

STUDENT STUDY GUIDE – October 18, 2026

VISION – HEIRS OF GOD

Think Like an Heir, Not a Slave

Based on the message by Pastor Chad Everett

OVERVIEW

Are you living according to who God says you are, or are you allowing your feelings, experiences, and other people's opinions to determine your identity?

Through faith in Jesus Christ, we become sons and daughters of God. But our identity doesn't stop there. Galatians 4 and Romans 8 tell us that we are also heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

Yet it's possible to belong to God's family and still live with a mindset shaped by fear, insecurity, past mistakes, and the pressure to fit in.

Just as the Israelites were delivered from slavery in Egypt but continued thinking like slaves, we can experience freedom through Jesus while holding on to old ways of thinking and living.

God calls us to something different. He doesn't want our past, circumstances, or feelings to determine what we believe about ourselves. He wants us to renew our minds according to His Word and allow the Holy Spirit to transform how we think, respond, and live.

That transformation affects more than what we believe about ourselves. It changes how we treat our families, respond to authority, choose our friendships, handle conflict, and make decisions when no one is watching.

“God wants us to think like heirs while we're here, not just when we get to heaven.” – Chad Everett

The question isn't simply whether you know that you are God's child. Are you actually living like you believe it?

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read → Respond → Reflect → Pray → Live It

Read each passage carefully. Pay attention to what Scripture says about your identity, your thinking, and the way God calls you to live.

Respond from Scripture. Don't answer based only on what you remember from a sermon or what someone else has told you. Open your Bible and find the answers.

Reflect honestly. Think about your relationships, friendships, social media, attitudes, fears, and the decisions you make when no one is watching. Don't settle for answers that sound spiritual but never challenge how you actually live.

Pray about what the Holy Spirit reveals, and then Live It. Choose a specific response that puts God's Word into action.

WORD DEFINITIONS

Heir – *klēronomos* – Someone entitled to receive an inheritance; a person who inherits what belongs to a family.

Child – *nēpios* – A very young or immature child, such as an infant.

Carnal – Being controlled by selfish desires and human nature rather than following God's Spirit.

Condemnation – *katakrima* – A judgment of guilt resulting in punishment.

Put to Death – *thanatoō* – To stop or put an end to something completely.

Bears Witness With – *summartureō* – To testify or confirm that something is true.

Joint-Heirs – *sugklēronomos* – People who share the same inheritance. Through Christ, we are joint heirs with Him.

SECTION 1 — SEE YOURSELF AS GOD SEES YOU

FOCUS

Through Jesus Christ, we have been welcomed into God's family as His sons and daughters and made heirs through Him. Our identity isn't determined by popularity, accomplishments, failures, appearance, or other people's opinions. God's Word establishes who we are, and that truth should change how we see ourselves and live.

READ

Galatians 4:1–7

RESPOND

1. According to Galatians 4:1–3, how does Paul describe the condition of an heir who is still a child?
2. What did God do when the fullness of time had come?
3. According to verses 4–5, why did God send His Son?
4. Where did God send the Spirit of His Son, and what does the Spirit cry out?
5. What does Galatians 4:7 declare about our identity and inheritance?

REFLECT

1. How much of your identity is shaped by your appearance, achievements, friendships, social media, or what others think of you? If those things changed tomorrow, would you still know who you are according to God's Word?
2. Do you approach God as a son or daughter who belongs to Him, or do you feel like you have to earn His acceptance by being good enough? How does that belief affect your willingness to pray, repent, and draw near to Him when you've messed up?
3. When someone rejects, criticizes, or embarrasses you, how do you respond? Does your reaction reveal that your identity is secure in Christ, or that you've given someone else's opinion more authority than God's Word?

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal where you've allowed your identity to be shaped by things other than God's Word. Ask Him to help you believe what God says about you, especially when your feelings or circumstances disagree.

LIVE IT

Identify one label you've accepted about yourself that doesn't agree with your identity in Christ. Write down what Galatians 4:7 says about you. When that old label influences your thoughts or decisions this week, deliberately return to God's truth.

READ MORE

Romans 8:15–16

SECTION 2 — THINK LIKE AN HEIR, NOT A SLAVE

FOCUS

The Israelites were physically free from Egypt, but their thinking was still shaped by slavery. We can do something similar when we allow old habits, fears, past experiences, or excuses to control us even though Jesus has made us free. Being an heir means learning to think and respond according to who God says we are.

READ

Galatians 4:1–7; Romans 8:12–15

RESPOND

1. How does Galatians 4:1 compare an immature heir with a slave?
2. According to Galatians 4:3, what held people in bondage?
3. What change in identity does Paul declare in Galatians 4:7?
4. According to Romans 8:12, what are believers no longer obligated to obey?
5. What contrast does Romans 8:15 make between a spirit of bondage and the Spirit of adoption?

REFLECT

1. What behaviors or attitudes have you excused by saying, "That's just how I am," "I can't help it," or "Everyone does it"? Are you using your personality, past experiences, or the people around you as an excuse to avoid changing?
2. When your parents set boundaries, a teacher corrects you, or a friend disappoints you, do you take responsibility for your response or justify your attitude because of what someone else did? What does that reveal about what is controlling you?
3. Is there an area where you keep asking God to change your situation while refusing to change your own attitude or behavior? What would surrendering that area to Him actually require?

PRAY

Ask God to expose attitudes, excuses, and patterns of thinking that you've accepted as normal but that don't agree with His Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you take responsibility for your responses and live in the freedom Jesus has given you.

LIVE IT

Pay attention to one reaction you tend to excuse, such as complaining, arguing, jealousy, or shutting people out. When it comes up this week, stop and choose a response that reflects your identity as God's child.

READ MORE

2 Corinthians 10:3–5

SECTION 3 — RENEW YOUR MIND TO MATCH YOUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST

FOCUS

Colossians 3 tells us to seek the things above and set our minds on Christ. Renewing our minds means allowing God's Word to challenge what we believe, value, and accept as normal. Jesus, not social media, popular culture, our friends, or our own opinions, must become the standard for how we think and live.

READ

Colossians 3:1–10

RESPOND

1. According to Colossians 3:1, what are believers instructed to seek?
2. Where does verse 2 tell us to set our minds?
3. What does Paul say about our lives in verses 3–4?
4. What attitudes and behaviors are believers instructed to put away in verses 5–9?
5. According to verse 10, how is the new man renewed, and whose image is the standard?

REFLECT

1. If someone could see everything you watch, listen to, follow, search for, and think about, what would it reveal about what matters most to you? Are those influences helping you become more like Jesus, or are they shaping your thinking away from Him?
2. When God's Word challenges something you want to do, believe, or participate in, do you change your thinking to agree with Scripture or search for reasons why your situation should be an exception? Where are you currently allowing your feelings or culture to have more authority than God's Word?
3. Are you living by one set of standards at church and another at school, online, or when you're alone? What specific attitudes, conversations, or private choices need to change if Jesus is truly your standard?

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where your thinking has been shaped more by the world around you than by God's Word. Ask Him to help you recognize what needs to change and develop a greater desire for the things of God.

LIVE IT

Choose one influence that regularly shapes your thinking, such as a social media account, show, music, or group conversation. Compare its message with Colossians 3:1–10. Make one specific change this week that helps you set your mind on Christ.

READ MORE

2 Corinthians 5:17

SECTION 4 — BE LED BY THE SPIRIT, NOT THE FLESH

FOCUS

Romans 8 teaches that we don't have to obey every feeling, desire, or impulse. The Holy Spirit helps us put sinful attitudes and actions to death. Real change isn't just trying harder to behave better; it comes as we pursue God, surrender to His Spirit, and allow Him to transform us from the inside out.

READ

Romans 8:12–14; Colossians 3:1–10

RESPOND

1. According to Romans 8:12, what obligation do believers no longer have?
2. What warning does Paul give about living according to the flesh in Romans 8:13?
3. By whose power are believers able to put to death the deeds of the body?
4. According to Romans 8:14, who are identified as the sons of God?
5. What specific attitudes and behaviors does Colossians 3:5–9 instruct believers to put away?

REFLECT

1. When you're angry, jealous, embarrassed, or frustrated, do you treat those feelings as permission to say or do whatever you want? What do your reactions reveal about whether you're being led by the Holy Spirit or controlled by your flesh?
2. Are you the same person at home, church, school, and online? If your family or closest friends described your attitude, language, honesty, and treatment of others, would their description match the person you present at church?
3. When someone confronts you about something wrong, do you listen and take responsibility, or immediately defend yourself, blame someone else, or make excuses? What does genuine repentance and surrender to the Holy Spirit look like in that area of your life?

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any sinful attitudes or behaviors you've been excusing, hiding, or trying to manage on your own. Invite Him to change your heart, not just your outward behavior, and help you respond to His correction with humility.

LIVE IT

Identify one situation where your flesh regularly controls your response. Before facing that situation again, pray and ask the Holy Spirit for help. Choose a different response that agrees with God's Word, and take responsibility if you fall short.

READ MORE

Galatians 5:16–25

SECTION 5 — LIVE IN THE INHERITANCE YOU HAVE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

FOCUS

Romans 8 tells us that the Holy Spirit confirms we are God's children and that we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Our inheritance isn't only about going to heaven someday. Our identity in Christ should influence our confidence, decisions, relationships, and willingness to follow the Holy Spirit right now.

READ

Romans 8:14–17; Galatians 4:6–7

RESPOND

1. According to Romans 8:14, what characterizes the sons of God?
2. What kind of spirit have believers received according to Romans 8:15?
3. What does the Holy Spirit testify to our spirit in verse 16?
4. According to Romans 8:17, what follows from being children of God?

5. What does Romans 8:17 say about being joint heirs with Christ, including the connection between suffering with Him and being glorified with Him?

REFLECT

1. Have you treated following Jesus mainly as something that gets you to heaven someday, or does belonging to Him actually influence your choices today? What evidence in your everyday life supports your answer?
2. When following Jesus could cost you popularity, a friendship, an opportunity, or your comfort, are you willing to obey Him anyway? What does your response reveal about whether you value your identity in Christ more than the approval of others?
3. If someone younger watched how you handle conflict, speak about others, treat your family, and make decisions, what would they learn about being a follower of Jesus? What needs to change so your life reflects the freedom and identity you've received through Him?

PRAY

Thank God for making you His child through Jesus Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen your understanding of your identity and give you courage to live according to His Word, even when it costs you something.

LIVE IT

Choose one place where you've been hiding your faith, compromising your convictions, or allowing fear to influence your choices. Take one specific step this week that demonstrates you belong to Jesus and are willing to follow Him.

READ MORE

Ephesians 1:17–23

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

“God wants us to think like heirs while we're here, not just when we get to heaven.” – Chad Everett

You can attend church, know Bible verses, worship, and say you believe in Jesus while still allowing fear, insecurity, selfish desires, or other people's opinions to control how you live. But being God's child isn't just a truth to know. It's an identity that should transform your thinking, choices, and relationships.

Don't allow your past, feelings, or the pressure to fit in to define who you are. Let God's Word challenge what you believe, surrender what needs to change, and allow the Holy Spirit to transform you from the inside out. You are a son or daughter of God and an heir through Jesus Christ. **Don't just know who you are. Live like you believe it.**