



Identity Month

Week 3 Discussion Guide

Walking Out Your Identity in Christ

Focus: How Your Identity Makes a Difference with Other Believers

One of the ways we walk out our Identity in Christ is by taking care of our hearts and managing our emotions. As we are in relationships and community with others, there are situations that can be upsetting. If we navigate those situations by using healthy communication and managing our own hearts in them, we will be able to be our best selves and help others be their best selves.

Scripture Reading

- ²⁰ My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words.
²¹ Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart;
²² for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body.
²³ Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.
²⁴ Keep your mouth free of perversity; keep corrupt talk far from your lips.
²⁵ Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you.
²⁶ Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways.
²⁷ Do not turn to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.

Proverbs 4:20-27

Questions for Discussion

- Proverbs 4:20-27 instructs us to keep the Word of God in our hearts, for it is life to us – nourishing like food for our hearts. It also says to guard our hearts “for everything [we] do flows from it.” This means that whatever is in our hearts will determine how we handle things in life. If our hearts are free from negative feelings and things that weigh us down, the things our mouths speak and the actions we take will be positive and kind. How do you see this truth in your life?
- You can illustrate this using a pitcher of water (a clear glass one shows it well) the water is the well of your heart.
 - Add a few rocks representing a bad situation, troubles or stress. You could keep adding them until it's full to show a very weighed down heart without much room for clean water.
 - We have to find ways to get those rocks out, because they will affect how we live our lives.
 - Discuss what it would be like if you had a bunch of rocks in your heart.

- As troubles and stress happen in life, we need to know how to manage them in a way that our hearts stay free from negativity. The first thing we do is to be sure the Word of God is going in ... Verse 20-22 says God's Word is life and health to us. What does that mean to you?
- Verse 25 says, "Let your eyes look straight ahead." We keep our eyes on Jesus, and we learn from the way He lived His life. We decide we want our life to reflect His. We keep our eyes off of what others are doing. It's not our business, and we don't want to learn from them (if they're not living like Jesus). Where do your eyes tend to focus recently?
- Verse 26 says, "Give careful thought to [ponder] the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways." When troubles and stress come, we ponder, which means to think about the things we are feeling so our feet will stay on the path and way of Jesus. We do that by asking our hearts some questions when we feel things like anger, sadness, frustration, jealousy, left out, fear, etc.
 - **Question #1: Why do I feel angry/sad/frustrated/jealous/left out/afraid?**
 - Talk about these questions with someone or write them down. This helps get it out of your heart and keeps you from stuffing it down like the rocks from above.
 - If these feelings happened because another person did something to you, it's okay to say, "I feel angry/sad/frustrated right now because of what has happened."
 - If it's not something you can say anything to them about right now, tell Jesus about it. He wants to hear what is going on in your heart. "Jesus, I feel very angry/sad/frustrated/jealous/left out/afraid right now. Will you come into my heart and help me with these feelings so I won't get weighed down?"
 - **Question #2: Do I need to forgive someone for these feelings I'm feeling right now?**
 - If we don't forgive others for wrongs they have done, this will cause unforgiveness to grow in our hearts, which is like a giant rock that grows bitter.
 - If someone has wronged you, it doesn't mean what they have done is okay, it means you agree to let Jesus talk with them about it without you. He is LORD and able to do that when the time is right.
 - Say a prayer like this: "Jesus, I choose to forgive {say the person's name} for doing {say what they have done}. This really hurts me and I feel {angry/sad/frustrated/etc.}. I forgive them, and I give them to you Jesus and ask you to bless them."
- Have you practiced asking yourself these questions in the past? How has asking or not asking them affected you and your relationships?
- Keeping our hearts free from negativity helps us be our very best selves, and we are then able to love everyone well and encourage those we have in our lives.

Find More Resources & Activities

IdentityMonth.org

Identity Month is a season set aside (month of June)
to focus on our God-given identity and how to live in that.