



Claimed

IDENTITY IN CHRIST

28-Day Devotional

Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
WEEK 1: CHOSEN	6
Day 1 Created Before You Accomplished Anything	7
Day 2 Loved Before You Performed	9
Day 3 Saved by Grace, Not Résumé	11
Day 4 Rest for the Worn Out	13
Day 5 Working for an Audience of One	15
Day 6 When Everything Else Is Loss	17
Day 7 Resting in God's Finished Work	19
WEEK 2: BELOVED AND BELONGING	21
Day 8 Chosen and Adopted	22
Day 9 Children of God	24
Day 10 God Sets the Lonely in Families	26
Day 11 No Longer Strangers	28
Day 12 One Body, Many Parts	30
Day 13 Doing Life Together	32
Day 14 Don't Give Up Meeting Together.	34

WEEK 3: SECURE	36
Day 15 You Are Mine	37
Day 16 No One Can Snatch You Away	39
Day 17 Cast Your Anxiety on Him	41
Day 18 Peace That Guards Your Heart	43
Day 19 Don't Worry About Tomorrow	45
Day 20 He Holds All Things Together	47
Day 21 Nothing Can Separate You	49
WEEK 4: TRANSFORMED	51
Day 22 God Looks at the Heart.	52
Day 23 Nowhere to Hide, Nothing to Fear	54
Day 24 Loved While Still a Sinner	56
Day 25 No Condemnation	58
Day 26 A New Creation.	60
Day 27 The Father Runs to You	62
Day 28 Confession Brings Freedom.	64
CONCLUSION	66

Written and designed by Jerry Tadlock

Introduction

WHEN JESUS STEPPED OUT OF THE JORDAN RIVER, HIS FATHER'S VOICE BROKE through the heavens: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). Notice the timing. Jesus had not yet performed a miracle, preached a sermon, or died on a cross. He had simply *been*—and in His being, He was fully claimed, fully loved, fully approved.

This devotional invites you into that same reality. Many of us have built our entire identities on what we accomplish, who accepts us, how we perform, or what we can control. We've learned to earn, to prove, to hide, to hustle. But the gospel announces something radically different: **You are claimed.**

Not because of what you do. Not because of your potential. Not because you figured everything out. Simply because you bear the image of God, and He loves you with an everlasting love.

THE WEEKS AHEAD

WEEK 1: CHOSEN

Claimed, Not Earned — Your worth isn't determined by your performance

WEEK 2: BELOVED AND BELONGING

Claimed Into a Family — You belong somewhere; you belong to someone

WEEK 3: SECURE

Claimed and Held — Your security is not your responsibility; it's His promise

WEEK 4: TRANSFORMED

Claimed as I Am — God knows you completely and loves you completely

As you read, you'll notice each day follows the same structure: a short reflection on Scripture, a question for personal reflection, and a prayer. Some days may resonate deeply; others may challenge you. Both are important. This devotional is meant to be written in, prayed through, and lived out.

May you discover in these four weeks what the Psalmist knew: that God has searched you and known you, and before a word is on your tongue, He knows it completely (Psalm 139:1–2).

You are claimed.

WEEK 1

CHOSEN

Claimed, Not Earned

Your worth isn't determined by your performance

ANCHOR VERSE

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

EPHESIANS 2:8-10 (NIV)

DAY 1

Created Before You Accomplished Anything

READ: GENESIS 1:26-31

BEFORE YOU TOOK YOUR FIRST BREATH, BEFORE YOU COULD TIE YOUR SHOES OR SAY your first word, you were already claimed. God looked at His creative work and declared it good not after checking your resume, not after seeing how you'd turn out, but simply because you bear His image.

The Genesis account is clear: humanity's worth is intrinsic, not earned. We are created in the image of God (*imago Dei*) at the very foundation of our existence. This is not a conditional statement. Your dignity isn't granted on performance; it's woven into the fabric of who you are. Long before you learned to hustle, achieve, or prove yourself, you were already valuable because you are His.

This challenges everything our culture teaches us. We are trained to believe our worth is proportional to our productivity. We internalize the equation: I am what I do. But the gospel whispers something different: *I am because I am made in God's image.*

When you're tempted to feel worthless—when a project fails, a relationship ends, or you fall short—return to this truth: Your fundamental identity precedes your accomplishments. You were claimed before you could earn anything at all.

REFLECT

What does it mean to you personally that your identity is not based on what you accomplish or achieve?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I confess that I often measure myself by my productivity and my performance. Help me to root my identity in the simple, profound truth that I am made in Your image. Remind me today that I have worth not because of what I do, but because of whose I am. Amen.

DAY 2

Loved Before You Performed

READ: MATTHEW 3:16-17

IMAGINE STANDING AT THE RIVER'S EDGE WHERE JESUS WAS BAPTIZED. THE heavens open, the Spirit descends like a dove, and God speaks: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

What had Jesus done to earn this love? He had preached no sermons. He had healed no sick. He had not yet faced temptation in the wilderness or taught anyone to pray. He was simply there, fully human, fully obedient in this one act of righteousness. And His Father was thrilled.

This is where many of us get stuck. We imagine that God's approval is something we earn through better behavior, more faithful service, or greater sacrifice. We think if we just *try harder, do better, become more*, then God's smile will finally fall upon us.

But the baptism of Jesus reveals the truth: God delights in us not because of our performance, but because of our identity as His beloved. He looks at us the same way He looked at His Son, with love that precedes and supersedes everything we do.

Your worth doesn't increase when you do good. It doesn't decrease when you fail. It is fixed and eternal because it rests on God's unchanging character and His prevenient grace. You are loved before you perform. Period.

REFLECT

When is it hardest for you to believe that God loves you apart from your performance or achievement?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Abba Father, I come to You today as Your child, not as someone who must earn Your favor. Thank You for loving me before I could do anything to deserve it. Forgive me for the lies I've believed about needing to perform for Your affection. Let me rest in the security of being Your beloved. Amen.

DAY 3

Saved by Grace, Not Résumé

READ: TITUS 3:4-7

PAUL IS WRITING TO TITUS ABOUT SALVATION, AND HE MAKES AN AUDACIOUS CLAIM: God saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He emphasizes this twice, as if the early church needed to hear it twice to believe it.

Here's the scandal of salvation: it is fundamentally anti-meritocratic. Grace means that nobody earned it. Nobody could have earned it. Your entire résumé—your accomplishments, your character development, your spiritual disciplines, your good deeds—cannot purchase what Christ has already freely given.

This is offensive to the human ego. We want to believe that we contributed to our salvation in some way. We want to feel like we did *something*, no matter how small. We want to maintain the illusion of control, that our salvation was a partnership where we did our part and God did His.

But grace doesn't work that way. Grace means you are saved by something outside yourself, by Someone who owes you nothing and gives you everything. You can't contribute to it. You can only receive it.

This is deeply freeing. It means your salvation is not fragile, dependent on your consistent performance. It means you cannot lose what you did not earn. It means that when you fail, and you will, your relationship with God does not hang in the balance.

You are saved by grace alone. Your résumé is irrelevant.

REFLECT

In what areas of your faith are you still trying to “earn” your way into God’s favor?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, I thank You for being enough. I thank You for saving me not because I deserved it or worked for it, but because of Your mercy and grace. Help me to stop performing for salvation and start resting in it. Teach me to live like someone who is already saved, already loved, already enough. Amen.

DAY 4

Rest for the Worn Out

READ: MATTHEW 11:28-30

IF YOU HAVE BEEN DRIVING YOURSELF INTO THE GROUND WITH THE BELIEF THAT your worth depends on your work, these words from Jesus are your permission slip: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

The Greek word for “weary” (κοπιᾶω—*kopiaō*) means to labor to the point of exhaustion. It’s the word for someone who has been carrying something too heavy for too long. Jesus sees you. He sees the way you’ve internalized the demand that you must *perform, achieve, prove yourself worthy*.

And He invites you to something radically different: rest.

But notice what kind of rest Jesus offers. He says, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” He’s not offering the rest of doing nothing. He’s offering the rest that comes from working *with* Him, from having your labor aligned with His purposes rather than your ego’s demands.

This is revolutionary. It means work is okay. Productivity is okay. Effort is okay. But it must be released from the burden of proving your worth. Your labor can be an expression of gratitude, not a demand to earn God’s approval.

When you’re worn out, it’s often because you’ve been carrying a weight Jesus never asked you to carry. He invites you to put it down.

REFLECT

What would change if you believed that your worth is secure regardless of how much you accomplish?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Lord Jesus, I'm so tired. I'm tired of performing, of trying to earn, of carrying the weight of my own validation. I come to You now, laying down my exhaustion at Your feet. Teach me what it means to work with You, to labor from rest rather than for rest. Help me find the peace that comes from knowing I am enough. Amen.

DAY 5

Working for an Audience of One

READ: COLOSSIANS 3:23-24

PAUL GIVES US A PROVOCATIVE INSTRUCTION: “WHATEVER YOU DO, WORK AT IT with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

This is not a call to mediocrity. This is not permission to phone it in. Paul is saying: *work with excellence, with full effort, with genuine care*. But shift your audience.

Most of us are performing for the wrong crowd. We work for the approval of a boss, the admiration of peers, the validation of social media, the judgment of family members. We have internalized countless voices telling us what makes us worthy, and we’ve spent our lives trying to satisfy them.

But what if your only audience was God?

Not in a morbid, guilt-driven way. In a liberating way. When God is your only audience, you can take risks that others would judge as foolish, pursue work that the world says isn’t valuable, operate with integrity when nobody’s watching, make decisions based on calling rather than on earning approval, and accept failure without it defining you.

Working for an audience of one doesn’t mean your work doesn’t matter. It means your work is valued because God sees it, not because humans applaud it.

REFLECT

Who are you currently working to impress? What would change if your only goal was to please God with your work?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I confess that I have spent so much energy trying to impress people—my boss, my family, my peers, even strangers online. Redirect my gaze. Help me to see every task, every conversation, every decision as an opportunity to work for You. Give me the courage to do what's right even when nobody's watching. May my work be an offering to You. Amen.

DAY 6

When Everything Else Is Loss

READ: PHILIPPIANS 3:7-9

PAUL HAS AN IMPRESSIVE RÉSUMÉ. HE WAS A PHARISEE OF THE PHARISEES—thoroughly trained in Jewish law, zealous for the traditions, blameless in terms of legalistic righteousness. If anyone could build an identity on accomplishment, it was Paul.

And then he met Jesus.

His response is brutal honesty: “But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things.”

Paul isn’t saying that education is bad or that accomplishment is worthless. He’s saying that when placed beside the worth of Christ, everything else fades into insignificance. He’s declaring that if your identity is wrapped up in your credentials, your achievements, your status, or your accomplishments, you’ve built your house on sand.

This is the most liberating loss you can experience.

When everything you’ve built your identity on is recognized as loss compared to Christ, you become free. You’re free to fail. You’re free to change careers. You’re free to disappoint people. You’re free to be human because you’re no longer clinging to the illusion that your worth is measured by your accomplishments.

Paul calls this “gain.” And he’s right. Losing yourself in Christ is the greatest gain.

REFLECT

What accomplishment or credential have you been clinging to as a source of identity? What would it look like to release it?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, thank You that You are worth far more than anything I could accomplish or achieve. Help me to loosen my grip on the things I've been clinging to for identity. Teach me that knowing You is the only credential that ultimately matters. Give me the faith to surrender everything else. Amen.

DAY 7

Resting in God's Finished Work

READ: HEBREWS 4:9-11

THE WRITER OF HEBREWS MAKES A STRIKING CONNECTION: JUST AS GOD RESTED on the seventh day after creation was complete, there remains a Sabbath rest for God's people. And the entry point into that rest is faith, particularly, faith that God's work is finished and complete.

The issue for many of us is that we cannot rest because we don't believe the work is done. We think there's always more to earn, more to prove, more to accomplish. We think God is standing there with a clipboard, checking off our accomplishments, waiting for us to finally do enough.

But Hebrews tells us something different: God's work is finished. Redemption is complete. Your salvation is not a work in progress. Your identity is not something you're still building. You don't need to add anything to what Christ has already accomplished.

This is why Hebrews urgently encourages us: "Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest." Note the paradox: we must make effort to *stop* making effort. We must be intentional about surrendering our compulsive productivity and trusting that God's work is truly complete.

Resting in God's finished work doesn't mean passivity. It means trusting that the foundation of your identity, security, and worth is already laid. You are not building it; you are living from it.

REFLECT

What does it feel like to imagine that there is nothing left for you to earn or prove?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, help me to truly believe that Your work is finished and that my salvation is complete. Teach me to rest not from weariness, but from trust. Help me to silence the voices that tell me there's always more to do, more to earn, more to prove. Let me enter into the Sabbath rest that Christ has already won for me. Amen.

WEEK 2

BELOVED AND BELONGING

Claimed Into a Family

You belong somewhere; you belong to someone

ANCHOR VERSE

“The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”

ROMANS 8:15-16 (NIV)

DAY 8

Chosen and Adopted

READ: EPHESIANS 1:4-6

PAUL BEGINS HIS LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS WITH A RADICAL CLAIM: GOD CHOSE us before the foundation of the world. Not after we believed. Not after we proved ourselves. Before time itself began, God set His affection on you and marked you for adoption.

Adoption is different from birth. Adoption is a *choice*. Birth happens naturally; adoption is a deliberate decision to bring someone into your family, to give them your name, to make them yours. And Ephesians tells us that this is what God has done for us, before we ever existed, He chose to adopt us.

This matters because it means you are not an accident. You are not a backup plan. You are not someone God is tolerating or begrudgingly including. You are chosen. You are adopted. You are brought into God's family not because you qualified, but because God determined before the ages that He wanted you.

Think about that. The infinite God, unlimited in every way, looked across all of eternity and chose you. Not because of your potential. Not because of your future achievements. Just because He wanted you in His family.

This is the foundation of belonging. Before you can truly experience family, you must know that you are chosen. And you are.

REFLECT

How would your sense of belonging change if you truly believed that God chose you before the foundation of the world?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, thank You for choosing me. Thank You for adopting me into Your family not because I earned it or deserved it, but because of Your sovereign love. Help me to rest in the security of knowing that I was chosen before time began. When I feel like an outsider or unwanted, remind me that I was chosen by You. Amen.

DAY 9

Children of God

READ: 1 JOHN 3:1

“SEE WHAT GREAT LOVE THE FATHER HAS LAVISHED ON US, THAT WE SHOULD BE called children of God! And that is what we are!”

John begins with an exclamation point because this reality is meant to astound us. We are children of God. This is not a metaphor. This is not reserved for super-spiritual people or those who have their act together. This is the birthright of every believer.

But look at the opening: John is amazed at the love of the Father. He starts with wonder. He’s inviting us into his astonishment that God would claim us as His children.

In biblical culture, being a child of someone meant you bore their nature, their character, their reputation. When people looked at you, they would see the family resemblance. You would be expected to carry on the family name and legacy.

As children of God, we are heirs to His kingdom. We carry His image. We bear His name. And most importantly, we inherit His love.

But there’s more in the verse that John doesn’t elaborate on: “The world does not know us, because it did not know him.” Being a child of God sometimes means being misunderstood by a world that doesn’t share your values or your family identity. But it doesn’t change the fact of your belonging.

You are God’s child. The world may not understand this. But God does. And that’s what matters.

REFLECT

What does it mean to you to be called a child of God? How does that shape your sense of identity?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I stand amazed at Your love for me. Thank You for calling me Your child, not just in theory, but in reality. Help me to walk in the dignity and security of knowing that I am Yours. When the world misunderstands me or questions my identity, help me to remember whose child I am. Amen.

DAY 10

God Sets the Lonely in Families

READ: PSALM 68:5-6

“A FATHER TO THE FATHERLESS, A DEFENDER OF WIDOWS, IS GOD IN HIS HOLY dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.”

This psalm paints a picture of God as the one who gathers the scattered, who brings the lonely into family, who advocates for the vulnerable. It's not a passive comfort; it's an active intervention. God doesn't just sympathize with your loneliness, He *places you in families*.

Some of us have experienced profound loneliness. Maybe our biological families were broken or rejecting. Maybe we've moved far from home and don't know where we belong. Maybe we've experienced rejection that makes us question our worth. The psalmist speaks directly to this wound.

God's solution is not a self-help program or a motivational talk. It's family. It's belonging. It's being placed somewhere, by someone, among people who will claim you as their own.

This happens both spiritually (our adoption into God's family) and practically (the church as the family of God). When you come to faith, you're not just gaining a relationship with God; you're gaining siblings. You're entering into a household. You're no longer alone.

The promise is specific: God *sets* the lonely in families. This is action. This is God's commitment to your belonging. You don't have to earn it or prove you're worthy. God is actively working to place you in the family where you belong.

REFLECT

When have you felt most alone? Where have you experienced genuine family, either biological or spiritual?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, for those times when I've felt so alone that I wondered if anyone cared, thank You. Thank You for seeing my loneliness and moving to place me in family. Help me to receive the family You've given me, both spiritual and practical. And give me eyes to see the lonely around me and to invite them into our family as well. Amen.

DAY 11

No Longer Strangers

READ: EPHESIANS 2:19-22

PAUL WRITES TO THE GENTILE BELIEVERS IN EPHEBUS, REMINDING THEM OF THEIR old status: they were foreigners and strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world. They were on the outside looking in.

But then he announces the radical shift: “You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household.”

Do you hear the shift from exclusion to inclusion? From stranger to citizen? From outsider to family member?

For many of us, this resonates deeply because we’ve felt like strangers, in our own families, in our communities, in the world. We’ve experienced rejection and felt like we didn’t quite belong anywhere. We’ve been the odd one out, the misfit, the one nobody picked first.

And the gospel tells you: that’s over. Your stranger status has been revoked. You are a citizen of the kingdom. You are a member of God’s household.

Ephesians goes deeper, though. It describes the church, this household, as being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ as the cornerstone. The entire structure is growing into a holy temple. And *you are the temple*. You are part of the building that God is constructing.

You’re not just accepted into the family; you’re essential to it. You’re not just tolerated; you’re structural. The building doesn’t work without you.

REFLECT

What has it cost you to feel like a stranger? What would change if you fully believed you belong?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, thank You for making a way for me to be brought in from the outside. Thank You for declaring that I am no longer a stranger, but a full member of Your household. Help me to find my place in the family of God. And help me to recognize that others who feel like strangers need to know that they, too, can come home. Amen.

DAY 12

One Body, Many Parts

READ: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27

PAUL USES THE BODY METAPHOR TO DESCRIBE THE CHURCH: JUST AS A HUMAN BODY has many parts, each with its own function, the church is one body with many members. And crucially, each member is essential. There are no unnecessary parts.

But here's where it gets uncomfortable: Paul specifically addresses the parts that feel weak or less honorable. He says, "Those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor."

If you've ever felt like the less-important part—the weak link, the one with less to offer, the one whose gifts don't seem as spectacular or obvious—Paul is speaking directly to you. You are indispensable. You are essential to the body of Christ. The fact that your role is different or less visible doesn't make it less vital.

In a body, every part is necessary. You can lose your hand and survive. You can lose your hair and survive. But you can't lose your heart and survive. Some parts are vital precisely because they're foundational, not because they're the most prominent.

The same is true in the church. Your contribution to the body matters, not because it's flashy or impressive, but because the body needs you. There's a role that only you can fill, a perspective only you can offer, a gift only you can give.

REFLECT

What part of the body do you identify with? How might your role in the church be more vital than you realize?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, thank You for making me part of Your body. Help me to recognize that my role matters, even if it's not the most visible or glamorous. Free me from the need to be the most impressive part. Help me to be faithful to my function, and give me eyes to see how others depend on me. Amen.

DAY 13

Doing Life Together

READ: ACTS 2:42-47

THIS PASSAGE DESCRIBES THE EARLY CHURCH, AND IT'S BREATHTAKING. THEY devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to breaking bread and to prayer. They gave to anyone in need. They met daily in the temple courts and in their homes, breaking bread together and sharing their food with glad and sincere hearts.

But notice what's missing from the list: church programs, polished productions, professional staff, impressive buildings. What's present is radically simple: teaching, fellowship, eating, prayer, generosity, and presence.

"Doing life together" means opening your life to people. It means sharing not just your Sunday morning, but your kitchen table, your struggles, your celebrations, your ordinary moments. It means knowing and being known.

This terrifies us because it requires vulnerability. It's easier to attend a service and go home alone than to allow others into the messiness of your actual life. But the early church modeled something different: they did life together.

They didn't just believe together; they lived together. They didn't just worship together; they ate together. They didn't just pray for each other; they cared for each other's actual needs.

This is family. This is what it means to be claimed into a family, not just accepted, but woven into the texture of community where your life intersects with others' lives, where you're known and loved, where you belong.

REFLECT

Who in your faith community knows your actual life, not just your Sunday face? Who would you need to invite closer to experience true fellowship?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I confess that I often keep people at arm's length. It feels safer to be private, to keep my struggles hidden, to present a polished version of myself. But You call me into community, into real fellowship where I'm known and loved as I am. Give me courage to open my life to others and to let them matter to me. Amen.

DAY 14

Don't Give Up Meeting Together

READ: HEBREWS 10:24-25

“AND LET US CONSIDER HOW WE MAY SPUR ONE ANOTHER ON TOWARD LOVE AND good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

The writer of Hebrews is addressing a real temptation: to isolate, to stop showing up, to retreat from community. And his response is not just permission to skip; it's an urgent exhortation: don't give up.

Why? Because we *need each other*. Alone, we atrophy. We lose perspective. We become prey to lies we would never believe in community. We lose courage. We lose hope.

The writer mentions “spurring one another on toward love and good deeds”—this is what community does. It challenges us. It inspires us. It calls us higher.

But there's another reason given: “the Day approaching”—in times of tribulation or uncertainty, community becomes even more crucial. When the world feels dark or your faith is being tested, you need the encouragement of the body of Christ. You need to see others holding on to faith. You need to be reminded that you're not alone in this.

Hebrews is speaking to us across the centuries. In a world that isolates us digitally while disconnecting us relationally, this word is critical: *Do not give up meeting together*. Show up. Be present. Let yourself need people and let people need you.

This is how family works.

REFLECT

When is it hardest for you to show up in community? What would it mean to recommit to gathering with God's people?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, thank You for the gift of community. Forgive me for the times I've isolated myself or made excuses to skip gathering with Your people. Help me to see community not as an obligation but as a gift. Give me the courage to keep showing up, to let others encourage me, and to offer encouragement to them. Amen.

WEEK 3

SECURE

Claimed and Held

Your security is not your responsibility; it's His promise

ANCHOR VERSE

“But now, this is what the Lord says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.’”

ISAIAH 43:1-2 (NIV)

DAY 15

You Are Mine

READ: ISAIAH 43:1-3

“FEAR NOT, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU; I HAVE SUMMONED YOU BY NAME; YOU ARE mine.”

Four powerful declarations in one sentence:

- **Fear not** — release your anxiety
- **I have redeemed you** — you have been bought back, rescued, paid for
- **I have summoned you by name** — you are known personally, not anonymously
- **You are mine** — you belong to God

The redundancy is intentional. God is hammering home the reality of His claim on your life.

“I have summoned you by name.” Imagine being called by your name—your real name, not a title or a role. Someone sees you, knows you, and calls you into relationship. This is intimate. This is personal. This is the opposite of being a nameless person in a crowd.

And the culmination: “You are mine.”

Not for a season. Not conditionally. Not as long as you perform well. You *are* God’s. This is your fundamental identity. You are owned, in the sense of belonging to Someone who will never let you go.

This is the foundation of all the promises that follow in Isaiah 43. You can walk through water and not be swept away. You can walk through fire and not be burned. Not because you’re invincible, but because you belong to God and He is with you.

REFLECT

When you hear “you are mine,” what emotions arise? Security? Surrender? Both?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, thank You for calling me by name. Thank You for summoning me into relationship with You. Thank You for claiming me as Yours. Help me to live with the security of knowing that I belong to You, that You’ve redeemed me, that You will not let me go. Amen.

DAY 16

No One Can Snatch You Away

READ: JOHN 10:27-30

JESUS SAYS: “MY SHEEP LISTEN TO MY VOICE; I KNOW THEM, AND THEY FOLLOW ME. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”

There’s an extraordinary security in these words. You are in Jesus’ hand. You are also in the Father’s hand. You are held twice over.

And the promise is absolute: *no one can snatch you away*. Not the enemy. Not your circumstances. Not your failures. No one has the power to remove you from God’s hand.

This is not just comfort; this is security. Your salvation is not dependent on your strength to hold on. It’s dependent on God’s strength to hold you. And His grip is unbreakable.

The metaphor of sheep in the shepherd’s hand is intimate and tender. Sheep are vulnerable animals. They can’t defend themselves. They need constant care and protection. And the shepherd holds them with protective strength.

That’s you. You are held. You are safe.

But notice also: you listen to your shepherd’s voice. You follow Him. Your security is not passive, it’s relational. You’re held because you belong to Him, because you listen to Him, because you follow Him.

This is claimed and held: you are secured not just by divine strength but by covenant relationship.

REFLECT

What would it mean to truly believe that no one can snatch you away from God's hand? How would that change your anxieties?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, thank You for holding me in Your hand. Thank You for the security of knowing that nothing and no one can remove me from Your grip. When I'm tempted to fear that I might fall away or be lost, help me to remember that I am held. Help me to listen to Your voice and follow You. Amen.

DAY 17

Cast Your Anxiety on Him

READ: 1 PETER 5:6-7

“HUMBLE YOURSELVES, THEREFORE, UNDER GOD’S MIGHTY HAND, THAT HE MAY lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

Peter is addressing believers who are facing persecution, suffering, and uncertainty. The world is not safe. The future is not guaranteed. And his counsel is: cast your anxiety on Him.

The phrase “cast all your anxiety” is striking. It’s not “manage your anxiety” or “think positive about your anxiety.” It’s *cast*—throw it, transfer it, hand it over completely.

And the reason? Because He cares for you.

Peter isn’t saying that if you cast your anxiety on God, everything will immediately improve. He’s saying something more foundational: God cares about you. Your anxiety matters to Him. Your struggles matter to Him. He’s not indifferent.

Notice also: you “humble yourself under God’s mighty hand” before you cast your anxiety. Humility means acknowledging that you’re not strong enough to carry this alone. It means releasing the illusion of control.

And when you do? When you stop trying to carry it yourself and transfer it to God? He lifts you up. Not necessarily out of the circumstance, but up—elevated, sustained, held.

This is what it means to be claimed and held: not that nothing bad will happen, but that when it does, you don’t have to carry it alone.

REFLECT

What anxiety are you carrying that you need to cast on God? What's holding you back from trusting Him with it?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I'm so tired of carrying this anxiety. I'm tired of trying to manage, predict, and control everything. Help me to humble myself before You and to cast all of this on You. Help me to trust that You care for me and that I don't have to do this alone. Lift me up. Sustain me. Hold me. Amen.

DAY 18

Peace That Guards Your Heart

READ: PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

“DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERY SITUATION, BY PRAYER AND petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Paul is not telling you to never feel anxious. He's telling you what to do with your anxiety: bring it to God in prayer.

Notice the progression:

- Instead of anxiety, prayer
- With thanksgiving (gratitude for who God is and what He's done)
- Present your requests (be specific about what you need)
- Result: peace

This peace is not the absence of problems. It's not denying reality. It's a supernatural peace that exists *in the midst of* anxiety-inducing circumstances. It transcends understanding because logic would say you should be anxious, but you're not.

And this peace *guards* your heart and mind. It stands sentinel. It protects you from destructive thought patterns, from spiraling fear, from the lies that whisper that God has abandoned you.

Think about that: peace as a guard. While your circumstances may be chaotic, your inner life is protected. You are safe, not because the world is safe, but because the peace of God is standing watch over your heart.

This is claimed and held: you are protected not from difficulty, but in difficulty. You are guarded by the supernatural peace of God.

REFLECT

When are you most prone to anxiety? How might prayer with thanksgiving transform your experience of that anxiety?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I bring my anxiety to You. I thank You for Your faithfulness, for Your power, for Your commitment to me. I present my requests to You, trusting that You hear and care. I ask for Your peace, that supernatural peace that doesn't make sense but holds my heart steady. Guard my mind and heart in Christ. Amen.

DAY 19

Don't Worry About Tomorrow

READ: MATTHEW 6:25-34

JESUS SAYS: “THEREFORE DO NOT WORRY ABOUT TOMORROW, FOR TOMORROW WILL worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

This is one of the most practical things Jesus ever said. He's not saying life will be easy. He's not saying there won't be problems tomorrow. He's saying: stop spending today's energy on tomorrow's problems.

Worry is a futile exercise. It doesn't prevent bad things from happening. It just steals your peace today.

Jesus illustrates with nature: the birds of the air don't sow or reap or store away in barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. The lilies of the field don't labor or spin, yet they are clothed more gloriously than Solomon. If God cares for the transient beauty of flowers and the daily needs of birds, how much more will He care for you?

This is an argument from the greater to the lesser. If God is attentive to creation, He's certainly attentive to His beloved children.

The key insight: you can trust God with tomorrow because He will be there tomorrow. You don't need to carry tomorrow's burden today. You can lay it down.

“Each day has enough trouble of its own” is Jesus' compassionate recognition that today is hard enough. Don't add tomorrow's imagined catastrophes to today's real challenges.

REFLECT

What tomorrow are you spending today's energy worrying about? What would it mean to lay that down?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, thank You for reminding me that You are with me every day, not just today. Help me to trust that You will be there tomorrow and provide for tomorrow's needs. Help me to stop borrowing tomorrow's troubles. Help me to focus on today and to trust You with what comes next. Amen.

DAY 20

He Holds All Things Together

READ: COLOSSIANS 1:15-17

“THE SON IS THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, THE FIRSTBORN OVER ALL creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”

This is cosmically stunning. Jesus doesn't just affect spiritual reality. He holds the physical universe together. Gravity, momentum, atomic structure—at the deepest level, Christ is the cohesive force.

And if He holds the universe together, He can hold your life together.

You don't have to understand how everything works. You don't have to have all the answers. You don't have to be the one holding things together—your relationships, your finances, your health, your future. That's not your job.

Your job is to trust the One who holds it all together.

This is radical trust. It means that when your life feels like it's falling apart, you can remember: “In him all things hold together.” Even when you can't see how things will work out, the One who ordered the universe is ordering your life.

This isn't magical thinking that denies real problems. This is confidence that you're not ultimately responsible for keeping everything together. That burden has been lifted. Christ holds all things, including you.

REFLECT

What are you trying to hold together? What would it feel like to let Christ hold that instead?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, thank You for holding all things together, including my life. Thank You for taking on the cosmic work of maintaining creation, so I don't have to be the one holding everything together. Help me to release my death grip on things I can't ultimately control. Help me to trust that You are holding it all. Amen.

DAY 21

Nothing Can Separate You

READ: ROMANS 8:35-39

PAUL CONCLUDES HIS GREAT MEDITATION ON SECURITY AND FREEDOM WITH A challenge: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: ‘For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’”

Then he makes the climactic statement: “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

This is the ultimate affirmation of being claimed and held.

Nothing. Not suffering. Not failure. Not cosmic powers. Not time itself. *Nothing* can separate you from God’s love.

Paul’s list is comprehensive. He covers every category of potential separation:

- Circumstances (trouble, hardship, persecution, danger)
- Physical needs (famine, nakedness)
- Spiritual forces (angels, demons, powers)
- Space and dimension (height, depth)
- Time (present, future)
- The totality of creation (anything else)

And none of it can separate you.

You are claimed and held with a grip so unbreakable that it transcends every category of potential loss, every possible threat, every imaginable separation.

You are claimed. You are held. You are loved with an eternal love that no force in heaven or on earth or under the earth can sever.

REFLECT

What separation have you feared most? How does it change things to know that nothing can separate you from God's love?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I thank You for this certainty: that nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate me from Your love. Thank You for claiming me. Thank You for holding me. Thank You for loving me with a love that death cannot overcome, that time cannot diminish, that circumstances cannot shake. I am forever Yours, and nothing can change that. Amen.

WEEK 4

TRANSFORMED

Claimed as I Am

God knows you completely and loves you completely

ANCHOR VERSE

“You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.”

PSALM 139:1-6 (NIV)

DAY 22

God Looks at the Heart

READ: 1 SAMUEL 16:7

SAMUEL IS LOOKING FOR THE NEXT KING OF ISRAEL, AND HE'S CONVINCED IT'S Eliab, the eldest son of Jesse. Eliab is tall, strong, impressive, everything a king should look like. But God stops him: "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Then God chooses David, the youngest, the shepherd boy who isn't even brought to the gathering. David, who no one thought was worth considering.

This verse confronts the way we've been taught to evaluate people, including ourselves. We assess based on externals: appearance, credentials, status, performance, presentation. And we've internalized this. We believe others will accept us only if we look right, say the right things, project the right image.

But God's evaluation criteria are fundamentally different. He doesn't care about your external resume. He looks at your heart.

What does this mean practically? It means that what you're anxious others will discover about you—your insecurity, your doubt, your failure, your shame—God already knows and already sees past it to your heart. He's not surprised by your contradictions or disappointed by your struggle.

He looks at the heart. And He claims you anyway.

This is the beginning of freedom from the exhausting performance of managing your image. If God looks at your heart and still loves you, then you can stop performing for people who do the same.

REFLECT

What do you most fear people would discover about your heart? How does it change things to know that God already knows and accepts you?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I've spent so much energy managing how I appear to others. I've worried about what people would think if they really knew me. Help me to believe that You look at my heart, and that what You see, You love. Free me from the tyranny of managing my image, and help me to live with authenticity. Amen.

DAY 23

Nowhere to Hide, Nothing to Fear

READ: GENESIS 3:8-10, 21

AFTER ADAM AND EVE EAT FROM THE TREE, THEY EXPERIENCE SHAME FOR THE first time. The passage says, “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they hid from each other and from God.”

Adam says, “I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

Notice: shame and hiding go together. When we feel exposed, when we believe something about us is wrong or unacceptable, we hide. We cover up. We create masks. We edit our stories.

But the passage continues. God finds them in their hiding place, not to condemn them, but to clothe them. He makes garments for them, a picture of God’s covering, His provision, His care for their shame.

This is the gospel in miniature. God doesn’t leave us in our shame and hiding. He comes looking for us. He sees us in our nakedness—our failure, our fear, our imperfection—and rather than rejecting us, He covers us. He cares for us.

This is revolutionary: *Nowhere to hide, nothing to fear.*

There’s nowhere to hide because God already knows. You can’t surprise Him. You can’t hide anything that would make Him stop loving you. And there’s nothing to fear because His response to your exposure is not rejection but covering.

This is what it means to be claimed as you are. You are known completely. You are still loved completely.

REFLECT

What have you been hiding from God (and others)? What would change if you believed you could be seen and still be loved?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I've been hiding for so long. I'm tired of the mask, tired of the performance, tired of fear. Help me to believe that I can be known, truly known, and still be loved. Cover my shame with Your love and acceptance. Help me to stop hiding and start living openly as someone claimed by You. Amen.

DAY 24

Loved While Still a Sinner

READ: ROMANS 5:8

“BUT GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS OWN LOVE FOR US IN THIS: WHILE WE WERE STILL sinners, Christ died for us.”

This is the scandal of the gospel. Love typically works like this: you do good, therefore you deserve reward. You behave well, therefore you earn affection. Love is conditional on being lovable.

But Paul is saying something radically different: Christ died for us *while we were still sinners*. Not after we cleaned ourselves up. Not after we proved ourselves worthy. Not after we made some progress toward righteousness.

While we were still hostile to God. Still rebellious. Still broken. Still selfish. Still deserving judgment.

That’s when Christ loved us into redemption.

This means your sins—your failures, your addictions, your bitterness, your lust, your selfishness—did not disqualify you from being loved by God. Your worst self did not make you unlovable. Your deepest shame did not place you beyond His reach.

You were loved at your worst. Claimed in your brokenness. Redeemed in your rebellion.

This changes everything about how you see yourself. You’re no longer someone trying to become good enough to be loved. You’re someone already loved, whose love is meant to transform you.

REFLECT

What is the sin or failure you most fear would make you unlovable to God? How does it change things to hear that Christ died for you while you were still in that sin?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Jesus, thank You for loving me while I was still a sinner. Thank You for not waiting for me to get my act together before dying for me. Thank You for valuing me enough to die for me at my absolute worst. Help me to live in the reality of that love. Help me to extend that same undeserved love to others. Amen.

DAY 25

No Condemnation

READ: ROMANS 8:1

“THEREFORE, THERE IS NOW NO CONDEMNATION FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST Jesus.”

Paul writes this after an entire section of the letter where he’s described the struggle of the Christian life—wanting to do good but finding himself drawn to evil, being enslaved to sin, feeling like a prisoner in his own body. He’s laid out the internal warfare of the human condition.

And then he announces: no condemnation.

This word “condemnation” (κατάκριμα—katakrima) doesn’t mean discipline or correction. It means judicial sentencing. It means the pronouncement of guilt and the consequent punishment.

And Paul is saying: that’s over. The sentence has been served. The guilt has been transferred. You are no longer condemned.

This is crucial because most of us live under a constant low-level condemnation. We criticize ourselves. We rehearse our failures. We assume that God is disappointed in us. We live as though we’re perpetually on thin ice with Him.

But Romans 8:1 says: no. There is no judgment hanging over you. The only one who could condemn you, the righteous Judge, has chosen not to.

This doesn’t mean there are no consequences to your actions. It means that you are not defined by your failures, not imprisoned by your guilt, not under the condemnation of judgment.

REFLECT

What voices of condemnation do you carry? What would it mean to truly believe that there is no condemnation for you?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, I confess that I live under condemnation, my own and what I imagine to be Yours. I critique myself harshly. I assume You're disappointed. Help me to believe the truth: that I am not condemned. That my sentence has been served. That I am free. Help me to release myself from the condemnation I carry and to live in the freedom of Your acceptance. Amen.

DAY 26

A New Creation

READ: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

“THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, THE NEW CREATION HAS COME: THE OLD HAS gone, the new is here!”

Paul is making an audacious claim: when you come to Christ, you are not just forgiven. You are not just updated. You are *recreated*. You are a new creation.

This is not a metaphor about self-improvement. This is not about becoming a “better version” of yourself. This is about radical, fundamental transformation at the level of identity.

The old self—the self built on performance, on shame, on the need to earn approval, on the belief that you’re fundamentally flawed—that self has passed away. It’s gone.

And in its place? A new creation. Someone remade in Christ. Someone who bears His image in a new way. Someone whose fundamental identity has shifted from “sinner” to “saint,” from “condemned” to “claimed,” from “alone” to “beloved.”

This is not about denying your past or pretending your struggles don’t exist. This is about recognizing that the deepest truth about you is not your history or your failures, it’s your identity in Christ.

You are a new creation. The old is gone. You have been claimed and remade.

REFLECT

How much of your current identity is still built on your past? What would change if you truly believed you were a new creation?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, thank You for making me new. Thank You for not just forgiving my past but for entirely remaking me as a new creation in Christ. Help me to live from this new identity rather than from the shame of what I used to be. Help me to see myself the way You see me, not as damaged goods, but as remade. Amen.

DAY 27

The Father Runs to You

READ: LUKE 15:11-24

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON IS ACHINGLY FAMILIAR. A SON DEMANDS HIS inheritance, leaves home, squanders everything, and finds himself in dire poverty. In desperation, he decides to return home and ask his father to make him a servant—he knows he’s forfeited his right to be called a son.

But when his father sees him coming down the road, the father doesn’t wait for his son to make his request. The father *runs* to him, embraces him, covers him with kisses, restores him as a beloved son, and throws a celebration.

Notice: the father runs. In the Middle Eastern cultural context, running was undignified for a respected elder. But this father abandons dignity for the sake of his wayward child.

The son is prepared to be a servant. He expects condemnation. He believes he’s forfeited his place in the family.

And he’s met with radical, undignified, running love.

This is how God responds to you. Not when you’ve been good enough. Not when you’ve proven your worthiness. When you return, when you come home, when you stop running, He runs to you.

He doesn’t lecture you about your failure. He doesn’t make you prove yourself. He celebrates you. He restores you. He claims you as beloved.

REFLECT

In what ways have you been running from God? What would it feel like to experience Him running toward you?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, thank You for running toward me rather than demanding I earn my way back. Thank You for not waiting for me to prove myself or for me to become worthy. Thank You for the undignified, lavish, scandalous love that celebrates my return. Help me to stop running and to rest in Your embrace. Amen.

DAY 28

Confession Brings Freedom

READ: 1 JOHN 1:9 AND JAMES 5:16

JOHN WRITES: “IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST AND WILL forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

James adds: “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”

There’s something about confession, naming your sin, speaking it out loud, bringing it into the light, that breaks its power.

Many of us carry our shame in secret. We hide what we’ve done, what we feel, what we struggle with. We believe that if anyone really knew, we’d be rejected. So we keep it hidden, and the hiding becomes its own prison.

But confession is freedom.

When you confess to God, you experience His forgiveness and purification. When you confess to others (with appropriate boundaries), you experience the power of being known and loved anyway.

The word “confess” literally means “to speak the same.” When you confess, you’re agreeing with God about what you’ve done. You’re not minimizing, not making excuses, not pretending. You’re naming it. And in that naming, you transfer it from darkness into light.

This is claimed as I am: not claimed only when you’re performing well, but claimed in your confession, in your honesty, in your willingness to be seen in your brokenness.

This is the promise you need to hold onto as you close this devotional. Whatever you face, whatever comes, whatever threatens to shake your faith or your security, nothing can separate you from the love of God.

REFLECT

What are you keeping secret? What would it mean to bring it into the light through confession?

YOUR RESPONSE – TYPE IN THE BOX BELOW

PRAY

Father, help me to have the courage to confess to You, to a trusted friend, to whoever needs to hear it. Free me from the power of secrets and shame. Help me to experience the freedom that comes from being fully known and still fully loved. Give me trustworthy people with whom I can be honest. Amen.

Conclusion

AS YOU CLOSE THIS DEVOTIONAL, YOU HAVE JOURNEYED THROUGH FOUR WEEKS OF truth:

Week 1 told you that your worth is not determined by what you accomplish

Week 2 told you that you belong to a family

Week 3 told you that you are held by a grip nothing can break

Week 4 told you that you are known completely and loved completely

These truths are not just poetic. They are the foundation of a transformed life.

Returning to where we started—Jesus standing in the Jordan River, His Father’s voice saying, “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased”—you have permission to receive that declaration for yourself.

You are God’s child.

You are fully known.

You are completely loved.

You are deeply held.

You are claimed.

Whether you circle through this devotional once and never look back, or whether you return to it again and again as you need reminding, know this: the truths written here are true whether you feel them or not. Your identity in Christ does not depend on your emotional experience. It depends on God's character and His promise.

- On days when you feel abandoned, return to Isaiah 43: "You are mine."
- On days when you feel ashamed, return to 1 John 3: "You are God's child."
- On days when you feel weak, return to 1 Peter 5: "Cast your anxiety on him."
- On days when you feel separated, return to Romans 8: "Nothing can separate you."

You are claimed. Let that transform everything.