF brings you a Grande Strawberry Acai Lemonade with light ice, and you didn't even ASK for it! If someone goes out of their way to make an effort, or take an action, that is 100% intended for me, it makes my day.**

When God's voice boomed throughout the universe and spoke the world into existence, He did so with intention. He meant to make the sun shine the way it does, He meant for the birds to sing the way they do, and He meant to define every little detail in every little thing. Not one thing God created was done so by accident.

We see it over and over in the Creation account in Genesis, God spoke, it happened, and "He saw that it was good." Do you want to know why it was good? Because He made it just the way He intended for it to be made.

When God proceeded to make man, scripture tells us that He did so in His image:

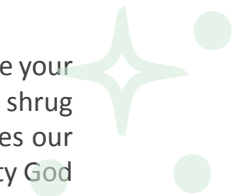
26 Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground." (Genesis 1:26)

Take time to read through the entire creation account in Genesis 1. Is there a scripture that says God made the beasts in His image or the trees in His image? Of course not! But man... He made man in His image. What does that even mean? It means that He made Adam as a reflection of himself, and Eve a reflection of Him. He made me to look, to feel, to sound like Him. He did it with intention.

Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? (Matthew 6:26)

Your individuality and personality are based on a ton of tiny little details - you might laugh like your mom, or look like your dad. You might describe yourself as smart or creative, or you might shrug it off and decide you're not special at all. Every little thing we know about ourselves creates our own personal perception. My identity as defined by me doesn't always align with the identity God defined for me.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)





When God **intentionally chose** to make me, He made me in HIS image. I didn't just appear - \*poof\* "Rachel's here!" I was created and intended to mirror my God, and that should matter to me and play the biggest part in trying to find out who I am. But - it's hard. There are so many voices and images, and options, about who I can be. How do I keep looking like God?

There comes a point in every girl's life where you have to decide what is going to define you, influence you, inspire you, entertain you, emulate you... where will you place your identity?

Now is as good a time as any to ask God to make us look more like Him - "God, I want my actions to reflect you, I want my attitude to reflect yours, I want "me" to be more like "you." The same God that made you, hears you.

You can be anything you want to be, and I mean it. You want to be a doctor? Go for it! You want to own a business? Sign me up. You want to be a writer? I love it. But, before you'll ever be a doctor, and before you'll ever be an entrepreneur, you are God's creation - intentionally defined, formed, and protected - and I can't think of an identity more valuable and special than that.

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:  
Marvellous are thy works; And that my soul knoweth right well. (Psalm 139:14)



#### Discussion questions:

- What adjustment can you make now to start better reflecting God?
- What are the greatest pressures you think girls face when trying to find their identity?
- Think of yourself the way God sees you. Now describe yourself as His creation.



#### ***about the writer: Rachel DeAngelo***

Rachel DeAngelo is an avid Coca Cola drinker, cat lover, and laughs at all of her own jokes. She works in marketing and loves that she gets to flex her creative side at work and church. She and her husband serve in ministry at their church in Lutz, and love every second of it.