

# Identity HS | EMBRACE YOUR GOD-GIVEN IDENTITY

## VRFD

Everywhere students look, someone's asking them to prove who they are—through likes, achievements, or belonging to the right crowd. But God already knows and verifies their worth. This series helps students trade the pressure to perform for the peace of being known and loved by the One who made them. Our prayer is that by the end of this series, students will find their confidence not in what others say, but in who God says they are.

### CORE THEOLOGICAL INSIGHTS

Purpose, Identity, Mission

### RESPONSE

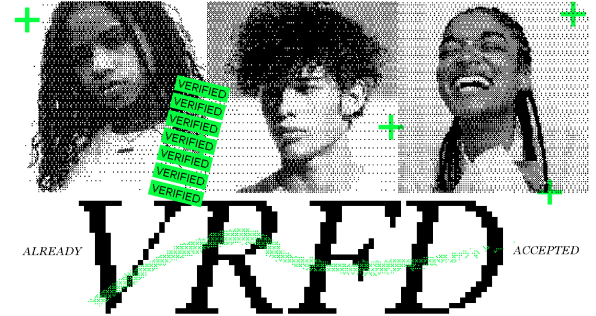
Confidence, Truth

### EMPHASIZED RELATIONSHIPS

God, Self

### MEMORY VERSE

*"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10 NIV).*



### Bottom Line

## EMBACE YOUR GOD-GIVEN IDENTITY

### Topic

Identity

### Scripture

1 Samuel 17:38–40 (NIV):

*Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them.*

*"I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.*

25 min

# Teaching

5 min

## Introduction (ME)

### What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

## Tension (WE)

### What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

## Truth (GOD)

### What You Need

No supplies needed

5 min

## Application (YOU)

### What You Need

No supplies needed

Say: "Identity isn't just confidence; it's confusion too. I watched a student get cut from the team the same week their friends stopped responding in the group chat. They said, 'If I'm not an athlete and I'm not in that friend group anymore... who even am I.' That question is honest. Tonight's not a pep talk. It's a real conversation about who you are when the labels fall off."

Say: "We try on a lot of armor—fits, filters, friend-group roles, the way you talk in the hallway vs. at home. It works—until it doesn't. You can't fake who you are forever. At some point, who you pretend to be gets heavy. And when a breakup hits, you get cut, or you feel ghosted, the costume can't carry you."

Read 1 Samuel 17:38–40 (NIV):

*Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them.*

*"I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off.*

*Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.*

Say: "Saul hands David his armor. David moves around in it and says, 'I can't go in these.' That line isn't defiance; it's clarity. David won't wear what doesn't fit because he knows how God wired him—called, claimed, known. God didn't ask David to be Saul. God asked David to be David. Same for you. When we wear what isn't ours, we miss the way God shows up through who we actually are."

Say: "Grab a scrap of paper or your Notes. First, write one label you've believed most—something a coach, a comment, or a crowd has put on you. Hold it a second. Now rip it up (or delete it) and whisper, 'That's not my armor.'

"Next, write two lines: 1) what doesn't fit (a persona, filter, pressure), 2) what actually fits (a strength, interest, quiet gift, way you serve). Choose

5 min

## Landing (ME)

### What You Need

No supplies needed

30 min

## Groups

5 min

## Think About This

### What You Need

No supplies needed

15 min

## Discussion Questions

### What You Need

No supplies needed

one thing to take off this week and one real-you step to practice. Tell a safe person so you don't do it alone."

Say: "Don't rob us of you. Take off what isn't you; bring what God put in you. When you forget who you are, remember who picked you before you even showed up. God hasn't called you to be a copy. He's claimed you, He knows you, and He'll meet you as you walk in who He says you are. Do a 48-hour armor swap: drop one 'not-you' thing (a pose, a pressure) and practice one "real-you" step (serve, include, create, ask a question). Share one win with a leader or friend by week's end.

"Let's pray. Jesus, give us courage to stop performing, clarity to see what fits, and strength to walk as the people You've called, claimed, and known. Amen."

The goal of this discussion is to help students move from performing a persona to walking as the people God has called, claimed, and known. We want them to name the labels they've believed, rip up what doesn't fit, and choose one real-you step to practice this week with a safe person.

High schoolers live with identity confusion as much as confidence—breakups, getting cut, being ghosted, hallway roles, and online personas. Lead with empathy. Model privacy and consent. No one is forced to share. If a student shares something that signals harm, follow your church's safety plan.

1. Warm-up: Share one funny/real moment when something looked great on someone else but felt wrong on you (an outfit, a trend, a way of talking).  
(Leader note: Keep it light and brief; set a non-judgmental tone.)
2. Where does identity get confusing for you right now—after a breakup, getting cut, friend drama/ghosting, or switching how you act with different groups?  
(Leader note: Normalize the confusion; avoid shaming or graphic specifics.)
3. Read 1 Samuel 17:38–40 together. What phrase hits you—"I can't go in these," "he took them off," or what actually fits David—and why?  
(Leader note: Tie it to God's wiring them to bring *them* to the fight.)
4. Reflection line: "You can't fake who you are forever. At some point, who you pretend to be gets heavy." When have you felt that weight?  
(Leader note: Invite short, honest answers; protect privacy.)
- 5.

10 min

## Try This

### What You Need

No supplies needed

Practice—Label Rip: write one label you've believed most (from a coach, comment, crowd). Hold it, then rip it up (or delete) and whisper, "That's not my armor."

(Leader note: Keep it simple; no one has to show their paper; affirm courage.)

6. Practice—Armor Audit: write two lines—(1) what doesn't fit (a persona, filter, pressure), (2) what actually fits (a strength, interest, quiet gift, way you serve). Choose one thing to take off this week and one real-you step to practice.

(Leader note: Give a quiet minute; help students name specific, doable steps.)

7. Landing: "When you forget who you are, remember who picked you before you even showed up." What does that mean for you this week, and who is a safe person you'll tell today about your real-you step? (Leader note: Help them set a same-day text or tap-on-the-shoulder plan.)

Challenge Statement: "Do a 48-hour armor swap: drop one 'not-you-' thing (a pose, a pressure) and practice one 'real-you' step (serve, include, create, ask a question). Text a safe person tonight with your plan and one check-in time."