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# To Have and to Hold

## Lesson 1 *The Identification and Ownership of Marriage*

In the beginning . . . Eve was created from Adam's rib and brought to Adam who called her *Woman* because she was taken out of man. (Genesis 2)  
Adam embedded his name (*man*) in hers (*woman*)—her identity linked to his.

In Genesis 36 note how Basemath is referred to in verse 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
and in verse 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 4 tells of which two extraordinary women who were examples of bravery and strength?  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
In verses 4 and 21, how are they identified?  
\_\_\_\_\_

In God's use of the marriage metaphor, He emphasizes this change of identity. Marriage changes what we are called, what we are known to the world as, and even how we think of ourselves.

1. **God has been concerned from the foundation of the world with calling a people by His name, identifying certain people with Himself: "These are Mine."**

**A. God is the \_\_\_\_\_ of our new identification with Him.**

Even as **He chose us in Him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. (Ephesians 1:4)

But when **He who had set me apart** before I was born, and who **called me** by His grace. . . (Galatians 1:15)

In order to make known the riches of His glory for vessels of mercy, which **He has prepared beforehand** for glory—even us whom **He has called**, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? (Romans 9:23-24)

Romans 9 gives the beautiful promise that God's people called by His name come from Gentiles as well as Jews!

**B. God is motivated by \_\_\_\_\_ in His calling us into identity with Himself.**

**Called** to belong to Jesus Christ. . . **loved** by God. . . **called** to be saints. (Romans 1:6-7)

But now thus says the Lord, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. . . Because you are **precious** in My eyes, and **honored** and **I love you**. . . (Isaiah 43:1,4)

**2. Being called by God's name is not just a matter of identity. It is also a matter of \_\_\_\_\_, of possession.**

Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; **you are Mine!** (Isaiah 43:1)

**A. God \_\_\_\_\_ me; God owns me.**

O LORD, how many are Your works! In wisdom **You have made them all**; The earth is full of **Your possessions**. (Psalm 104:24 NASB)

**B. God \_\_\_\_\_ me; God owns me.**

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has **chosen you** to be a people for His **treasured possession** out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 7:6)

**C. God \_\_\_\_\_ me; God owns me.**

Who gave Himself for us to **redeem us** from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for **His own possession** who are zealous for good works. (Titus 2:14)

**D. God owns me; God \_\_\_\_\_ me.**

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my **treasured possession** among all peoples, for all the earth is mine. (Exodus 19:5)

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for **His treasured possession** out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. (Deuteronomy 7:6)

**E. God owns me; God \_\_\_\_\_ me.**

You shall therefore **keep all My statutes and all My rules** and do them. . . You shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine. (Leviticus 20:22,26)

You shall therefore love the LORD your God and **keep His charge, His statutes, His rules, and His commandments always.** (Deuteronomy 11:1)

It is this aspect of our identity as God's own treasured possession that gets us in trouble. We want the treasuring, loving, protecting, provision, but we don't want the authority. We don't want to be ruled over by another. ("We will not have this man rule over us!" Luke 19:14)

**3. We can deny our identification as God's own treasured possession by loving, serving, and being ruled by false gods.**

Our hearts were made to be owned and ruled by another. If we are not allowing ourselves to be owned and ruled by God, then we are allowing ourselves to be owned and ruled by other gods. Our hearts are not a vacuum as to being ruled.

Baal, the name of false gods used repeatedly in the Old Testament, means *master, husband, owner*.

Infidelity to God happens when I let something else be my master, my owner, my ruler, my husband; it involves willingly letting myself become enslaved to someone or something else besides the God who chose me, owns me, loves me, and treasures me.

**A. We identify ourselves with other gods.**

The people began to play the whore with the daughters of Moab. These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So **Israel yoked himself to Baal** of Peor. (Numbers 25:1-3)

**B. We give our hearts and affections to other gods.**

If you are returning to the Lord **with all your heart**, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you and **direct your heart to the Lord** and serve Him only, and He will deliver you. . . So the people of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the Lord only. (I Samuel 7:3-4)

Yet I will leave 7000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him. (I Kings 19:18)

My son, **give me your heart**, and let your eyes observe my ways. (Proverbs 23:26)

**C. We worship, submit to, and serve other gods.**

And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and **served the Baals**. And they abandoned the Lord. . . They went after other gods and **bowed down to them**. (Judges 2:11-12)

**4. God responds to our rejection (infidelity) in mercy by drawing us back.**

In the following excerpt from Hosea 2, circle everything God promises to do in response to the infidelity of His people.

<sup>13</sup> And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals when she burned offerings to them and adorned herself with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers and forgot me, declares the LORD. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. . . <sup>16</sup> And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.' <sup>17</sup> For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more. . . <sup>19</sup> And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. <sup>20</sup> I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD. . . <sup>23</sup> And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever,  
because he delights in steadfast love. (Micah 7:18)

**Conclusion:**

There are four overarching reasons God uses the marriage metaphor to describe His relationship to His people. The marriage metaphor emphasizes:

1. God’s initiating, loving choice in making us His own treasured bride.
2. Our infidelity in turning to other lovers, other masters.
3. God’s covenant-keeping faithfulness and love that forgives and restores us.
4. Our future eternal fidelity to God.

**Study Questions**

**Day 1**

Identify the descriptions of our new identity as God’s chosen people that the following pairs of verses have in common.

I Corinthians 1:21 I Peter 1:21	
I John 3:1 Romans 8:16	
I Peter 2:10 Hebrews 4:9	
Hebrews 2:11-12 Matthew 25:40	
John 15:15 James 2:23	
I Peter 2:5,9 Revelation 1:6	

Compare I Corinthians 7:22 and I Peter 2:16. Both verses have two contrasting descriptions of the new identity of believers. What are the descriptions?

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These descriptions seem to contradict each other. How can both identities of Christians be true at the same time? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Day 2

Continue identifying in the following verses descriptions of our new identity as God's chosen people.

Romans 1:7 I Corinthians 1:2	
I Corinthians 3:16-17 I Corinthians 6:19	
Romans 1:7 II Thessalonians 2:13	

Romans 8:16-17 Ephesians 3:6	
Hosea 2:19-20 II Corinthians 11:2 Revelation 19:7	

Which of the identities of God's chosen people (look back at Day 1, too) resonate the most with you?

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Which identities bring you the greatest comfort?

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Which identities are the hardest to wrap your mind around? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Day 3

God's value system and our value system are very different! As we saw in this lesson, God loves us and considers us His special treasure, highly valued.

If a stranger followed you around for a month, closely watching how you spend your time and your money, and if she had the ability to see in your mind to know what you devote your mental and emotional energy to, what might she conclude about what you love and value the most in life?

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According to Deuteronomy 6:5, what are we to love with every ounce of our being? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Job 23:12, what is a greater treasure than food? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the great treasure the writer of Proverbs celebrates in Proverbs 2:1-6? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Matthew 6:19-21, how can we tell where the affections of our hearts lie?

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According to Paul in Philippians 3:7-8, what is the thing of greatest worth? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the enduring riches that comprise truly living described in I Timothy 6:17-19?

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Identify in the following verses what counts more than anything.

I Corinthians 7:19	
Galatians 5:6	
Galatians 6:15	
Philippians 3:7-8	
I Timothy 4:8	
Acts 20:24	

## Day 4

What is the third commandment? (Exodus 20:7)

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At marriage, a woman often takes her husband's name. What would it mean for a bride to take her husband's name in vain?

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If we think of the third commandment in the marriage context, what does it mean for us, who are identified as the *people of God* and *Christians*, to take God's name or Christ's name in vain?

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Read Ephesians 4:1-3. What phrase does Paul use in verse 1 that means the same thing as "don't take the Lord's name in vain"? \_\_\_\_\_

In verses 2-3 what is the arena in which we are given an opportunity to walk worthy? In other words, what is the practical application in which Paul is discussing walking worthy? \_\_\_\_\_

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From verses 2-3, list the characteristics of a believer who walks worthy of the name of Christ.

## Day 5

The passage from Ephesians in Day 4's questions focused on walking worthy of our calling as primarily lived out in relationship with people around us, especially with fellow members of the body of Christ.

### Read Colossians 1:9-14

What phrase in verse 10 echoes Ephesians 4:1?



According to verse 10, what two evidences will there be in our life that we are living in way that pleases God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

According to verse 11, what resource do we have to enable us to live in a way that pleases God?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What additional two evidences of a God-pleasing life are given in verse 11?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List the words and phrases used in verses 11-14 that describe God's actions on our behalf in saving us and changing our identity. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Memory verses

**Over the next 6 weeks, we will be memorizing 8 verses together: Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 10:22-25. Find a partner and help each other!**

**We begin this week with Jeremiah 31:31-32.**

<sup>31</sup> Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,

<sup>32</sup> not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.