

PARENT/STUDENT IDENTITY GUIDE

9th Grade Conversation

OBJECTIVE

Have a meaningful conversation with your teen about how our identity is in Christ and not in what we wear, whom we hang around with, what we accomplish, or what we think our identity is in.

THE 411

We hear all the time about identity theft and how people can hack into computers and steal our identity. That can be a scary thing. For those in Christ, our identity is in Him and we are His. However, the enemy is trying to convince our teens that they are not worthy of such an identity and has them chase their identity in other things and people. It is so important to talk about this subject of identity in Christ.

As you walk through the mall, you will see many teens – all with different identities. They are on a quest for identity. The biggest reason for this is because they want to belong and have a place where they feel accepted. You will see the preps, the skaters, the rebellious, the cliques and so on. They are all trying to fit in, and so is your teen. That is why it is so important over these next four years to build up in your son or daughter a strong sense of spiritual identity in Christ. Think about the Great Wall of China and how long it took to build with many people involved to make it happen. To this day it is standing strong. In the same way it will take time and investment to build your teen's spiritual identity, and many others will need to come alongside you who can mentor and encourage your teen to build a foundation for a strong identity in Christ that will last a lifetime.

SUGGESTION

A good experience for this is to take your teen to the mall. Walk around and do a little shopping first, whether to many different stores or to just a few stores. When you finish shopping, find a place in the food court to talk about having an identity in Christ. Share with them that every teen wants a place to belong. Refer back to the groups you saw in the mall and how those teens dressed the same because their identity was in that group.

Ask these two questions of your teen:

1. Why do teens walk around here in groups?
2. Why in each group are they dressed the same?

That group accepts one another, and they feel a sense of belonging. We all desire that in our lives.

On the way home, stop by their school, especially in the evening. In the parking lot summarize this conversation and have a time of prayer.



DISCUSSION

SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

Earlier I asked why teens dress the same. I think it is because they feel like they belong and find acceptance in that group. The problem is that it doesn't bring true fulfillment. That is why it is so important to know that we are chosen by God and our identity and worth is found in Him first. We can't just rely on our friends to make us happy or to bring worth to our lives. Our worth is not found in other people or material things. It is found in Christ. We need to know our confidence is in the fact that God loves us unconditionally.

READ:

Ephesians 1:4-10 (NIV)

"For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will – to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ."

ASK:

How do you feel when you read that God chose us before the creation of the world?

What does that mean to be loved unconditionally by God?

TALKING POINTS:

You need to know that when others criticize you or when you have thoughts that you're not good, those are lies of the enemy trying to lure you away from your identity in Christ.

You were so valuable to God that He sent His only Son to die for you and me.

We have value and worth and are given a purpose in life to share this love of Christ with others.

I know it is hard at school and the pressures to belong and be accepted is at the front of your priority list, but you need to know you don't have to chase that, because it is exhausting and you will never find true fulfillment.

Your identity is not how short, tall, fat, skinny or good-looking you are but that you are worthy of a God declaring you are His and that you are loved.

[On the way home in the school parking lot] This is a place filled with your peers trying every possible way to be liked and accepted – in many ways giving up what they know is right and true just to belong. Remember that you don't have to do that. Be who God created you to be: yourself.

PRAYER

Have a time of prayer.

