

IDENTITY DISCOVERY

Study Guide Questions

Introduction & Chapter 1:

1. Name the three things that you believe are the most powerful negative forces/influences on the identity of:
 - A young child
 - A teen-ager
 - An adult
2. What would you say is different about the negative identity influences for men and women?
3. What are some of the most subtle, but still powerful, negative influences on our identities?
4. How would you define insecurity as it relates to our identities?
5. Why can seemingly very confident people very often harbor deep insecurities?
6. Complete the following phrase:
 - “Our insecurity is often revealed in...”
7. The book asserts, “...our God-intended security went out the window when Adam and Eve decided they wanted to make life centered on themselves...” (pg. 3)

What are some of the reasons our security is seriously weakened and distorted when we center life on ourselves rather than on God?

8. What are some of the ways we try to help people “feel good about themselves”? Are such efforts wrong?

Chapter 2:

1. In one word, describe your reaction to the phenomenon of “snapchat dysmorphia” as described on pgs. 8 & 9. Briefly explain why you chose that word.
2. What makes it so hard to “listen to the right voice” that is advocated in this chapter?

3. Romans 12:2 is cited on pg. 12. Apart from reading, learning, and prayerfully reflecting on the truth God gives us in Scripture, is it possible to “listen to the right voice”? Are there other ways minds can be “transformed” as declared in Romans 12:2? Discuss as to why or why not.
4. On pg. 13 Paul David Tripp is quoted as saying, “My self-perception is as accurate as a carnival mirror.” Discuss what you believe about that statement.

Chapter 3:

1. Do you happen to know the meaning of your given name? What is it?
2. Name one quality about yourself that would be a good symbol/description of you.
3. What might go on in a person’s life to bring them to the point where they willingly want to tattoo the phrase “Born to lose” on their body.
4. Agree or disagree? Of all the names or titles that could ever be given to a human being, in any society, in any age, there is no greater name, no higher privilege than this: “child of God.” (pg. 16)
5. Do you feel most church goers have the strong assurance that they are indeed a Christian, a child of God? Explain.
6. What causes a person to be able to trust God’s word or not trust God’s word?
7. What do you think of the following phrase given on pg. 21: “When you know your worth, no one can make you feel worthless.”?
8. How or in what ways does having a deep assurance that you are a child of God affect your self-perception.....your confidence...your future outlook and hope?

Chapter 4:

1. On page 25 it is stated, “The more we become convinced of their reality (*referring to being forgiven, accepted, loved*) and embrace them in our hearts, the more powerfully they will help us experience the freedom and security of who we are.” What in your life has helped you grow in that conviction or what has hindered that conviction?

2. What would you say to the Christian who has a hard time becoming more certain of the truths that they are “forgiven, accepted, and loved” by God? (i.e. someone who expresses that “I do believe, help my unbelief” situation that Jesus came across)
3. Share your reaction to Karen Green’s story (pgs. 25 ff.)
4. The book (pg. 28) notes the difference between forgiveness and acceptance. What else would you say is the difference between these two qualities?
5. On pg. 29, reference is made to the genealogy of Jesus. Is this a powerful illustration to you of the acceptance Jesus has for those who come to Him? Why or why not?
6. Complete the following phrase:
 - “The forgiveness, acceptance, and love of God in my life has affected the way that I feel and think about myself by....”

Chapter 5:

1. From what you learn in this chapter, how can a Christian take any type of job or position and view it primarily as a way of serving God rather than simply a way to advance and protect themselves?
2. Do you think it is important to understand how God may have gifted you for work in His Kingdom? Do you think it is necessary to understand what gift you may have in order to be effective? Explain.
3. What gifts do you think Christians often demonstrate in their lives and service which are not part of those listed in such passages as I Corinthians 12 or Ephesians 4:8-12?
4. Explain in your own words why every Christian is uniquely suited to serve God and others in the way they can do. Give some examples if possible.
5. For those willing to share, how do you think God has uniquely designed you to serve Him?

Chapter 6:

1. Do you agree with the book's assessment on pg. 43 that, "You will not see the combination of true humility with true dignity very often in our world"?
2. What are your thoughts about the statement, "humility may well be the single most powerful quality in the Bible"?
3. Why does true dignity enable a person to receive both compliments and appropriate criticism well?
4. Do you agree with the book's assertion that only God can bring about the combination of true humility with true dignity?
5. Why does the Christian faith enable a person to "think of themselves less"?
6. If every person is created in the image of God, what does this have to say about the way we are called to treat others and what impact would this make on the way others view and feel about themselves?
7. Finish the following:
 - True humility means....
 - True dignity means....
 - The combination of these two qualities will express itself in...

Chapter 7 & 8:

1. How would you explain this statement to someone in talking about our self-image/identity: "It turns out the key to experiencing the inner security God intended for us to have is not centered on ourselves at all, but centered on God."
2. What does it mean for a Christian to follow their own agenda rather than God's? What does it mean practically to follow God's agenda?
3. Why would following God's agenda as our life's purpose make such a dramatic positive impact on our identity/self-image?
4. Discuss the illustration on page 62 regarding our RAS. How does this reality work itself out in our lives as it relates to our identity?

5. Thinking about the truths and insights provided in this book, how would you share with someone the barriers to having a strong, secure identity and the way we can come to experience a much greater security and contented view of ourselves?