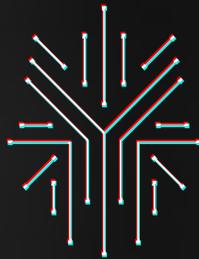




K N O W I N G W H O Y O U A R E I N C H R I S T

I D E N T I T Y

& W H A T T O D O I N A C O N F U S E D W O R L D .



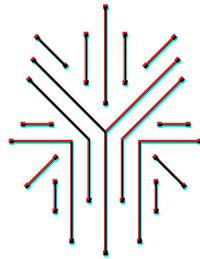
A S I X - W E E K S T U D Y



KNOWING WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST

I D E N T I T Y

& WHAT TO DO IN A CONFUSED WORLD.



A SIX - W E E K S T U D Y

IDENTITY

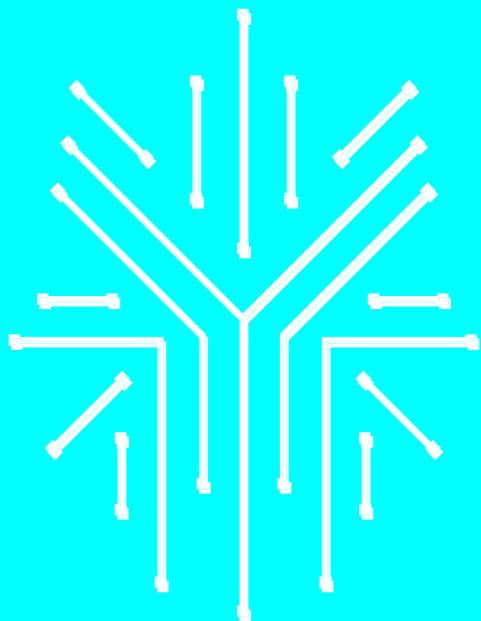
Knowing Who You Are In Christ & What to Do In a Confused World

Two Cities Church

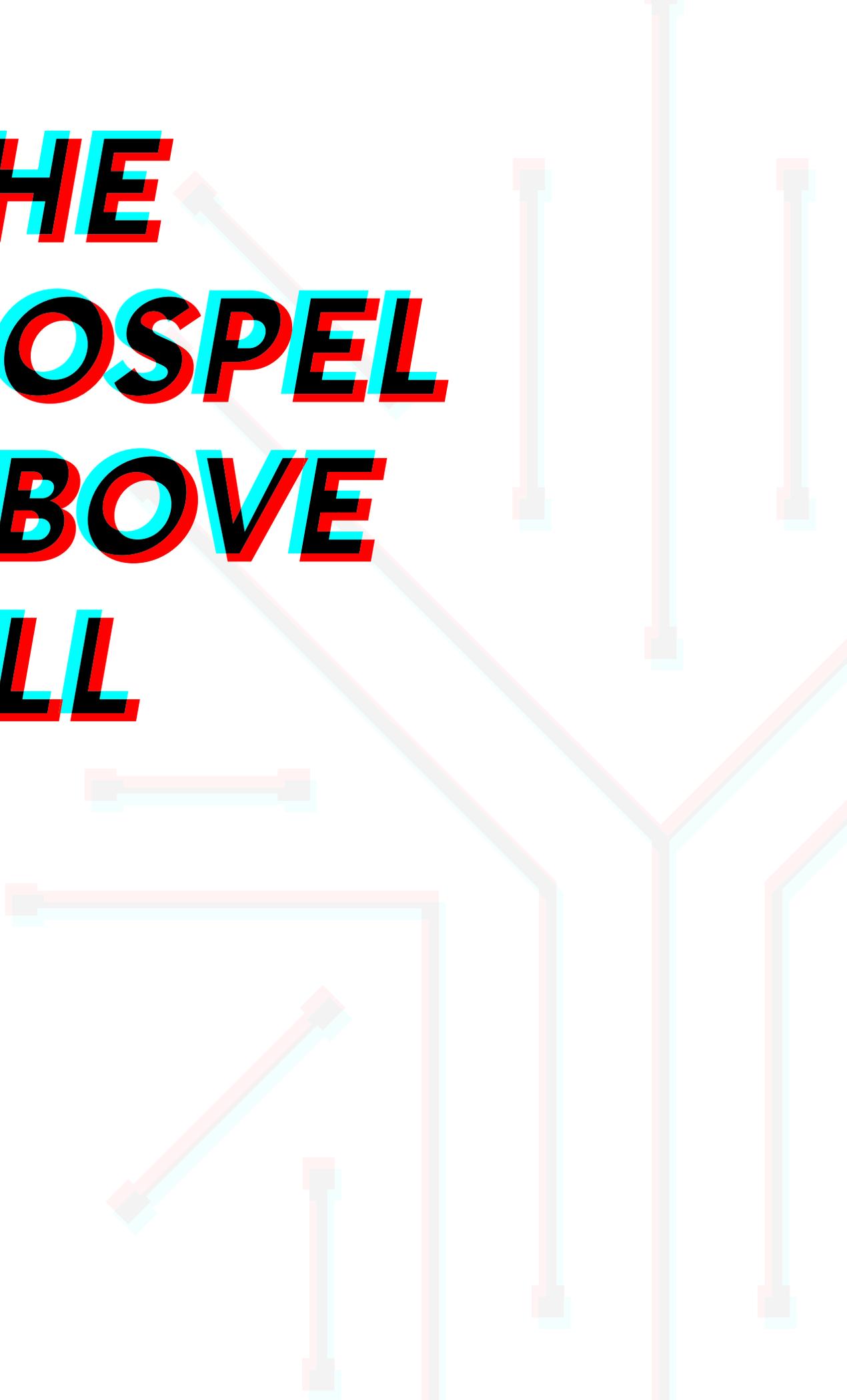
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***THE
GOSPEL
ABOVE
ALL***





The very first followers of Jesus were normal people...

They had jobs. They had families. They were known in the communities they lived in. But they believed Jesus – God in the flesh – was calling them to something greater. So, what did they do? They left everything – exchanged who they were – to take up new identities: disciples of Jesus.

Over the next few years, the disciples did everything with Jesus – lived, ate, worked, rested, and traveled. As they followed him, they learned what it meant to be his followers – to be disciples. They learned what it meant to have everything they were wrapped up in everything Jesus was. Like the very first followers of Jesus, that is what we need to do. We must take everything we are – down to our core – and let it be consumed by all that Jesus is and all that he calls us to.

As Christians, we believe the Bible is God's Word and live our lives under its authority. Throughout the Bible, the disciples of Jesus are called to center their entire lives around Jesus. You see, when we follow Jesus, everything about our lives change. That's why Scripture calls life in Christ "new life." That's why Scripture says, that in Christ, we are something new – our old selves have disappeared, and a new identity has manifested in and through us. Christ is the life that flows through each and every believer. He is our source of truth, hope, peace, security, and most importantly, our identity.

The goal of this study is to help us understand what it means for our identities to be changed through and through by Jesus and his gospel. Following Jesus is coming to understand who God is and what he's done, and then putting into practice what he's taught us. First and foremost, we want this to help you know and enjoy Jesus. He didn't save you so you could just know about him. He wants you to know him! We pray this study will equip and lead you to this end. Jesus wants to show you more about who he is.

Secondly, as you know Jesus more, we pray you would allow his Spirit to infiltrate all that you are so you can become more and more like him each day. Friend, Jesus wants every part of your life –

beliefs, your affections, and your practices.

As a follower of Christ, everything we do is because of the gospel. The way that he has loved us drives us to love him and lay down our lives for his sake. It is because of what Jesus has done for us that our true identities can be found in him. As we say at Two Cities, a disciple of Jesus is characterized by an open Bible and an open life. We want Scripture to dwell in us richly in order to conform us more and more into the image of Christ.

As we do this, we believe our identity in Jesus is grounded in five core descriptors:

+ WORSHIPPER

+ FAMILY

+ WITNESS

+ STEWARD

+ SERVANT

Remember, these elements of your identity are not actions but descriptors of who you are in Christ. We believe these give a holistic picture of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Over the next six weeks, we will use this guide to unpack each of the five identity descriptors and what each of them means for your life. Each session will focus on one of the identity elements. But before we begin, we want to spend our first week unpacking the beauty of the gospel.

+ SESSION 1 - THE BEAUTY OF THE GOSPEL

+ SESSION 2 - WORSHIPPER: READING THE BIBLE & PRAYING TO GOD

+ SESSION 3 - FAMILY: RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR RELATIONSHIP

+ SESSION 4 - WITNESS: LIVING INTENTIONALLY

+ SESSION 5 - STEWARD: TIME, TALENT, & TREASURE

+ SESSION 6 - SERVANT: A LIFE OF SACRIFICE

At the end of this process, we want you to be equipped to lead someone else through the same Identity study. God wants you to follow him and to grow in your ability to follow him. The next six sessions have the ability to establish your true identity as a follower of Jesus.

GOSPEL

J E S U S I N M Y P L A C E .



We can get our ideas about God and religion wrong, can't we?

If we aren't careful, we will think our relationship with God is all about our behavior – what we can and cannot do. But this view is a great misconception about God and what he desires from us and for us. God wants to restore. The Christian message of the gospel isn't just about religious behavior. God hasn't established a relationship with humanity simply to tell us what to do so he can be a strict and distant dictator who rules our lives with an iron fist.

While it may seem hard to see in times of difficulty and struggle, he doesn't want to remove joy from our lives. Friend, God wants to restore joy to our lives. His Word is a gift that allows us to know him and begin to see ourselves and the world through his eyes.

This is what the gospel is about. The gospel is about the restoration of beauty – God transforming everything. God wants restoration and reconnection with his children. God established a relationship with humanity when he created them and placed them in a garden (see Genesis 2). This garden teemed with life. It was creation as God intended it – beautiful, sinless, life-giving, abundant flourishing. And God established man as ruler over the created order – to continue the expansion of life through God's decree to bear fruit: the multiplication of his good creation.

In the opening chapters of the Bible, it becomes clear that humanity didn't follow God's direction. Instead of finding their identity in God and a relationship with him, humanity found their identity in themselves and their desires. As a result, God banished them from his perfect garden. Man's perfect relationship and unstrained connection to God was severed. Throughout history, God's mission has been to restore this brokenness; to bring restoration back to his created order and to his relationship with his most precious creation – us. God's desire is for us to look to him and nothing else for our true sense of identity and purpose.

Jesus accomplished this and offers the restoration of our identities to those who trust in his work – specifically his death, burial, and resurrection on our behalf. There's no work of our own to trust in. This gospel message is a declaration of new life.

GOSPEL MISCONCEPTIONS

Circle the words that come to mind
most often when you hear the word “Christianity”

RELIGION

JUDGMENTAL

HOPE

GRACE

JESUS

GOSPEL

RULES

CONSERVATIVE

BORING

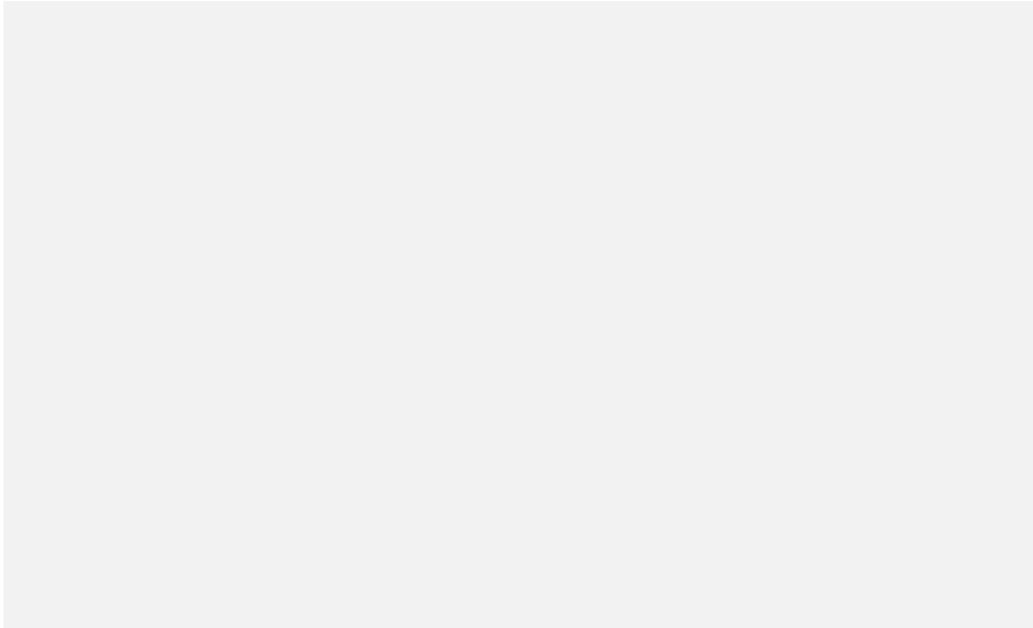
WORKING THINGS OUT: Culture thinks many things when it comes to the Christian faith. The purpose of this resource is to help correctly articulate what it looks like and what it means to be a follower of Jesus. We want to look to God’s Word to lay the groundwork – the stable foundation – to help us understand and process how we, as God’s cherished creation, carry out his purpose for the world.

LOOKING AT THE TERMS

Write key words or phrases that come to mind when reading each word in the boxes below

GOSPEL	WORSHIPPER	STEWARD
WITNESS	SERVANT	FAMILY

Q: WHAT IS THE GOSPEL TO YOU?



IN NEED OF SAVING

We all look for our identity in the wrong places. We search for meaning, purpose, thrill, and pleasure. But the truth is, we come up empty handed time and time again. Instead living for God and his greatness, we choose to live for ourselves. We pursue our own passions and purposes. When we do this, we lose sight of God's commands. We forget him. Instead of looking to him, we look to ourselves. The Bible calls this sin. Sin is simply when we disobey God and live for ourselves; when we exchange the identity he's given us for one we create for ourselves. Because of this, we need help. More than just help, we need to be brought back to life. We need to be given life. Sin has done the terrible work of separating us from true life — the life that God gives us. That's why the gospel is so important and gives us such hope. Without Christ, we are lifeless.

When you understand this, you realize you have no hope of pleasing God. You have no hope of restoring your true self – your true identity. And that’s what you need. The gospel is not that we were spiritually weak and needed God’s rules to make us better. The gospel is that through Christ the spiritually dead are made new and brought back to life; given a new name, a new family, a new inheritance, a whole new way of life. The gospel unveils the beauty of resurrection – the resurrection of who and what God calls us to be. This is a resurrection that began with Christ and is extended to us in Christ.

The gospel is the declaration that Jesus – through his death in our place - has made a way to bring dead sinners back to life and transform them into beautiful, spotless, clean sons and daughters of God. Other religions offer acceptance from God by doing things for God. The gospel offers acceptance from God by resting in what God has done for you. Have you exchanged your identity for the one he offers?



READ EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Q: What words and phrases does Paul use to describe our status without Christ?

Q: According to Ephesians 2, why did God choose to save us? Why do we need God's help?

Q: In your daily life, where are you the most confident in your own abilities? List these areas:

Q: How difficult is it for you to ask for help when you need it?

- ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

EASY TO ASK

STRUGGLE OF
MY LIFE



LIVING FOR HIS KINGDOM

We can't love God and appreciate his greatness on our own. We don't have the power. Our hearts and our desires are bent away from him and toward ourselves. Our love for God happens after we trust him in faith to do for us what we cannot: change us from the inside.

That's true salvation. And when God accomplishes that work in us, it must bring us to a place of worship. At Two Cities, we describe worship as "all that we are responding to all that God is and has

done for us.” It’s an identity shift. It’s an identity declaration. As followers of Jesus, we worship God because we are grateful. We worship because we are in awe. We worship because he is worthy of our entire lives down to every small aspect and detail. We worship because he has done for us what we could never have done for ourselves.

Our response in worship begins with our repentance. It begins with our confession of the ways we ignore all that God is and the things he has done for us. John writes in the letter of 1 John that if we will simply confess our sin and our need for God, God will be faithful to forgive us (see 1 John 1:9). We can’t experience life in God without repentance. To repent simply means to turn from our ways of self-worship and turn to God and worship him. Repentance means we acknowledge our wrongs and seek to change our actions with God’s help. And here’s the beauty of the gospel: don’t believe the lie that confession brings condemnation. Because of Christ, confession is the gateway to healing.

Repentance gives way to a whole new way of life. When we surrender our lives to God, his Spirit transforms us and makes us new from the inside. In light of this, we now have stories of fully transformed identities.



DISCIPLES OF JESUS

WORSHIPPER

Seeks to know, love, and obey God above all else in life.

FAMILY

Embraces the lifestyle of the local church as their family.

WITNESS

Shares the gospel and helps make disciples locally, nationally, & globally.

STEWARD

Uses their time, talents, and treasure to know God and make him known.

SERVANT

Gives of themselves for the good of their church, family, and city.

