

# YOUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

*book three in the series:*

**THE OWNER'S MANUAL TO THE NEW YOU**

**DOUG BRITTON, MFT**

Five-day Bible study for individuals, small groups, and churches

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- Day One: You are a Child of God
- Day Two: You are a Temple of the Holy Spirit
- Day Three: You are a Priest and an Ambassador of God
- Day Four: You are Part of the Body of Christ
- Day Five: Review and Test

**Your Identity in Christ:** Book three in “The Owner’s Manual to the New You”

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# The Owner's Manual to the New You

Forty-eight short books

(Each book includes a five-day Bible study and homework)

**By Doug Britton, MFT**

Twelve books on “Knowing God”

Twelve books on “Developing a Godly Character”

Twelve books on “Enjoying Healthy Relationships”

Twelve books on “Overcoming Personal Problems”

*For*

Individuals

Small Groups

Churches

Available free for personal use at:  
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# The Owner's Manual to the New You

"The Owner's Manual to the New You," published by LifeTree Books, is a series of forty-eight cross-cultural discipleship books by Bible-based Marriage and Family Therapist Doug Britton. LifeTree Books is making these books available free of charge for individual use.

Each book is ideal for a five-day study by small groups, classes, or individuals. Although this is a forty-eight-book series, each book can be studied as a complete book by itself.

## **Knowing God**

- Book 1: Who is God?
- Book 2: Becoming a Believer
- Book 3: Your Identity in Christ
- Book 4: Quick Overview of the Bible
- Book 5: How to Study the Bible
- Book 6: How to Pray
- Book 7: Key Christian Practices
- Book 8: Successful Christian Living
- Book 9: Living a Joyful Life
- Book 10: Knowing God's Will
- Book 11: Obeying God
- Book 12: Living in God's Power

## **Developing a Godly Character**

- Book 13: Growing in Christ
- Book 14: Changing Your Self-Image
- Book 15: Changing Your Attitudes
- Book 16: Living with Humility
- Book 17: Living with Purpose
- Book 18: Living with Self-Control
- Book 19: Living with Integrity
- Book 20: Growing through Problems
- Book 21: Trusting God
- Book 22: Breaking Free from Our Culture
- Book 23: Handling Money Responsibly
- Book 24: Staying Faithful to God

## **Enjoying Healthy Relationships**

- Book 25: Keys to Healthy Relationships
- Book 26: Making Friends
- Book 27: Showing Grace to Others
- Book 28: Forgiving Others
- Book 29: Serving Others
- Book 30: Resolving Conflicts
- Book 31: Overcoming Peer Pressure
- Book 32: Helping Others with Wisdom
- Book 33: Dating, Marriage, and Sex
- Book 34: Embracing the Body of Christ
- Book 35: Respecting Authority
- Book 36: Sharing Your Faith

## **Overcoming Personal Problems**

- Book 37: Overcoming Your Anger (Part 1)
- Book 38: Overcoming Your Anger (Part 2)
- Book 39: Overcoming Rejection
- Book 40: Overcoming Temptation (Part 1)
- Book 41: Overcoming Temptation (Part 2)
- Book 42: Overcoming Anxiety and Fear
- Book 43: Overcoming Jealousy and Insecurity
- Book 44: Overcoming Self-Sufficiency
- Book 45: Overcoming Guilt and Shame
- Book 46: Overcoming Discouragement
- Book 47: Overcoming Failure
- Book 48: Overcoming the Fear of Death

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## Foreword

When I was first asked to write a series of downloadable books for intensive discipleship training, I was excited. Jesus has revolutionized my life, and I am glad to share his truths with you.

The pages you are about to study come straight from God's word. They contain truth that puts our feet on the path to the fullest life possible—truth that sets us free.

As Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32).

May God speak to your heart as you read, and may he bring his truth alive in your life.

Your brother in Christ,

Doug Britton

P.S. LifeTree Books is offering this downloadable book and all the other books in "The Owner's Manual to the New You" series free of charge. If you find these books helpful, please feel free to spread the news to churches, ministries, and individuals who might benefit from them.

## Small Group Leader's Guidelines

**Introduction.** These studies are for new believers as well as mature Christians. They are for small groups, discipleship classes, mentors, and individuals. They are ideal for studies lasting from sixty to ninety minutes.

**Choose the key points, verses, and discussion questions** you will talk about. Don't think you need to cover every verse and question. With new believers, go over the main points, key verses, and selected questions. Go into more depth with mature Christians.

**Begin and end each study with prayer.** Start by asking God to help each person grow from the study. At the end, ask everyone to pray for help to put God's truth into practice.

**Review homework.** Before starting the current lesson, ask group members to discuss their answers to some of the previous day's homework questions.

**Personalize the lesson.** Although it's okay to read each lesson word-for-word, the material will "come alive" if you discuss some of the key points in your own words. Share your own experiences and struggles, and how God has helped you.

**As you read, identify important points and key parts of verses.** Ask group members to circle them, and then explain why you want to emphasize these points.

**Get everyone involved.** The more people are actively involved, the more they are impacted by what you are studying. Don't ask questions that can be answered by "yes" or "no." For example, don't ask, "Do you have any thoughts about this?" Instead, ask, "How does this insight speak to you?"

**Consider breaking up into smaller groups** to discuss the questions if you are leading a large group or class.

**Use day five for a review and test.** Use the questions in day five as a review and/or test. Remove these pages if you do not want group members to see the questions ahead of time.

## Want to Learn More?

**Free online resources:** For more suggestions for small group leaders as well as many online Bible studies on Christianity and daily living (anger, marriage, self-image, finances, and more), visit [www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources/small-groups](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources/small-groups)

**Small group leader's book:** For detailed information on how to lead small groups and overcome typical problems, visit [www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore/small-groups](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore/small-groups).



# Day One: You are a Child of God

## **Your identity changed when you were born again.**

When you became a believer—that is, when you were born again—God gave you a new identity. As Paul wrote, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In this book, you will read about your identity in Christ. You will discover that God sees you in a much more positive light than you may see yourself.

## **Have you ever felt inadequate or like a failure?**

The trouble for many of us is that we feel insignificant or like a failure, even after we become a Christian. Many people try to run away from their negative feelings about themselves by using drugs or alcohol, or by doing dangerous things to try to get their mind off the pain.

How about you? Have you tried to build up your “self-esteem” by making yourself look good through sexual conquests, earning (or stealing) a lot of money, becoming popular, lifting weights, gaining power over other people, or buying stuff—clothes, a new car, jewelry, or something else?

If so, you have probably learned that trying to build up your “self-esteem” doesn’t really work. What does work is realizing that you are a child of God and that he loves you.



### **Discussion question**

1. Have you felt like a failure or that your life doesn’t matter? If so, why have you felt this way? (For example, did this feeling come from the way your parents or other people treated you? Did it come from your failures? Did it come from your life circumstances?)

## **Do you know Jesus?**

This book was written to help believers in Jesus grow in their faith and personal life. You will get the most out of these pages if you know Christ, since it is through his love and power that you can truly change. If you have not yet entered into a relationship with Jesus, let me invite you to accept him as your Savior and Lord. Make this your personal prayer:

*Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God, and I need your help. I confess I have sinned and failed you in many ways. I invite you to be my Savior and Lord, and I ask you to help me follow you the rest of my life. Thank you for loving me, forgiving me, and accepting me as your child.*

If you prayed this prayer, welcome to the family of God. God has plans for you—to transform you. You have an exciting life ahead of you!

### **Discussion question**

2. Do you know Jesus as your Savior? If so, share how you became a believer.

## You are God's child

Imagine the greatest parent you have ever known or have ever heard about. It might be one of your parents. Or it might be one of your friends' parents. If you can't think of anyone, use your imagination. What would a wonderful parent be like?

Whether you are thinking of a specific person, or you are thinking of an imaginary parent, there's one parent who far outshines your picture of a wonderful parent—God himself.

*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)*

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. (Romans 8:15-17)*

*But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:4-6)*

*How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. (1 John 3:1-3)*

When you come to know God as your father, you enter into a remarkable parent-child relationship. You can be both excited and secure because God is your dad.

### Discussion questions

3. What does the Bible mean when it says we are God's children?
4. Why did John write that "everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself" (1 John 3:3)? What do you think that means?

## God is your real father. Do not treat this knowledge casually.

Many Christians take their relationship with God, their father, for granted, hardly ever thinking about it. When they do think about God being their father, it's in a casual way, acknowledging the fact, yet not beginning to grasp the wonder and majesty of having the King of Kings, the Creator of the universe, the author of life itself, as their father.

It's an awesome thing when you think that God, the Creator of everything, is your dad!

*I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6:18)*

### Discussion questions

5. Do you think about God being your father as you go through the day? How would your life change if you remembered this more often?
6. How can you remind yourself that God is your father as you go through life?

## **“But I have a negative image of my father”**

If your human father was abusive or distant, you may not feel comfortable thinking of God as your father. That would be understandable. God understands where you are coming from. He is a very different kind of father. His love for you goes way beyond anything you could think or imagine.

Jesus told his followers a story to help them understand the type of father God is. In this story, recounted in Luke 15:11-32, a son asked his father for an early inheritance. The father gave him the money and the son left home, only to foolishly spend all his money on wild living. He ended up broke and took a job feeding pigs.

Finally, starving, he returned home. He was sure his father wouldn't take him back as his son, but he hoped his father would give him a job.

This shows how little the son knew about his father's love for him. When his father saw the son coming, he ran to him, threw his arms around him, kissed him, and threw a party to celebrate his homecoming.

If you start to wonder what kind of father God is, remember this picture of the father running to embrace his miserable, wayward child. If believing in God as a good father has been hard for you, train yourself to think of this picture each morning before you get out of bed.

### **Discussion questions**

Read Luke 15:11-32, then answer these questions:

7. Do you think the younger son made a mistake when he left home? Why or why not?
8. Did the son's actions stop his father from treating him as his son? What can we learn from his example?
9. How can this story encourage you?

### **Suggested prayer**

*Thank you, God, for being my father. What an amazing privilege! Help me remember that you are my dad and that you love me.*

### **Memory verse**

*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. (Romans 8:16)*

## Want to learn more?

### Free online Bible studies

*How to Be Born Again*

[www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources/salvation](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources/salvation)

*Studies on self-image and self-worth*

[www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources/self-image](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources/self-image)

### Books by Doug Britton

*Getting Started, Getting Connected*

[www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore/getting-started](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore/getting-started)

*First Things First*

[www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore/first-things-first](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore/first-things-first)

## Homework – Day One

1. What has your self-image been?
2. What have you done in the past to try to feel good about yourself?
3. How well did those “solutions” work? What were the results?
4. If your father was abusive or absent, has that affected the way you look at God? If so, in what way?

5. What is the difference between your heavenly father (God) and your earthly father?

6. Read Ephesians 1:1-8.

a. Verse 2 says God is our father. What does that mean? Is he everyone's father?

b. Verse 5 says you are adopted. What does it mean to be adopted?

c. God has adopted you as his child. How does that make you feel?

d. Since God has adopted you, what are your responsibilities as his child?

## Day Two: You are a Temple of the Holy Spirit

Where does God live? In a way this can seem like a silly question, for God is Spirit and he is everywhere. He can't be pinned down to any one place.

Yet when we read the Bible, we see that God instructed the Jewish people to build a temple—a special place where they could go to hear from God and experience his presence.

Today we go to church for a similar reason. Or we might go into the mountains or visit the sea-shore to experience God's presence in the midst of his creation.

### God's Spirit lives in you

It's great to go to church to spend special time with God. And it's good to spend quiet time with him in the midst of his creation.

But God is not only present in church or in his creation. He lives in you—and in all other followers of Jesus.

*To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)*

#### Discussion question

1. What does "Christ in you" mean?

### You are a temple of the Holy Spirit

Not only does the Bible teach that Jesus lives in you, it also says you are a temple of God.

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

The temple was a very special place in the Old Testament. God gave precise instructions about how it was to be constructed and furnished. It was the primary place where God revealed himself and talked to the priests.

It also was the place where the priests and the people made various types of offerings to God. In short, the temple was a holy place, a place where God's Spirit dwelt and interacted with the Israelites.

When the Bible says you are a temple of the Holy Spirit, it is saying that God's Spirit lives in you, but it is saying much more than that. God is saying that you are a holy place. That means you need to take good care of yourself—spiritually, physically, and mentally.



### Discussion question

2. The Bible could simply say God's Spirit lives in you without saying you are a temple. Why do you think the Bible uses the word "temple"?

## How often do you think about the fact that God lives in you?

When you think about it, it's an amazing thing that God doesn't just exist outside of you in heaven or in church. His Spirit actually is living in you. Think about that. Right now, this moment, as you read this, God is in you!

It's easy to take this amazing truth for granted. If you are like many Christians, you rarely think about this. Even if you have heard people say you are the temple of the Holy Spirit, these may have seemed almost meaningless words.

If you are a busy person, you may have found that it's easy to get so caught up in daily living that you don't think about him actually residing within you—even if you are seeking to serve God.

### Discussion questions

3. How often do you think about the fact that you are a temple of God?
4. If you were to think about this more often, how would it affect your attitude, words, and actions?

## Meditate on the fact that God lives in you

Take some time right now to meditate on what an amazing and wonderful thing it is for you to be a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Make this part of your regular prayer life. When you prayerfully remind yourself that you are a temple and that God's Spirit lives in you, it will transform the way you look at yourself. And it will transform the way you see God's purpose for your life.

### Discussion questions

5. Sit quietly, still your mind, and ask God to make you aware that he dwells in you. Think about his presence and love.
6. What thoughts or feelings came up as you did this?
7. How can you remind yourself that God lives in you as you go through life?

## Treat God's temple with respect

We read in the Old Testament that God has very strict rules about how his temple was to be treated. Likewise, today we need to respect God's temple—to take good care of it.

When we think about being a temple of God, it can motivate us to be careful about where we go, what we eat, what we watch, and what we listen to. It can motivate us to keep his temple pure.

It can motivate us to make sure he is glorified in his temple, and that when people see his temple they will see his presence shining through.

Remember Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20:



*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

#### **Discussion questions**

8. Why is it important to take care of your temple?
9. How well have you been caring for your temple? Explain your answer.
10. What is one way you will take better care of your temple? (What is one change you will make in your thoughts, words, or deeds?)

### **You also are part of a larger temple**

In today's lesson you have read about how you are a temple of the Holy Spirit. In Day 4 of this book, you will read about how you also are part of a much larger temple—one consisting of every believer in the world.

#### **Suggested prayer**

*“God help me remember that I am a temple of your Holy Spirit. Help me be excited and motivated by this great privilege. Help me treat your temple with respect.”*

#### **Memory verse**

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

## Notes



5. How does knowing you are God's temple affect your self-image?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. How do you think knowing you are God's temple will affect your words and actions?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How can you remind yourself that you are God's temple?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Write out one verse from today's study that spoke to your heart:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Why did this verse speak to you?

# Day Three: You are a Priest and an Ambassador of God

## God has given you a great position

Have you ever thought you were not very important in the kingdom of God? Perhaps you think that pastors, evangelists, and missionaries are special people in God's sight—and that you don't have much of a role in God's plan.

That's not true. Everyone, including you, has an important role to play.

As you read this chapter, discipline yourself to deeply understand the following passages from the Bible.

Don't simply think, "I already know the Bible says that we are priests and ambassadors." Instead, ask God to help you realize that these passages are for you personally.



### Discussion questions

1. Describe a time you felt insignificant or unimportant.
2. Does it seem to you that other people are more talented than you and that you don't have much to offer? Why or why not?
3. How does thinking that what you do doesn't matter affect your attitude, words, and behavior?

In today's study we'll look at two ways you (and every other believer) are described in the New Testament. As you will see, both of these roles are important.

## You are a priest

The Bible says you (as well as every other believer) are a priest. That's not a small thing. When you read the Old Testament, you learn that God placed priests in an extremely significant position.

*You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:5)*

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)*

*[Jesus] has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. (Revelation 1:6)*

Four ways you can serve God as a priest are to:

- Pray
- Praise God

- Worship God
- Minister to others (helping and encouraging them)

Whether you are a pastor or a street cleaner, God's word says you are a priest. That means wherever you go, you are serving and representing God.

### Discussion questions

4. Why is it important to take being a priest seriously?
5. What are some things a priest does?
6. Do you think God wants you to do these things? Why or why not?
7. Are you able to do them? Why or why not?

## You are Christ's ambassador

We usually think of ambassadors as being people who represent their country when living in another country.

You are representing a different kind of "country"—the Kingdom of God—and its king, Jesus Christ wherever you go. This is an awesome position, one of honor and responsibility.

*We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:20)*

*I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. (Ephesians 6:20)*

When people see you and hear you talk, they are seeing and listening to an ambassador of God. Pray to be the best ambassador you can be.

Ask God to help you love everyone you come in contact with. Look for ways to encourage and help others. Share Jesus' gospel message when there are open doors.

Be a good example in everything you do. Follow Paul's instructions in his letter to Timothy:

*Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)*

### Discussion questions

8. What does it mean to be a good example in your speech?
9. What does it mean to be a good example in your life?
10. What does it mean to be a good example in your love?
11. What does it mean to be a good example in your purity?
12. What is one way in which you would like to be a better example?

As a priest and ambassador, you represent Jesus wherever you go. Never think you don't have anything important to do. You can have an impact on everyone with whom you come in contact.

## Pray for humility

When you serve God, talk to others about Jesus, teach the Bible, or serve in other ways, it's easy to slip into spiritual pride—thinking that:

- You are a better Christian than the person you are talking to.
- You understand the Bible better than the other person does.
- You are closer to God than the other person.
- God thinks you are a better Christian than the other person.

If any of these describe you, ask God to help you change your attitude. Remember that God warns us to avoid pride throughout the Bible:

*When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. (Proverbs 11:2)*

*Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice. (Proverbs 13:10)*

*Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18)*

*A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor. (Proverbs 29:23)*

*The eyes of the arrogant man will be humbled and the pride of men brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. (Isaiah 2:11)*

Jesus gave us a great example in humility. Even though he was “in very nature God,” he made himself nothing and took the nature of a servant.

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (Philippians 2:5-7)*

### Discussion question

13. Do you sometimes slip into spiritual pride? If so, what can you do about it?

## Memory verse

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)*

## Notes



## Homework – Day Three

1. The Bible says you are a priest. Based on the Scriptures in today's lesson, list three things a priest does, followed by the Scripture that mentions this duty.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. Is a priest only “on duty” while at church, or also when away from church? Explain your answer:
3. How about you? How often are you on duty?
4. What are some characteristics of a good priest?
5. What is an ambassador?

6. Why does the Bible describe you as an ambassador of Christ?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. How can you be an effective ambassador of Christ?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What are the five ways Paul instructed Timothy to be a good example?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Write a brief prayer asking God to help you be a better example in one of these five ways:

## Day Four: You are Part of the Body of Christ

As you read in Day 2, when you became a believer, God's Spirit took up residence in you and you became a temple of the Holy Spirit. In today's lesson, you will read about something else that happened at the same time.

### The temple of God's Spirit

Not only did you become an individual temple when you became a believer, you also became part of a much larger temple—one that includes every other believer in the world.

When you realize you are part of this temple, you can see that your relationship with God is not simply "God and me." It also is "God and us." You are part of something indescribably significant. You share an intimate spiritual connection with every other believer in the world.

*What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." (2 Corinthians 6:16)*

*In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (Ephesians 2:21-22)*

The temple was much more than a building. It was a God-ordained place where people could experience God's presence, offer sacrifices, and hear his instructions.

When the Bible says you are part of God's temple, it is saying that the connection between you and every other Christian is profound and deep.

#### Discussion questions

1. What does it mean to say that your identity is not simply "God and me," it also is "God and us"? Explain your answer.
2. What do you think the Bible means when it says "you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (Ephesians 2:21-22)?

### The body of Christ

Another way the Bible describes how closely connected Christians are is to describe us as the "body of Christ," with Jesus being the head. You can't be much more closely connected than being part of the same body.



To understand what this means, imagine you are looking at one person. This person has a body which is composed of many parts, all of which should be working in unity. That's the vision Jesus has for us, his body.

*Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:4-8)*

### Discussion questions

3. What do you think the Bible means when it says that “we who are many form one body” (Romans 12:5)?
4. What do you think it means when it says that “each member belongs to all the others” (Romans 12:5)?

## You are an important part of Christ's body

Just as every part of your own body is important, every believer is important to the body of Christ. Each of us has a purpose.

*For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. (1 Corinthians 12:13-20)*

If you continue reading 1 Corinthians 12, you will see that verses 21-27 say that God gives special honor to those who seem weaker or less honorable. That means regardless of your abilities, gifts, or position in life, you have an important role to play.

### Discussion questions

5. Do you sometimes think you don't have a purpose in life, or that your life doesn't have any meaning? Explain your answer.
6. After reading 1 Corinthians 12:13-20, what do you think God would say to you if you said, “I don't have a purpose in life”?
7. Do the verses in Ephesians 12:13-20 encourage you? Explain your answer.

## Enjoy unity, harmony, and love with other members of the body

It can dramatically change the way you look at other believers when you begin to grasp how closely connected you are to every other Christian. You begin to see the importance of treating everyone with respect and love. You become concerned about others' welfare.

As you read the following verses, ask God to help you catch a vision of what it means to be part of the body of Christ. Ask him to help you appreciate and love other believers, regardless of their race, ethnicity, denomination, intelligence, social status, or appearance.

*By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. (John 13:35)*

*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)*

*Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:3)*

*Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. (Romans 12:16)*

*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. (Romans 12:18)*

*Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. (1 Peter 3:8)*

*Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. (Romans 12:15)*

*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. (Romans 12:10)*

*Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. (Romans 12:17)*

*If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. (Philippians 2:1-4)*

### Discussion questions

8. What are the key themes in the previous verses? How important are they to God?
9. Have you looked down on some other believers? If so, will today's lesson help you look at them differently? Explain your answer.

### Memory verse

*Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. (Romans 12:4-5)*

### **A note from Doug Britton**

It is my prayer that reading *Your Identity in Christ* has encouraged you and helped you grow in your walk with our Lord. I invite you to now study *Quick Overview of the Bible*, Book 4 in “The Owner’s Manual to the New You” series.

I would love to hear how this study affected you! Please email me at:  
owners-manual@dougbrittonbooks.com

## Homework – Day Four

1. How important is it to know that all Christians collectively comprise the body of Christ? Explain your answer:
2. The Bible says all believers make up the body of Christ. What does that mean? How can the vast number of Christians around the world be one entity?
3. The Bible says each member belongs to all the others (Romans 12:5). What does this mean?
4. What would you say to someone who says he or she is not an important part of the body of Christ?





## Day Five: Review and Test (may be removed by leader)

### Note to teachers and small group leaders

These questions can be used in day five as a review and/or test. Remove this page if you do not want group members to see the questions ahead of time.

### True or false (circle one)

- T F 1. If you feel bad about yourself, it's good to think about how you are better than others.
- T F 2. A priest is someone who is a super-good Christian.
- T F 3. When you accept Christ, you become God's child.
- T F 4. Your self-image should depend on how strong and smart you are.
- T F 5. Your self-image should depend on how good-looking you are.
- T F 6. Your self-image should depend on understanding God's love and who you are in Christ.
- T F 7. If you have been born again, God's Spirit lives in you.
- T F 8. If you are going through a lot of problems, that proves God doesn't love you.
- T F 9. God stops loving you when you sin.
- T F 10. You are part of the Body of Christ. You may even be the head.

### Short questions

1. What are four unsuccessful ways in which people often try to feel better about themselves?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What can we learn about God from the story Jesus told about a son who took his inheritance early, left home, lost his money in wild living, and then returned home to his father?

3. The Bible says you are a temple of God's Spirit. What does that mean?

How should knowing this affect the way you live?

4. The Bible says we are ambassadors. What does that mean?

How should knowing this affect the way you interact with non-Christians?

5. What is the body of Christ?

Why is it important to understand this?

### **Memory verses**

1. Romans 8:16
  
2. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

## Day Five: Answer Key to Test (may be removed by leader)

### Note to teachers and small group leaders

Remove this page if you do not want group members to see these answers ahead of time.

### True or false

- F 1. If you feel bad about yourself, it's good to think about how you are better than others.
- F 2. A priest is someone who is a super-good Christian.
- T 3. When you accept Christ, you become God's child.
- F 4. Your self-image should depend on how strong and smart you are.
- F 5. Your self-image should depend on how good-looking you are.
- T 6. Your self-image should depend on understanding God's love and who you are in Christ.
- T 7. If you have been born again, God's Spirit lives in you.
- F 8. If you are going through a lot of problems, that proves God doesn't love you.
- F 9. God stops loving you when you sin.
- F 10. You are part of the Body of Christ. You may even be the head.

### Memory verses

- 1. Romans 8:16

*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

- 2. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*



## About the Author

Doug Britton, Bible-based Marriage and Family Therapist, has helped hundreds of thousands of people as a therapist, clinical director of a treatment center, seminar speaker, radio co-host, and author of over twenty books that show people how to apply God's truths in their daily lives.

He has also trained pastors, counselors, mentors, and lay leaders in biblical counseling, mentoring, and small group leadership.

Doug and his wife Skeeter live in Northern California.



### Books

Doug has written Bible-based books on many daily-living topics. Visit [www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/bookstore).

### Free online Bible studies for daily living

Read and download Doug's free online studies on marriage, parenting, anger, self-concept, anxiety, depression, temptation, fear of death, biblical counseling, mentoring, small group leadership, and other topics. Visit [www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources).

### Seminars and retreats

Doug is the founder and president of LifeTree Institute and LifeTree Books. If you would like him or another member of the LifeTree team to speak in your church on any of the above topics, please visit [www.dougbrittonbooks.com](http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com) and click on the "Seminars" link.

### We would love to hear from you

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(Be sure to mention the name of this book and what country you live in.)

## More Books by Doug Britton

In addition to “The Owner’s Manual to the New You,” Doug Britton has written many more cross-cultural, Bible-based books on leadership, discipleship, and key areas of daily living.

### **Growing in Christ**

Getting Started, Getting Connected  
First Things First  
Living by Grace

### **Living Free**

Breaking Free (from Drugs and Alcohol)  
Conquering Depression  
Defeating Temptation  
Healing Life’s Hurts  
Overcoming Jealousy and Insecurity  
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