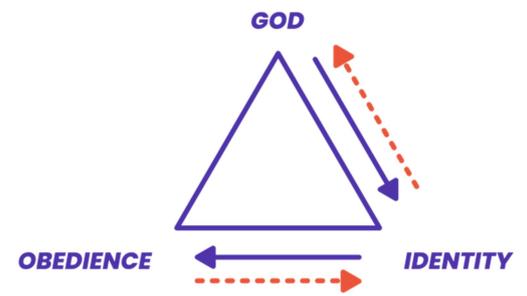


# Identity

## (Identity Triangle)



How does God views us? Who are we now that we have been born again by God's Spirit? What is our *identity* in Christ?

### Scripture

In the New Testament there are over 160 statements made about our identity in Christ. This phrase 'In Christ' is an important phrase that is used to describe who we now are, and all that we now have, because of Jesus.

A selection of these 'In Christ' identity statements have been listed below under the three categories: I am Accepted; I am Secure; and I am Significant.

Read through the list and highlight any that stand out to you.

I AM ACCEPTED...	I AM SECURE...	I AM SIGNIFICANT...
I am God's child. (John 1:12)	I am free from condemnation. (Romans 8:1-2)	I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life. (John 15:5)
As a disciple, I am a friend of Jesus Christ. (John 15:15)	I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances. (Romans 8:28)	I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. (John 15:16)
I have been justified (declared righteous). (Romans 5:1)	I am free from any condemnation brought against me and I cannot be separated from the love of God. (Romans 8:31-39)	I am God's temple. (1 Corinthians 3:16)
I am united with the Lord and I am one with him in spirit. (1 Corinthians 6:17)	I have been established, anointed and sealed by God. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)	I am a minister of reconciliation for God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)
I have been bought with a price and I belong to God. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)	I am hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-4)	I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm. (Ephesians 2:6)

I am a member of Christ's body. (1 Corinthians 12:27)	I am confident that God will complete the good work He started in me. (Philippians 1:6)	I am God's workmanship. (Ephesians 2:10)
I have been chosen by God and adopted as His child. (Ephesians 1:3-8)	I am a citizen of heaven. (Philippians 3:20)	I may approach God with freedom and confidence. (Ephesians 3:12)
I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins. (Colossians 1:13-14)	I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)	I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)
I am complete in Christ. (Colossians 2:9-10)	I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me. (1 John 5:18)	
I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 4:14-16)		

\*Originally Compiled by Neil T Anderson

What identity statements struck you and why?

## Story

A rich uncle goes into the bank when his nephew is born and sets up an investment account in his nephew's name with £5,000 in it. He knows that this money will multiply and grow over his lifetime and sets it to mature on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, knowing that by that stage it will be worth an incredible sum of money. Unfortunately, as the uncle leaves the bank he gets hit by a car and dies before he has a chance to tell anyone about the account. It isn't actually until the nephew is around 90 that the bank finally realises that no one has been to claim this money and gets in touch. By this time the money has multiplied to incredible proportions. They tell him that he is incredibly rich and that he actually has been all his adult life. The man is initially overjoyed but then realises that his life is pretty much over. He starts thinking about how he would have lived differently had he known that he actually had this amount of wealth at his disposal. How much less he would have worried, how many more risks he would have taken, how much more generous he would have been.

The moral of the story is that it is vitally important to understand what we have already been given in Christ so that we don't spend our lives living to get something we already have, or failing to live in the fullness of what we have already been given.

Given the identity statements in the Scripture section of this study, what difference do you think it would make to your life if you believed these things about yourself?

## Shape

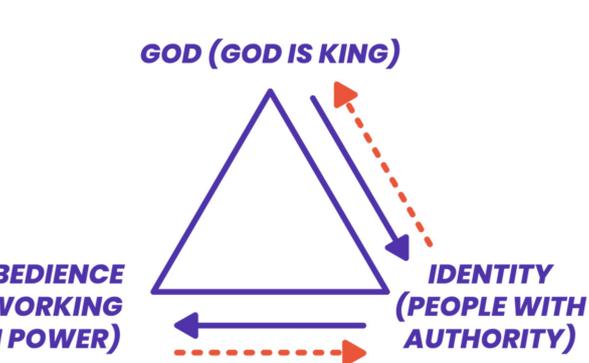
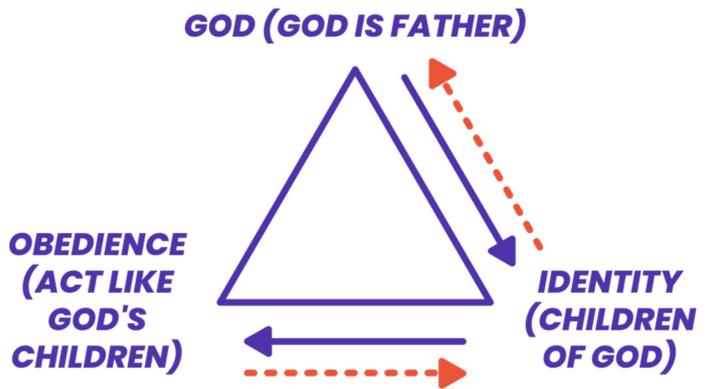
**The Identity Triangle** illustrates what it is to understand and live out our identity in Christ.

Clockwise is the correct way round this triangle. **God** is at the top and is the source of everything. He gives us our **identity** in Christ – e.g. righteous, holy, forgiven, chosen, alive, etc., simply because we are now united with Jesus. We then **obey** God because it is now part of who we are.

Anti-clockwise is the wrong way round the triangle. We need to be careful that we don't seek to try and be obedient in order to become something (i.e.

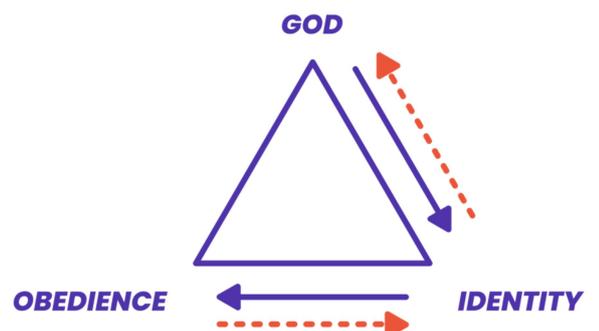
establish our own identity) in order to somehow get to God. This would be to ignore all that God has done for us through Jesus and would lead to us living a life of striving and working for something we actually already have in Christ.

Let's see how this works out in regards to two major themes running throughout the whole of Scripture – **Covenant and Kingdom.**



**Covenant** is to do with our relationship with God. The right way round the triangle takes note that God has brought us into relationship with him, he is our Father and so we are His children, we now act in accordance with the truth that we are children of God. The wrong way round would be to try to act like children of God in order to somehow be good enough to be selected by God as one of his children and so to have him become our Father.

**Kingdom** is to do with the responsibility that God gives His people. The right way round the triangle is to note that God is the King and he gives his people authority to enable them to carry out the things that he wants them to accomplish. The wrong way round the triangle is to try and do lots of things in our own strength to try and somehow obtain our authority or profile to do the work of God.



## **So What?**

In groups, take some time to consider areas of your lives where you feel you are going round the Identity Triangle the wrong way.

Thinking about those areas of life, discuss the following questions together to help you go the right way round the Identity Triangle:

### **God**

- Who is God in relevance to this area of life?
- Which of His characteristics are of relevance here?
- What things have you seen God do as recorded in Scripture that relate to this area of your life?
- What things have you seen God do in your own life in the past that relate to this area?
- How does what God did on the cross through Jesus have relevance to this area of your life?

### **Identity**

- What is now true of you in Christ?
- What is your God-given identity?

### **Obedience**

- In light of what you now know about God and your identity, how do you now get to live?
- How will you now go about this area of your life differently?

## **Grow Further**

### **Memory Verse:**

John 1:12

'Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God'

### **Other Bible passages:**

- Romans 5
- Galatians 2:20-21
- Ephesians 1
- Ephesians 2
- Colossians 2:9-15

### **Other resources:**

*Your Identity in Christ* video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIfK482mFU4>