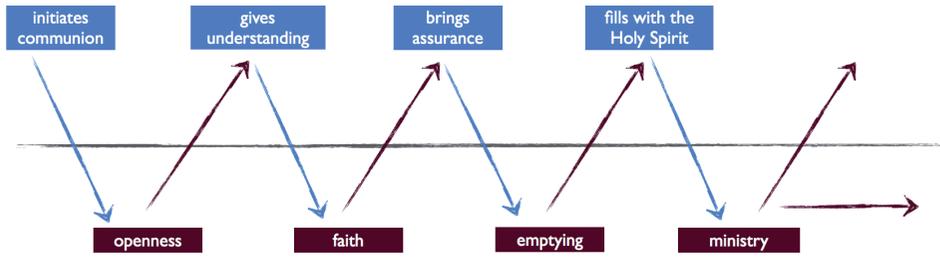


UNTIL CHRIST IS FORMED IN YOU



connect to reflect

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNION: 3

God gives assurance

when we place our faith in God, he affirms that we are his children



the challenge to believe

In what is your identity placed? In what you own, or have achieved—financially, academically, or your family? In the table over the page, which promises challenge your faith the most? Which promises is God calling you to believe?



deepening dependence

Have you heard the testimony of the Holy Spirit to your spirit, that you are a child of God, as Paul writes is possible in Romans 8:16? Spend some time in communion with God so that you hear the Holy Spirit's affirmation that you are God's child.



steps for re-connecting our hearts to God

1. Ask the Holy Spirit what he wants you to learn from this lesson. What do you sense the Holy Spirit teaching you?
2. This week, what practical steps do you need to take to apply what the Holy Spirit is teaching you?
3. What evidence will you see that indicates that you are successfully applying what the Holy Spirit is teaching you?



passing it on

- INTERCESSION** Who can you pray for who needs to hear the assurance of the Holy Spirit that they are God's child?
- WORDS** Who could you encourage to put their faith in the promises of God, so that they hear the testimony of the Holy Spirit to them?
- CHARACTER** How can the assurance of the Spirit's testimony to you that you are God's child, be visible in the way you live?



Opening to God's words

Where do you get your identity from? What makes you "you"? Is it what you have? What you know? Who you know? What others think of you?

When we become Christians and are "born again" (John 3:3), we take on a new identity. Paul says, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). In other words, when we are connected to the person of Jesus, we share in his identity. We are no longer identified by anything on this earth, but by our new relationship Jesus and his kingdom.

We understand what this new identity is like as we come into communion with Jesus. God's promises explain what this identity is like. These promises explain our new identity from God's point of view. No longer are we identified by what people think

of us, but how God views us. We do not generate our own identity. Our identity is affirmed to us by God.

As we place our faith in these promises, Jesus, through his Holy Spirit, affirms to our hearts that what we read is really so. This affirmation that we are God's children gives us complete security in Jesus. When we have this security, we become willing to do whatever he asks.

According to Romans 8:16 & Galatians 4:6-7, what is the function of the Holy Spirit? Why do you think it is that the Holy Spirit is the one who affirms our identity?

I AM:

1. I AM LOVED

- * *Nothing can separate me from God's love Romans 8:37-39*
- * *I am loved and chosen by God 1 Thessalonians 1:4*

2. I AM SECURE

- * *I am forgiven because of the riches of God's grace Ephesians 1:7-8*
- * *I am not condemned for my past sins Romans 8:1-2*
- * *I am sealed with the Holy Spirit Ephesians 1:13*

3. I AM VALUED

- * *I am God's treasured possession Deuteronomy 14:2*
- * *I am being transformed into the likeness of God 2 Corinthians 3:18*

4. I AM EMPOWERED

- * *God lives in me as Jesus lives in the Father and the Father in Jesus John 17:20-22*
- * *I can do everything that God wills because he gives me strength Philippians 4:13*

5. I AM PROVIDED FOR

- * *I have direct access to God's throne for all my needs Hebrews 4:14-16*
- * *The God who died to save me will certainly give me everything I will ever need Romans 8:31-32*

I HAVE:

1. I HAVE A NEW PURPOSE

- * *To glorify God by revealing God's character to others John 15:8*
- * *To do good works for God Ephesians 2:10*

2. I HAVE A NEW FAMILY

- * *I am a member of Heaven's family—a child of God John 1:12*
- * *I am a member of God's family on earth—His Church Romans 12:5*

3. I HAVE NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

- * *I have been bought with a price 1 Corinthians 6:19-20*
- * *I am an ambassador for God's kingdom 2 Corinthians 5:20*
- * *I am a royal priest for God 1 Peter 2:9*
- * *I am a worker with God 1 Corinthians 3:9*

4. I HAVE A NEW FUTURE

- * *Where everything works for good Romans 8:28*
- * *I have an inheritance in Heaven 1 Peter 1:3-4*

I LIVE BY:

1. FAITH, NOT JUST SIGHT OR FEELINGS

- * *2 Corinthians 5:7, Romans 1:17*

2. EXPERIENCE, NOT JUST THEORY

- * *Ephesians 3:16-19, 2 Corinthians 4:16*

3. SACRIFICE, NOT JUST GETTING

- * *Romans 12:1-2, Philippians 1:21*

4. OBEDIENCE, NOT JUST KNOWING

- * *1 John 2:5-6*

5. ABIDING, NOT JUST TRYING ON MY OWN

- * *John 15:1-4*

6. SERVING, NOT JUST LOOKING AFTER MYSELF

- * *Philippians 2:1-8*

7. RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS, NOT JUST RULES

- * *John 15:15*

PROMISES ON WHICH TO BUILD MY IDENTITY

which of these texts speaks most to you, and why?

In the questions below, place a X on the line that is closest to what you really think. Be as honest as you can. Don't try and answer what you think should be the right answer, because you want to gain an accurate understanding of your own sense of identity.

1	I feel most loved when...	I know I am loved by friends or family	.....	I know that God loves me
2	I feel most secure when...	I know I am accepted unconditionally by God	.....	Other people like me
3	I feel valued when...	Other people think I am really special	.....	God thinks I am really special
4	I feel most confident when I rely on...	God's power	.....	Myself
5	The one who is going to take care of me is...	Me	.....	God
6	The purpose of life is to...	Honour God	.....	Enjoy myself
7	The family that is most important to me is...	The family of God	.....	My earthly family
8	The most important responsibilities in life are...	Those that have to do with God's kingdom	.....	Looking after my own needs
9	When I think about the future...	I know God is working everything out for my good at all times	.....	I feel scared
10	I live mostly by...			
a		Faith	.....	What I can see
b		An experience of God	.....	Theory about God
c		Obedience to God	.....	Knowing about God
d		Relying on what Jesus has done for me	.....	Doing things myself
e		Serving others	.....	Serving myself
f		Sacrificing for God	.....	Getting things for me
g		A relationship with God	.....	Following rules

Look back over your answers. Are there any questions or answers that have surprised you about your identity? Anything you need to do? Ask further questions about? Pray about?