

LESSON

# 1 God Made You What You Are

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The Bible tells us about a man named Gideon who thought he was not important. He was hiding from the enemy that had invaded his country. When Gideon had given up all hope for his people, God sent an angel to encourage him. The angel had this message, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior” (Judges 6:12).

God did not evaluate Gideon by his fear or insecurity. Instead, God saw Gideon’s potential in helping His people. God saw him as a warrior, not a coward (Read Judges 6–8.) People soon knew that the Lord was with Gideon, for he behaved differently.

Think of Gideon and take courage. You may not feel important, but you are—in God’s eyes. Because you are somebody to Him, He wants you to behave differently.

## ***The Plan***

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- A. You Are Somebody: A Child of God
- B. You Are Somebody: A Member of Christ's Body
- C. You Are Somebody: An Ambassador of the Kingdom

## ***The Goals***

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1. Explain how important you are as a child of God and how this affects your life.
2. Describe your personal responsibility for living as God's child according to God's Word.
3. Explain why God has placed you in the body of Christ.
4. Give an example of your responsibilities as a believer.
5. Describe God's purpose for you in the world as an ambassador for Christ

## **A. YOU ARE SOMEBODY: A CHILD OF GOD**

**Goal 1.** Explain how important you are as a child of God and how this affects your life.

What happened to you when you became a Christian? You repented of your sin, and God forgave you. You were saved because you asked Jesus Christ to become the Savior and Lord of your life. You believed in Him as the Son of God and received Him into your heart, to rule over your life.

### **God Has Done a Work in You**

The Gospel of John tells us what a wonderful thing takes place when people receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Read these verses carefully:

Yet to all who received 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)

Was this only for those who lived at the time of Jesus? No, of course not! To be born again is the right and experience of all who have ever believed and received Jesus. We are made new through the Holy Spirit.

In a special way God has given life to you. It is not a new physical life—no one can go back to being a baby. It is a new spiritual life, which God himself brings into being. He is the Father of all who are born again. We are His children.

So, if you are a Christian believer, you are a child of God. Can you imagine how important that makes you? You really are somebody! You are a child of the Almighty God. The Creator of the universe is *your* Father.

## Application

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For these two exercises, choose the best answer to each question. Circle the letter in front of your choice.

- 1 What does John 1:12 tell us we need to do to become God's children?
  - a) Forgive and forget others
  - b) Receive and believe Jesus
  - c) Become a baby and grow again
  
- 2 When you became a Christian, what work did God do in you?
  - a) He made you His child and helped you behave in a better way.
  - b) He made you feel more important than other people.



Check your answers at the end of this lesson.

## Purpose for You as His Child

**Goal 2.** Describe your personal responsibility for living as God's child according to God's Word.

When you read that God is your heavenly Father, perhaps you think of your own father. What was your father like when you were a child? Certainly, he was not perfect, for only God is perfect. However, a good father loves his children. He wants them to have the best he can provide. He wants them to have a happy and complete life, and be the best they can be.

God, our heavenly Father, wants the same for us. He wants the best for His children. He has a purpose for our new lives as Christians. God wants us to be happy as we fulfill His purpose for our lives.

In Ephesians 2, we learn about the great things God has done for us. We were spiritually dead, following our own desires. But God has made us alive in Jesus Christ. This new life is the gift of God received by faith in Jesus. The apostle Paul writes about what it means to become a child of God:

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).

The purpose of God for His children includes a life of good deeds. *Good deeds* means doing what is good and right in all things. We should use all our time and talents to be the best we can become. This will please our heavenly Father and will give us a happy and complete life.

However, good deeds alone cannot make anyone a Christian. In Ephesians 2:8–9, we learn that salvation is not earned. It is a gift of God. But once a person becomes a child of God, he or she must live according to God's standards. A child of God is different and acts differently from people who are not Christians. Christians show their faith by doing new things for God. This is the message of James 1:22–25—faith has to show itself in action.

## Application

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Circle the letter of the phrase that best completes each sentence.

- 3** God's purpose for your life as a believer is to have you  
**a)** earn your salvation.  
**b)** do good and right in all things.
- 4** James 1:22–26 tells us to not only listen to God's words but also to  
**a)** read them often.  
**b)** wonder what they mean.  
**c)** put them into practice.



We have talked about God's purpose for the Christian in terms of good deeds. It is important for you to understand, however, that what you do is an outward sign of what you *are*. You *are* somebody—you *are* God's child! But what will God's child be like? God chose us "before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight" (Ephesians 1:4).

God wants His children to be holy and without fault. You know that the believer is a new creation. You can also know from your Bible reading and from experience that a Christian is not instantly perfect. Even the disciples had faults. But God wants all His children to become holy. This takes time, like a child growing up. In fact, our growth will not be complete until we are in heaven.

### GOD'S CHILD

- |              |   |                    |
|--------------|---|--------------------|
| Is           | ➔ | A new creation     |
| Is not       | ➔ | Instantly perfect  |
| Is to become | ➔ | Holy and faultless |

A carpenter may hope that his son will be a skillful carpenter. A singer may want her daughter to become a great musician. But

does being born into a certain family give a child the skill of his or her parent? No. It takes time, teaching, and practice to develop any skill. The child has to want to learn from the parent and do as the parent instructs.

God can help believers change their attitudes. *Attitudes* are the ways we feel about people and things. Our attitudes will show what we are like. So, when God saves us, He changes our inner life. Then our new life produces godly attitudes and actions. That is one definition of Bible ethics: putting your new life into practice through your attitude and actions.

## ***Application***

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**5** List in your notebook how God has changed your feelings and your actions. Are you encouraged by what God has done in your life?

**6** Match the words which indicate God's purpose for your life (right column) with the three areas of your life they affect (left column). Write the number on the blank provided.

- |                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ... <b>a</b> Actions   | 1) Be saved              |
| ... <b>b</b> New life  | 2) Be holy and faultless |
| ... <b>c</b> Attitudes | 3) Do good               |



## **B. YOU ARE SOMEBODY: A MEMBER OF CHRIST'S BODY**

**Goal 3.** Explain why God has placed you in the body of Christ.

You may have heard someone say "If you were the only sinner in the world, Jesus would have died for you!" But you were not the only one, were you? It was part of God's plan of salvation that many should be saved. You were included, of course. The suffering of Jesus was to bring many sons to share

His glory (Hebrews 2:10). God intended his Son, Jesus, to be “the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29).

Do you think the words *sons* and *brothers* do not include you if you are a woman? No, you have an equal right to be called a “son of God.” Those who believed and received had the right to become God’s children.

## God Has Placed You in a Family

God has many sons and daughters: the Christians who form the family of God. Our Father wants His family to be a united group. The Bible expresses this by calling God’s family “the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12).

A body is a unit formed of many parts, all working for one purpose. Though different, each part needs the other! Christ’s body is like that. It is formed of Christians from different countries, races, and ages. Yet it is unified—made into one body, and one family. Paul writes to the believers in Ephesus, “You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household” (Ephesians 2:19).

Unity is wonderful! But God did not make Christians one body just to have a unit. A soccer coach does not collect players just to say that he has a team. He unifies them to play! God has a purpose for the body of Christ, and you have a part to play in it.

## Purpose for You in the Family

Why did God place people in families? Think of an orphan or a widow in your town. It is easy to see that people need people. The family is God’s way of meeting needs, both physical and emotional. Together a family can provide the food and housing needed by the members. Together it can meet the need of each person.

God placed each of His children in His family for the same reason—because we need each other. Perhaps you do not feel the need for other Christians to help you with your physical or

emotional needs. Perhaps you have a family in which you are loved and cared for. But your brothers in Christ may need your help in these ways. Without a doubt, you have an important part in the ministry to these other members of the family.

We all need to take part in the spiritual life of God's family. The writer to the Hebrews puts the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs together.

Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 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 10:24–25)

By coming together with other Christians, you can meet needs and have needs met. This is biblical ethics. You put this new life into practice by helping the family of God. Paul gives us an example of his attitude and deeds when he says, “Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you” (Ephesians 3:2). God wants us to live for the good of others in the body of Christ.

## ***Application***

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**7** Circle the letter before each TRUE statement about God and His family.

- a)** God wants His children to minister to each other.
- b)** All men are God's children.
- c)** We should not despise other Christians: God has made them our brothers and sisters, too.
- d)** Christ's body exists to meet members' needs.

**8** Think about the Christians in your community. What needs do they have? Are you part of God's answer to those needs?

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## C. YOU ARE SOMEBODY: AN AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM

**Goal 4.** Give an example of your responsibilities as a believer.

What would happen to a family that did not grow? Families are meant to increase in number. When God created the first human beings, He told them to increase the family (Genesis 1:28). God wants the same for His spiritual family. He wants more and more people to be born again into His family. Jesus said to His disciples, “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

Christ’s body of believers must grow, and each member has a share in this process. You are commanded to help by doing your best to bring more believers into God’s family.

### God Has Left You in the World

When you became a Christian, you did *not* suddenly leave this world and go to heaven. Yet being with the Lord in heaven is far better than life here on earth (Philippians 1:23). God could have taken you to be with Him, but He chose not to.

Probably another thing did *not* happen when you became a child of God. All the problems of money and work did not suddenly disappear. Your neighbors and fellow workers did not suddenly become more friendly and helpful. Why not? You were still left in this world. And here, things are not always easy. Problems are mixed with joys. You may have harder decisions to make than before you were a Christian. Your family and friends may not understand you. And the devil (who is an evil angel opposed to all God’s good work) is against you now.

But consider Jesus’ prayer to God for His disciples:

My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil

one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. . . . As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. (John 17:15–16, 18)

If God wants His children in the world, you can be sure that there is a good reason.

### Application

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Choose the correct answer from those given and write them on the space provided.

- 9 As a believer, we have a responsibility to .....  
 (tell/argue with)
- all people everywhere about .....  
 (Adam and Eve/God’s family)



## Purpose for You in the World

**Goal 5.** Describe God’s purpose for you in the world as an ambassador for Christ.

Some Christians would like to separate themselves from other people. They leave their homes, families, and villages to live away from the world. That is not what God intended. His plan for you, and for all His children, is to do His work in the world. Jesus told His disciples, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21). You are sent to the world just as much as Peter, James, John, and all of Jesus’ disciples were. You are to represent the Lord to those around you.

Listen to what Paul says about Christians living as God’s representatives:

Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like

stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

(Philippians 2:14–16)

Therefore, your job involves *being*, *feeling*, and *doing*. You are to be God’s child, innocent and pure. You are to feel like God’s child, happy and obedient, not grumbling. You are to act as His child, doing everything you can for others and telling them about Christ.

A person who represents his country in a foreign land is called an ambassador. He or she is important. Others recognize what the ambassador is and where he or she comes from. In the foreign land, the ambassador speaks with authority when his or her own country’s interests are involved.

You are an ambassador; you represent the kingdom of God. The apostle Paul expresses this idea: “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).

God’s purpose is for you to speak for Christ. God sends you to show and tell people that He loves them and wants to give them new life. What privilege could be greater? What responsibility could be more challenging? What activity places a greater demand on you in terms of practicing your new life?

God’s purpose for you is a high one. No one by his or her own power could fulfill it. But you are born again by the Spirit of God, and He lives in you to help you do what you could not do before. The Holy Spirit helps you live out your new nature in attitudes and actions worthy of a child of God. But you have to let Him help you, by doing what He tells you. You are responsible for the way you live out what God has entrusted to you. Paul’s encouragement to Timothy is a good reminder that you must make an effort. “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to

be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth”  
(2 Timothy 2:15).

### ***Application***

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**10** Write Philippians 2:14–16 in your notebook. Then, underline the words that can help you live a better life. Study this passage until you know it.

**11** As an ambassador for Christ, whom do you represent?

**12** Circle the letter before each TRUE statement below.

- a)** As a believer you are to complain about others who are not living right.
  - b)** God’s purpose for you in the world is to be His light and speak for Him.
  - c)** You are responsible for the way you live your new life as a child of God.
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## Check Your Answers

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The answers to your study exercises are not given in the usual order, so that you will not easily see the answer to your next question ahead of time. Try not to look ahead.

- 7** Statements **a)**, **c)**, and **d)** are true.
- 1** **b)** Receive and believe Jesus
- 8** Your answer
- 2** **a)** He made you His child and helped you behave in a better way.
- 9** tell; God's family.
- 3** **b)** do good and right in all things.
- 10** Your answer
- 4** **c)** put them into practice.
- 11** Christ here on earth
- 5** Your answer
- 12** Statements **b)** and **c)** are true.
- 6** **a** 3) Do good  
**b** 1) Be saved  
**c** 2) Be holy and faultless

