

PRAXiS

Me
& my
identity



PRAXiS

HOW TO USE

This discussion guide is designed for you, leaders, to guide your group through the “Who is Jesus?” video series. This series is structured as a five-week conversation using integrated and engaging questions throughout each video. When these questions pop up on the screen, hit pause and turn the question to the group. **Each episode has the following section within this guide:**

BIG IDEA

We highlight the big idea behind the episode, emphasizing key scripture or quotes, to give you and your group an idea of what will be covered in the video. Feel free to share this before pressing play, or after to summarize what was taught into a concise thought.

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

If the video question doesn't invite participation, use these questions to spark interest. These questions are simply reworded to present the idea in a different way. We invite you to be creative and present the questions in a way that engages your group.

DISCUSS

The video questions are created to springboard conversation and get the thoughts rolling – inviting participants to wrestle and begin sharing their beliefs and experiences. This is just the beginning. The discussion questions exist to go deeper. We always begin with the same two basic questions, inviting feedback from the video, inviting participants to share any questions that arose as they watched the episode.

CONTEXT

IN A CHURCH OR LARGE GROUP SETTING

This guide is designed to be used by a leader, so begin by identifying those leaders and getting a guide into each of their hands. If you are watching the episodes in a room larger than 20, we would advise identifying multiple leaders and having them focus on a section of the group. When the video questions arise, have them turn to their “small group” and open discussion. Time dependent, each smaller group to share with the larger group what was shared. This invites more people to share without the intimidation of a large group setting. Whether you keep these groups consistent from week to week, or you mix it up, remaining the same for the discussion portion of each episode will allow for greater depth and increased transparency.

IN A SMALL GROUP SETTING

Every leader in the room should have one of these guides prior to beginning the video. It can be helpful to identify one leader as the facilitators, and others as helpers. The facilitator can guide the video question time, with helpers stepping in as needed based on the direction of conversation. Come discussion time, gathering into small groups where one or two leaders oversee a small group can invite quieter participants to engage and allow for depth of conversation.

AS AN INDIVIDUAL

While this discussion guide is designed with group participation in mind, the content is something we believe is valuable for every individual. We advise watching these episodes with a pen in hand and paper before you. Have your Bible handy and get ready to pause. You get to take this at your pace! Scripture referenced, open your Bible and read along – question asked, hit pause and write out your answer – questions sparked in your mind that you are unable to answer, write them down to ask later.

GET READY

Take a breath, the pressure is off. We are not asking you to teach, or to have the answer to every question. Your role is to guide, facilitate, but most importantly to **listen** and **invite**.

Invite questions. Invite conversation.

This discussion guide was created to provide direction for the conversation, but not to limit or harness the group. During the video, listen to what the participants say. Do not feel the need to answer the question yourself. Be comfortable with silence. Give it fifteen seconds before you even use a supporting question. Let them think.

“When will I know when to press play again?” Trust me, you’ll know. Conversation will end, or you may even have to re-focus the group if they go down a rabbit trail. If a valuable question or topic is sparked during the video, write it down and say you will return as group to that during the discussion time.

When it comes time for discussion, follow pace with the group. Let them naturally guide the conversation around what content stuck out from the video, or what questions were sparked for them. You are not confined to the questions in this guide. Pick the ones that stand out to you or add your own. This time will look different for each group and that’s intentional.

LISTEN AND INVITE.

ME & MY IDENTITY?

THREE EPISODES | PRAXIS SERIES 8

BIG IDEA

Everyday teenagers buckle under the pressure of trying to figure out who they are. They are in an ongoing inner battle to discover their identity. How do I form my identity? What informs who I am? What if I don't like who I've chosen to be? Or worse, what if my friends don't like me?

Rather than tell you how to answer the question "Who am I?" we reframe the question to be "Who does God say I am?"

Together we realize that the pressure is off, because we do not need to create our identity, we get to discover it in Christ. An identity, that is grounded in the great love and intention God expressed in creating us with purpose.

ME & MY IDENTITY

EPISODE 1 | MY IDENTITY DISCOVERED

BIG IDEA

We do not need to create our identity, we get to discover it!

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

Psalms 139:13-18: For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand – when I wake, I am still with you.

Video Quote – Sid Koop: “My identity is not based on my accomplishments, or the positions I achieve. It's not based on the friends I can gather online or the “likes” I get for the selfie I posted. In fact, my identity has very little to do with me. It has everything to do with Him. He (Christ) defines me. I don't need to create my identity. I simply need to discover it.”

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **When people tell you, “you can be whoever you want to be,” do you ever wonder if that is true? Why or why not?**
 - How does the idea of “being whoever you want to be,” make you feel?
 - Is that idea something that gives you a sense of freedom? Or makes you feel overwhelmed? Why?

- **How does that make you feel to think that there is a God who purposefully designed you and put you together?**
 - What does it mean to create something with purpose? How does this impact the value of the creation?
 - Psalm 130 reveals God’s deep knowledge of us. how do you feel about God knowing everything about you?
- **Do you ever try to determine what God’s plan is for your life? Why or why not?**
 - Do you believe that God has a plan for your life? Why or why not?
 - How specific do you believe God’s plan is for you? Do you believe it is detail-oriented and direct, or more general and unspecific? Why?

DISCUSS

- **In your group, read out loud Psalm 139:13-18. As you read, put yourself in the position of David. Listen to the Psalm as if you were the one writing it. Think about what makes you personality unique, the way you tend to interact with others, your interests and skills. How do you feel?**
 - **If we believe that there is a God who has purposefully designed and created each of us as human beings, how should that affect how we treat and value ourselves and others? Is that different than if we don’t believe that there is a God who created us?**
 - **What difference would it make if instead of asking “what is God’s plan for my life”, we started to assume that we are His plan, and began to ask, “how can I use my life for God’s plan right now?”**
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NEXT STEPS

How can we intentionally resist the urge to create our identity, and instead focus on discovering who Jesus made us to be? What is one thing you can do different tomorrow to live into this truth – you don’t create your identity, you discover it.

ME & MY IDENTITY

EPISODE 2 | MY IDENTITY RESTORED

BIG IDEA

Christ restores our identity.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

John 8:1-11: Early in the morning he (Jesus) came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.” And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5:21: For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Video Quote – Sid Koop: “When Jesus died on the cross, He did so to silence the condemning voices, and give us new identities. He did it by taking our condemnation for us.”

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **When you daydream about being part of a defining moment, what activity or experience do you often dream of?**
 - Is it a sport, a relationship, an accomplishment, saving a life?
 - What have been some of the most defining moments in your life?
- **How do you deal with the defining voices in your life – what do you do to try and “shut those voices up”?**
 - How can we identify what voices are defining us? How do we know if they are healthy or not?
 - What do your defining voices say? How do they make you feel? What can you do to silence them?
- **Spend some time talking about the battle of not letting our worst moments define us.**
 - Why do you think it can be so difficult to quit allowing our past failures and hurts define who we are today?
 - What are some practical things we could do that would remind us who we are in Christ? What about things we should stop doing?

DISCUSS

- **What stands out to you in the story of the woman caught in adultery from John 8? Imagine you are the woman; how would you feel about Jesus response to you?**
 - **If a non-believer were to ask you what it means to be given a new identity in Christ, how would you explain it? What about if a fellow believer asked?**
 - **Have you chosen to live out your new Christ given identity? Why or why not? What keeps you from living this identity out?**
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NEXT STEPS

What decisions and changes can you make in your life to live out your new identity in Christ?

ME & MY IDENTITY

EPISODE 3 | MY IDENTITY IN COMMUNITY

BIG IDEA

God created us to be interdependent and in community.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

Romans 12:3-8: For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Galatians 6:1-2

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **What are some of the different communities you are part of? What makes those communities so important to you?**
 - Is it a sport, a relationship, an accomplishment, saving a life?
 - Have you ever been removed from a community? How did it feel?
 - What influence does our communities have on us? Why are they valuable?

- **Has there ever been a time in your life when you really needed someone else? Was it difficult for you to seek help from others? Why or why not?**
 - Reflect on a time when you needed help but didn't ask, how did you respond to others during that season? How did they respond to you?
 - Reflect on a time when you asked for help, how did the helper respond? How did you feel? Is this act relieving or discouraging? Why?
- **What are some of the skills, abilities, or gifts you think God may have uniquely given you?**
 - Do you ever find it hard to believe that you are uniquely gifted? Why or why not?
 - Do you ever find yourself comparing your gifts, skills, and abilities to others? Why do you think we tend to do this?

DISCUSS

- **How do you evaluate or gauge how you are doing? What do you reflect on – social media? Bank account? Marks? Achievements? Your faith? Why do you reflect on these things?**
 - **How can we shift our focus to how we are doing with God, rather than our worldly success or failures?**
 - **Have you ever had a friend call you out for not reflecting Christ? How was their approach? If hurtful, how could they have done it differently to reflect Paul's teaching in Galatians 6 (humbly and gently)?**
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NEXT STEPS

What is one way you could use one of your gifts, skills, or abilities to serve each other this week?