



GOD LIKES YOU.

Message Next Steps

A PURPOSE AND A POEM

SEPTEMBER 15

Ever wish someone would walk up to you, nudge you on the shoulder, and simply share what the point of your life is? Wouldn't that change everything? Instead, we find ourselves giving life our best shot, slogging through, trying different things, and working to discover our purpose. We wander through life often unfilled and dissatisfied. How can we discover our purpose? What is our identity? What are we supposed to do in this life?

Work through the following questions and Scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever experienced buyer's remorse? What did you buy? What were you thinking before your purchase? Why did you have regret afterward?
2. **Read Ephesians 2:2-3.** Have you ever felt empty after doing something you truly thought would give you satisfaction? Share with your running partner or life group about such a time and how you felt.
3. Have you ever received a substantial gift you didn't deserve? How did that make you feel? How did you respond?
4. **Read Ephesians 2:8-10.** God likes you. He offers the gift of salvation, so we can have a real relationship with Him. He has created us for a purpose. Discuss with your group how that changes your perspective of your identity and your life.
5. Work through the poem and self assessment tool, I-D-E-N-T-I-T-Y, together with your running partner or life group (see reverse). Read each section. Are you asking God the same questions? Share with one another where you find yourself.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Ephesians 2:2-3a – You let the world, which doesn't know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience. We all did it, all of us doing what we felt like doing, when we felt like doing it, all of us in the same boat. (The Message)

Ephesians 2:8-10 – God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. (NLT)

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

I – D – E – N – T – I – T – Y

Five areas of self-assessment and reflection with God

Adapted from a poem by Shaula Overholt

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

I – Self: The me I think I am

The me I am pretending to be, the image I am trying to curate.

God, will you remind me now of who you say I am.

I.D. – Name, Label

The titles others have given me, some good, some not,

God, please tell me how do I know the difference?

I DENT – I get hurt ...

Broken, warped, diminished by others.

God, what is hurting me right now?

I DENT IT – I hurt and break others ...

Hurt people hurt people. Whom have I hurt recently?

God, to whom do I need to be reconciled?

ENTITY – A lie I have believed about myself and others

That I am something to be used to give pleasure to others.

This is also a way I see others in order to use them for my purposes or pleasure.

God, will you search me and reveal any distortions?

Truth: I was never meant to live independently from God, and he does not see me as an entity ... a pawn. He sees a masterpiece (a work of art) in me ... made full of potential by the Master. He sees the same potential in everyone else. As a result of this realization, I have a new purpose (not just to live for myself — that's playing God and seeking my will to be done), but to fulfill the plan God had for me when He created me.

SPIRITUAL OUTCOMES—

gatewaychurch.com/spiritual_outcomes/new-creation/