

ROOTED: Foundations of the Believer

Week 1 — What Is Your Faith Rooted In?

John 1:1–5

Foundation: Christ is our source.

Week 2 — The Authority of the Believer

Matthew 28:18–20

Foundation: We are under Christ's authority, authorized for His purpose, empowered by His Spirit, and sent to represent Him.

For Week 3

ROOTED — WEEK 3

THE IDENTITY OF THE BELIEVER

Knowing Who You Are in Christ

The progression becomes:

ROOTED → AUTHORIZED → IDENTITY → FUNCTION. **IN CHRIST**

Before I teach believers extensively about exercising authority, I want them to understand the person who has been authorized.

Because one of the greatest problems in the Church isn't simply that believers don't know what they can do.

They don't know WHO THEY ARE.

Foundational Scripture — 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

Reconciliation = the restoration of a relationship that had been broken or alienated.

In the New Testament, reconciliation specifically describes what God accomplished through Jesus Christ to restore sinful humanity to relationship with Himself.

The key Greek word

καταλλαγή — katallagē

Pronounced roughly: kat-al-la-GAY

It means reconciliation, restoration to favor, or the exchange of hostility/alienation for a restored relationship.

The related verb is:

καταλλάσσω — katallassō

“To reconcile; to change from hostility into friendship; to restore a broken relationship.”

One of the most important passages is 2 Corinthians 5:18–20:

“All things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation...”

Notice the order:

GOD → reconciles US → through CHRIST → then gives US the ministry of reconciliation.

That is significant for your ROOTED series.

What needed reconciliation?

Paul explains it in Colossians 1:21:

“And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled...”

The problem wasn't merely that humanity needed encouragement.

There was alienation because of sin.

Romans 5:10 says:

“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son...”

So reconciliation contains a movement:

ALIENATED → RECONCILED

ENEMIES → PEACE

SEPARATED → RESTORED

FAR FROM GOD → BROUGHT NEAR

And the bridge is:

CHRIST.

Christ is the center of reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:19 says:

“God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself...”

That's critical.

Christian reconciliation isn't primarily:

“Man finding his way back to God.”

It's:

“God acting through Christ to make reconciliation possible.”

And how did He accomplish it?

Colossians 1:20 says:

“having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

So biblically:

Reconciliation isn't God pretending sin never happened.

The Cross dealt with the very thing that caused the separation.

This connects strongly to Week 3: Identity

Look at what Paul says immediately before discussing reconciliation:

2 Corinthians 5:17:

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...”

Then verse 18:

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ...”

Then verse 20:

“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ...”

There's a progression here that could fit your message extremely well:

NEW CREATION → RECONCILED → GIVEN A MINISTRY → MADE AN AMBASSADOR.

Or more simply:

WHO I WAS → WHO CHRIST MADE ME → WHO I NOW BELONG TO → WHAT I'VE BEEN SENT TO DO.

That's the connection between identity and function.

A powerful way to say it from the pulpit would be:

“Before God gave you a ministry of reconciliation, He reconciled you. Before He sent you as an ambassador, He brought you home.”

And that keeps the entire revelation centered on Jesus:

We are not the reconciler.

Christ is.

We are the people who have been reconciled and are now entrusted with the message:

“Be reconciled to God.” — 2 Corinthians 5:20

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

I would open with a question:

“Who told you who you are?”

Because identity can become rooted in:

What happened to me.

What people called me.

What I've accomplished.

What I've failed at.

What I own.

My title.

My position.

My past.

My feelings.

But none of those things has the final authority to define a believer.

God does.

This gives you a strong statement:

Your identity isn't determined by what you've been through. Your identity is determined by who you've been brought into.

IN CHRIST.

1. YOU ARE A NEW CREATION

2 Corinthians 5:17

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...”

Salvation isn't simply God improving the old you.

There has been a fundamental change in spiritual identity.

Paul says:

OLD things have passed away.

NEW things have come.

This gives you an important distinction:

We don't live trying to become accepted by God.

We live FROM what Christ has accomplished.

Preaching statement:

You cannot consistently function like the new creation while continually identifying yourself by the old creation.

Your past may explain some things about you.

It doesn't get to define you.

Christ does.

2. YOU HAVE BEEN ADOPTED

Romans 8:14–17

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

Then:

“You received the Spirit of adoption...”

This takes identity deeper.

I'm not merely:

FORGIVEN.

I'm not merely:

SAVED.

I've been brought into God's family.

Galatians 4:6–7

“You are no longer a slave but a son...”

That's an enormous identity shift:

SLAVE → SON.

And sonship changes how you approach God.

A servant wonders:

“Do I belong here?”

A son knows:

“This is my Father's house.”

A servant performs for acceptance.

A son functions from relationship.

That could be one of the strongest moments of Week 3:

We don't obey God trying to become sons. We obey because through Christ we have been brought into His family.

3. YOU ARE GOD'S WORKMANSHIP

Ephesians 2:10

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works...”

Notice again:

CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS.

And notice something else:

Identity comes before assignment.

Ephesians 2 doesn't say:

“Do enough good works and maybe God will make something out of you.”

It says:

YOU ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP...

created FOR good works.

Identity → Purpose → Function.

That's the connection to Week 2.

You don't discover your identity from your assignment. You fulfill your assignment from your identity.

What Jesus calls His people

- Disciples — Matthew 28:19; John 8:31
A disciple is a learner, follower, and apprentice. Jesus doesn't merely call people to believe facts about Him; He calls them to follow Him.
- Friends — John 15:15
“I have called you friends.”

This speaks of relationship and intimacy with Christ, while He remains Lord.

- Brothers and sisters — Matthew 12:49–50; Matthew 28:10
Jesus identifies those who do the Father's will as His family. After the resurrection He even says, “Go and tell My brethren...”
- Sheep — John 10:14, 27
“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”
This communicates belonging, dependence, recognition of His voice, and Christ as Shepherd.
- Branches — John 15:5
“I am the vine, you are the branches.”
This one is perfect for ROOTED. Our life and fruitfulness come entirely from remaining connected to Christ.
- Servants — John 12:26; 13:16
Jesus calls His followers to serve Him and others. Interestingly, John 15:15 says He no longer calls the disciples merely servants but friends —yet the apostles continue willingly identifying themselves as servants of Christ.
- Little flock — Luke 12:32
“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”
This combines shepherd imagery with belonging to the Father and participation in His Kingdom.
- Light of the world — Matthew 5:14
Jesus says, “You are the light of the world.”
But importantly, Jesus Himself is ultimately “the light of the world” in John 8:12. Our light is derivative—we reveal Him.
- Salt of the earth — Matthew 5:13
“You are the salt of the earth.”
This speaks to the believer's influence and Kingdom presence in the world.

Then the apostles expand our identity “in Christ”

This is where Week 3 could become very powerful.

Paul and Peter describe believers as:

New creation — 2 Corinthians 5:17

Children/sons of God — Romans 8:14–17; Galatians 3:26

Adopted — Ephesians 1:5; Romans 8:15

Saints — Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1

God's workmanship — Ephesians 2:10

Citizens of heaven — Philippians 3:20

Fellow citizens of God's household — Ephesians 2:19

Ambassadors for Christ — 2 Corinthians 5:20

Members of Christ's body — 1 Corinthians 12:27

Temple of the Holy Spirit — 1 Corinthians 6:19

Chosen generation — 1 Peter 2:9

Royal priesthood — 1 Peter 2:9

Holy nation — 1 Peter 2:9

God's own people — 1 Peter 2:9

Heirs of God / joint heirs with Christ — Romans 8:17

More than conquerors — Romans 8:37

Beloved — Romans 1:7; Colossians 3:12

But there's something important here for your sermon

I wouldn't simply preach these as a list of positive labels:

“I am chosen.”

“I am royalty.”

“I am an ambassador.”

“I am a conqueror.”

Because we could accidentally make an identity sermon about us.

There's a deeper biblical pattern:

Every identity God gives the believer describes our relationship to Christ or our function because of Christ.

I am a BRANCH because He is the VINE.

I am a SHEEP because He is the SHEPHERD.

I am a DISCIPLE because He is the MASTER/TEACHER.

I am a SERVANT because He is LORD.

I am part of the BODY because He is the HEAD.

I am an AMBASSADOR because He is the KING who sent me.

I am an HEIR because God is my FATHER.

I am part of the BRIDE because Christ is the BRIDEGROOM.

I am LIGHT because He is THE LIGHT.

I am a CHRISTIAN because I belong to CHRIST.

4. YOU ARE CHOSEN TO REPRESENT HIM

1 Peter 2:9

“You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people...”

Then Peter tells us WHY:

“That you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Look at the pattern again.

IDENTITY:

Chosen generation.

Royal priesthood.

Holy nation.

His people.

Then FUNCTION:

“That you may proclaim...”

God tells you WHO YOU ARE before telling you WHAT YOU'RE HERE TO DO.

This ties beautifully into the officer illustration from Week 2.

Last week:

The officer's badge represented the authority of the government that commissioned him.

This week:

Before the officer ever steps into the intersection, he has to understand WHO HE REPRESENTS.

His function flows from his identity and commission.

5. YOUR IDENTITY MUST REMAIN ROOTED IN CHRIST

Colossians 3:1–4

“For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

That's an incredible ROOTED statement:

YOUR LIFE IS HIDDEN WITH CHRIST.

Not hidden in:

your title,
your gifting,
your ministry,
your success,
people's approval,
your failures,
your past.

WITH CHRIST.

Then Colossians 3:4 says:

“When Christ who is our life appears...”

Not:

Christ who is PART of our life.

CHRIST WHO IS OUR LIFE.

FINAL DECLARATION — MY IDENTITY IS IN CHRIST

I am a new creation.

I am chosen, redeemed, reconciled, and sent.

I will not answer to an identity Christ has already broken off my life.

My past cannot name me.

My failures cannot define me.

My circumstances cannot dictate who I am.

CHRIST DEFINES ME.

I am rooted in Christ.
I carry His name.
I represent His Kingdom.
I am authorized for His purpose.

I know who I am because I know WHOSE I am.

I AM HIS.
I AM ROOTED.
I AM IN CHRIST.
AND I WILL BECOME EVERYTHING HE HAS CALLED ME TO BE.

Amen.