



WEEK 2 HOST GUIDE

Identity: Knowing Who You Are

Live from Acceptance, Not for Acceptance

A 6-week biblical leadership small group experience designed to help people grow in faith, find breakthrough, and step into the leadership God created them for.

Launching May 2026

Week 2 Overview

Theme: Identity: Knowing Who You Are

Core idea: Live from acceptance, not for acceptance.

Praise Reports

Begin by asking if anyone has praise reports or reflections from last week.

Host Flexibility Note

This outline is designed for discussion. Feel free to shorten sections based on group size, engagement, and meeting format. The most important part of the program is helping people share, reflect, and grow together.

Host Introduction

Last week we talked about releasing offenses and hurts that can hold us back. This week we are talking about identity.

We live in a world where people often determine their worth by things that can change:

- Followers and likes
- Income and position
- Appearance and success
- The opinions and approval of others

The challenge is that if our identity comes from things that can change, our confidence will constantly rise and fall.

Biblical leadership starts with knowing who God says we are.

Session Flow

- 1 Welcome the group and ask for praise reports from last week.
- 2 Introduce the theme of identity and the pressure to live for approval.
- 3 Share the core idea and key scriptures.
- 4 Read or share the stories from Mark and Tracy.
- 5 Guide discussion using 2 or 3 of the questions provided.
- 6 Close with encouragement, Jeremiah 29:11, and prayer requests.

Core Teaching

Core Idea

If you do not know who you are, the world will tell you who you should be.

Our identity should not be determined by:

- Success or failure
- Followers or likes
- Titles or positions
- The approval of people

Our identity is found in being loved and accepted by God.

Before Jesus ever performed a miracle, preached a sermon, or healed the sick, the Father spoke over Him:

Matthew 3:17

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Notice the order.

Approval came before performance. The Father affirmed Jesus because of relationship, not achievement. The same is true for us.

When we place our faith in Christ:

- We are forgiven
- We are adopted
- We are accepted
- We are made new

Not because we earned it. Because Jesus earned it.

Live from Acceptance, Not for Acceptance

Key Scriptures

2 Corinthians 5:17

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Your identity is no longer your past, mistakes, failures, accomplishments, or social status. Your identity is who God says you are.

Matthew 6:33

Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

When we seek God's Kingdom first, everything else finds its proper place. We are in right standing with God not based on us, but because righteousness is a gift God gives through Jesus. Seeking the Kingdom of God can be as simple as knowing He loves us and approves of us.

Galatians 1:10

Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God?

Leadership Connection

Leaders who need constant approval become controlled by criticism.

Leaders who understand their identity:

- Lead with confidence
- Empower others
- Accept correction without being crushed
- Stay focused on purpose

When your value comes from God, you stop needing everyone else's validation.

Story: Tracy

Growing up, I was incredibly insecure about who I was and how I measured up to others. I am not sure where that came from, but as I shared last week, I did not grow up in a house that was learning about God and His promises.

My dad held my brother and me to very high standards. There was not a lot of praise, but there was criticism about my shortcomings.

I was embarrassed about my insecurities and did not want anyone to know how I felt. Because of that, I came across more bold and direct. If you ask any of my high school friends today, they would say I was very confident. I was the captain of the cheerleading squad and carried myself in a way that no one would have known how I truly felt. That led to me feeling lonely and isolated at times.

I do not have a college degree, and as a young adult I was divorced and struggling with who I was. I was not finding success in business and was struggling to feel accomplished and secure.

In my early 30s, when I started seeking a relationship with my Heavenly Father, I started learning His true character, and many things in my heart changed. I was able to start looking at myself the way God does and not feel so inadequate.

My confidence grew as the barriers of my heart fell, and I learned to have grace not only for others, but also for myself.

It is not that I do not have moments of insecurity anymore or that I feel confident all the time. But I am able to reflect on God's promises of who I am and allow that to guide my heart and mind.

Story: Mark

Growing up, I often felt I did not measure up. I compared myself to others based on my size, my background, my education, and later my financial success.

My value was based on what I did not have. This was without the social pressure that social media puts on us today.

Our children and the people we lead today often find their value based on:

- Followers
- Likes
- What degree they have and where it is from
- What team they make
- How they are recognized by others

Before any miracle, God said:

Matthew 3:17

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The enemy wants us to seek the approval of man and to be measured by what we do or do not do. The problem is that approval is temporary.

If our identity is built on what people think about us, then criticism can destroy us and success can define us.

The good news is that God's acceptance is not something we earn. Through faith in Jesus, we are welcomed into His family and become recipients of His love, grace, and approval.

A Solid Foundation

Why are you more magnificent than the mountains or the sea? Because you are made in His image. You are the apple of His eye.

You are loved, forgiven, accepted, and celebrated.

Leadership Application

In leadership, if we spend our time trying to convince people that the world accepts them, we will never succeed. That foundation is sand.

The world constantly changes its standards of success and acceptance. What is celebrated today may be forgotten tomorrow. God's acceptance never changes.

If we point people to the truth of what God says, our foundation is on solid ground. That foundation is eternal and never changes.

When leading others, we can encourage them with consistency by pointing them back to God's approval of them and trusting that He will work it out.

Romans 8:28

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

The world says you need to be something great to be recognized as great. Your Heavenly Father recognizes that anything you do with His heart is great.

If you were able to pay attention to the Holy Spirit, this is what you would hear: every smile in an elevator, every kind word, every door opened - you would hear a voice saying, "You are amazing. You bless My people. Thank you for your heart to serve."

When we learn to value what God says more than what others say - or what we think they think - we become free and confident.

Discussion Questions

The host can use some of these questions or use their own. You will probably get through 2 or 3 questions depending on the size of the group.

Warm-Up Question

Where do you think people most commonly look for their identity today?

Optional Discussion Questions

- 1 How can social media and comparison affect the way people see themselves?
- 2 Where do you think people most often tie their value to success, performance, or the opinions of others?
- 3 Why do you think knowing your identity is important for leadership?
- 4 How might your life be different if you truly believed you were fully loved and accepted by God?

Host Close

Last week we focused on letting go of offenses. This week is about knowing who we are in Christ. We can stay encouraged when our trust is in Him.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Ask for prayer requests and close in prayer.

Facilitator Quick Reference

Use this page as a simple guide while leading the session.

Big Idea

Live from acceptance, not for acceptance. When your value comes from God, you stop needing everyone else's validation.

Remember to:

- Begin with praise reports from last week.
- Create a safe, welcoming, and encouraging environment.
- Help people recognize where they may be seeking approval.
- Keep pointing the conversation back to who God says we are.
- Allow people to share, but do not force anyone to talk.
- End with hope, prayer, and expectation for what God can do next.

Suggested Closing Words

Tonight, we talked about identity as a foundation for biblical leadership. My encouragement is that we keep our hearts open this week and ask God to help us live from His acceptance instead of striving for the approval of others. We are loved, forgiven, accepted, and made new in Christ.