

STUDY 01

The Echo in the Room*On pride, the hidden architect*

STUDY 02

The Comparison Trap*On measuring ourselves
against others*

STUDY 03

The Full Apology*On going all the way*

STUDY 04

**The Unshakeable
Ground***Series Finale*

The Unshakeable Ground

On identity in Christ — and why it's the only foundation that makes everything else possible

Romans 8:15 (ESV)

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'

We have spent three studies naming pride, tracing it into comparison, and following it all the way into the apology we owe. And if you've been honest with yourself along the way, you may have arrived here with one quiet, uncomfortable question underneath all the others:

"So if I can't build my identity or my worth on what I achieve, what people think of me, how I compare to others, or how good a person I am — then what do I build it on? Like the reality is, who are we without being pride-orientated?"

That question is not a distraction from the series. It is the point of the whole series. Pride, comparison, and the half-apology are all symptoms. This is the root. And this is where we go to find the only thing sturdy enough to replace them.

There is a reason Jesus' first act before his public ministry was his baptism — and the Father's voice over him: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Not after the miracles. Not after the cross. Before any of it. His identity was declared before his performance began.

PART ONE

What We've Been Building On Instead

Every human being builds their sense of self on something. The question is never *whether* you have a foundation — it's *what* that foundation is. And most of us have been building, often without realising it, on things that move.

UNSTABLE FOUNDATIONS

- What people think of me
- My performance and track record
- My role in a relationship
- My moral score
- My cultural identity
- My ministry or calling
- How hard I work
- What I've sacrificed

WHAT GOD SAYS INSTEAD

- You are chosen (Ephesians 1:4)
- You are loved without condition
- You are already declared righteous
- You are held and fully known
- You belong to him — irrevocably
- No condemnation (Romans 8:1)
- You are his masterpiece (Eph 2:10)
- You are a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9)

Romans 8:15 (ESV)

The spirit of adoption. Not a hired servant. Not a probationer. In Roman culture, adoption was irrevocable. An adopted child could not be disinherited. The relationship was permanent, binding, and unconditional. That is the ground you are standing on.

PART TWO

Who the Word Says You Are

Right after the Father declares over Jesus at his baptism, the Spirit leads him immediately into the desert. And what does the enemy attack first? His identity. Here is who God says you are — six declarations that are not contingent on how last week went:

<p>John 1:12</p> <p>A Child of God</p> <p>Not a servant. Not an employee. A child — with all the inheritance that implies.</p>	<p>Ephesians 1:4</p> <p>Chosen Before the World Began</p> <p>Not discovered. Not an afterthought. Chosen before time — before you could do anything to deserve it.</p>	<p>Romans 8:1</p> <p>No Condemnation</p> <p>Not “no condemnation if you’re doing well.” No condemnation. Full stop. The verdict has been given.</p>
<p>2 Cor. 5:17</p> <p>A New Creation</p> <p>The old self — defined by pride, fear, performance — is not who you are. You are new.</p>	<p>Eph. 2:10</p> <p>God’s Masterpiece</p> <p>The Greek poiema — the root of ‘poem.’ You are not an accident. You are crafted with intention.</p>	<p>1 Peter 2:9</p> <p>A Royal Priesthood</p> <p>Not defined by what culture says about you. Your identity belongs to a different kingdom entirely.</p>

Do you actually believe these things about yourself? Not as a theological position. Not as a Sunday school answer. But in the moment when the argument blows up, when the project fails, when you don’t get the

recognition — in that moment, what do you reach for?

PART THREE

The Desert and the Declaration

This is not a list to make you feel better. These are declarations made over you by the one who created you — and they are not contingent on how last week went.

“If you are the Son of God...”

Matthew 4:3 · The Enemy's Opening Move

The attack is not on his power. It is on his identity. The enemy's opening move — the very first thing he goes after — is the declaration the Father just made. *Are you sure? Prove it. Perform it. Earn it again.*

And Jesus does not perform. He does not prove. He answers from Scripture — from the fixed, unchanging Word — not from a need to demonstrate who he is to someone who has already questioned it.

The attacks on your identity are all variations of the same question: if you are who God says you are, prove it. The answer is not to prove it. The answer is to return to the declaration.

PART FOUR

Why Identity in Christ Actually Solves the Pride Problem

This is where the whole series connects.

Pride exists because we need something to stand on. When identity is built on performance, recognition, or moral score-keeping — we cling to those things because without them, we have nothing. The pride is not just arrogance. It is survival.

Comparison happens because when identity is external, we need external evidence. The half-apology happens because a full apology feels like destruction — if our identity depends on being right, then admitting we were wrong feels like we cease to exist.

But when your identity is anchored in Christ — in the permanent, irrevocable adoption of Romans 8, in the “no condemnation” verdict, in being his chosen, crafted, deeply loved child — none of those threats land the same way. You can be wrong and still be whole. You can be unseen and still be known. You can be behind and still be on track. The foundation doesn’t move.

Philippians 1:6 (ESV)

“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

He who *began* the work. Not: he who will begin it once you get yourself together. He already began. And he will complete it — not because of your consistency, but because of his faithfulness. That promise removes the urgency of self-promotion. It removes the panic of being behind. It removes the need to keep score, to be seen, to protect your position — because the one whose opinion of you actually counts has already given his verdict, and it does not change based on how last week went.

PART FIVE

The Daily Practice: Returning to What Is True

This is not a one-time shift. It is a daily returning. Because the world — and the older voice inside us — keeps pulling toward the unstable foundations. The algorithm keeps showing you what other people have. The argument keeps threatening your position. The work keeps demanding proof of worth.

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

The renewing of the mind is not a feeling. It is a discipline. It is choosing, again and again, to let what God says about you be louder than what everything else says. It is catching yourself mid-comparison and saying: *what is that to me? I follow him.* It is feeling the pride rise and naming it — not with self-condemnation, but with the quiet confidence of someone who doesn’t need the performance to be loved.

That is what this whole series has been moving toward. Not a perfectly humble person who never struggles with pride. But a person who has found something sturdy enough to stand on — so that when pride rises, when comparison pulls, when the apology is hard — there is a ground underneath that does not move.

You are his. *That is the ground. Build there.*

Study & Reflection — Series Finale

Honestly, what has your identity most been built on? Performance, relationships, moral track record, what others think — which one is loudest?

When things go wrong — an argument, a failure, a season of not being seen — what is the first thing you reach for to stabilise yourself?

Which of the six identity declarations do you find hardest to actually believe? Why?

The enemy's first move against Jesus was to question his identity. Where in your life is someone or something asking you to prove who you are?

How does building on an unshakeable identity change the way you would have handled the situations from Studies 01–03?

What would it look like this week to practise 'renewing your mind' — actively returning to what is true when the unstable foundations start pulling?

A Prayer

Dear Abba, Father,

Today I want to build differently. Not on what I produce or how I'm perceived or whether I'm ahead or behind. On what you have already declared over me. Chosen. Loved. No condemnation. Yours.

Help me to believe it not just in theory but in the moments when it's hardest. When pride rises, remind me: I already have what pride was trying to get me.

Help me and guide me during those times I get puffed up and remind me of the words you have spoken over me and who I am.

In Jesus' Mighty Name,

Amen.

Key Scriptures

Matthew 3:17 · Matthew 4:1–11 · Romans 8:1, 15 · Romans 12:2 · Ephesians 1:4 · Ephesians 2:10 · 2 Corinthians 5:17 · John 1:12 · 1 Peter 2:9 · Philippians 1:6

“You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but the Spirit of adoption — by whom we cry, Abba! Father!”

Romans 8:15 · The Unshakeable Ground · Pride Series Complete

Read the full series and more devotionals at wovenandknown.com

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