

THE SONSHIP CODE

IDENTITY IN CHRIST

Who You Are Determines How You Live

Lesson 7 | The Kingdom Codes Learning Portal

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From Lesson 6 to Lesson 7

In Lesson 6, we learned that biblical sonship begins in relationship, develops through formation, and matures into representation. We saw that identity comes before assignment, that the Father spoke over Jesus before His ministry began, and that a servant works for approval while a son works from approval.

Now we take the first step of that journey. Before we can talk about maturity, authority, or commissioning, we must settle one foundational question: Who am I in Christ?

Core Idea

Biblical identity begins with the finished work of Jesus Christ, not with what we achieve for Him.

We do not work our way into sonship. We receive life in Christ, discover who we are in Him, grow into maturity, and learn to represent the Father from that place of beloved identity.

IDENTITY PRECEDES MATURITY.

MATURITY PRECEDES REPRESENTATION.

KEY TEXTS

2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

John 1:12-13

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, 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."

Colossians 3:3

"For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

Ephesians 2:10

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

1. THE REVELATION

The Christian life begins with identity before activity.

One of the greatest mistakes we can make is trying to become through performance what God has already established through relationship.

Many people build their identity around what they do, what they own, what others think, what they have achieved, what they have lost, what happened to them, where they have failed, or what title they carry.

Each of these can change in a single day. A job can end. A relationship can fail. A reputation can be damaged. When identity is built on things that can be taken away, life is lived in constant fear of losing them.

Scripture continually redirects identity toward Christ. The foundational question is not, “What have I accomplished?” It is:

“WHO AM I IN CHRIST?”

Before we discuss calling, authority, purpose, maturity, commissioning, or representation, we must establish identity. If identity is unstable, everything built upon it becomes unstable.

2. THE CODE

You receive identity before you represent identity.

The Code of Identity can be expressed as:

RECEIVED -> REVEALED -> FORMED -> MATURED -> REPRESENTED

RECEIVED: Beloved identity in Christ begins as a gift we receive.

REVEALED: We discover what God has established in Christ.

FORMED: Our thinking, character, and responses begin changing.

MATURED: Identity becomes increasingly stable and embodied.

REPRESENTED: We reveal the nature of the Father through the life we live.

This Code sits inside the Sonship Code from Lesson 6: Relationship -> Identity -> Formation -> Maturity -> Commissioning -> Representation. Identity is the second step, and everything after it depends on it.

WE RECEIVE IDENTITY IN RELATIONSHIP.

WE DEVELOP IDENTITY THROUGH FORMATION.

WE EXPRESS IDENTITY THROUGH REPRESENTATION.

3. IDENTITY IS NOT SOMETHING YOU INVENT

Modern culture often says, “Create your own identity. Define yourself. Become whatever you choose.”

Scripture begins somewhere different. God is Creator. Christ is Savior and Lord. We are brought into relationship with Him, and our identity is discovered within that relationship.

Self-made identity is exhausting. If I create who I am, then I must also hold it together, defend it, and keep reinventing it whenever life changes. Received identity is restful. The One who made me tells me who I am, and He does not change.

God told Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you” (Jeremiah 1:5). Before Jeremiah had a name, a family, or a single accomplishment, he was known by God. Identity was spoken over him before he could define himself.

Holy Spirit leads us to Jesus and reveals Him (John 16:14). Jesus reveals our heavenly Father (John 14:9). And our heavenly Father reveals who we are in Christ, as Holy Spirit “bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:16).

So we ask different questions:

- Who does my heavenly Father say I am?
- What has Christ accomplished?
- What has changed because I am in Him?

BELOVED IDENTITY IS NOT SELF-DEFINITION. IT IS DIVINE DEFINITION.

4. “IN CHRIST” IS THE FOUNDATION

One of Paul’s most important expressions is two small words: in Christ. The New Testament repeatedly describes believers as being in Christ, in Him, with Christ, through Christ, and “accepted in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:6). To be in the Beloved is to share His beloved identity.

This language reveals something powerful. Christian identity is not built around self-improvement, religious performance, moral comparison, or personal branding. It has a location: in Christ.

- Where is my new life located? In Him.
- Where is my acceptance rooted? In Him.
- Where is my righteousness found? In Him.
- Where is my future connected? In Him.
- Where is my identity anchored? In Him.

Paul says, “Your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). What is hidden in Christ is protected in Christ. No failure, accusation, or circumstance can reach in and remove it.

CHRIST IS NOT AN ADDITION TO OUR IDENTITY.

HE BECOMES THE CENTER OF IT.

5. NEW CREATION

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The Greek word Paul uses for new is kainos. It emphasizes something new in kind and quality, a creation that did not exist before, not just new in time.

Paul is not describing a better version of the old person, a more religious person, or a morally improved person. He is describing a new-creation reality.

This does not mean every habit instantly disappears. It does not mean maturity is instantaneous, or that the mind no longer needs renewal. But it does mean our starting point has changed.

We are not merely trying to repair the fall of Adam in our own strength. We are participating in a new creation in Christ.

IN CHRIST, WE HAVE ENTERED NEW-CREATION REALITY.

6. IDENTITY IS RECEIVED BEFORE BEHAVIOR MATURES

A child belongs to a family before that child matures. A newborn does not earn belonging. The child belongs, and then the child grows.

The same is true in the Kingdom:

BELONGING PRECEDES FORMATION.

FORMATION PRODUCES MATURITY.

MATURITY PRODUCES RESPONSIBLE REPRESENTATION.

Many believers reverse the order. They think, “If I behave well enough, maybe God will accept me.” That is the prodigal son’s speech on the road home: “I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants” (Luke 15:19). But the father never let him finish that speech. He ran to him, embraced him, and restored him as a son.

The father said, “Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet” (Luke 15:22). In Christ we are reinstated in the family of God. We receive the robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10), a ring that signifies authority, and sandals. Servants went barefoot; sons wore sandals. They speak of our ability to walk with Him every day as sons.

The gospel begins with grace. We are received by Him, and then we are transformed by Him.

Grace is often defined as unmerited favor, and toward us it is. We could never earn it: “For by grace you have been saved through faith… not of works” (Ephesians 2:8-9). But grace is more than favor we do not deserve. John says Jesus was “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14), and Luke tells us “the grace of God was upon Him” (Luke 2:40). Jesus was the spotless Lamb of God. He needed no undeserved favor, yet grace rested on Him. That shows us grace is also God’s empowering presence. Paul wrote, “By the grace of God I am what I am… I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Corinthians 15:10). Grace is both unearned favor and divine empowerment to accomplish His good works, revealing the kindness of our heavenly Father.

7. JOHN 1: RECEIVING AND BECOMING

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12)

Notice the sequence:

RECEIVE HIM -> RECEIVE THE RIGHT TO BECOME -> BECOME

The text holds together both identity and development. Jesus gives us Himself. As we receive Him, He gives us the right, the authority, to become children of God. The older translations used the word power here: power to become.

This is the beauty of the Sonship Code. We are not trying to create sonship apart from Christ. We receive Christ, and then the reality of sonship begins forming our lives as we follow Him.

SONSHIP IS RECEIVED AS RELATIONSHIP AND DEVELOPED THROUGH FORMATION.

8. BORN OF GOD

John continues: “who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:13).

This is identity language. Following Christ is not merely joining a movement, accepting an ideology, or adopting a moral code. It involves new birth. Jesus told Nicodemus, “Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

The new birth establishes a new source of life. And notice its first benefit: the ability to see the Kingdom of God. Many people postpone this to the future, as if the Kingdom can only be seen after we die. But Jesus said to Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (John 3:12). The ability to see and perceive the Kingdom of God is available here and now, not just a future event.

“THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT.” (JOHN 3:6)

This is why our new identity cannot be reduced to behavior modification. Something deeper has happened. We have received new life from God, the source of all life. Paul says, “He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him” (1 Corinthians 6:17).

9. BELOVED BEFORE PUBLIC MINISTRY

Sonship is relational before it is functional. A son is a son because of relationship, not because of assignment, authority, achievement, or position.

At the Jordan, the Father declared, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17). As we saw in Lesson 6, that declaration came before the miracles, before the crowds, before the cross, and before public recognition.

Notice the order of the Father’s words. First, “This is My beloved Son.” That is identity. Then, “in whom I am well pleased.” That is delight. Jesus had not done anything publicly to earn either one.

Jesus did not perform miracles to convince the Father to call Him Son. He lived and ministered from sonship, not for sonship.

FUNCTION DOES NOT CREATE IDENTITY.

WE DO NOT PERFORM TO BECOME. WE LIVE FROM WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED.

10. IDENTITY UNDER ATTACK: THE WILDERNESS

Immediately after the Father's declaration, Jesus was led into the wilderness. The tempter's first words were, "If You are the Son of God" (Matthew 4:3).

The enemy challenged the very identity the Father had just declared. Look closely at the three temptations, because they are the same three pressures we face:

• **Provision:** "Command that these stones become bread" (Matthew 4:3). Prove who you are by meeting your own needs.

• **Protection and recognition:** "Throw Yourself down" (Matthew 4:6). Prove who you are by forcing a public display.

• **Position:** "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:9). Take a shortcut to what the Father has already promised.

Each temptation said, in effect: Prove it. Each time, Jesus answered, "It is written." He did not need to prove what the Father had already spoken. He responded from Scripture, relationship, and settled identity.

IDENTITY IS OFTEN TESTED PRIVATELY BEFORE IT IS REPRESENTED PUBLICLY.

TEMPTATION SAYS, "PROVE WHO YOU ARE."

SONSHIP SAYS, "I ALREADY KNOW WHO I AM."

11. IDENTITY AND PERFORMANCE

When identity is insecure, performance becomes dangerous. We begin using:

• Achievement to prove worth.

• Success to prove significance.

• Recognition to prove value.

• Ministry to prove spirituality.

• Money to prove importance.

• Influence to prove relevance.

Even spiritual gifts can become identity substitutes. A gifted person who is insecure will use the gift to be noticed. A gifted person who is secure will use the gift to serve.

I DO NOT NEED MY GIFT TO TELL ME WHO I AM.

I NEED CHRIST TO TELL ME WHO I AM.

Then gifts become service rather than self-validation.

12. KNOWING WHOSE I AM

Sonship is not merely knowing who I am. It is knowing whose I am. Identity becomes secure when belonging becomes settled.

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1). Notice that John does not tell us to work toward being called children. The love has already been bestowed.

In Lesson 6, we saw that Scripture uses two complementary pictures. New birth speaks of life received from God. Adoption, huiothesia, speaks of placement as a son, inheritance, and recognized standing. Neither picture describes outsiders whom God reluctantly accepts. Both describe a Father who has made us family. “You are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19).

SONSHIP DOES NOT BEGIN WITH WHAT A SON CAN DO.

IT BEGINS WITH WHOSE SON HE IS.

This changes the question from “Am I enough?” to “Am I living from relationship with the Father?”

13. IDENTITY IS PRESENT, MATURITY IS PROGRESSIVE

This distinction is crucial. Some things are true of you right now. In Christ, you are received, loved, reconciled, made alive, and part of God’s royal family. Peter calls us “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people” (1 Peter 2:9).

But character, wisdom, responsibility, capacity, and representation develop over time.

IDENTITY CAN BE IMMEDIATE. MATURITY IS PROGRESSIVE.

Confusing these creates two opposite problems. If we think identity must be earned through maturity, we fall into performance religion. If we think maturity comes automatically with identity, we claim premature authority. Healthy sonship teaches both: You belong, and you must grow.

Identity Does Not Eliminate Formation

Grace does not remove growth. Love does not remove correction. A loving Father forms His children, because sonship is not only about belonging. It is about becoming capable of representing Him.

The New Testament uses four Greek words that help us recognize this growth: teknon (identity and belonging), nēpios (character formation), neaniskos (strength and capacity), and huios (mature representation). The next lesson explores them in depth. For now, notice where the journey begins: with teknon, the child who belongs.

IDENTITY GIVES SECURITY TO FORMATION.

Correction does not mean rejection. Correction becomes evidence that our growth matters to the Father. God corrects those He loves, and sonship is confirmed by correction. Proverbs warns us not to despise or resent the Lord's discipline: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights" (Proverbs 3:11-12). Hebrews 12:6 quotes this very passage to show that the Lord corrects everyone He receives as a son. Correction is intended to direct us away from harm and draw us closer into fellowship.

14. A BIBLICAL PICTURE: SIMON BECOMES PETER

The first time Jesus met Simon, He looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (John 1:42). Cephas means "a stone."

Jesus named Simon a rock long before Simon acted like one. In the years that followed, Peter was impulsive, rebuked Jesus, sank in the water, and finally denied Him three times. His behavior did not yet match his name.

But Jesus did not withdraw the name. After the resurrection, He met Peter by the sea and asked him three times, "Do you love Me?" Three denials were answered with three restorations, and each one ended with an assignment: "Feed My sheep" (John 21:17).

Weeks later, the same man who had denied Jesus before a servant girl stood before thousands on the Day of Pentecost and preached with boldness.

GOD NAMES YOU BY WHAT HE IS FORMING IN YOU.

Your identity in Christ is not a reward for maturity. It is the seed of it. Jesus promised, “To him who overcomes… I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it” (Revelation 2:17). The One who named Simon a stone has a name for you that only He can give. Have you ever wondered what your new name will be?

15. IDENTITY AND THE RENEWED MIND

Identity may be established spiritually while the mind still operates through old agreements. Someone may be:

• Loved, but still think rejected.

• Accepted, but still think abandoned.

• Free, but still think enslaved.

• Forgiven, but still think condemned.

• Chosen, but still think insignificant.

This is why Romans 12:2 matters: “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” In Lesson 4, we saw that alignment begins with what we agree with. Identity in Christ is true, but it must also become our agreement.

We learn to think from what is true in Christ rather than from old experiences alone.

NEW IDENTITY REQUIRES NEW THINKING.

16. THE OLD STORY AND THE NEW STORY

Everyone carries a story about themselves:

• “I always fail.”

• “I am unwanted.”

• “I am what happened to me.”

• “I am what I achieved.”

• “I will never change.”

Identity in Christ introduces a new reference point. The past may explain what happened. It does not have the authority to define who you are becoming. Paul wrote, “Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal” (Philippians 3:13-14).

A Biblical Picture: Mephibosheth at the King's Table

Mephibosheth was the grandson of King Saul. When news came of Saul's death, his nurse fled in a panic, dropped him, and he became lame in both feet. He grew up hidden away in a place called Lo Debar, a name often understood to mean "no pasture."

Years later, King David asked, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Mephibosheth was brought to the palace, expecting judgment. Instead, David said, "You shall eat bread at my table continually" (2 Samuel 9:7).

Listen to how Mephibosheth saw himself: "What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?" (2 Samuel 9:8). The king had restored his inheritance, but he still described himself by his injury.

Scripture ends the story this way: "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet" (2 Samuel 9:13). His feet had not changed. His seat had.

Picture the scene. Once Mephibosheth was seated, the table hid his feet. No one at the king's table could see what wasn't working. All they saw was a son sitting face to face with the king. In the same way, at the table of fellowship with our Father, our lameness is covered.

YOUR HISTORY CAN INFORM YOU WITHOUT GOVERNING YOU.

YOUR WOUND DOES NOT DECIDE YOUR SEAT. THE KING DOES.

17. IDENTITY AND SHAME

Shame and conviction can feel similar, but they are very different.

• Shame turns failure into identity: "My failure tells me who I am."

• Conviction identifies what is out of alignment: "Something in me needs to change."

Shame attacks identity. Healthy conviction addresses alignment. Shame says, "You are bad." Conviction says, "That was wrong, and you were made for better." Shame drives us to hide, the way Adam hid in the garden. Conviction draws us to come home.

If correction becomes identity destruction, people hide. If correction happens inside secure belonging, people can grow.

Everyday Example: "You'll Never Amount to Anything"

Kevin grew up hearing one sentence from his father more than any other: "You'll never amount to anything." By the time he was forty, he had built a successful career, but every mistake at work sent him into days of self-condemnation. One missed deadline felt like proof that his father had been right.

When Kevin began meeting with a mentor at church, he was asked a simple question: “Whose voice are you hearing when you fail?” Kevin realized it was not God’s voice. It was an old sentence that had been given authority over his identity.

Kevin started writing down what Scripture says about him in Christ and reading it aloud when the old sentence returned. Mistakes still happened. But now they led to correction instead of collapse. For the first time, he could say, “I made a mistake,” without hearing, “I am a mistake.”

SONSHIP CREATES AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE CORRECTION DOES NOT MEAN REJECTION.

18. IDENTITY AND CONDEMNATION

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

Condemnation says you are rejected, disqualified, hopeless, and permanently defined by failure. The gospel says that in Christ there is a new position for you.

This does not make sin meaningless. It makes restoration possible. The same chapter that begins with no condemnation goes on to say, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:16). Condemnation is silenced so that sonship can be heard.

CONDEMNATION FREEZES IDENTITY AROUND FAILURE.

GRACE CALLS IDENTITY FORWARD INTO TRANSFORMATION.

Righteousness-Conscious, Not Sin-Conscious

Many believers live with a constant awareness of what is wrong with them. Every prayer begins with failure, and every thought of God is tied to guilt. That is sin-consciousness.

But Scripture describes something different. “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). Our righteousness is not something we produce. It is something we receive in Christ. We are not righteous because we did everything right. We are righteous because He did everything right, and we are in Him. Just as He took our sin upon Himself, we receive His righteousness by faith.

This does not mean we ignore sin. When we sin, we confess it and receive forgiveness. But we do not build our identity around it. A righteousness-conscious believer comes to the Father with confidence, not because of personal performance, but because of what Jesus has done.

WE ARE NOT SINNERS TRYING TO BECOME RIGHTEOUS.

WE ARE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN CHRIST LEARNING TO LIVE LIKE IT.

19. IDENTITY, PURPOSE, AND AUTHORITY

Purpose flows best from identity. Without secure identity, purpose turns into pressure, comparison, competition, and striving. But when identity is settled, calling becomes stewardship, gifts become service, influence becomes responsibility, and opportunity becomes assignment.

PURPOSE IS NOT WHO YOU ARE.

PURPOSE IS WHAT YOU ARE CALLED TO CARRY.

If the assignment changes, identity should remain stable.

Authority works the same way. It should flow from identity, not from insecurity, ego, domination, or the need to be noticed. Jesus carried extraordinary authority because He knew who He was, who sent Him, whose will He represented, and where His authority came from. John tells us that Jesus, “knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God” (John 13:3), picked up a towel and washed His disciples’ feet.

Insecure people use authority to prove themselves. Mature sons use authority to serve and represent the Father.

HEALTHY AUTHORITY FLOWS FROM SECURE IDENTITY.

20. IDENTITY AND INHERITANCE

Romans 8 tells us that if we are children, then we are “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17). Inheritance is connected to belonging.

A servant may work in a house. A son belongs to the house. This does not mean sonship is entitlement. It means relationship carries both inheritance and responsibility.

INHERITANCE IS NOT MERELY WHAT WE RECEIVE.

IT IS ALSO WHAT WE BECOME RESPONSIBLE TO STEWARD.

21. IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION

“So God created man in His own image” (Genesis 1:27). Image carries the idea of representation. This means biblical identity was never intended to end in self-discovery. We discover who we are so that we can reveal who He is.

This connects directly to the Kingdom Codes pathway:

REVELATION -> APPLICATION -> TRANSFORMATION -> MATURITY -> REPRESENTATION

In Lesson 6, we summarized this outward movement through the Four R’s: Reveal, Reflect, Represent, and Release. Identity is where that movement begins.

The goal is not, “I finally know who I am.” The greater goal is, “My life now reveals who He is.”

SONSHIP IS NOT SELF-ABSORPTION. SONSHIP IS FATHER-REPRESENTATION.

22. IDENTITY IS FORMED IN COMMUNITY

Identity is received personally, but it is not merely private. Scripture describes us as a body, a household, a family, a temple, a flock, and a priesthood. We belong to Christ and to one another.

Isolation often distorts identity, because there is no healthy relational environment for formation. Alone, we tend either to inflate ourselves or to condemn ourselves. In healthy community, people who love us can expose blind spots, call out gifts, encourage strengths, and help us grow through weaknesses.

Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit” (John 15:5). Identity is sustained by abiding in Christ and strengthened through relationship with His people.

In Lesson 3, we learned that relationship sustains increase. Here we see that it also sustains identity.

IDENTITY IS RECEIVED PERSONALLY AND FORMED RELATIONALLY.

23. IDENTITY UNDER PRESSURE

Pressure reveals what identity is rooted in.

• If identity is rooted in approval, criticism destabilizes us.

• If identity is rooted in success, failure destroys us.

• If identity is rooted in money, loss defines us.

• If identity is rooted in position, transition threatens us.

But if identity is rooted in Christ, circumstances can hurt without having the authority to redefine us.

Secure identity can serve without applause, obey without recognition, wait without panic, and be corrected without collapse. It can even celebrate someone else without feeling diminished.

Everyday Example: When the Promotion Went to Someone Else

Maria had worked toward a management position for three years. When it was announced, the job went to a coworker she had trained. That night she felt the old questions rising: Am I not good enough? Was all that work for nothing?

In prayer, Maria realized the disappointment was real, but it did not have the right to name her. Her worth had not changed with the announcement. The next morning, she walked into her coworker's office and sincerely congratulated her, then offered to help her succeed in the new role.

Months later, a different door opened for Maria, one better suited to her gifts. But the greater victory had already happened in that office. Her identity had held under pressure.

IDENTITY DETERMINES WHAT YOU ALLOW TO NAME YOU.

MATURITY IS REVEALED IN RESPONSE.

24. SEVEN IDENTITY STATEMENTS IN CHRIST

These are not slogans. They are biblical realities to explore and embody.

1. **I am in Christ.** My life has a new location and center (Colossians 3:3).

2. **I am loved.** I do not have to perform for belonging (1 John 3:1).

3. **I am accepted.** Grace has brought me near (Ephesians 1:6).

4. **I am a new creation.** My past is not my final definition (2 Corinthians 5:17).

5. **I belong to the family of God.** Sonship is relational (Ephesians 2:19).

6. **I am being formed.** Maturity is an ongoing process (Philippians 3:13-14).

7. **I am called to represent Christ.** Identity has a purpose beyond self-discovery (Ephesians 2:10).

25. HOW TO STRENGTHEN IDENTITY

Use this seven-part framework:

1. **Receive.** Stop trying to earn what grace gives.

2. **Recognize.** What does Scripture say is true of me in Christ?

3. **Reject false definitions.** What label, story, failure, fear, or opinion has been naming me?

4. **Renew.** Train the mind around truth. Search for scriptures that reveal who the Father says you are, then meditate on them. The Seven Identity Statements in Section 24 are a good place to start.

5. **Remain.** Abide in Christ. Identity is sustained through relationship.

6. **Respond.** Live according to the identity I have received.

7. **Represent.** Allow the Father's nature to become visible through my life.

RECEIVE -> RECOGNIZE -> REJECT -> RENEW -> REMAIN -> RESPOND -> REPRESENT

26. CHRIST AT THE CENTER

Identity in Christ can never become self-exaltation, spiritual ego, personal greatness, or independent power. The entire phrase is in Christ. He remains the center.

Without Christ, sonship loses its foundation. Without the Father, sonship loses its relationship. Without Holy Spirit, sonship loses its formation and power.

Paul said it best: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). Our identity in Christ is not, "Look how great I am." It is, "Look what grace has done in Christ." And ultimately, "Let my life reveal Him."

CHRIST IS NOT ONLY THE SOURCE OF MY IDENTITY.

HE IS THE LIFE OF IT.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Many people try to fix behavior without addressing identity. They ask, “How do I stop doing this? How do I become more confident? How do I find my purpose?” Those questions matter. But beneath them is a deeper one: Who do I believe I am?

Behavior often follows identity. If I see myself as permanently rejected, I may live defensively. If I see myself as powerless, I may live passively. If I see myself only through failure, I may stop expecting growth.

But as my identity becomes rooted in Christ, my thinking changes, my responses change, my relationships change, and my behavior begins to follow.

IDENTITY CREATES AN ENVIRONMENT FOR TRANSFORMATION.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Choose one area where your identity feels unstable, and reflect on these questions:

1. What label or old story has been defining me in this area, and where did it come from?

2. What does Scripture say is true of me in Christ instead?

3. Where am I still performing for something Christ has already given?

4. What would a secure son or daughter do differently here?

Do not begin by trying to impress God.

Begin with belonging.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What has most strongly shaped the way I define myself?

2. How do I respond when I am criticized, when I fail, or when someone else succeeds?

3. Am I more focused on discovering who I am, or on representing who He is?

4. What Kingdom Code can I apply here to break through?

ONE QUESTION

Whose voice has been naming me, and does it agree with what the Father has said?

ONE ACTION STEP

Choose one of the Seven Identity Statements in Christ that you find hardest to believe. Write it on a card with its Scripture reference, read it aloud each morning this week, and when an old label speaks, answer it the way Jesus did: “It is written.”

DECLARATION

I am in Christ, and my life is hidden with Christ in God.

I am a new creation; old things have passed away, and all things have become new.

I am accepted in the Beloved, and I do not perform for belonging.

My past may inform me, but it does not govern me.

There is no condemnation for me in Christ Jesus; I receive correction as love.

I do not need to prove what the Father has already spoken.

I live from sonship, not for sonship.

Jesus Christ is my center, Scripture is my foundation, and Holy Spirit is my guide.

I will move from revelation to representation.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Identity is the foundation, but identity must mature. A child belongs before maturity, but belonging is meant to lead somewhere.

The next lesson explores how biblical sonship develops through four recognizable stages of formation:

TEKNON -> NĒPIOS -> NEANISKOS -> HUIOS

These words help us understand the movement from:

IDENTITY -> CHARACTER -> STRENGTH -> MATURE REPRESENTATION

[NEXT LESSON: THE FOUR STAGES OF SONSHIP]

RELATED CODES

WHAT IS BIBLICAL SONSHIP?

Understand the larger biblical framework of sonship.

[EXPLORE]

THE CODE OF ALIGNMENT

Bring life into agreement with the identity received in Christ.

[EXPLORE]

THE CODE OF MIND RENEWAL

Replace old identity agreements with Kingdom truth.

[EXPLORE]

THE CODE OF SHALOM

Discover the peace that comes when identity becomes settled and ordered.

[EXPLORE]

THE RECOVERY CODE

Rebuild areas damaged by false identity through revelation, alignment, and action.

[EXPLORE]

TAKE HOME POINT

IDENTITY IS RECEIVED BEFORE IT IS REPRESENTED.

You do not perform your way into belonging.

You receive life in Christ and discover who you are in Him.

You allow that identity to reshape your thinking.

You grow through formation and mature through relationship and obedience.

YOU REPRESENT THE FATHER FROM THE IDENTITY YOU HAVE RECEIVED.

WHO YOU ARE DETERMINES HOW YOU LIVE.

WHO YOU ARE BECOMING DETERMINES WHAT YOU CAN REPRESENT.

Discover the Kingdom Code you need.

Apply it. Move forward.

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