

The Identity Step



The identity step is the practice of seeking our _____ through the reflection of Christ and not the opinions of man.


The Bible doesn't use the word identity, self-esteem, self-image or self-confidence. These are secular terms to describe what the Bible refers to as _____, _____, or _____.


Group Exercise A

When a woman's identity is compromised she may:


- Be held in bondage to the opinions of others
- Worry about what others think of her
- Blend in and put on a false sense of self so she doesn't risk criticism
- Deny her feelings even when she's hurting
- Be overly defensive
- Pull approval out of other people
- Feel unworthy
- Fear change
- Fear rejection
- Constantly over-analyze and criticize her actions
- Seek validation from external influences instead of her inner confidence
- Be overly concerned about her appearance
- Never leave the house without makeup or wardrobe perfection
- Deny problems when they exist
- Avoid certain people because of what others may think

Group Exercise B: Identity Scriptures

 My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Hosea 4:6 (NIV) knowledge comes from a Hebrew word meaning perception.

 My people are ruined because they don't know what's right or true. Hosea 4:6 (The Message)

? How can someone be destroyed by having the wrong self-image, perception or identity? If you have experienced a time when your identity suffered from the opinions of man, how did you overcome?

 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

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

? What does it mean to be a new creation or created in the image of God? Have you experienced a time when your identity was renewed in Christ?

📖 **3 John 1:2** Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. (NKJV)

📖 But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose *confidence* is in him. Jeremiah 17:7 (NIV) Blessed [is] the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose *hope* the LORD is. Jeremiah 17:7 (KJV)

Notice that the KJV of this verse uses the word *hope* instead of *confidence*. Hope comes from the Hebrew word *mibtach* (miv·täkh') which means trust, confidence, refuge

- a) act of confiding
- b) object of confidence
- c) state of confidence, security

? How can you tell when others do not have hope and confidence in God? What characteristics or mannerisms do they exhibit? How can you tell when your own hope and confidence is not centered in Christ?

📖 The gullible believe anything they're told; the prudent sift and weigh every word. Proverbs 14:15 (The Message)

📖 With persuasive words she led him astray; (stole his confidence so she could control him) she seduced him with her smooth talk. Proverbs 7:21 (NIV)

? Do actions really speak louder than words? How do we know when it is safe to trust others and what they say? Have you experienced a time when you put your trust in someone before they earned it? What happened?


📖 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

📖 In the paths of the wicked lie thorns and snares, but he who guards his soul stays far from them. Proverbs 22:5 NIV

? Do you think guarding your soul is more like building a wall, being mistrustful, being cautious or establishing boundaries? How do you guard your soul?

📖 My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity. Let love and faithfulness never

leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. Proverbs 3:1-4

 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh. Philippians 3:3 (NIV)

? Can having the favor of God also give you the favor of man? Have you experienced a time when you stood up for your Christian standards in the midst of apparent opposition? What happened? Did you win the favor of God or man or both?

Group Exercise C: Action Points

If you struggle with identity, try these action points:

- ❖ _____ **the Word**
Use the suggested scriptures above and declare them out loud using your name.
- ❖ _____ **Positive Affirmations**
Make a list of positive affirmations and say them out loud over yourself.
- ❖ _____ **Your Faith**
Take truth and apply it to your life even if it feels awkward. Do it anyway. Ask God for specific ways to do this for your areas of weakness. Exercise and practice what he tells you to do. Don't despise small beginnings. The more you exercise the stronger you'll get, but you'll never lift a 15 pound weight if you can't lift a 5 pound dumbbell.
- ❖ _____ **Your Thoughts**
Be careful of what you say about yourself. Say your thoughts out loud. If what you say about yourself is not kind and encouraging and you wouldn't say it about someone else, don't say it about yourself. Our words create life and have the power to produce death.
- ❖ **Give Yourself a** _____
We tend to be the hardest on ourselves. Whenever you goof up, give yourself some grace. You give it to others so why not extend it to yourself.
- ❖ **Evaluate** _____ **and** _____
Change your friends. Protect your soul by discontinuing friendships with negative people. A man is known by the company he keeps and complaining is contagious.
- ❖ **Avoid** _____ **People or Environments**
Refuse to argue with others. When you are in a negative environment, say as little as possible (without wood a fire goes out) and remove yourself from the place if possible.



Reading Assignment for Next Week: Forgiveness Chapters 9-11