

# Oregon: Discover identity

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Recently, I was writing some curriculum for a DiscipleNow weekend. We're studying the life of Joseph from the book of Genesis, and we are considering how what Jesus did on the cross finished every trial and struggle Joseph faced. We pointed out four main things that are finished in his life—his self-worth, self-identity, fear and independence.



Portland, Oregon Identity means so much here in Portland—how you express yourself, your interests, your feelings and your sexuality define who you are. Coming from South Texas, I really struggled to understand where people were coming from and why they expressed themselves the way they did.

But then I got to see Joseph's identity. We began to break down Genesis 37, and we got a glimpse into what this "robe of many colors" was. Joseph was his father's favorite son. To prove it, Israel gave him a beautiful coat, which represented his affection for Joseph and established his place above all of his brothers.

But his identity in his family didn't last. He was taken by his brothers and sold into slavery. His robe was taken and destroyed. His identity was broken. He no longer was what he believed himself to be. And I realized, neither was I.



A couple of hours later, I was gearing up for my weekly basketball game with my friend, Tom. Tom is a married man, easily 15 years older than me. I've been playing with him for about four weeks now, and we've become pretty tight on the basketball court. As we sat, he talked to me about how he'd been a basketball player all his life, and it is what helped him stay away from bad things in college and early in his career. Basketball was who he was.

But then I remembered Joseph. So I told Tom who Joseph was. I described how Joseph was his father's favorite son and how he received a beautiful coat. And then that identity was broken. And I told him who I was. I described how I was a tennis player and a bodybuilder, but one day on the court, I tore a ligament in my hand and wasn't able to play any sports for 18 months. My identity was broken. I couldn't any longer be who I thought I was. My coat was taken from me. But I had another coat—one given to me by the King of Kings. It's one that shines like the sun and never can be destroyed. I have an eternal identity. I am a child of God.

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