

Our Full Identity in Christ Jesus

An 11-Session Bible Study

Who We Are Because of What He Has Done

Includes: Greek & Hebrew Word Studies · Cross-Reference Trails
Reflection Questions · Personal Application
Group Discussion · Prayer Guides

"Christ in you, the hope of glory."

— **Colossians 1:27**

How to Use This Study

This study guide contains eleven sessions, one for each foundational truth of Christian identity covered in the blog series. Each session is designed for approximately 60–90 minutes of personal study, or 90 minutes in a group setting.

Each session includes:

Session Focus — a theological grounding for the identity truth, written in accessible language.

Greek/Hebrew Word Studies — the original language behind key terms, with context from the ancient world.

Cross-Reference Trail — connected Scriptures that develop the theme across the biblical narrative.

Reflection Questions — personal, honest questions designed to move from theology to your actual life.

Personal Application — concrete, specific practices to embody the truth this week.

Group Discussion — questions for open, honest conversation with others on the same journey.

Prayer — a closing prayer that speaks the truth back to God as a declaration and invitation.

A note on approach:

Christian identity is not motivational content. It is covenantal reality — statements about who you are based on what Christ has done. The goal of this study is not information accumulation but genuine reception: learning to live from truths that are already true, rather than striving toward an identity you're hoping to earn.

Go slowly. Return to sessions. Let the word studies open the text in new ways. Use the reflection questions honestly. Pray the prayers as your own — not as liturgy to perform but as declarations to receive.

You are not discovering who you should be. You are discovering who you already are in Christ.

SESSION 04

Adopted

"You received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."

— Romans 8:15–16

◆ SESSION FOCUS

Adoption (Greek: *huiiothesia*) was a profound legal institution in the Roman world — not available in Jewish law, which is exactly why Paul borrows Roman legal culture to describe what God has done. In Rome, an adopted child's entire former life was legally cancelled. Old debts, old obligations, old family identity — gone. The new father assumed full responsibility and the child received a new name, full inheritance rights, and permanent family status that could never be revoked. Paul is saying: God has done this for you. In Christ.

◆ GREEK/HEBREW WORD STUDIES

νιοθεσία
huiiothesia

Adoption to sonship, placement as a son

From *huios* (son) + *thesis* (placement). Used only by Paul (5x). No Jewish legal equivalent — Paul draws on Roman *adoptio* deliberately. In Rome, an adopted child was legally identical to a biological child with full inheritance rights and no possibility of disinheritance.

Ἄββα
Abba

Father (Aramaic, intimate)

Jesus's own prayer word (Mark 14:36). Cited by Paul in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6 as evidence of adoption. The fact that Gentile believers cry *Abba* in the Spirit means they've been brought into the same intimacy Jesus himself has with the Father.

κληρονόμος
klēronomos

Heir, inheritor

Romans 8:17 — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. Legal and economic term. In Roman adoption, the adopted child received equal inheritance rights. You are not a lesser member of the family — you are an heir.

◆ CROSS-REFERENCE TRAIL

Ephesians 1:4–5 Predestined for adoption through Christ — the Father's purpose from before creation.

Galatians 4:4–7 From slave to heir — the full adoption narrative.

John 1:12 Those who believe receive the right to become children of God.

1 John 3:1–2 'See what great love' — the Father's lavish declaration of our family status.

Romans 8:14–17 The full adoption passage — Spirit leading, *Abba* cry, co-heirs with Christ.

◆ REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is your gut-level sense of God as Father — distant, demanding, warm, safe, unpredictable? Where did that picture come from, and how much does it match what Paul describes in Romans 8:15–16?

Your response...

2. The Spirit testifies that you are God's child. Have you experienced this — a sense of being known and loved as a child of God, not just theologically but personally? Describe it.

Your response...

3. In Roman adoption, all old debts were cancelled. What 'old debts' from your pre-Christ life do you still sometimes feel burdened by? How does the adoption language address those?

Your response...

◆ PERSONAL APPLICATION

→ Spend ten minutes this week in prayer using only the word 'Father' — not presenting requests, just sitting in the relationship. Notice what comes up: comfort, awkwardness, longing, distance.

→ Read Romans 8:14–17 slowly. Write down every implication of being an heir of God. Sit with the size of that.

→ Identify one way the 'orphan mindset' (striving for approval, fear of rejection, performance-based relating) shows up in your life. Bring it before God as a father, not as a judge.

◆ GROUP DISCUSSION

1. How has your experience of earthly fathers (or their absence) shaped your picture of God as Father? What has needed to be healed or corrected in that picture?

2. What does it mean to you that the Spirit of adoption makes you cry 'Abba'? Have you experienced this? What was it like?

3. If you truly have full inheritance rights — equal standing to a biological child — how should that change the way you approach God in prayer?

4. Why do so many Christians live with an 'orphan spirit' even after being adopted? What keeps us from fully receiving this identity?

◆ PRAYER

Abba, Father —

*I come to you not as a servant earning access, not as a stranger hoping to be tolerated,
but as your child.*

Your adopted, chosen, named, inheriting child.

Where I relate to you from fear or distance, bring me close.

Let the Spirit cry through me: Abba. Father.

And let me live from that, not just believe it.

Amen.