

3

versas

EVERY TEENAGER
SHOULD KNOW

IDENTITY





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31 **verses** EVERY TEENAGER
SHOULD KNOW

IDENTITY

By
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INTRO

Here's a question: Who are you?

What defines your identity?

What makes you different from your friends and family? What about you makes you stand out among the billions of other people on this planet? It can't just be your personality or your interests. It can't just be your talents or your passions. And it can't just be your appearance. Why? Because all of these things change over time.

Face it: You may not always be the smartest or most talented person. You may not always be able to run fast. Personalities change. Your appearance definitely will.

So what makes you, well . . . you?

I want to offer a suggestion about the nature of who you are . . . an answer to the question, What defines your identity? I believe that God's Word makes it clear: If you are a Christ-follower, then your identity is found in Christ. Simple as that.

All the questions about your value, your purpose, your appearance, and your self-worth . . . the answer to all of these is found in Christ. You are who you are because He is who He is. Christ is your advocate, your healer, your friend, your master, and your savior.

But don't take my word for it. Let God's Word speak for itself.

That really is my challenge to you. I wrote this book to try and show you all the wonderful things the Bible says about the nature of your identity. My prayer is that through reading it, you will learn more about Christ, and learn more about yourself in relation to Him. I hope you find that God's Word speaks to you through each of these pages, and that your passion to know Christ is ignited.

Blessings,
Andy Blanks

HOW TO USE

Now that you own this incredible little book, you may be wondering, "What do I do with it?" Glad you asked . . . The great thing about this book is that you can use it just about any way you want. It's not a system. It's a resource that can be used in ways that are as unique and varied as you are.

A few suggestions . . .

The "One Month" Plan

On this plan, you'll read one devotion each day for a month. This is a great way to immerse yourself in the Bible for a month-long period. (OK, we realize that every month doesn't have 31 days. But 30 is close enough to 31, right?) The idea is to cover a lot of information in a short amount of time.

The "Scripture Memory" Plan

The idea behind this plan is to memorize the verse for each day's devotion; you don't move on to the next devotion until you have memorized the one you're on. If you're like most people, this might take you more than one day per devotion. So, this plan takes a slower approach.

The "I'm No Charles Dickens" Plan

Don't like to write or journal? This plan is for you . . . Listen, not everyone expresses themselves the same. If you don't like to express yourself through writing, that's OK. Simply read the devotion for each verse, then read the questions. Think about them. Pray through them. But don't feel like you have to journal if you don't want to.

The "Strength In Numbers" Plan

God designed humans for interaction. We are social animals. How cool would it be if you could go through 31: *Identity* with your friends? Get a group of friends together. Consider agreeing to read five verses each week, then meeting to talk about it.

Pretty simple, right? Choose a plan. Or make up your own. But get started already. What are you waiting on?

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
he is a new creation; the old has
gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

• **N**ew creations excite people. This is true for a lot of different reasons. Take a creation such as the pacemaker. A pacemaker is a device implanted inside an individual that helps control that person's heart rate. If you were struggling with heart problems, this creation would get you pumped (Get it? Pumped?). If you're like me, new gadgets excite you; I always look forward to the newest creations the folks at Apple™ dream up. If you're a gamer, new games excite you. If you're a musician, new songs or arrangements excite you. If you're a skater, new tricks excite you. If you're a football player, new plays excite you. For most people the idea of something totally new is pretty cool.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-19. 2 Corinthians was written by the Apostle Paul to the church in Corinth. Paul helped found the church. But the church had been a source of frustration to Paul; it seemed like they struggled mightily with their spiritual growth. Paul spent a great deal of time trying to help them stay on the right track with God. In this passage, he was more or less speaking to the way followers of Christ should look at others. Paul wanted his readers to see that people who have committed themselves to Christ are different. How are they different? Well, the answer to that question is the key to understanding your identity in Christ.

Paul wrote that people who submit their lives to Christ's lordship literally become something new. There is a change. Whoever they were, with their faults and wants and sin, is gone. In the place of those things is life and hope and purpose. In the place of their flaws, there is Christ.

Rejoice that you are a new creation in Christ. Understanding this is the first step in grasping your true identity in Christ.

REFLECT

1. Think about your life as a Christ-follower. When do you first remember submitting your will to Jesus?
2. What does it mean to you to live as a new creation in the world around you?
3. Define your identity. How has being a Christ-follower affected your identity?

Your hands made me and formed me;
give me understanding to learn your commands.

Psalm 119:73

If you've ever watched someone make something out of clay, you know that it can be pretty cool to see something emerge out of nothing. Maybe you've seen a potter crafting objects out of a raw, earth-colored mass. Or maybe it's simply a little kid making something out of a colorful pile of Play Doh™. Maybe you're a sculptor yourself. Whatever the case may be, it's amazing to see a lump of clay formed into a bowl or a vase or a flower or an abstract work of art. Where there was once something formless, in its place is a new creation.

Read Psalm 119:73-80. Pay close attention to verse 73. Because here you see the foundation of your identity. Quite simply, you couldn't be who you are if you had not been created in the first place. Does God craft each person in the world by hand, one at a time? Does He have a large pile of supernatural human clay that he forms babies out of? Of course, not. But that's not really the point of the verse. The author of Psalm 119 is using imagery to speak to the fact that your life originates with God.

Psalm 119:73 firmly establishes God as the source of your life. You did not happen by accident. You are literally alive because God chose to create you. He did not have to. You certainly did not earn it. He created you intentionally, *as if* He formed you Himself. You can be who you are because God saw fit to create you.

As you begin to think about the source of your identity, you can never forget that you were created to be a part of God's creation.



1. How do you feel when you read this statement: You are alive because God wanted you to be in this world.
2. What does knowing that God intentionally created you do for the way you value yourself?
3. What does this say about your life on this earth? If God made you, how should you use your life?

Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the LORD called me; from my birth he has made mention of my name.

Isaiah 49:1

What is your name? Is it a relatively common name, like John, or Sarah? Maybe you're one of the lucky ones whose name has some real flair ... like Alejandro or Caldonia or Santosha. Names are significant. And some are more significant than others. My oldest daughter is named after both of her grandmothers. For her, a name is a reminder of the character of the women she is named after and the love they have for her. Maybe you share the name of a cherished family member, too.

Read Isaiah 49:1-4. Isaiah was one of God's chosen messengers. These messengers, called *prophets*, spoke to God's people. Sometimes their message was encouraging. Sometimes it was harsh. But they were called to be obedient servants of the Lord. In verse 1 Isaiah said God called him to this duty before he was even born. Isaiah saw himself as an arrow in the Lord's quiver to be used to shoot a message of truth right in the hearts of God's people. Isaiah knew the source of his identity and purpose.

Don't miss the imagery in verse 1. Isaiah said that before he was even born, the Lord "made mention of his name." Amazing! The *name* "Isaiah" was on God's lips before the *man* was even alive. Your name is on God's lips, too. It has been on His lips since the beginning of time. You see, God is eternal. He has always been. He will always be. And His plans are unchanging. God's plan for us, His people, was set forth before time. And that plan included you. How awesome is that?

Say your name out loud. For real. Say it. Say it again. That name has been on God's lips since before you took your first breath. God knew your identity before you did.

REFLECT

1. Can you imagine God saying your name? How does knowing God ~~care~~ care for you so personally affect the way you view Him?
2. Go look up your name on one of the baby-name websites. What does it mean? Does it describe you accurately, or not-so-much?
3. God included you as part of His plan. How does that make you feel?



Verses

EVERY TEENAGER SHOULD KNOW

IDENTITY

“WHO AM I?”

“Who am I going to be?”

These are huge questions. Questions that are answered definitively in Scripture. Over and over again, the Bible makes bold statements about your identity. And all of them speak to the truth that as a Christ-follower, your identity is found in Christ alone.

Let *31 Verses: Identity* take you on a journey through Scripture, a journey of discovering exactly who you are.



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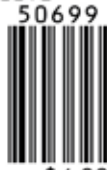


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