



Clothed by my Father  
Identity Series  
Pastor Rafael Aristy

We bear the image of our God. Our past does not define us. Our failures do not define us. The culture does not define us. **We are who Christ says we are!** He alone paid the price to define us.

**Genesis 37:2-3** This is the account of Jacob's family line. Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them. Now Israel (JACOB) loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him.

Joseph was the 11<sup>th</sup> son of Jacob and the firstborn son of Rachel, who was Jacob's favorite wife. Here, he is 17 years old and taking care of his father's sheep with his 4 brothers. Assumptions about his identity can be made: he was arrogant, prideful, and his father's favorite. He is engaging in behaviors he has seen through generations of family dynamics, but that doesn't make it acceptable or right.

There are some behavioral patterns Jacob, Joseph's father, has learned from his family of origin. In Genesis 25:28, we learn that **Isaac** (Jacob's father) **loved Esau**, and that **Rebekah** (Jacob's mother) **loved Jacob**.

- It doesn't excuse you to live outside of God's ways because your parents did things a certain way.
- It comes down to personal choice. When we choose Jesus, we choose a better, different way of doing things.

Jacob learned favoritism and here we see he loves his son Joseph more than any of his other sons. **He gives him an ornate robe, a coat of many colors.** This bold gesture by his father was significant because it showed **FAVOR!** This garment was different than anything his brothers wore. **IT SET HIM APART!** This robe was beautiful, ornate, had long sleeves, and went down to his ankles. In comparison, his brothers likely had shorter, sleeveless tunics that allowed them to more easily do their manual labor. **This robe was a sign of favor, love, and authority.**

The Bible doesn't tell us, but we can imagine that this act by his father could've shaped Joseph's identity.

"By giving Joseph this elaborate, full-length coat, which was also a sign of nobility in that day, his father was boldly implying, ***'You can wear this beautiful garment because you don't have to work like those brothers of yours.'***"

Charles Swindoll

### **Fathers and mothers shape the identity of their children!**

*-How do you think Joseph's brothers felt about the robe? About Joseph?*

*-What are you allowing to set you apart?*

*-How was your identity shaped by outside influences?*

**Genesis 37:4** When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

Joseph was clothed by His father. This act was a display of his father's love and favor. We too have been given an ornate robe, a beautiful garment that sets us apart. **Jesus is that gift from the Father that shows us His love and favor.**

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

**Galatians 3:26** So in Christ Jesus you are ALL children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Baptized into Christ, meaning you have surrendered your life to God, and now your life is not your own. **You have CLOTHED yourself with Christ!**

- Just as in the garden, Adam and Eve were naked after they sinned, God clothed them.

- God clothed us and covered our sin by giving us Jesus. Being clothed with Jesus sets you apart.
- You have been **CLOTHED BY YOUR FATHER** and this garment is a garment of nobility. Your Father is a King...**AND YOU ARE ROYALTY!**

**John 1:12** Yet to all who did receive 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.

*-Have you received Him?*

*-Do you believe God when He calls you a son or daughter? Do you believe that you are royalty?*

Joseph was already hated by his brothers. To make matters worse, he then tells them about the dream God gave him.

**Genesis 37:7-10** "We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.' Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?"

Not everyone can handle the dreams God has given you, **especially if those dreams affect them in a way they don't agree with.**

**Genesis 37:23** So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe—the ornate robe he was wearing— and they took him and threw him into the cistern. The cistern was empty; there was no water in it.

They stripped him of his robe. They stripped him of the one thing that set him apart, his identity!

*-Who or what tends to strip you of your identity as a child of God?*

It could be:

- Anger
- Fear
- Lust

- Laziness
- Complacency
- Spouse or significant other
- Kids
- Boss

Often times we feel we've been stripped our identity, but that's a lie. Joseph's coat was removed, but he was still Jacob's son. **Your IDENTITY is not circumstantial or transactional, but PERPETUAL! It does not change because He who gave it to you does not change and paid the price to define it.**

The next several years in Joseph's life are transformative in forming his character:

- He gets sold into slavery by his brothers and taken to Egypt. He becomes a slave at one of Pharaoh's officials named Potiphar.
- Potiphar's wife wanted to sleep with him, but he refused. She wrongly accused him of him trying to sleep with her and she takes his coat (once again he is stripped of his identity).
- Joseph is sent to jail for refusing to sin against God by sleeping with Potiphar's wife.
- After helping one of his cellmates by correctly interpreting his dream, he forgets him in that dungeon for another 2 FULL YEARS!

Why did all this happen to Joseph?

-God used the actions of those trying to strip him of his identity, to humble him and to help him get to the place where he can be used by God.

**James 1:2-4** Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

It is **trials** that make you **stronger**. It is the **difficulties of life** that **equip** you to be an **overcomer**.

*-What do you do when faced with trials?*

*-How has God used trials to shape your identity?*

When Joseph was a slave:

**Genesis 39:2** The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned.

When Joseph was imprisoned:

**Genesis 39:21** the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there.

It was in the seasons of trials that we are told God was with Joseph.

***There are seasons of life that WILL TEST your identity as a child of God.***

- There are seasons where you will want to give in.
- There are seasons where you will want to give up.
- It is in these seasons of life where God desires to show you **who He is** and **WHO YOU ARE!**

We know that after 2 years after Pharaoh's cupbearer left the prison, Pharaoh had 2 dreams that no one could interpret. This caused the cupbearer to remember Joseph and bring him up to Pharaoh. **WHEN OTHERS FORGET YOU, GOD WILL NOT!**

Joseph is called before Pharaoh and interprets his dreams.

**Genesis 41:38** So Pharaoh asked them (his officials), "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?"

Before this point it was the gift of a beautiful robe that Joseph's father gave him that provided him with his identity. It was what set him apart.

Now it is the Spirit of God that set him apart. His identity was now found in God.

***The immature, arrogant and prideful dreamer had matured into a faithful, humble interpreter of dreams!***

**Romans 8:14-16** For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 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.

**John 1:12** Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

We find our *identity* in the *sacrifice of Jesus* and the *Holy Spirit in us* who testifies that we are *children of God!*

Your identity is not your past. Your identity is not your last name. Your identity should not be your degree, your job, your income bracket, or your outward appearance. Your identity is who Jesus says you are: redeemed, righteous, saved, a son or daughter of the King!

*-Is your identity wrapped up in who others say you are?*

*-Do you truly know your value as a child of the King?*

*-What is God speaking to you?*

*-What changes will you make in order to walk in the truth of who He says you are?*