



PART ONE: CAN OF SOUP

It bothers some people when cans have no labels. Without labels, we have to take the time to open and discover what's in there. *We label people because we don't want to take the time to see what's really inside.* Labels identify things...and people. We can choose to base our identity on words spoken about us and relationships built with others, or we can look deeper into our souls and see the label God has etched into each of us.

BIG IDEA: When we look to people to define us,
we expect people to be something that only God can be.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do most people base their identity and self-worth on? (Examples: appearance, possessions, other's opinions, behavior, work, etc.)
2. Choose a number between 1 and 10 that represents how much you accept yourself, 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest. Write this number down. How does this compare with how God accepts you? (*God gives you a 10.*) On what have you been basing God's acceptance of you? What makes it so difficult for you to believe the truth that God has made you acceptable?
3. *Read Colossians 26-10.*
4. In the past, what relationships have you allowed to define your identity and self-worth?
5. Dave said, *When we look to people to define us, we expect people to be something that only God can be.*

What do you think he means by this?

Our relationships with other people is to be a resource for God's working, not the source of God's working. When we confuse that, we set ourselves up to be hurt, disappointment, and betrayal, because we expect people to be something that only God can be.

6. Our past experiences and what have others said about us has affected how we see ourselves. In what area do you struggle with the belief, "I'm not good enough." Examples could include struggling with feelings of inadequacy as a parent, spouse, friend, or employee. Others struggle believing they're not good enough for God. Be open and honest. What kinds of problems has believing this lie caused? What new label do you need to believe? How will seeing yourself this way bring about change in the way you live?
7. When do you feel the most inadequate? In a given day, how often are you aware of the fact that Christ lives in you and is empowering you to do God's will? What have you taken credit for that was actually God's Spirit working in and through you?
8. When would you say you were born again? How would you share with someone what it means to be born again? What are some of the circumstances that led you to Jesus? What changes have you noticed in your life?





FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Mark 5:1-20 Tells the story of Jesus healing the man who was possessed by an entire legion of demons. The story goes on to say that he would run around naked and he would harm himself. The local people who lived around him would chain him down. The people in that town saw him as legion, they saw him as crazy, they saw him as ill. They labeled him and set him aside so that they could continue doing life around him, but nobody tried to do life with him. Jesus saw him as one thing "beloved" he was God's loved one.
2. Put yourself in his shoes, put yourself in that moment and try to feel what it would have been like to be this man. Some of you don't have to try very hard, you have been ostracized, you have been forgotten. Some of you don't have to try too hard because you have forgotten about someone, you have led life around someone instead of with someone. Write down what he must have felt.

THINK ABOUT IT

Before coming into a relationship with Christ, we formed our beliefs about who we are based on our life experiences, what others said about us and our performance. These old beliefs still haunt us on a daily basis. We need to 1) know how God has changed us and 2) believe what He says about us, in order to experience our full potential in Christ. God bases our identity on our spiritual birth not on our performance. We are either spiritually dead or we are spiritually alive in Christ; lost or saved; a sinner or a saint; child of the devil or child of God.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. Colossians 2:6-10

