

Identity



Series: I Became a Christian and All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt

Week One: Youth Small Group Questions

Correlates with Chapters 1-5

1. Do you have a nickname or have you ever had a nickname? What is/was it? How did you get it? Did you like it?
2. If you could give yourself a nickname, what would it be?
3. In chapter four of the book, the author (Vince) discusses his struggles to feel loved and wanted by God, because he had grown up not feeling loved and wanted.
 - a. Do you think most people desire to feel loved and wanted? Why or why not? What are some examples you see in everyday life that point to this truth?
 - b. How do you have the desire to feel loved and wanted?
4. The Bible teaches us that the moment a person becomes a Christian, he or she receives the identity of Jesus. From that moment on, that person is “in Christ” and that is how God sees him or her.
 - a. What does this mean to you and how do you relate with this?
 - b. Why do you think it’s so difficult for us to see our identity as being in Christ?
5. Read Colossians 3:1-12.
6. In verses 1-2 we’re encouraged to set our hearts (verse 1) and our minds (verse 2) on “things above.”
 - a. What do you think it means to set our hearts on things above? What does it look like to you? How does it play out in real life?
 - b. What do you think it means to set our minds on things above? What does it look like to you? How does it play out in real life?
 - c. If we set our hearts and minds on things above, what kind of identity would we find? If we set our hearts and minds on the world, what kind of identity would we find? Which identity do you view as the best one? What would you say is the identity your life most reflects?
7. Verse 3 tells Christians that they have died and their life is hidden with Christ in God. What does this say to you about your new and true identity?
8. We’re challenged, in verse 7, to put some things to death. Since verse 3 teaches us that we’ve already died, what do you think it looks like to put some parts of our life to death? What things in your life do you need to put to death?
9. In this series we’re talking about *really* living the Christian life (rather than wearing the t-shirt because we’ve missed out on the journey). Why do you think this issue of identity is so critical in our truly living the Christian life?
10. Do you think it’s possible that “identity issues” have been holding you back? How? What do you need to do to change that?

Ideas to Illustrate This:

- 1) Have the room you're using lined with mirrors, or give students mirrors, and at some point have students look into the mirror—while a slow song plays or in a moment of silence perhaps—and contemplate one of these questions: “Do you believe that God loves and wants you?” “Look at the reflection of yourself. Do you reflect your true identity in the way you live?” “Look into the mirror and tell yourself how God sees you with ‘I am’ statements – I am loved. I am created in God’s image, etc.”
- 2) As a takeaway or experiential time, give students mirrors and have them write how they view themselves on the mirrors. Have students write how God views them.
 - a. Give students mirrors or have one big mirror and have them write out their identity as the world says it is on the mirrors or mirror then have students break those mirrors as a way to shatter that identity.
 - b. Give students mirrors and have them break the mirrors (or have one mirror and break that mirror) and use it as an object lesson to talk about the fact that many of us see our identity in a shattered and broken way, but when we set our minds and hearts on things above, we see our identity as a whole (use an unbroken mirror for this).
- 3) Have students write down the things in their lives that need to die, and in a symbolic way of putting those things to death, bury the paper outside using shovels or bring in a tray of soil for them to bury it in using their hands. Tell students to leave those things buried and walk in their new identity.
- 4) Have a bunch of items (compact mirror, lipstick, car, cash, heart pendant, report card, basketball, etc.) that represent various things we find our identity in and ask students which they identify with most, or have students choose an item that represents where their identity is and ask them why they chose that item. You could also have students bring in items that represent how they identify themselves and ask them to share why they brought that item. You may instead choose to have students bring in an item for the next time you meet and talk about it then.
 - a. One option with this is to have students bring in an item that they find their identity in and ask them to give up that item and instead find their identity in God. Maybe to take this a step further, give them a cross in place of the item they have.