



Who Are You??? (Chapter one)

Genesis 1:27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

God accepts us just as we are. Why wouldn't He? He created us. He understands our strengths and weaknesses. Although He accepts us just as we are, He wouldn't be a loving God if he left us that way. His purpose in our life is to continually grow us to become more like Him. Understanding His reason for creating us in the first place is key to becoming all God designed us to be. *Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.* Until we are in His presence our goal should be to allow Him to mold and change us.

In order to get the most from this book you should start with defining your relationship with God. From the beginning God has allowed man the freedom to choose to trust Him. Have you taken the opportunity of receiving His perfect gift of a one-on-one relationship with Him? If not, let me invite you to take some time and consider all that He has to offer you. Below are a few of my favorite verses from the Bible. Each of these verses reveals God's love and desire to have a close personal relationship with you.

Acts 10:43 *"All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."*

Romans 5:6-8 *"6) You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7) Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. 8) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

John 16:24 *"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."*

Ephesians 2:8,9 *"By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."*

I Corinthians 2:9 *However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"*

Having a relationship with God is as simple as admitting your desire and need for Him to be there for you. Acknowledging and repenting from your disobedience and sin while accepting His purpose and plan is the beginning of an incredible journey. If you have never accepted His invitation to be part of His family take a moment before you go on to accept His offer. He promises that He will be there with you every moment for the

rest of your life. You don't have to change *anything* about you, or know *everything* about Him; He loves you just the way you are! All you need to do is trust that He is going to continue to reveal His will to you in His timing and throughout the rest of your life. Welcome to the family of God!

I love that He calls us *family*. An example of a healthy family is one where every member is fulfilling his or her role in ways that compliment the whole family unit. I like to think of our place in God's family like a sports team where each player has a specific position that must be learned, practiced and played well in order for the team to be successful. In the Bible God uses the example of the human body to explain how each of us has a specific and essential responsibility. He refers to the family of God as "The Body of Christ". Each element of the body is necessary to help it perform to its full potential.

In First Corinthians the Bible explains God's desire for each of us to understand our place and responsibility in the body of Christ. As we submit ourselves to Him and obediently follow His purpose in our lives we will be able to realize and experience His presence and glory.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-26 (niv) **12** *The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 13* *For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14* *Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. 15* *If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 16* *And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 17* *If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18* *But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19* *If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20* *As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21* *The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 22* *On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23* *and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24* *while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25* *so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26* *If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.*

Before we go on, I believe that we must first agree that we were given our personality as a gift from God. We are created in His likeness and our personality is a part of that. I feel it would be futile to continue on without stopping, right now, and begin this journey by thanking Him for who He created you to be.

For the purpose of this study it is necessary that we are all using the same definition of the word, "personality". Through out this book when I use the term *personality* I am referring to our temperament, behaviors, motives, our disposition, the way we respond to the world around us, how we interact with people, or how we behave, think and feel. You will notice the more you begin to understand yourself in light of these comparisons that you will become more aware of how you are able to use your strengths that God has blessed you with while submitting and releasing your weaknesses to Him. It will also become easier to accept others and appreciate their abilities instead of highlighting their faults.

Once you have recognized that your personality is a gift from God it is critical to your spiritual development to recognize when you are using your personality to glorify Him or allowing your personality to be used against His plan for your life. Remember, Satan also knows your personality and will exploit your weaknesses to attempt to thwart what God has planned. Because we live in a world where sin has crept in and God's design has been diluted by selfishness and lies it is easy to allow our weaknesses to dominate and tear down what God intended for good. Commit and submit your heart to the Lord, always be growing in your knowledge and

relationship with Him. I use the following verse as a prayer giving God permission to reveal anything in my life that might be distracting me from His plan: *Psalm 139:23 & 24* "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Allow Him to lead you and direct your life. He created you! He has a plan for your life that is Uniquely You!

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Take some time

Read I Corinthians 12:12-26 again answer the following questions:

1. What are some of your strengths?

2. What are some of your weaknesses? _____

3. Who are the people in your life that God uses to support you in your weaknesses? What strengths do they have that help to complete God's purpose? _____

4. Is there a part of your personality you wish you could change? Explain: _____

5. What do you feel your 'position' or responsibility is when thinking of how the body of Christ works together? _____

6. Do you sometimes feel like you are not playing your part to its full potential because you are trying to do something that isn't your responsibility? _____

7. Take some time to ask God to reveal to you what His desire is for your life. Ask Him to show you your strengths and weaknesses are. Ask Him to direct you to be able to fulfill your place in the Body of Christ and to give you peace in knowing that He doesn't expect you to do it all. Write out this prayer and allow God the ability to reveal His answers to you. _____
