

# Clarify Your Identity

## A King & A Kingdom

### I. Following Jesus

John 3:1–2 (NIV®)

<sup>1</sup> Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. <sup>2</sup> He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

John 19:38–40 (NIV®)

<sup>38</sup> Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate’s permission, he came and took the body away.

<sup>39</sup> **He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night.** Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. <sup>40</sup> Taking Jesus’ body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

A. (The Challenges Of) Learning, Growing & Experiencing God’s Glory

B. Fails (Part Of The Learning, Not Moral Failures Or Lapses)

### The Struggle Of Allegiance

Luke 13:34–35 (NIV®)

<sup>34</sup> “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! <sup>35</sup> **Look, your house is left to you desolate.** I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

Luke 19:41–44 (NIV®)

<sup>41</sup> As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it <sup>42</sup> and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. <sup>44</sup> They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”

### Israel Placed Under Interdict

Matthew 21:43–44 (NIV®)

<sup>43</sup> “Therefore I tell you that **the kingdom of God will be taken away from you** and given to a people who will produce its fruit. <sup>44</sup> He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.”

Luke 7:29–30 (NIV®)

<sup>29</sup> (All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus' words, acknowledged that God's way was right, because they had been baptized by John. <sup>30</sup> But **the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves**, because they had not been baptized by John.)

Acts 1:6–8 (NIV®)

<sup>6</sup> So when they met together, **they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"** <sup>7</sup> He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

## II. "In Christ" — A Special Status

Ephesians 1:3-4 (NIV®)

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

### No Room For Pride — Learn the Lessons!

1 Corinthians 10:1-12 (NIV®)

<sup>1</sup> For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. <sup>2</sup> They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. <sup>3</sup> They all ate the same spiritual food <sup>4</sup> and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. <sup>6</sup> Now **these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.** <sup>7</sup> Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry." <sup>8</sup> We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did--and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. <sup>9</sup> We should not test the Lord, as some of them did--and were killed by snakes. <sup>10</sup> And do not grumble, as some of them did--and were killed by the destroying angel. <sup>11</sup> **These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us**, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. <sup>12</sup> So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

### Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your great provision for my life. You have not left me alone or uncared for but have made me a participant in Your eternal purposes. You have called me out of darkness and provided for my justification. Help me to walk in the light and to choose paths of righteousness. Deliver me from evil and restore the joy of my salvation, in Jesus' name, amen.