

Good for the Soul
How to Become Who God Created You to Be
Week One: Identity Crisis

Introduction: Hello my name is... welcome guests.

I want to welcome everyone to week One of our new series, Good for the Soul: How to Become Who God Created You to Be.

- Every day of our lives, we come face to face with things that shape and influence us for better or worse. What if, instead of starting that new fad diet or tv series, we took time to overcome the damaging influences that assault us every day?
Not just the influences around us but the conflict inside of us.

Together, in this new series, we will look at how we all have areas that regularly get in the way of us becoming who God created us to be.

Many times when we think about obstacles and barriers, we think about our circumstances, those things that happen to us however, many times the situations we find ourselves in didn't originate externally but started internally.

Don't miss this, this series is going to look at those things inside of us that hold us back.

Proverbs 11:20

The Lord detests people with crooked hearts,
but he delights in those with **integrity**.

Integrity is a big concept. It isn't about being perfect like most people use it. The word integrity comes from "Integer" or the parts of the whole. So to have integrity means that the parts equal the whole...

Series BIG IDEA:

Dealing with your soul is the only thing that will make you whole.

Transition to Today: When I say the word "Soul" what comes to mind?

Probably the 1960's, you die and your soul goes to heaven. Look what the Apostle Paul says about the word soul as it relates to wholeness.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

²³ Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.

The Whole You (Works inside out)

SPIRIT (the part of you that connects with God. Alive in Christ)

SOUL (Your thinker, feeler & chooser or: mind, will, emotions)

BODY (your five senses. Sensual.)

You are a spirit, you have a soul, you reside in a body.

Today, we are kicking off our series and we are laying a foundation for Good for the Soul by zooming inside and taking a look at the foundation of the soul which is Identity. **Our world wants to give you an identity that's contrary to the one God gives you.**

Our world loves to lump people together and assign a counterfeit identity, **why?** to control how you think, feel and choose. To control your soul. If the enemy can control your soul, he has your life. So let's talk today about identity.

Ephesians 6:1-4 NLT

1 Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. 2 "Honor your father and mother." This is the **first** commandment with a promise: If you honor your father and mother, 3 "things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth." 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

This is a foundational truth in how we are formed and developed.

The number one job of a parent is to model the heart and image of God to their children.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a story about a time your natural parents did something or parented you in a way that didn't necessarily reflect the heart of God. Be real about the love and honor you have for your parents, but also how your first experiences with parenthood (your parents) shaped your early view of God and how you've had to re-shape that view as you've grown older.

Our identity is shaped by our parents. Kids belong to the Lord, we have a responsibility to raise them as close as we can to the way God would. **Some of us have**

wrong images of god because of relationships with our parents. Some of us have bad images of ourselves because of the way we were raised.

- This comes by the proper combination of instruction (admonition-verbal) and discipline (nurture-action). **The more we respond to instruction, the less we need discipline.**

Proverbs 22:6 Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.

- The training is for a relationship with God, not just for a standard of behavior. When they are by themselves and on their own they will be able to connect to God.

Illustration- Story about a positive experience you had with your parents or parental figures that shaped your view of Father God in a positive way.

2 extremes of battles with Identity

- Those who had maybe been exposed to abuse, criticism-experiences condemnation, always down on themselves, don't believe God can really bless you. **shaped by what parents did.**
- Others were overly indulged by parents-they never accept responsibility for anything, never examine themselves, never ask am I wrong, it's always everyone else's fault-their self-esteem is shaped by what their parents didn't do. **Shaped by what parents didn't do.**

*But- **If you will walk with God,** God will right the wrongs you experienced with your earthly parents.*

God's power to heal is greater than Satan's power to hurt. God promises to be a father to the fatherless:

Psalm 68:4-5

4 Sing praises to God and to his name! 5 ... a father of the fatherless.

God says himself I will be like a father to the person who has never had a father, and create in you the proper image of himself and yourself-that's' what he wants to do.

Even Jesus needed his father to shape his identity.

- Jesus was 100% God AND 100% Human at the same time. This in theology is called the **Hypostatic union**. Even Jesus needed his father for identity.
- **Matthew 3:17** – God Spoke: This is my beloved Son, In whom I am well pleased.
- **Matthew 4** – immediately following he is led to be tempted 40 days by Satan.
- **Matthew 5,6,7** – He returns and delivers His very first and longest sermon!
- They say if you write books you will always be known by the first book you write.
The law of first mention

Jesus came right out with the **sermon on the mount**, (Matthew 5, 6, 7) **17 times he uses the word father**-He's changing the perspective of the Jewish people from religion to a personal relationship!

Only a truth can overcome a lie.

That's why Jesus uses the word Father 17 times, he's trying to get to get to something. Before we dig deeper into the series, it is so vital that we rewire some truths in our soul:

5 Biblical Truths about Identity

1. We can't judge how much God loves us by how bad others treat us.

Romans 5:8

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners

- You have to quit blaming God for what people do. People may have done you wrong, you may have been treated the wrong way, abused-but don't think that that comes from God.

2. We can't hate others and love God at the same time. If you hate people you don't really love God.

1 John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?

- Love for God spills over into "I love people!"

3. Doing things for the praise of people hurts us.

Matthew 6: 1 "Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven.

- Doing things for God isn't bad, but doing so that others will accept you... eh.

4. God knows what we need better than we know what we need.

Matthew 6:7-8

⁷"When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!"

We tend to badger God and the cause to much of our anxiety and fear is a belief that God is out to get us or take away our fun, but that's not true.

5. God wants you to ask Him for good things.

1 John 5: 14-15

14 And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. 15 And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for.

- He invites you to pray, he wants to be your provider.

We must learn to focus on the things Jesus taught, not be distracted by the way you were raised, or that false image on the inside, nor be distracted by the storms of life.

Speaking of the storms of our life, Jesus teaches us something profound about how we build our life...

Matthew 7:24-27 NLT

24 "Anyone who listens to My teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 25 Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. 26 But anyone who hears My teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. 27 When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

If you don't build a healthy relationship with your heavenly father based on the teachings of Jesus you are going to be distracted in the storm, and your life is going to experience loss, **you will crash.**

So, how can we make sure our identity is on a solid foundation?

Our soul is most healthy when we allow God's Word to shape our identity.

Over time, God's Word shapes and changes our circumstances and changes our identity to become who He has called us to be.

Remember:

Matthew 7:24 NLT

24 "Anyone who listens to My teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.

Let's Pray: