



PARTICIPANT JOURNAL

LESSON 3 | WHO AM I? | THE TAPES WE PLAY

What has shaped your understanding of who you are? When you reflect on the habits and personality quirks that have become identity markers for you, do you see the character of a parent, grandparent, teacher, or friend within your own actions? When you fail, are you gracious and hospitable to your own mistakes — or is your mind full of repeating messages that convince you that you're needy, unlovable, loud, untrustworthy...? When we hold distorted images of our own identity, we miss out on God's invitation to be a beloved child sharing His presence with others around us. No matter how you feel about your internal tapes, awareness of how you've formed your own ideas of self-identity is a necessary step in true connectedness to other people.

THE TAPES WE PLAY

I'm unlovable/unworthy
My needs are too much
I'm not enough
I am on my own
I don't fit in
I should stay quiet
I can't trust other people
I need to be perfect
other

TRIAD DISCUSSION

Which tapes run in your head when you feel alone, inadequate, ashamed, pressure, or distressed?

When do your tapes get the loudest?

Are any tapes playing right now as you share in your triad?

Are any tapes being challenged as you connect?

"The road to self-discovery runs through another person."

DIAD EXPERIMENT

Speaker: For 2-3 minutes, share something that was exciting or meaningful for you this week.

Listener: As the speaker shares, do your best not to offer any non-verbals or words that show that you are 'with' or 'joining' the Speaker.

When the speaker is done, share what it was like to be the speaker and to be the listener in this experiment.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Being formed in the image of a relational God means we have relational longings:

To be accepted

To be valued

To know and be known

To see and be seen

To include and be included

To give and receive delight

When our relational needs go unacknowledged or dismissed, or when others need something from us that feels overwhelming, the 'tapes' start playing in our heads and we tend to lean more anxious or avoidant in our responses. We saw this play out in the 'still face' video. Here's a brief description of each:

Anxious: protest, demand, criticize, and amplify in hopes of get our needs met

Avoidant: turn away, withdraw, avoid, and dismiss our needs and other's needs

Do you tend to lean more anxious or avoidant in your primary relationships? What's it like for you to lean more anxious or avoidant? When you look at the list of relational longings...what emotion comes up for you? Sadness, joy, fear, disgust, anger?

We've covered a lot of material in the first three lessons. Read the synopsis below and share in your group about how this journey has been for you so far....

God is love.

Love can't exist outside of relationship.

God is relational....Triune; therefore,

As image bearers of God, we are relational beings with relational longings.

As relational beings, we formulate ideas of 'who God is' primarily through relationships.

We have distorted understandings of 'who God is' and 'who we are' because people are wounded.

We are innately good (original blessing in Genesis 1) & fallen (Gen 3).

What is distorted in relationships is healed in relationships; therefore,

Knowing ourselves and growing in our ability to love, relate, and repair well is primary (not secondary) to the Christian life...to evangelism.

Share about your experience of doing the God Delighting Journal this week.

Did it impact how you see God, or how you experience God seeing you? If so, how?

DAILY PRACTICE FOR WEEK 3 : GOD DELIGHTING JOURNAL

"You have prepared a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows." (Psalm 23:5)

Often times our internal tapes our biggest enemy, and we need the anointing of God's healing presence. Your practice for this week will be to notice, name, and release a 'distorted tape' when it is playing in your head.

So, when you are feeling inadequate, alone, afraid, reactive, or withdrawn this week; pause, take a breath deep, and let yourself notice which tape might be playing. Take another deep breath, and name it out loud: "I am afraid that I _____."

Now picture yourself coming to the table set by the Father, Son, and Spirit, with your tape. Sit down at the space waiting for you. Notice the compassion & tenderness Father, Son, and Spirit extend as you talk about your tape.. You are safe, loved, and accepted here.

Let go of the tape as you lay it on the table. Allow the healing presence of love to bring you peace as you take another deep breath. Allow any tension I your body to release. Stay here as long as you need. Find a time this week to share your experience with a safe friend or spouse.

BENEDICTION

The God of kindness and mercy sees you and knows you....now go in the awareness of God's deep love for you.