

Leader's Guide

Strengthening the Family: *From the Groom to the Bride*

June 14, 2026

Pastor Ian Edwards

Leaders note

The goal of this discussion is to help participants identify areas of their life where they might currently be finding their identity in something other than Christ. Then to compare those sources with the identity found in Christ, and lastly to take one practical step toward living more intentionally from God's truth this week.

As you facilitate conversation, keep bringing it back to Scripture. The goal is to keep the truth of Scripture as the compass for the discussion rather than our own opinions.

Question 1

What are some common places people look for identity and worth besides Christ? Why do you think those sources are so appealing?

Teaching Point

Finding our identity in something other than Christ is often something that doesn't happen overnight. It's often a gradual process that happens without us really realizing the extent of it until something or someone exposes it.

Follow-Up Prompts

- What messages does our culture send about where we should find our worth?
- Which identity source do you think is most tempting for people today: success, relationships, reputation, appearance, achievement, control, or something else?
- Why do these sources often feel more tangible than our identity in Christ?
- How can a good thing become an unhealthy source of identity?

Additional scripture

- 1 John 2:16-17

Question 2

Read Romans 3:22-26

Out of these three identity truths that were mentioned: saved, justified, and being sanctified, which one these three do you most need to remember right now?

Teaching Point

Reading something in Scripture is one thing, but believing it can be something totally different. We often need to do some digging and allow the Holy Spirit to show us why we struggle to believe the truths mentioned in this section.

Follow-Up Prompts

- Which of these three truths is easiest for you to believe?
- Which is most difficult?
- How would your daily life change if you fully believed you were already accepted and justified by God?
- Are you more likely to struggle with guilt, shame, perfectionism, or discouragement? How might these truths address that struggle?

Additional scripture

- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
 - Romans 5:1-2
 - Ephesians 1:11-14
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Question 3

Read Romans 6:22

When you feel stressed, discouraged, criticized, or overlooked, what does that reveal about where you're finding your identity? Can you think of a recent situation where your response exposed what was motivating you?

Teaching Point

Our response to a crisis or an unexpected situation can often expose us to the fact that we might have our identity wrapped up in the wrong thing.

Follow-Up Prompts

- What situations tend to trigger strong emotional reactions in you?
- When you are criticized, what feels threatened?
- What does your anxiety, anger, or discouragement usually reveal about what matters most to you?
- Have you ever looked back on a difficult moment and realized God was exposing something in your heart?

Additional Scripture

- Luke 6:45
 - Psalm 139:23-24
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Question 4

Pastor Ian challenged us to surrender our "broken identities" to Christ. What does it look like, practically speaking, to do that? How does having a "broken identity" affect your relationships, whether it's a spouse, co-worker, sibling or any other relationship in your life?

Teaching Point

When we're struggling with a "broken identity" it can often have very negative effects on those closest to us.

Follow-Up Prompts

- What is one identity struggle you've carried for a long time?
 - How has that struggle affected your closest relationships?
 - What would surrendering that area actually look like in practical terms?
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Question 5

Read Ephesians 5:21-32

Paul uses marriage here as a picture of Christ's relationship with the Church. What does it practically look like for all believers, not just married people, to submit to Christ as our Head? Are there areas of your life where reputation, success, control, or approval have competed with His leadership?

Teaching Point

Submission of any kind can be hard, mainly because we like to have control over our lives and situations. In order to submit to anyone or anything, we have to first submit to Christ. Otherwise, we'll struggle no matter what it is we're trying to submit to.

Follow-Up Prompts

- Paul says, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" before he ever addresses husbands and wives. What does that tell us about the heart behind biblical submission?
- What are some practical ways Christians can demonstrate submission to Christ in their everyday decisions, relationships, finances, schedules, or priorities?
- What is one area of your life where submission to Christ feels easy? What is one area where it feels more difficult?

Closing Application

Invite everyone to personally reflect on this question: What is one lie that I tend to believe about myself that affects my relationships with those around me?

Encourage everyone to follow the following sentence on their own during the week.

"This week, I need to replace the lie that _____ with the truth that _____."