



Main Idea: Our identity doesn't start with us but with the God who made us.

Key Scriptures: Genesis 1:27, Matthew 16:13-18, John 8:1-11

Hey students! Welcome to [youth group]. My name is [_____] and I am thrilled to see you today! I believe that God has something special in store for us as we open up His Word tonight and start a brand-new series called *Identity on Trial*.

For the next four weeks we're going look at who God says we are and seeing who we were created to be in spite of what the world often tells us.

I believe that God wants to take us on an adventure of God-discovery and self-discovery. It is a journey that will lead to fulfillment as we have never imagined.

Welcome to the world! Every day you are on trial. Your identity is attacked, you're being told who you should be, and we spend a lot of time trying to figure it out for ourselves. And if other people think you chose wrong, it can feel like they get the final say in who you are.

Did you know that the top three selling book categories are 1. Romance, 2. Crime, and 3. Self-Help?

We all love good stories, and honestly, I don't see a big difference between these three genres. Romance is a story that we can insert ourselves into, a dream that we want to have. That's why it's so popular, it moves people to feel a certain way, expect certain things, and want to be treated a certain way. Can you agree?

Crime is yet another venture into understanding humanity. Sane people can't help but wonder why people do what they do. The most gruesome crimes tend to fascinate us.

And that last genre is self-help. It doesn't seem like it belongs next to the other two, but doesn't it?

It's another attempt to figure out what's wrong with humanity, it's just that human is you, right? We can't help but feel like something is wrong with who we are, we were born into sin and NOTHING in this world is how it should be.

Identity is all about ME, right? Identity is an issue of *self*-everything about us that we have to explore, discover, and determine. That's why we have so many things like self-care, self-Image, self-discovery, self-fulfillment, self-improvement, self-help, and self-esteem.

If everything is all about self and we spend so much effort finding ourselves why aren't people generally happier?

[Teacher's Note: Leave some time for discussion here.]

It seems like identity is all about self, but our first point tonight is this:

1. SELF IS THE WRONG STARTING POINT

We are all created to be individuals who are unique and crafted for a different purpose but let's go all the way to the beginning to see who God says you are.

Let's dive into **Genesis 1:27 (ESV)**:

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

*IN ORDER TO DISCOVER WHO WE WERE CREATED TO BE, WE
HAVE TO LOOK TO THE ONE WHO CREATED US.*

We are created in the image of God, so we have to understand that God gets to define His creation, and that's our second point tonight.

2. GOD DEFINES, WE DON'T

The world tries to define us, and when they flood us with ideas and expectations, we also define ourselves. When you think about who you are, and you say I AM.... what are the next words are YOU put there?

Over the next few weeks, we'll talk about who God says you are because He defines us, we don't.

THE POINT: We are deeply loved by the Creator of the universe.

1. Have you ever felt like no one likes you? If so, how did that impact your view of yourself?
2. What does it mean to be adopted?
3. How does being adopted apply to our relationship with God?
4. What would you give away to help a stranger? Someone who doesn't like you? Someone that you're friends with?
5. How does it make you feel knowing Jesus gave His life for you before you even existed?
6. How can we pray for you this week?

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