

“A New Identity”

New #1

INTRODUCTION

Just about everything that is “you” is wrapped up in your identity: your thoughts, words, decisions, priorities, how you relate to others, etc. As broken, imperfect people, there are often parts of our identity that we wish we could change. In Jesus, there is great hope: the Bible clearly teaches that anyone who is “in Christ” is a “new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17). By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are never too old or young or guilty to be changed into something new. That’s Good News!

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

When you introduce yourself, after your name, what is the next thing you tell people to identify who you are? Why do you choose to share this information?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

The Source of Our Identity

Q1. Read Galatians 3:26; Romans 8:16; John 15:5

As we consider our identity, we should first ask “How do I see myself?” For many, it may include a relationship (“Beth’s dad”) or occupation (teacher, sales, etc.). With what relationship does Galatians 3:26 and Romans 8:16 identify us? How does John 15:5 give us perspective on our achievements? Take a moment to view yourself from God’s perspective. What is your reaction to this new identity?

Knowing Where We Are

Q2. Read John 5:1-3; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 2:1-6

The paralytic Jesus healed was found at the pool called Bethesda (house of mercy). How does John 5:3 describe others who were found there? These people knew they needed the physical healing they could find in the waters of the pool. From the list of “spiritual diseases” in 1Cr6:9-11, which one or two do you think is most prevalent in our world? Are any of these things that you’ve personally struggled with? Where is it that we dwell after God has “healed” us of our sins? (Ephesians 2:6)

Knowing What God Says

Q3. Read John 5:6-8; 1 John 1:9

Jesus asked the paralytic if he wanted to be healed. Did he answer the question? Who did he see as responsible for his lack of healing?

Although it’s by God’s power we are changed, we still carry some responsibility ... the paralytic had to pick up his mat and go home. What does 1 John 1:9 tell us we are responsible to do for our own spiritual healing? During the group’s prayer time, ask God to show you if there is any person or circumstance you have held responsible for your unmet needs, when in fact you need to take action and seek Him directly for forgiveness and healing.

Knowing Who We Are

Q4 Read 1 Corinthians 12:27; Romans 15:7:

One important facet of our identity is found in our relationships. Your identity as a Christian involves more than your relationship to Christ; it involves your relationship to other believers as well. How does 1 Corinthians 12:27 describe the relationship we have both individually to other believers and also collectively to Christ? What does Romans 15:7 tell us results from our unity and acceptance of one another? Is there someone you could be praying for or showing more acceptance of?

WRAP-UP

Through our faith in Jesus Christ we take on a new identity. We no longer dwell in the past, but now we are seated in heavenly places with Christ. God initiates His free gift of salvation, but we are responsible to respond to it through confession and faith. When we do, we become His children, and we belong to the family of God, members of the body of Christ.

Memory Verse

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more space) _____

Challenge: Look for opportunities to bless others with the gifts God has uniquely placed in you.

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