



CONNECT

FIRST STEPS - LESSON 3: MY IDENTITY IN GOD



Objectives

- New believers to understand God's nature (the TRINITY – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit).
- New believers to understand how to discover God as their personal God.
- New believers to understand their identity in God.
- New believers to discover God's promises in their lives.

Introduction

Many of us secretly wish that we are closer to our fathers. One of the most heart-touching songs about the relationship between a son and his father is “The Living Years” by Mike and the Mechanics. The song expresses the sadness and regrets of a young man who had a less-than-perfect relationship with his dad, and he looks back at the missed opportunities to make peace. This young man failed to appreciate his father, until his father was gone and it was too late.

Likewise, the truth is we are weak and sinful. We have a million excuses to justify all our behaviour. What if your father takes the first step and tells you that he loves you despite all your faults? Do you know that God, your heavenly Father, has been saying “*I love you*” all of your life? In fact, God chose to love you even before you existed or knew Him!

The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness”
Jeremiah 31:3

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.
Jeremiah 1:5

Knowing Your God – Who Is God To Me?

The Bible has a simple story. God created men. Men rejected God. Ever since then, God has been actively seeking to re-establish the relationship between Himself and men, which was broken by sin. God will not give up until He wins us back.

The number one problem faced by our society today is that people do not realise their need for a relationship with God. Even more heart-rending are those who realise they need God, but intentionally refuse to come to Him.

He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.”
Revelation 21:6

The Trinity

The word “trinity” is not used in the scriptures. It is coined by Tertullian, one of the Early Church Fathers. The Bible has always revealed God as One in Three (distinguishable), and Three in One (indivisible). God reveals Himself as one God existing in three Persons (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit); distinguishable, but yet indivisible in essence. Co-eternal, co-equal and co-existent in attributes, power, nature and glory.

1. God, the heavenly Father

God, the heavenly Father created all things with the Son and the Holy Spirit. In Genesis 1:26, notice the words used, “us” and “our” in the verse below. In both the Old and New Testament, God revealed Himself to man as the Father.

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

Genesis 1:26

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:4-6

2. God, the Son

God, the Son, took the form of a man, Jesus Christ.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Philippians 2:5-8

He came into this world over 2,000 years ago in order to save mankind from the consequences of sin. He did this willingly, by dying on the cross in order to pay the penalty for our sins. No one can have a relationship with the Father except through Jesus, the Son (cf. John 14:6) The Son gives every new believer a fresh start on earth for an eternity in heaven.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:6

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 1:12-13

3. God, the Holy Spirit

God, the Holy Spirit, is our Counsellor. Although He lives in every believer, we cannot see Him with our eyes nor touch Him because He is Spirit. However, we can certainly witness His presence and power at work in our lives. He helps us to become more like Jesus, and also help us to serve more effectively. He convicts us of our sins and is now living in our hearts.

When he (the Advocate, the Holy Spirit) comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.

John 16:8

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 14:26

When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.

John 15:26

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

John 16:7

How To Know God?

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:6

1. Acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God

We meet God through His Son, Jesus, who reveals the very nature of God, and who came to help us establish that intimate relationship with the Father.

Acknowledge and trust Him fully as the forgiver of our sins and the leader of our lives. This is the starting point for the Christian life.

2. Spend time with God, talk to Him and listen to Him

We can get to know God by talking, and more importantly, listening to Him. It is impossible to get to know someone if we never speak to him or her. In the same way, if we do all the talking and not listening, we would not hear Him speaking to us.

As we pray and worship, reflect on God's attributes and our past interactions. Seek God for forgiveness of our sins by saying we are sorry for hurting Him and ask Him to guide us, and go with us everywhere we go.

Since we are all God's sheep, we can and should expect to hear His voice as He speaks to us.

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

John 10:27

3. Understand His Word

We need to study God's Word, to know what will disappoint God, and to learn the things that please Him. Read the Bible as a love letter from God to us. Hear God's voice as we read His Word and allow Him to lead us and work through us. Go where He asks us to go.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

James 1:22-25

Reflection Station

1. Who am I in God?

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 1:12-13

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:13-14

We are the sons and daughters of God, and as God's heirs, we will receive His blessings and inheritance in due time. Understand that God's heart is not to make us happy, but to make us His; not to get us what we want, but to get us what we really need. It is normal for a father to want to give good things to his children. If God is our heavenly Father, we can rest assured that He will take good care of us!

For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:32-33

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 10:10

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11

Mentor Chat

1. How can I share in God's inheritance and blessings?

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,
Ephesians 1:11

who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.
Ephesians 1:14

and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.
Colossians 1:12

For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.
Hebrews 9:15

And into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,
1 Peter 1:4

As a loving Father, God has promised that He will give many blessings to His children. Yet why do many believers lack of God's blessings? Believers often lack of blessings because they do not put all their faith and hope in God. They do not understand how to receive God's blessings. The Word of God teaches us many ways of receiving His blessings.

A) Asking and praying

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Matthew 7:7-8

- **Pray in the name of Jesus**

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

John 16:24

Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

John 14:12-14

- **Coupled with faith**

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.

Matthew 21:22

And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.

James 5:15

B) Obeying God

And receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him.

1 John 3:22

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

John 15:7

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

1 John 5:14-15

If we have a close relationship with God, we will naturally desire to obey His Word and live our lives in accordance to His will (**James 1:22-25**). Which child does not naturally desire to please their father, especially a good father? Consequently, the desire to please ourselves will slowly lose its appeal.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

James 1:22-25

C) Honouring God in giving

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Luke 6:38

By giving, we are, in a way, releasing all the selfishness and self-centredness that will hinder us from opening up to God and other people. It is more blessed to give than to receive. It also better reflects the very heart of God our Father, who is incredibly generous.

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Acts 20:35

2. Knowing that God is your Father, what are you expecting to receive from Him?

We can ask from God by praying for specific requests.

Conclusion

God wants to know us and be known by us as a personal God. We are God's heirs who have the right to receive an inheritance from our Father. We need to know His promises for our lives, which comes from reading the word of God – Bible.

As we study and obey the Word of God, we will grow in our understanding of God's character, purposes and blessings in our lives. It is an exciting journey!

My identity: I belong to God
My responsibility: To know Christ

Worth found in human beings is fleeting; worth found in Christ lasts forever.
Find yours in Him alone.

Memory Verse

YET TO ALL WHO DID RECEIVE HIM, TO THOSE WHO BELIEVED IN HIS NAME, HE GAVE THE RIGHT TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD-CHILDREN BORN NOT OF NATURAL DESCENT, NOR OF HUMAN DECISION OR A HUSBAND'S WILL, BUT BORN OF GOD.

JOHN 1:12-13



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