

## **Transformed: Knowing our Identity**

### **Session Aim**

The focus of this session is on the relationship between transformation in Christ and our identity in Christ. The transforming power of Christ refashions our identity, and an awareness of who we are in Christ makes possible a continuing transformation process.

### **Preparation**

Talk to five people who claim to be followers of Christ, and ask them this question: What words would you use to describe our “identity” in Christ? Make a list of the responses you receive to share with the group during discussion.

### **Bible Text**

2 Corinthians 5:1-21, especially vv. 11-21

### **Introduction**

To understand the need for continuing transformation, we must understand who we are, both as individuals and as members of the body of Christ. We must know our identity. Who we are has been shaped by our past. Therefore, we grow as we explore various aspects of our identity, such as our values, goals, and heritage. What do these tell us about who we are? This study seeks to bond us and build trust among us. Our goal is not to analyze, criticize, or control each other, but is to grow and affirm what God is doing in and through one another.

Many of the values we live out stem from such influences as personality, family background, and culture. Not all of those values are contrary to our new identity in Christ. For example, the value a person places on honesty, likely a value learned from parents, is affirmed by one’s identity in Christ.

It can take a long time for the Spirit of God to transform our values to line up with our identity in Christ. We cooperate with the Spirit when we reflect on what our values are and how well they line up with our identity in Christ as described in Scripture. One aspect of identity transformation involves our value system.

One very significant characteristic of our identity in Christ is that we are part of the body of Christ. The Christian life cannot be lived in isolation.

### **Welcome/Icebreakers**

What were (are) some of the most important values of your parents?

What values that you personally hold are most significant in establishing your identity in Christ?

What are the “identity markers” that matter most to you in your Christianity?

## **Worship**

This week we want to celebrate Jesus' power in our life. The group may want to sing a couple of "power" songs, or favorites of any theme focused on Jesus.

Pray about the ways Jesus wants to reshape our identity.

## **Bible Study**

According to the context of 2 Corinthians 5, what kind of things did the Corinthians point to as evidences that they were Christians?

Often our homes give us identity. If money were no object, what room of your house would you begin to remodel? Why?

What room of your "spiritual house" would you begin to remodel?

Kitchen—where the real 'cooking' occurs

Living room—what people see

Den—where I spend my leisure time

Garage—where all my 'junk' is stored

How would this remodeling project improve your self-identity in Christ?

If you were an ambassador for your country, where would you want to be sent?

Where has God sent you as his ambassador?

What are the challenges of maintaining a Christian identity in the place where God has sent you?

Focusing on vv. 17-21, what are some of the identity makers or identity markers that Paul mentions in this text?

## **Application**

For thought: Which one area of your life would you most like to change to live a more consistent Christian life (maintain a more consistent Christian identity)? Share it with the group as appropriate.

Why is "reconciliation" valuable to you?

How does "reconciliation" influence your Christian identity?

In discussing reconciliation, are you thinking primarily about your relationship with God, or also about relationships you have with other people?

## **Conclusion**

Think of one factor that inhibits your Christian faith or testimony, and resolve to work on it this week. (Share it with one other person and pray together about it if possible.)

Try to be especially aware this week that you are called to be an "ambassador" wherever you go.

Seek to be a person of reconciliation wherever you go, making clear your identity in Christ.