

PARENT/STUDENT IDENTITY GUIDE

12th Grade Conversation

OBJECTIVE

This is a time to affirm your teen and let them know that their identity is in Christ, to have a meaningful conversation about how they are loved by God and to let them know that things are about to change. Their environment, their friends and they themselves will all change as they learn and mature. Confirm to them that even though things around them will change, the core of who they are doesn't change. At the core we are children of God and our identity is in Christ.

THE 411

Our teens go through major struggles of feeling worthless and discouraged. This is a time in life where they are figuring out who they are and why life matters. They are on a constant search to find acceptance and love. Most teens need constant reminders of why they are loved and why they matter. They won't tell you that, because they just can't seem to put it in words – especially to their parents – but it is true. They need affirmation and encouragement. We live in a performance society where worth is given and determined by what we can do and what we can achieve. This creates a lot of pressure and stress on us. Teens often wonder if they are loved by what they do or just by who they are. This is a great opportunity to take a week to affirm and love your teen through some creative avenues, but most importantly to let them know that they are loved unconditionally and that they are loved by the family of God. Let them know that God loves them and that their identity is not in what they can achieve or accomplish but that they are worthy by just being who they are. Their identity is in Christ.

SUGGESTION

Go out to dinner with your teen and present him with a new journal for college. You will need to find a nice journal for them. Even if they have never written in a journal before, this can be something they look back on and remember. In the journal take time to write a page or two of how you have seen them grow and how you are so proud of them. Let them know that you love them unconditionally. Let them know that there will be times at college that will be tough and lonely, and that they will have thoughts of not being smart enough or good enough. Let them know that there will be lots of changes in their life — their environment, their friends and even they will change. But the core of who they are does not change, and their identity in Christ does not change. You can also include a few pictures of your family and of them growing up, you might also include some Scriptures of identity such as:

1 John 3:1 (NIV)

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are ...”

Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

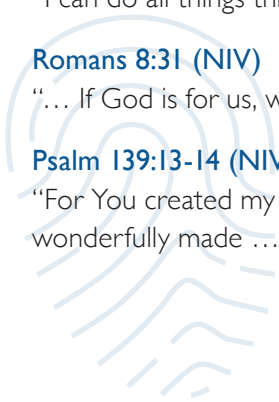
“I can do all things through Him who gives me strength.”

Romans 8:31 (NIV)

“... If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Psalms 139:13-14 (NIV)

“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 ...”



1 Corinthians 6:19 (NIV)

“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.”

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here.”

1 John 4: 4 (NIV)

“... the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

2 Timothy 1:7 (RSV)

“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control.”

1 John 5:4 (NIV)

“For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.”

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”

Romans 8:35-39 (NIV)

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Hebrews 13:5 (NIV)

“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’”

DISCUSSION

At dinner or after dinner, affirm your teen and how proud you are of them. Affirm character traits you have seen in them, and let them know of your love and support, that love is not based on achievements or accomplishments.

SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

We definitely want you to do well at college. We want you to have a great career and to fulfill your hopes and dreams but know that your job will be what you do and not who you are.

PRESENT THE JOURNAL:

There are going to be a lot of things that will change at college. Your environment is going to be different. You will make new friends. You in fact will change yourself as you grow, learn and mature. However, you need to know that at the core of you does not change. Your identity is in Christ. You are His. This journal is a way for you to be reminded of that, and it is a place to write about your hopes and dreams, and your fears and struggles. Our prayer is that at the core you will remember Whose you are. You are a child of the Most High God, and you are loved and were bought at a price.