

During adolescence and teen years, youth experience growth, change, and confusion as they make the transition from childhood to adulthood. Much of this process is a discovery of who they are and who they want to be. Inborn temperament and personality as well as life experiences, friends, family, teachers, the media, and hopefully the church all contribute to the formation of a person's identity. The goal of this study is to help students discover an accurate perception of themselves and their worth.

The world and people around us value and define us by what we can offer: if we are rich, our value and identity lies in our money; if we are beautiful, they lie in our looks; if intelligent or fast or strong, they lie in our abilities. Unfortunately, even in the church we frequently value people according to how they look and what they can do. This mistake is devastating in two ways. First, it perpetuates the lie that a person's worth comes from what he or she can offer. Those who are gifted or beautiful can easily depend upon themselves instead of on Christ to find their identity and value and can have a distorted or inflated sense of their own importance. While those who appear less gifted or beautiful struggle with their self-esteem, believing they are of lesser worth. Secondly, it perpetuates the belief that what you do determines who you are, rather than affirming the Biblical perspective that who you are determines what you do. Satan uses this lie to keep Christians from achieving freedom in Christ and spiritual maturity.

Although within the church we frequently act the same as the world around us, when we teach youth about self-esteem or personal identity we usually say that our feeling of self worth should come only from our relationship with God instead of basing it on the views of those around us. But because we believe that what we do determines who we are, our failure to be able to feel good about ourselves based solely on God's love for us, demoralizes us even more. Or, in the case of people with an already inflated perception of their self worth, this reassures them that of course God loves them specially because they are special people.

How can we help young people discover an accurate and balanced perspective of their identity and their worth? By helping them see themselves accurately in the context of their relationships with God and with others.

We know that, before creating mankind, God was complete and was love because He had relationships within himself. His very identity comes from those relationships: there can be no Father without a Son, nor Son without a Father, and no Spirit can exist without being the spirit of someone. Part of what it means that mankind is made in the image of God is that we too derive our identity from relationships, from our relationship with God and our relationships with others. Just like people can't know what they look like until they look in a mirror, God and others are mirrors we must "look in" to learn about ourselves.

But what about the lies that people around us tell us about ourselves, that we are worthless or insignificant unless we produce what they want from us? Well, like the rest of God's beautiful creation, this way of learning about ourselves was damaged by Adam's sin and the fall. Sin in the lives of other people causes them to distort how they perceive us and what they reflect to us about ourselves. For example, a manipulative or abusive person will make

The goal of this study is to help students discover an accurate perception of themselves and their worth in the context of their relationship with God and other people.

[read on](#)

another person feel worthless or insufficient with no basis in the actual worth of the object of their abuse. While a proud parent or grandparent might overestimate the talents or virtue of their offspring, causing, for example, a selfish, spoiled child to think of themselves as quite giving and virtuous. With great frequency, what people reflect to us has much more to do with what they think about themselves or with something going on in their lives at the moment than with who we are. An alcoholic parent may cause their child to think that if only they were more obedient or didn't fight so much with their siblings the parent wouldn't drink, but it is clear to everyone else that the parent's drinking is not dependent on the child's behavior at all.

But the difficulty in seeing ourselves clearly in relationship with those around us does not all stem from the distorted reflection they present us with—even in a hall of mirrors you can still tell what color your hair is. It is difficult for us to see ourselves clearly partly because in many cases we either misunderstand what others are communicating or are unable or unwilling to see ourselves as we really are. Our idea of the world and of ourselves forms a kind of filter through which all of our perceptions pass.

This filter causes us to have expectations of what we are going to experience, thus distorting our perceptions of what really happens. This selective perception is much easier to see in those around us than in ourselves. Just think of someone you know who is completely blind to a fact about themselves that everyone else knows but that no one tells them because they know that not only would it not be understood but bringing it up would create a very unpleasant situation.

In this study we identify four types of "filters"—expectations that can distort our perceptions: fear of failure, fear of rejection, fear of punishment and feelings of shame. Since the fall, mankind should experience these feelings since we have failed and shamed ourselves by sinning and so have brought upon ourselves God's just rejection and punishment. But once someone has accepted Christ all the punishment they deserve has been poured out on Jesus Christ; their failure is replaced by the perfect righteousness of Christ; they are no longer rejected but are

It is difficult for us to see ourselves clearly partly because in many cases we either misunderstand what they are communicating or are either unable or unwilling to see ourselves as we really are.

*my
name is,*

adopted into God's family; and they have no reason for shame because they have been made a new creation in Christ. When we can, with the help of God's Word and Spirit, begin to see ourselves clearly as He sees us, we can begin to experience healing in our view of ourselves, and our relationships with God and with others. This can be a slow process as these ways of thinking and viewing the world are deeply rooted. But if we can help people see themselves as God sees them—outside Christ as God's glorious handiwork yet sinful; in Christ as righteous and beloved—while they are still young enough that they are forming their "filters" and before they have years of hurts to reinterpret, this process can be faster and more effective.

Becoming convinced of our identity in Christ is a significant step towards spiritual liberty and maturity. It helps us put on the armor of God so that we can take our stand against the devil's schemes, especially his role as an accuser that uses our sins to make us doubt God's love for us and the effectiveness of the sanctifying work of His Spirit in our lives. It also strengthens our love for and relationship with God.

Whenever we are uncertain of what someone thinks about us or think that they are angry with us, we tend to avoid them. But when someone cares about us, believes in us and encourages us we want to spend time around them. So it is with God. When we view Him as unconcerned about us or as angry with us, just waiting for us to mess up so he can punish us, we treat him like the pagans treat their "gods": with respect, even fear, as we try to appease him with the things we think he wants—religious rituals and ceremonies, like going to church and trying to "be good." We are like the Israelites that the Lord bemoaned when he said to them through the prophet Isaiah, "These people come near me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men." (Is. 29: 13)

Throughout scripture God calls us, not to external conformity to a bunch of rules, but to enter into a real relationship with him. Once we begin to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is His love for us, we want to spend time with Him and be more like Him. People frequently criticize young people for not obeying all of the rules or for not giving a "good testimony," but in our teaching of them let us follow the strong exhortation of Jesus to the religious leaders of His day, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean." (Mt. 23:25, 26) By helping the people God has put under our care "clean the inside of their cup," by helping them clearly understand what it means to be born again and what their identity is as sons and daughters adopted into God's family, we help them deepen their heart relationship with God. And out of that intimate relationship will flow the desire and the power to live in a manner worthy of their identity. Knowing who they are will deeply affect how they live their lives.

With an accurate perception of themselves grounded in how God sees them, they can walk again into the hall of mirrors that surrounds us in the world and try to both learn to discern truth about themselves in the warped images they see there, and also reflect God's truth to those around them.

Lesson One

Just Who Am I Anyway?

Just who are you, anyway? It may sound like a silly question, but there's a lot more to you than just your name. Your identity — what makes you the unique person that you are — covers everything from your favorite flavor of ice cream to the way you laugh to the things deep inside your heart. Do you realize that there isn't another person in the world exactly like you?

See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him.

— 1 John 3:1 (NLT)

Day 1

Think for a moment about your unique characteristics. Write down three words that describe you physically, three words that describe your personality, and three abilities that you have:

Physical traits	Personality traits	Abilities
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

All of these things go together to help form your view of who you are — your identity. But are they really the things that make you a unique, whole person? As we'll discover together, your value doesn't come from the things you do or how you act on the outside. Your identity is rooted in your relationship with God, who loved you long before you were even created.

1. Have you ever considered that God knows you better than anyone else? Let's see what He has to say about you. Read Psalm 139:13-16 and fill in the blanks below.

"I praise you because I, (insert your name) _____, am _____ and _____ made; your works are _____, I know that full well." (Psalm 139:14, NIV).

2. Check the box or boxes below that best describe how you feel when you read that verse.

- Special
- Doubtful
- Happy
- Sad
- Confident
- Confused
- Loved
- Angry

3. Based on these verses, would you say that God made you the way you are on purpose?

yes no

4. Based on these verses, do you think God makes mistakes in creating people?

yes no

5. Based on these verses, on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the most), how much does God value every person He created?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Knowing how God sees us should affect the way we see ourselves. Prayerfully ask Him to show you what He sees when He looks at you.

Day 2

What would happen if you woke up, got dressed in the dark, and went to school without ever looking in a mirror? Chances are your clothes might not match and your hair might stick out in every direction. Just as people can't know what they look like until they glance in a mirror, we can't get an accurate picture of who we are without looking into the "mirrors" of our relationships with God and others. What we find there might just surprise us.

Read Jesus' parable about the Pharisee and the tax collector in Luke 18:9-14 to answer the following questions:

1. What did the Pharisee think of himself? (Check all that apply)
 - I'm such a good person! God must be really impressed with me.
 - I am a sinner just like everyone else.
 - I never fall short of pleasing God.
 - I'm not even worthy to come into God's presence.
2. What did the tax collector think of himself? (Check all that apply)
 - I'm such a good person! God must be really impressed with me.
 - I am a sinner just like everyone else.
 - I never fall short of pleasing God.
 - I'm not even worthy to come into God's presence.
3. Were their perceptions of themselves accurate?
4. What do you think God's impression of each man was?
5. Think for a moment about how you see yourself. Do you think God's view of who you are is different from your own? If so, how?

Making It Personal

At the beginning of this lesson, you wrote down three words that describe your appearance, personality, and abilities. Now, as you think about how well God knows you and cares for you, write down three words He might use to describe you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Finally, write down three words you would use to describe God. As you close in prayer, praise Him for those qualities and thank Him for making you His child!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



Lesson 2

Let's Get Real

If you could be anyone you wanted to be for just one day, who would you be? And why would you choose to be that person? While that may seem like a ridiculous question, most of us go around every day pretending to be someone we're not. It can be very difficult sometimes to just be real.

Day 1

Before we dive into today's study, let's get personal. On a scale of 1 to 10, how honest would you say you are with God?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all									Totally Honest

On a scale of 1 to 10, how honest are you with people in general?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all									Totally Honest

Read the story about a woman who got very real with Jesus in John 4:1-26. Then answer the following questions:

- Why was she so surprised that He would talk to her? (Check all that apply)
 - She thought she was better than Him.
 - Jews didn't usually talk to Samaritans.
 - Men didn't usually talk to strange women.
 - She was an outcast with a bad reputation.
- What did Jesus reveal about the woman's private life (v. 18)?
 - She'd murdered someone.
 - She'd been rude to the other people at the well.
 - She'd had five husbands and was living with a man who wasn't married to her.
 - She hadn't paid her taxes.
- How do you think she felt when she discovered that He really knew her? _____
- Look at the way the woman responded after talking with Jesus (John 4:28-29). What did she do?
 - Went away embarrassed
 - Lay on the ground crying about what a hard life she'd had
 - Gave Jesus a bunch of excuses
 - Went to town and boldly told the people about Jesus
- If you met Jesus at the water fountain at school, what things might He tell you about yourself and your life? We all know what it's like to try and impress our friends, even in church. We may put on a good show, but God knows whether we're being real or fake. He sees our hearts. Spend a few minutes being real with Him right now.

It's who you are and the way you live that count before God...
That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly themselves before him in their worship.

— John 4:23 (The Message)

Day 2

In Psalm 51:1-17, David was honest with God. He had messed up big time and knew that he needed to come clean and ask for forgiveness. God didn't remove the consequences of David's actions, but He did completely forgive him and restore their relationship.

1. How does it make you feel to realize that God can see what's in your heart?
 Frightened
 Free
 Uncomfortable
 Relieved
 Happy
 Don't really care
 Other: _____
2. What words or verses in this Psalm show you that you don't need to fear being honest with Jesus?
3. Our sins are things that we do that displease God, but sin is also who we are – it is the nature with which we are born. What does Psalm 51:5 reveal about us?
 We were sinners from the moment we were conceived.
 We didn't become sinners until we started middle school.
 We're not really that bad.
 We can choose whether or not we have a sin nature.
4. What does God want from us, according to verse 6?
5. What are the areas in your life where you need to tell God what's really going on?



Making It Personal

God hears our prayers no matter when, where, or how we say them. Sometimes, though, the position we take can help us have the right attitude. It's likely that when David prayed Psalm 51 before God, he was lying on the ground (2 Samuel 12:16).

This week, find a quiet place where you can pray on your knees. Use this time to tell God everything that's going on in your life. Ask for His forgiveness and help. He already knows, but He wants to hear it from you!

Lesson Three The Bad News

What traits did you inherit from your parents and grandparents? Curly hair? Athletic ability? Musical talent? Who do you resemble most in your family?

There's one trait that all of us inherited together from the parents of the whole human race - Adam and Eve. That trait, unfortunately, is our sin nature. Sin isn't just what we do that displeases God; it's part of our identity — who we are as human beings. That's the bad news. Don't worry, though — this doesn't have to be the end of the story.

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

— Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV)

Day 1

1. What does the world think makes someone a "good" or a "bad" person?
2. Read Romans 3:23 and Romans 3:10-11. Do you think that people today believe in sin? Why or why not?
3. What do you think the word "sin" means? (Check all that apply)
 - Disobeying God
 - Doing something really bad, like killing someone
 - Having a bad attitude
 - Your identity without Christ
 - Failing to live up to God's standards
4. How many of us naturally seek God? _____
5. The word "righteous" means doing everything God asks of us. Is it possible for us to be righteous on our own?
 - Yes No
6. How do you think God defines good and bad people?
 - People that go to church are good; all others are bad.
 - People that pray are good; all others are bad.
 - People that obey all His commands are good; all others are bad.
 - All people are born sinful, but those who have accepted Him will go to heaven.
7. What good news do you find in Romans 3:24-26?
 - God doesn't care about sin.
 - God provided a way for us to be righteous through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - Your good deeds will get you into Heaven.
 - Everyone will go to Heaven no matter what.

Before God created us, He knew that we would sin. Yet He chose to create us anyway. And He provided a way, the only way, for us to come to Him. Thank Him for that today.

Day 2

1. Discovering your identity is learning who you are. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, how well would you say you know yourself?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not at all

Very well

2. Write your name in the first blank below. Then look at Jeremiah 17:9 to fill in the rest of the blanks below:

"_____ 's heart is _____ above all things and _____
Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9, NIV)

3. What do you think that means?

We are born with pure hearts that seek God above all things.

We can fix our sin problem by trusting what's in our hearts.

The human heart is pure and very easy to understand.

We all have a heart condition — sin — that fools us into thinking we are good.

4. Do you ever find yourself trying to earn God's love and forgiveness? Will your good deeds ever be good enough (Isaiah 64:6)?

5. If God did all the work of taking away our sin by sending His Son, Jesus, why should we bother to ask His forgiveness or obey His words? (Hint: Read Romans 6:15-16.)

Making It Personal

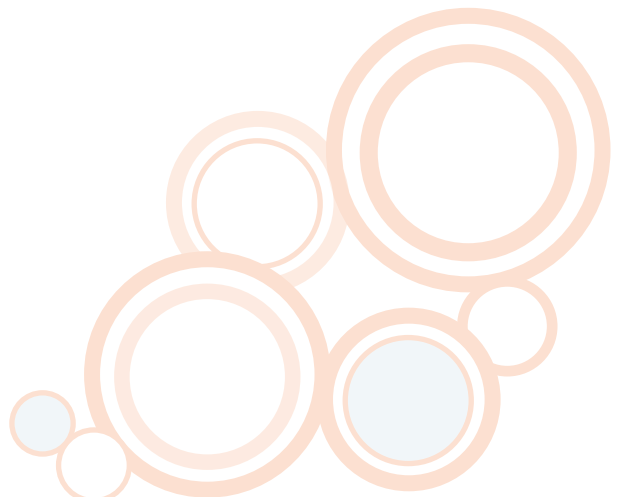
Read Psalm 103:12 to see God's response when we come to Him with our sin. A part of discovering your identity is recognizing where you've come from, where you are right now, and where you are going. In the three boxes below, write down a few words that describe your journey. Where does God fit into each of those descriptions?

If you don't have a personal relationship with Him, now is the time to begin. Ask God to forgive you of your sin and give you a new nature through Jesus Christ. God wants to restore your identity by transforming you into His son or daughter.

who i was...

who i am now....

who i want to be...



Lesson Four

Homeward Bound

Day 1

Where are you in the birth order of your family? Oldest? Youngest? Middle? Is one of your siblings considered to be the “good” one? Is one considered to be the “wild one”? How do you think your family would describe you?

Read the story of one family’s experience in Luke 15:11-32 and answer the following questions. (Each question may have more than one answer.)

1. Why did the younger son rebel and want to leave home?
 He wanted to see the world.
 He was tired of his father’s rules.
 He no longer cared about his father’s approval.
 He needed to get away from his older brother.
2. What finally caused him to come to his senses?
 All his new friends left him.
 The pigs smelled really bad.
 He realized that he was lost and had nowhere else to go
 He was out of money.
 Other: _____
3. How did his father respond when he came home?
 Welcome home!
 How could you do this to me?
 You’re grounded for life!
 Where’s my money?
4. How might this story be different if the younger son had been afraid to go back home after what he had done?
6. How do you think his father’s response made him feel?
 Sad Loved
 Forgiven Special
 Worthless Like he could never do anything right
 Like he could start over

It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to tell that this story was meant to resemble God’s response to us. We are the prodigal children. We have rebelled and lost our way. All of us can identify with the wayward son in some way. Spend a few moments talking with your heavenly Father.

Day 2

1. Look over the story in Luke 15 again. Who in this story can you relate to most?
 The forgiving father
 The younger son in his rebellious phase
 The disapproving older son
 The younger son in his repentant phase

We don’t yet see things clearly. We’re squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won’t be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We’ll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!

— 1 Corinthians 13:12
(The Message)

2. What kept the older son from seeing his brother with the same attitude of forgiveness his father had? (Check all that apply)
- He saw himself as the “good son” who deserved special treatment over his “bad” brother.
 - He was very concerned for his brother’s physical and spiritual health.
 - He couldn’t see past his own feelings of jealousy, anger, and bitterness.
 - He was mad that he hadn’t thought of throwing a party first.
3. How do you think the younger son felt when he saw his brother’s point of view?
- Sad
 - Loved
 - Forgiven
 - Distant
 - Worthless
 - Like he could never do anything right
 - Like he could start over
4. What lesson can we learn from this story? (Check all that apply)
- God loves and forgives us.
 - We need to see others as God does, and forgive them.
 - We need to make peace with our brothers.
 - We need to leave “fairness” to God.
 - Other: _____
5. Who should we trust to shape our view of ourselves?
- People that truly love us.
 - People that love God.
 - People that are related to us.
 - People that have had a lot of experience in the world.
 - People that have a lot to say about us.



Making It Personal

All of us, whether we realize it or not, are on a spiritual journey. We need friends around us that can help us see through the fog and give us an accurate view of God and of ourselves. We can travel together and share the lessons we are learning and the things we are experiencing.

- Who are your trusted friends that help you on your journey?
- Who are the friends that help you when you lose sight of God?
- How do you feel about sharing your journey with your friends?

If you have these friends, thank God for them today. If you do not, ask Him to send them to you.

Lesson Five

The Ultimate Rescue

Think of a time in your life when someone came to your rescue. It may have been a lifeguard, an ambulance driver, or a parent who brought your lunch to school. Who rescued you, from what, and what might have been the outcome?

When Jesus came to earth, He was on a rescue mission. He didn't come to save us with life jackets or oxygen masks; He saved us by giving His life. The Bible tells us that we were on a fast track to total destruction because of our rebellion against God, but because of Jesus' sacrifice, our identity has changed. We were once God's enemies. He came to make us friends.

Day 1

Read Romans 5:6-11 and answer the following questions.

1. Who did Jesus come to rescue? (Check all that apply)
 - Good people
 - Sinners
 - The ungodly
 - Enemies of God
 - His friends
2. Do you think most people would be willing to give their lives for their enemies?
 - No way
 - Maybe
 - Of course — wouldn't you?
3. What did God demonstrate by dying for us while we were still sinners? (Check all that apply)
 - We would never be good enough.
 - He is the only way.
 - How much He loves us.
 - How hopeless our situation was.
4. God did not wait for us to become good enough before He sent His Son to save us. It was worth it to Christ to leave heaven, come to earth, be born as a baby, and live and die to save us. What does this tell you about the way God sees you?

Romans 5:11 says we should rejoice about this great news. Do that today.

Day 2

Read Galatians 3:26-29 and answer the following questions.

1. Fill in the blanks: "You are all _____ through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26, NIV).
2. What does this mean?
 - You wear Christian T-shirts.
 - You have put on Christ's nature.

"When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."

— Romans 5:6-8 (NLT)

- You try your best to act like Christ so you can earn God's love.
- You dress very modestly.

3. How does God view you once you belong to Him?

(Check all that apply)

- Pure because of Christ's sacrifice
- As only human
- Not so bad
- As a work in progress
- As His child

4. What does verse 29 say we are if we belong to Christ?

5. What promise did Jesus make to His followers in Matthew 28:20?

- You will have lots of money.
- Everyone will admire you.
- Nothing bad will ever happen to you.
- I will be with you always.

6. What is the most recent time that you were aware that God was with you?

7. Judging from the verses we've studied, how valuable are you to God?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all				Kind of valuable					Priceless

Making It Personal

God sent Jesus to earth on a rescue mission. He went as far as sacrificing His own Son to demonstrate how much He loves you and desires a relationship with you. This week, spend some time thanking God for showing you how much He values you, His child. Complete the following sentence prayers:

"God, you are worthy of my praise because _____."

"Because of you, I am _____."

"I want to demonstrate my love for you by _____."

"Help me to see myself as _____."



Lesson Six

Lasting Impressions

Did you ever form an opinion about someone based on the way they dressed, or talked, or the activities they were involved in — only to discover later that they were very different than you'd originally thought? What caused you to change your opinion? Why can't we always trust our first impressions?

Day 1

Look at the story in 1 Samuel 16:1-13. God told His prophet, Samuel, to go out and meet the man He had chosen as the new king for Israel. Read the story for yourself to answer the following questions:

1. What might have gone through Samuel's mind when he first saw Jesse's son, Eliab?
 This guy sure looks like a king! He's got to be the one!
 Hmm... I'd better wait to hear from God before I make a judgment.
 I wonder what kind of man he is.
 I wonder how much he can bench-press.
2. What is important to God in considering a person?
 Age
 Character
 Intelligence
 Heart
 Family
3. What was God communicating by choosing David over his brothers?
 Shepherds make really great kings.
 Kings should be young and brave.
 Who you are is more important than how you look.
 Samuel needs his eyes checked.
4. How do you think Jesse and his sons reacted when God chose David to be the next king? (Check all that apply)
 We always thought David would make good.
 David? He's just a baby!
 Surely God knows what He is doing.
 There has to be some mistake!
5. Think for a moment about some of the things you look at when you form an opinion of others. See if you can list three:

6. What is the danger of judging someone based on outward appearances? (Check all that apply)
 Appearances can fool you.
 You can't know what is in a person's heart.
 You might catch them on a bad hair day.
 Clothes will become more important than character.
 Other: _____

"The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

— 1 Samuel 16:7

Lesson One

Just Who am I Anyway?

Lesson Objective: That students recognize their need to learn about themselves in relationship with God and others.

Bible Passage: Luke 18: 9-14

Bible Truth: God's perspective of who we are can be very different than what we think of ourselves.

Optional opener – (20 minutes)

As students arrive, tell them that you have a guest this week who is working for a production company. He/she is looking for a number of young people to serve as extras in a movie that is going to be filmed in the area. Explain that the job doesn't require acting or any special abilities and it will pay very well. Let every interested student do a 20 second interview to try out for the film. The process will be as follows: Film each student as they describe themselves in 20 seconds. Remind them that they do not need to describe themselves physically because that will be evident. Give them one minute to prepare and then begin filming. Start by announcing their name and after 20 seconds have passed say, "Cut." When everyone has had a chance, thank them for their time and say, *"Don't call us, we'll call you."*

[If you have access to a video camera, actually film them and watch it at a later time, like during a social event. If you do not have access to a video camera, you can set the whole thing up as an obvious game.]

[During this section, be very careful not to allow critical comments to be made about anyone in the group]

After the filming is finished, say the following:

- *What is something you learned about someone else in the group that you didn't know before?*
- *In general, did people describe themselves the way you would have described them or differently?*
Today we begin a six week study in which we will explore what we look like; not what we look like on the outside and not even what we can do, but the essence of the identity of each one of us. Calvin says that true wisdom consists of two parts: "knowledge of God and knowledge of ourselves." He says that we cannot know God without knowing ourselves and we cannot know ourselves without knowing God.

Interactive Learning (15 minutes)

Before class, recruit volunteers to prepare the skit "What do you see." Before presenting the skit, explain to the students that the exact same skit will be presented two different times. The first time, whenever the characters learn something about how he/she looks physically the class should shout out the word "Mirror." The second time through the skit whenever he/she learns something from those around them about him or herself as a person, (for example about their personality or their importance to others) the students should shout out "Mirror" and then a student should explain what the character perceived about him or herself. The second time through, the actors should freeze after each moment of perception (see script) just in case the class doesn't pick it up.

Bible Application (20 minutes)

Before you read the following paraphrase of Luke 18: 9-14, ask the students to pay close attention to the two characters in the parable:

Two people went into church to pray, one was a leader in the church and the other was a prostitute.

Stop reading and ask for several students on one half of the classroom to comment on what comes to mind when they think about these two people. [In general, unless they are already thinking ahead to the parable, their answers should be something like that the leader is respectable, dedicated to God, and a good person while the prostitute is sinful.]

The church leader lifted up his hands and prayed, "God, thank you that I am not like everyone else—greedy, dishonest, and contaminated by sin, or even like that prostitute over there. I am so dedicated to you that I fast twice every

What You'll Need:

- Copies of skit, "What do you see in me?"
- Handouts: "Mirror, Mirror" and "Mirror of Affirmation"
- Optional: video camera

week and always give you an exact tithe of all I earn." But the prostitute stayed in the back of the church, not even daring to lift her head, and with a groan of despair, said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Now ask students from the other half of the class to comment on their perception of each of the two people again. If it has changed, ask why.

Jesus told this parable to some who were confident of their own virtue and looked down on other people. Upon finishing the parable he said, "I assure you that the second, not the first, was the person who went home justified in God's sight."

- *How is God's perception of people different than ours and why?* [He sees their heart and their motives while we only see what they look like and what they do when they are in our presence]
- *Do you think God's perception of who you are is different than your own? Why or why not?*
- *Have someone read Jeremiah 17: 9. Does this agree or disagree with your answer to the last question?*

As difficult as it is to accurately judge what someone else is truly like, it is even more difficult, if not impossible, to be objective about who we are and what we are like. The world focuses on self-esteem with the goal of making us feel good about ourselves. But God doesn't deal with us in such a superficial way.

Part of what it means that we humans are made in the image of God is that we too get our identity from relationships. Part of who we are is determined by who our parents, siblings, teachers, friends and God are. Just like we need to look in a mirror to see clearly what we look like on the outside, we need to see ourselves in the mirror of God's word and the mirrors of those around us, with the interpretation of the Holy Spirit to help us know who we really are on the inside.

Commitment (15 minutes)

Hand out worksheet, "Mirror, Mirror" and pencil to each student. Ask them to fill in each "mirror" describing what they see reflected about themselves in each of the mentioned situations. After they have finished they should fold the paper in half, staple it shut, and write their name on the outside. Explain that you will collect the papers to hand back to them during the last lesson in the series but that in the meantime no one will read what they have written.

Closing (10 minutes)

[The goal of this activity is for each student to end up with a piece of paper on which their classmates have written compliments or positive statements about him or her.]

Give each student a copy of the handout "Mirror of Affirmation" (with the single mirror frame) and ask them to write their name on the top, then collect the papers, shuffle them, and hand them out, making sure that no one has their own sheet. Tell the students to write a compliment or something positive about the person whose name is on the top of the paper. Ask them to be specific, have them pass that sheet to the left and write a compliment on the sheet they receive from the person next to them until everyone has had a chance to write something positive about everyone else in the group. [If you have more than 15 to 20 in your group, for the sake of time you have ten to fifteen students write on each sheet.] Collect the sheets and give each person the sheet with their name on it.

Close with a prayer asking God to help us be humble enough to learn who we are from Him and from those around us.

What do you see in me?

Note: This drama will be performed twice with one difference: The first time through at symbol ✖ the students should call out "Mirror." The second time through at the symbol ✓ the actors should pause until the students call out "Mirror" and someone explains what Tina has perceived about herself.

First scene : In a home. Set up a table on one side as the kitchen. Let the other side serve as the bedroom.

Tina looks at herself in the mirror as she is fixing her hair into a unique hairstyle ✖, looks down at a magazine, then back in the mirror.

Tina: Aarrgg. *[She drops her arms in frustration with her hair and sighs.]* Even if I could get my hair to look like that, I'd have to get a whole new body and wardrobe to put on it to look like her!

✓ She perceives that she is not as attractive as she would like to be.

Tina walks from her bedroom to the kitchen and sits down at the table with her father and brother.

Tina: Good Morning, Dad.

Dad: *[grunts but doesn't put down the newspaper even to look at her]*

✓ She perceives she is less important than the newspaper

Mother enters carrying a plate with her breakfast.

Mother: Good morning, dear. Oh, your hair looks a little funny on top. You might smooth it down before you go to school. ✖ This afternoon I need you to come home from school as quickly as possible. I need to go out so you have to stay home with your brother.

Tina: Mom! *[whining]* Everybody was going to go to the mall this afternoon!

Mother: I'm sorry. You can go some other time. Your brother is more important than your friends.

Tina makes a face at her brother when her mother turns around.

Brother: MOM! Tina's making faces at me!

Mother: *[looks disapprovingly at her]* Tina, please grow up. If you cause trouble this afternoon I will cancel your birthday party this weekend.

✓ She perceives she is immature

All leave.

Second scene: the school hallway

Tina walks down hallway at school with her backpack and greets Carol.

Carol: Good morning. Hey, I love you hair. It looks so cool. ✖ Someday you'll have to show me how to do that. You are always doing such neat stuff with your hair. I wish I could do half the stuff with my hair that you do with yours.

✓ She perceives that she has valuable talents

Tina: Thanks. Hey I can't go to the mall this afternoon, I have to stay home and baby-sit my brother.

Carol: Aw, that's too bad. It won't be half as fun without you.

✓ She perceives that she is fun to be with.

Melissa and Mary walk by and Tina speaks to Melissa.

Tina: Hi, Melissa. I was just telling Carol that I can't go to the mall this afternoon, but I hope you can still come over for my birthday party on Saturday.

Andrew walks up

Melissa: *[stares disapprovingly at Tina's hair ✖]* Um... well... *[looks at Mary and rolls her eyes then looks back to Tina and says snobbily]* We'll see. Mary invited me to go with her to the beach this weekend, so if my parents give me permission, I won't be in town.

✓ She perceives that she isn't as popular or desirable a friend as some people

Tina: *[crestfallen]* Oh, well, maybe some other time then.

Melissa and Mary walk away.

Andrew: Hey, Tina. Don't worry about her. She's turned into such a snob lately. Your parties are always great. We'll have more fun without her. Right, Carol?

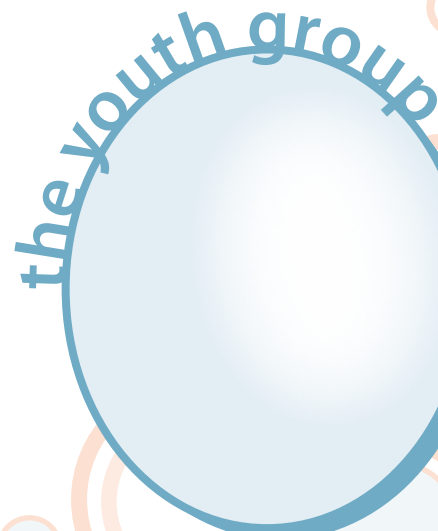
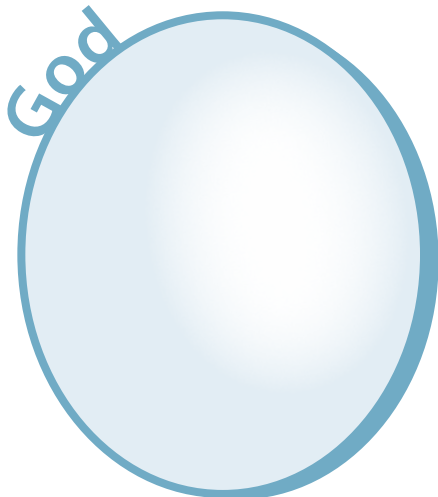
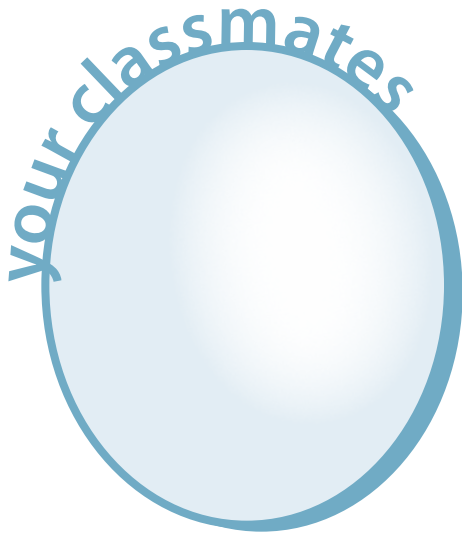
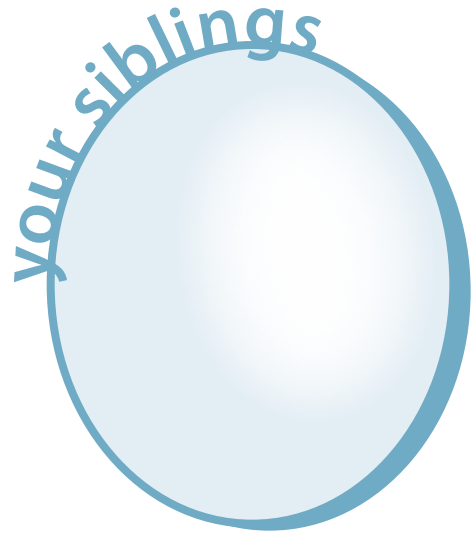
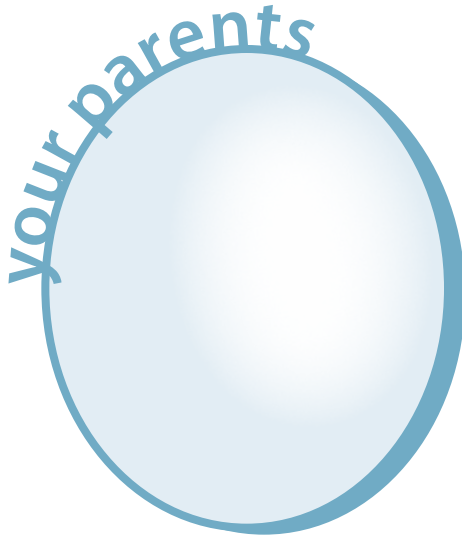
✓ She perceives that she is fun and a desirable friend to some people

Carol: Right.

She puts her arm around Tina and the three of them walk off.

✓ She perceives that she is cared about

Mirror, Mirror



what do you see in me?

name

Lesson Two

Let's Get Real

What You'll Need:

- two small mirrors
- Vaseline
- paper and pens for each group

Lesson Objective: That students feel the confusion, frustration and futility of trying to understand who they are based only on the opinions of others.

Bible Passage: the life of Joseph in Genesis chapters 37- 49

Bible Truth: [Genesis 49: 22-24] Like Joseph, we are hurt by the “arrows” people shoot at us (their comments and opinions about us, both positive and negative), but God can hold us firm in the knowledge of our significance.

Optional opener (15 minutes)

Before class find two small mirrors and smudge them with a small amount of Vaseline. Test out the mirrors to make sure that there is enough Vaseline to distort the reflection but that the reflection is clear enough that with a little effort the students will be able to distinguish how many fingers are being held up by someone close behind them. Divide the students into two equal teams and have them line up. Place the mirrors with the Vaseline on a chair at the other end of the room. Choose two people from each team to stand in front of the chairs with their backs to their team. Explain that each person will run up to the chair, pick up the mirror, use it to look over their shoulder and see the number of fingers the person behind them is holding up. When they have guessed correctly they run back to their team and tag the next person. (Instruct the person who will be holding up their fingers that they need to hold their hand in front of their body so that the rest of the team members cannot see and shout out the answer to the person with the mirror.) If someone does shout out an answer, have the person holding up his or her fingers change the number. Congratulate the team who finishes first. Then ask:

- *How were the mirrors different than you thought they would be?*
- *What could you see clearly reflected in them?*
- *What was difficult to see in them?*

In this series of lessons we will see that we can't really know ourselves without the perspective we get from finding out about ourselves from God and from other people. But unfortunately, just like these mirrors do not provide a clear reflection, the reflection that we see of ourselves in those around us is often distorted.

Interactive Learning (20 minutes)

Instruct the students to pretend that they are a committee working for a large international magazine. At the end of each year, the magazine produces a cover article and gives an award to a “man or woman of the year” - a well known person who has been significant in the events of that year. Explain that it can be a politician, a celebrity, an athlete, an inventor, or anyone well known. After several candidates have been proposed, vote on a winner.

- *What makes these people stand out?*
- *What criteria does the world use to judge the value of a person?*

Using their comments from the previous question, explain that just as many parents use a yardstick or make marks on the wall to measure the growth of their children, the world around us has yardsticks it uses to measure the worth of a person: good looks, money, intelligence, hard work, athletic ability, etc.

[You can be as creative as you have time, inclination, and resources for: You might decide to draw on a chalkboard or put up on the wall something representing yardsticks with the titles “good looks”, “money”, “intelligence”, “hard work”, “athletic ability.” Or you can just explain the ideas verbally.]

The world and people around us value and define us by what we can offer: if we are rich, our value and identity may lie in our money; if we are beautiful, they may lie in our looks; if intelligent or fast or strong, they may lie in our abilities. All of us have a deep need to be seen as valuable, so most people spend their lives trying to reach one or more of these standards. These standards are impossible for us to reach, as there will always be someone wealthier, some

Lesson Two

Let's Get Real cont'd

smarter, someone prettier than we are. If we look at ourselves in the mirror of the world we see ourselves reflected as being insignificant and maybe even flawed or inferior.

Bible Application (25 minutes)

To help us understand the confusion and frustration of trying to figure out who we are, based only on the point of view of those around us, we are going to spend some time looking at the life of Joseph as recorded in the book of Genesis. Very few people experience the extreme joys and sorrows that Joseph did. When he was 17 years old he went from being a privileged and favored son in his father's household to being a slave in a far away land. By the time he was thirty he had gone from being a mere slave to running an important household, to jail, and then to running the entire country of Egypt. In order to get to know Joseph better we are going to produce a live in-depth investigative report where we interview people who knew him firsthand and were part of his life story.

If your group has ten or more students, ask someone to be the TV reporter and divide the remaining students in 5 groups. Give each group the names and corresponding verses and ask them to prepare answers for the questions for each of the people listed.

If your group has less than ten students, have one student be the TV reporter and let each of the others take one of the following characters:

1. **Jacob/Israel**--Genesis 37: 2-3; **Leah**--Genesis 29: 16-34, 30: 14-15
2. **Jacob's Brothers**—Genesis 37: 2-9, 17- 20, 23-28; **Reuben**—Genesis 37: 2-9, 17-29
3. **Potiphar**—Genesis 39: 1-6, 17-20; **Potiphar's wife**—Genesis 39: 6-18
4. **Jail Warden**—Genesis 39: 20-23; **King's Cupbearer**—Genesis 40:1-15, 20-23
5. **Pharaoh**—Genesis 41: 9-15, 28-45

Write the following questions on a chalkboard or large piece of paper:

- 1) What is your name?
- 2) How do you know Joseph?
- 3) What do you think of him? Why?
- 4) Have you ever let him know what you think of him by your words or actions? If yes, how?

Allow enough time for each group or person to read their passages and prepare the answers to the questions. Then have the "TV reporter" interview each character asking them the four questions. After each interview have the class comment on how Joseph would have seen himself based on the opinion of that person.

When all of the characters have been interviewed ask someone to read out loud Genesis 45: 1-15. Discuss how Joseph actually saw himself and his life. Focus on the fact that he was neither proud nor bitter towards his brothers or the others who had criticized him and treated him badly. Instead, he loved his brothers and trusted that God had a purpose for his life. Highlight Genesis 45:8, "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God." Read together Genesis 49: 22-24 and ask:

- **How was Joseph's life significant?** [God used him to save the lives of the people of Egypt, the surrounding countries and his own family]
- **Who were the archers who attacked him?** [people who tried to harm him, like his brothers and Potiphar's wife]
- **We have seen that not only did Joseph survive the attacks but also proved himself as a wise leader and forgiving brother. How did he remain steady?** [by trusting in God and receiving God's help]

Commitment (5 minutes)

Give each student a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Have them write down three places or people who make them feel good about themselves and three people or places that make them feel bad about themselves. When you see that they have finished, hold up one of the Vaseline covered mirrors from the opening and explain:

Just like it is difficult to see ourselves in this mirror because it does not give us a clear reflection of who we are, the reflection of ourselves that we see in the mirror of other people is not perfectly clear. Sin in the lives of other people causes them to distort how they perceive us and what they reflect to us about ourselves.

For example, just like Joseph's brothers hated him, not because he was a bad guy but because they were jealous of his father's love, a manipulative or abusive person will make another person feel worthless or insufficient with no basis in the actual worth of the object of their abuse. On the other hand, just like Joseph's father didn't help him be more sensitive to his brothers but instead made the situation worse by giving him a special coat for everyone to see, a proud parent or grandparent might overestimate the talents or virtues of their offspring, causing, for example, a selfish, spoiled child to think of themselves as quite giving and virtuous.

With great frequency, what people reflect to us has much more to do with what they think about themselves, or with something going on in their lives at the moment, than with who we are. An alcoholic parent may cause their child to think that if only they were more obedient or didn't fight so much with their siblings the parent wouldn't drink, but it is clear to everyone else that the parent's drinking is not dependent on the child's behavior at all.

Closing (10 minutes)

Ask if any of the students have ever been in a "hall of mirrors" or seen mirrors that are warped, either in person, in a movie or on TV. If they have, ask them how it made them (or the person they saw looking into it) look. If they haven't, explain how it exaggerates parts of the person depending on the shape of the mirror, not the shape of the person. It might make someone look very tall and thin or very short and fat or have a huge head or nose.

- ***In a warped mirror can you see anything true about yourself?*** [yes, colors, like your hair, eyes, and clothing. What you have on, jeans, skirt, sweater, etc]
- ***In a warped mirror what can you not trust about what you see?***
- ***How can you know if you can trust what you see or not?*** [the best way is to know what you look like in a good mirror]

Have the students review what they have written down on the paper and then spend a few moments praying that God would help them be able to discern in these situations what is an accurate reflection of themselves (for example, a teacher being upset with them because they are always talking in class) and what is not an accurate reflection of them (for example, someone who criticizes them because of their own low self esteem).

Lesson Three

The Bad News

Lesson Objective: That students understand God's view of mankind as presented in the Bible.

Bible Passage: Isaiah 53:6

Bible Truth: All humans have turned away from God to pursue sin, but Christ died to provide a way for us to be saved.

Optional opener (15 minutes)

Give each student a piece of paper with the name of a barnyard animal: sheep, horse, chicken, goat, pig, cow, etc. Ask the students to find the other animals of their same species and form a group. They may only communicate through actions or sounds belonging to that specific animal. They may not talk. Try to end up with groups of 3 to 5 students, so if you have 20 students use 5 different animals. If you have fewer than 10 students have them end up in pairs rather than groups. The group that gets together first wins. Congratulate the winning team and, after all teams are formed, have each person share in their group what animal they would like to be and why (for example, "I would like to be a bird so I could fly.") When everyone has finished have them return to the large group.

Ask a few students to share what animal they would like to be and why. Ask for examples of animals that are mascots for countries or professional athletic teams (for example, USA-eagle; Russia-bear; England-lion; Chicago Bulls; Denver Broncos) and explain that individuals and groups want to associate themselves with animals that have qualities like strength and power.

Next ask what animal God compares us with most frequently. (Sheep) Invite students to share what they know about sheep and fill in details they may overlook. [They cannot live on their own, but are dependent on their shepherds for survival. They are stupid; in their obsession with finding food they can wander off cliffs or get lost from the flock. They are endearing. They are useful, however their wool is more useful to others than to themselves.] Next, say:

- *Do you think being called a sheep is a compliment, an insult, or a neither? Why?*
- *Can you see any similarity between your behavior and a sheep? If so, what?*
- *Ask for students to review what was covered in the last lesson.* (It can be confusing and painful to learn about ourselves from others because they to some degree distort the reality of who we are.)
- *Why is it important for us to learn about ourselves from God?* (His perspective about us is not warped. We can trust that what he says about us is the truth.)

Interactive Learning (15 minutes)

Many of us may not have spent much time around real sheep. We may only think of a cute white stuffed animal sitting on a child's bed. But for centuries throughout the world, sheep have been very important. They provide food and clothing and for the people of Israel they were important sacrifices to be offered to God. They are both more useful and more defenseless and stupid than household pets like dogs and cats. Dogs and cats can live wild; find their own food and even fight off enemies. But sheep can't find for themselves the food and water they need to stay alive, so they depend on their shepherd to lead them to food and water. Sheep can't defend themselves when they are attacked or help themselves when they get hurt or stuck. Because they are so dependent on their shepherd they grow to know and trust him. They come when he calls them, trusting that he is going to take care of them. We are going to spend the next few minutes thinking about how each one of us demonstrates some of these "sheepish" characteristics.

Hand out copies of "Baa, Baa Black Sheep" and pens or pencils to the students. After they have filled it out say:

What You'll Need:

- Slips of paper for each student assigning them a barnyard animal
- a copy of handout "Baa, baa black sheep" for each student
- copies of "In God's Mirror" verses to hand out to groups
- two pieces of paper: a poor quality one that appears white but is really not when compared to the other piece which is "super white" or "brilliant white." This paper can be found in most large paper supply stores.

Last week we saw that although we can learn about ourselves from those around us, the “mirrors” of what they reflect to us are frequently distorted in some way, so the only way to really know ourselves is to get used to looking at ourselves in a good mirror, so we can then tell what the distortions are in what we perceive from those around us. The one perfect mirror that we have is what God thinks about us, which we can learn about in the Bible. Let’s spend a few minutes learning about God’s view of mankind.

Bible Application (20 minutes)

Divide the class into 7 groups or pairs. If possible, just have them stay the same groups as in the opener. Give each group one of the “God’s Mirror” verse sheets. Ask them to look up the verses and write down on their paper the reflection of mankind expressed in the verses. [Study the verses yourself prior to the lesson and use the notes below to help you guide the following discussion.]

	Verses	“Reflection” of Mankind
1	Genesis 1:26, 27, 31; Psalm 139:13, 14	Mankind, as created by God and in his image is very good, fearfully and wonderfully made
2	Isaiah 46: 8-10; Romans 9: 20-21	God is the creator and can do what he pleases with his creation
3	Genesis 2: 15-17, 3:6-7; Romans 5: 12	Adam’s disobedience brought sin and death into the world and to all men
4	Genesis 6:5; Psalm 53:2-3; Isaiah 53:6	All mankind has turned it’s back on God and is sinful
5	Romans 1: 18-23, 29-32	All mankind is under judgment for their sin
6	Romans 3: 9-20, 23	No one is righteous, all have sinned
7	Jeremiah 17: 9; Isaiah 64:6	Our hearts are deceitful; what we think of as “good deeds” are really worthless

When all groups have finished, review the answers and decide together whether each reflection is something positive or negative (something people like to think about themselves or not). Then ask:

- *Do you agree or disagree with what the Bible says about mankind? Why?*
- *Do you think most people in the world today agree with God’s perspective that mankind is sinful and deserves punishment? Why or why not?*

God created mankind in His own image and gave him life, physical provisions, significance, and a spiritual life of communion with Him. This is our positive heritage from creation. But Adam’s sin had far-reaching effects for all humanity. Adam and Eve were separated from God’s presence, which is spiritual death, and all their descendents, except Jesus who is God himself, have inherited this original sin, as it is called, and are born into this spiritual death. Just as Adam and Eve tried to hide from God in the garden, so all of their descendents, while they are spiritually dead, avoid God’s presence because it reminds them of their sin and the punishment they deserve. People like to think that they are independent and free to do whatever they want, but God says that they are His creation, dependent on him for life, breath, and everything else, and that they should acknowledge him as their creator and God, thank Him for what he gives them, and obey his commands.

Commitment (15 minutes)

Have each group prepare a poem, rap, or song describing how the world responds to the reflection of themselves in God’s mirror. They can base the tune on a commercial from TV or the radio if they want. Give them three to five minutes to prepare the song then have each group share theirs with the rest of the class. [Note: it is preferable that all group members participate in the presentation.]

After all groups have shared, hold up the off-white piece of paper and ask what color the paper is. It should be white enough that the students respond “white.” Then hold up the “super white” or “brilliant white” piece of paper and now ask what color it is. Explain that we are like the off-white paper in that when we compare ourselves to those around us we think we are clean, pure, and good, but when we compare ourselves to God’s standard we see ourselves as we really are, far from attaining the holiness and perfection that He requires.

Closing (5 minutes)

Have students spend some time praying in groups or pairs. Give them a few minutes to exchange prayer requests. Have them thank God for sending Jesus, the lamb that was slain for us.

Baa, Baa, Black Sheep Have You Any Wool?

Under each characteristic of sheep, write how you demonstrate that characteristic in your life:

Sheep are useful.

Sheep depend on their shepherd to lead them to the food and water they need to stay alive.

Sheep have a limited perspective of their surroundings.

Sheep are often vulnerable, and need to be defended from attack and rescued from danger.

Sheep aren't very smart and frequently get themselves into situations they can't get themselves out of.

Sheep were used for sacrifices, pleasing to God.

Baa, Baa, Black Sheep Have You Any Wool?

Under each characteristic of sheep, write how you demonstrate that characteristic in your life:

Sheep are useful.

Sheep depend on their shepherd to lead them to the food and water they need to stay alive.

Sheep have a limited perspective of their surroundings.

Sheep are often vulnerable, and need to be defended from attack and rescued from danger.

Sheep aren't very smart and frequently get themselves into situations they can't get themselves out of.

Sheep were used for sacrifices, pleasing to God.

Genesis 6:5
Psalms 53:2-3
Isaiah 53:6

Isaiah 46: 8-10
Romans 9:20-21

Romans
1:18-23, 29-32

Romans
3:9-20, 23

Jeremiah 17: 9
Isaiah 64:6

Genesis
2: 15-17, 3:6-7
Romans 5: 12

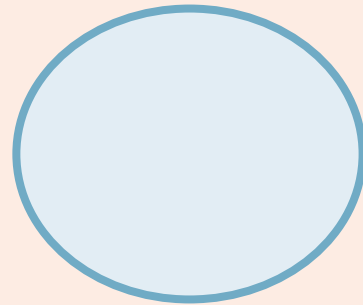
Genesis
1:26, 27, 31
Psalms
139:13, 14

*We all, like sheep,
have gone astray,*

*each of us has
turned to his own
way;*

*and the LORD
has laid on him*

*the iniquity of us
all.*

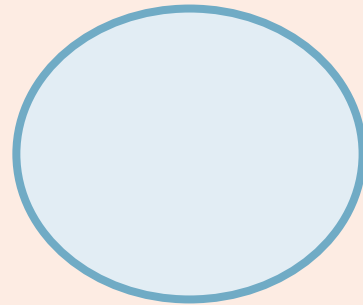


*We all, like sheep,
have gone astray,*

*each of us has
turned to his own
way;*

*and the LORD
has laid on him*

*the iniquity of us
all.*

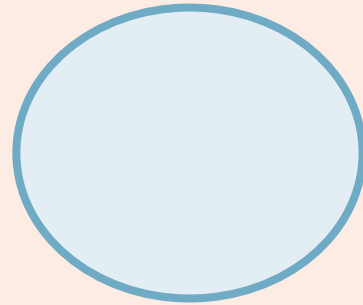


*We all, like sheep,
have gone astray,*

*each of us has
turned to his own
way;*

*and the LORD
has laid on him*

*the iniquity of us
all.*

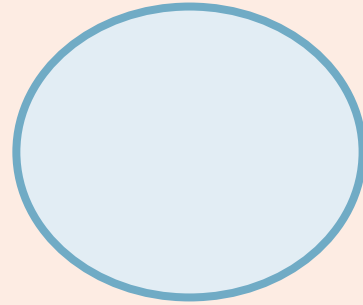


*We all, like sheep,
have gone astray,*

*each of us has
turned to his own
way;*

*and the LORD
has laid on him*

*the iniquity of us
all.*

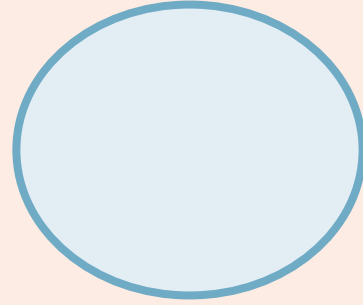


*We all, like sheep,
have gone astray,*

*each of us has
turned to his own
way;*

*and the LORD
has laid on him*

*the iniquity of us
all.*



Lesson Four

Homeward Bound

Lesson Objective: That students rejoice in what God has done, making anyone in Christ a new creation.

Bible Passage: 2 Corinthians 5: 17

Bible Truth: God has made us new creations in Christ.

Optional opener (15 minutes)

Before class collect either several rolls of toilet paper or several newspapers. Also gather scissors, tape and/or straight pins. Divide the group into teams, explaining that each group is to create a new outfit for one of their team members using the supplies available. Give them 10 minutes to dress one of their team mates in their creation.

If you are rushed, keep them posted on how much time is left. If time is not a problem for your group you may decide to let them work until the first team is finished. After you have called a stop to the activity, vote on the winner and give them a simple prize (like candy) or have everyone cheer them. Then ask:

- *Was this fun or frustrating? Why?*

You just made a new outfit that totally changed the way your model looked. Many of you already know that when we give our lives to God, he totally changes us. But even though we know this (“if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come”) sometimes we don’t let that knowledge change how we view ourselves or others.

Interactive Learning (20 minutes)

We have talked about how difficult it is to see ourselves clearly in those around us, because of sin in their lives that distorts what they show us. But the difficulty in seeing ourselves clearly in those around us does not all stem from the distorted reflection they present us with. It is difficult for us to see ourselves clearly partly because in many cases we either misunderstand what others are communicating or are unable or unwilling to see ourselves as we really are. Our idea of the world, and of ourselves about ourselves, form a kind of filter or lens through which all of our perceptions must pass. This filter causes us to have expectations of what we are going to experience, thus distorting our perceptions of what really happens. The purpose of the following activity is to help you identify the way you think about yourself and others that might affect how you “see” what other people and God reflect to you.

Make sure each student has a pen or pencil and hand out the quiz, “My Filters.” Tell them that when they have finished they may open up the sheet and read the answer key. Mention that if anyone has a particularly high score or wants to talk about the test that you are happy to spend some time with them outside of class. When they have finished ask,

- *Was this quiz interesting? Why/why not?*
- *Without getting too specific or personal, did anyone learn something about him or herself that you hadn’t realized before?*
- *How does a strong fear of failure, rejection, punishment or sense of shame will distort our view of reality?*

Explain that since the fall, because of our sin, every human being has reason to have feelings of shame and fear of failure, rejection, and punishment, and that each one of us experiences these in a way that reflects what we have lived, especially in our family. When we come into a personal relationship with God we are made a new creation, but frequently we still see ourselves through these filters, even though God has changed us totally.

In the second lesson we talked about how the people around us reflect to us a distorted image, and now we see that our own perceptions can cause a distortion in how we see ourselves and the world. We have said before that the only

What You’ll Need:

- several rolls of toilet paper or a lot of newspaper
- [(optional: scissors, tape, and/or straight pins)]
- a copy of handout “My Filters” and “in Christ I Am...” for each student
- “God’s Mirror” verse sheet cut into individual “mirrors”
- if possible, supplies for a “birthday party” i.e. a birthday cake, napkins or small plates and forks, drinks, etc.

Lesson Four Homeward Bound cont'd

way to know if what we're seeing is accurate is to know what we look like in a clear, undistorted mirror. Today we are going to look again into God's perfect mirror to help us find what we look like without any distortions. In the last study we saw what mankind looks like to God—valuable and important, but sinful and deserving punishment for their sin. In this study we are going to see how God views people who love him and have been saved by Jesus' death on the cross.

Bible Application (15 minutes)

Explain that this Bible application will be similar to the last lesson. Each group will look up the verses on the "God's mirror" you will give them. They will write down on their paper how those verses describe sons and daughters of God, and then choose a verse which summarizes the passage to share with the rest of the class. Divide the students into groups and give each group a "God's Mirror" verse. [Study the verses yourself prior to the lesson and use the notes below to help you guide the following discussion.]

Verses	One True Reflection
Ephesians 2: 1, 4, 5	We were dead in sins but have been made alive in Christ
Isaiah 53: 4-6	Christ suffered and died in our place, taking on himself the punishment we deserved for our sins
2 Corinthians 5: 21	The perfect righteousness of Christ has been credited to us. We were enemies of God, alienated from Him but in Christ we are reconciled with him (the problem between us has been solved)
2 Corinthians 5: 17	Anyone in Christ is a new creation and shouldn't be viewed from a "worldly" point of view
John 1: 12-13	God has adopted us as his sons and daughters. We are part of His family.

Whenever we are uncertain of what someone thinks about us or think that they are angry with us, we tend to avoid them. But when someone cares about us, believes in us and encourages us we want to spend time around them. So it is with God.

When we can, with the help of God's Word and Spirit, begin to see ourselves clearly as He sees us, we can begin to experience healing in our view of ourselves, and our relationships with God and with others. This can be a slow process, as our ways of thinking and viewing the world are deeply rooted.

Commitment (10 minutes)

(Note: it is important that the students understand that the following declarations are only true for people who have been born again into God's family through faith in Christ. For this reason they will preface each statement by saying "in Christ..." Obviously you will not want to exclude people from the activity but at the same time it is important to clarify this point. Offer to talk personally outside class with anyone who has doubts about any of these issues.)

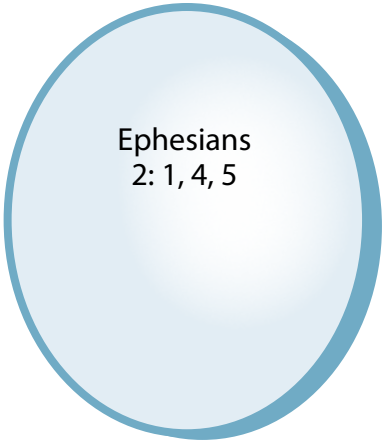
Give each student a copy of "In Christ I Am..." and explain that the group will read through it in the following way, starting with the leader and going around the room clockwise. Each person will read one of the sentences inserting the name of the person next to his/her left. When you are finished, ask:

- *How did hearing this with your name in it make you feel?*

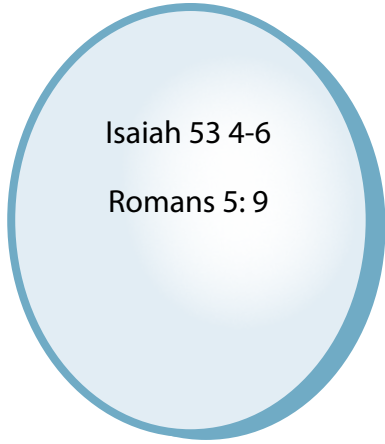
As we have discussed, most people do not have an accurate idea of who they are and of their value as a person. Maybe today you have discovered that you have feelings of fear or shame that affect the way you see yourself and your relationships with God and others. You might even find it difficult to hear yourself called righteous, holy and deeply loved. But you must accept that this is how God describes His children. Some of you might be thinking, "how can I possibly be called righteous and holy when there is sin in my life?"

Encourage the students to put their handouts in their Bibles and to read them at least once a day until they begin to know what they look like in God's perfect mirror. Remind them to ask the Holy Spirit to transform the way they see themselves and those around them.

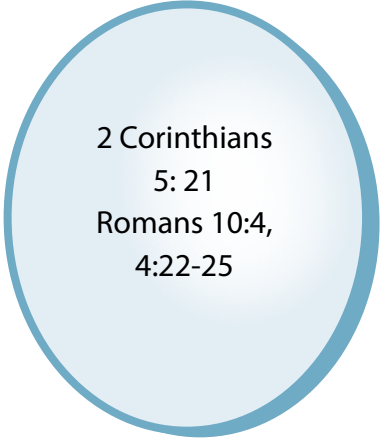




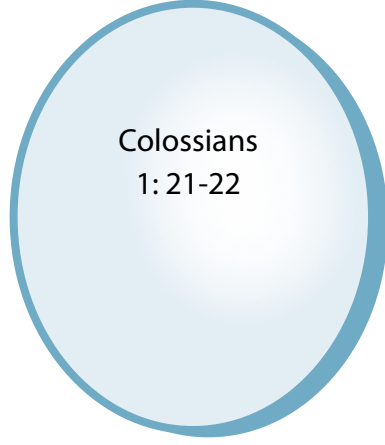
Ephesians
2: 1, 4, 5



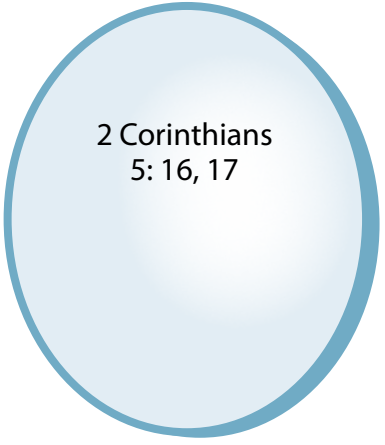
Isaiah 53 4-6
Romans 5: 9



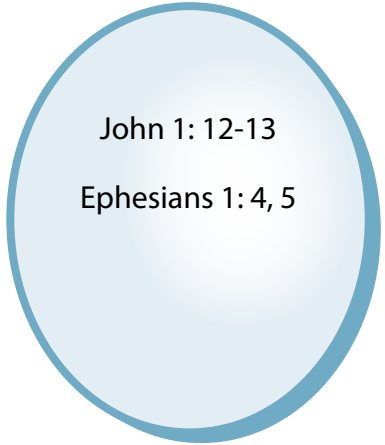
2 Corinthians
5: 21
Romans 10:4,
4:22-25



Colossians
1: 21-22



2 Corinthians
5: 16, 17



John 1: 12-13
Ephesians 1: 4, 5

My Filter

Next to each of the following statements note the number that best represents your response. After each section fill in the number of blocks horizontally corresponding to your answers.

1. I am very critical of myself if I fail to reach standards I have set.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
2. I avoid participating in certain activities because I am afraid I might fail.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
3. I am a perfectionist.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
4. I get angry with people who interfere with my efforts to succeed and so make me appear incompetent.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
5. I worry.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
6. When I think that someone might reject me I become nervous and anxious.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
7. It bothers me deeply when someone is unfriendly to me.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
8. I try to figure out what people think of me and how to impress them.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
9. I am shy and unsocial.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
10. I am critical of others.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
11. I am afraid of what God might do to punish me.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
12. When I see someone experiencing difficulties, I wonder what they did to deserve that punishment.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
13. I feel the need to tell others when I see them doing something wrong.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
14. I tend to focus on the faults and failures of others.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
15. I get angry with God when someone who is immoral or dishonest has success
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
16. I often think about past failures or experiences of rejection.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
17. I feel inferior.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
18. I feel like a certain experience has ruined my life and taken away my opportunity to have a complete and happy life.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
19. There are parts of me that I want to change but I don't believe I can ever accomplish it.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always
20. I have to hide who I really am from people or they would not like me.
1 Never 2 Seldom 3 Sometimes 4 Often 5 Always

Understanding your Score

21-25: Fear of failure appears to dominate the way you see yourself and the world around you. You need to experience deep healing in your view of yourself, your relationship with God and with other people.

17-20: Your life appears to be regularly affected by your fear of failure, which robs you of joy and peace

11-16: When you experience emotional problems they may come from a sense of failure.

0-10: You do not seem to be affected by the fear of failure that affects many people. God has given you a strong appreciation of His love and unconditional acceptance.

Statements 1-5 **Fear of Failure**

You believe that your worth is based on your performance so in order to be able to feel good about yourself you must meet certain standards. As a result you have a great fear of failure and a drive to succeed and to do everything as perfectly as you can, even if it means manipulating those around you. If anything or anyone interferes with your pursuit of perfect performance you become angry with them. If you believe that you might not succeed in a certain area or relationship you withdraw from it.

Statements 6-10 **Fear of Rejection**

You believe that in order to feel good about yourself you must have the approval of others. As a result you greatly fear rejection and will do anything necessary to please those around you. You are oversensitive to people's reactions or comments, interpreting them as more critical than they may be, or being devastated by them, causing you to be angry with others and withdraw from them in order to avoid their disapproval. Because you anticipate that people will reject you if they really know you, you find it hard to open up and be yourself so you end up having superficial relationships.

Statements 11-15 **Fear of Punishment**

Because you believe that your worth is based on your performance you also believe that your failure makes you unworthy of love and deserves to be punished. You also believe that when others fail they deserve to be punished. These beliefs drive you to avoid failure and to blame others when you feel you have failed. And you withdraw from God and from others because you are afraid of the punishment you think they will pour out on you.

Statements 16-20 **Feelings of Shame**

Your thoughts are frequently occupied by things that make you feel ashamed, whether some aspect of your physical appearance, a bad habit or character trait, or something you did or that happened to you in the past. Because of this you believe that you are inferior to others and you are ashamed of yourself or of some part of yourself. Because you believe that others look down on you, you are uncomfortable around people and isolate yourself from them. You do not believe you can change so you become depressed and feel hopeless.

Adapted from "The Search for Significance" by Robert McGee, Word Publishing

In Christ I Am...

I am accepted...

- In Christ, _____, you are God's child. [John 1:12]
- In Christ, _____, you are a friend of Jesus Christ. [John 15:15]
- In Christ, _____, you have been justified – just as if you'd never sinned. [Romans 5:1]
- In Christ, _____, you are united with the Lord, and are one with Him in spirit. [1 Corinthians 6:17]
- In Christ, _____, you have been bought with a price and belong to God. [1 Corinthians 6:19-20]
- In Christ, _____, you are a member of Christ's body. [1 Corinthians 12:27]
- In Christ, _____, you have been chosen by God and adopted as His child. [Ephesians 1:3-8]
- In Christ, _____, you have been redeemed and forgiven of all your sins. [Colossians 1:13-14]
- In Christ, _____, you have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ. [Hebrews 4:14-16]

I am secure...

- In Christ, _____, you are free from condemnation. [Romans 8:1-2]
- In Christ, _____, you can be assured that God works for your good in all circumstances. [Romans 8:28]
- In Christ, _____, you are a citizen of heaven. [Philippians 3:20]
- In Christ, _____, you have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind.
[2 Timothy 1:7]
- In Christ, _____, you are born of God and the evil one cannot touch you. [1 John 5:18]

I am significant...

- In Christ, _____, you are a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life. [John 15:5]
- In Christ, _____, you have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. [John 15:16]
- In Christ, _____, you are God's temple. [1 Corinthians 6:19]
- In Christ, _____, you are God's workmanship. [Ephesians 2:10]
- In Christ, _____, you may approach God with freedom and confidence. [Ephesians 3:12]
- In Christ, _____, you can do all things through Christ, who strengthens you. [Philippians 4:1]

"The more you reaffirm who you are in Christ, the more your behavior will begin to reflect your true identity!"

(From Victory Over the Darkness, by Dr. Neil Anderson)

Matching Game

Ephesians 2: 1, 4, 5

The perfect righteousness of Christ has been credited to us. We were enemies of God, alienated from Him but in Christ we are reconciled with him (the problem between us has been solved).

Isaiah 53: 4-6

God has adopted us as his sons and daughters. We are part of His family.

2 Corinthians 5: 21

We were dead in sin but have been made alive in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5: 17

Anyone in Christ is a new creation and shouldn't be viewed from a "worldly" point of view.

John 1: 12-13

Christ suffered and died in our place, taking on himself the punishment we deserved for our sins.

Lesson Five

The Ultimate Rescue

Lesson Objective: That students commit to living in a way that reflects their true identity in Christ.

Bible Passage: Colossians 3:1-17

Bible Truth: Having died to our sin we get rid of sin in ourselves and put on Christ like qualities.

Optional Opener (10 minutes)

Put all the chairs in a circle while one person, "it", remains standing without a chair in the middle of the circle. Divide your group into smaller groups and assign each group the name of a fruit. The person who is "it" calls out the name of a fruit, and everyone assigned that fruit must get up and find a new seat while the person in middle tries to take a seat. The person left standing without a chair becomes "it." If the person in the middle says "fruit basket" everyone has to change places.

When you decide to quit, explain that just like a fruit tree produces fruit, blossoms, and leaves, according to the kind of tree it is, so our lives will produce blossoms and fruit will that show who we are.

Interactive Learning (15 minutes)

Read the creative reading then ask,

- *Why had Rose stopped playing the piano?*
- *Rose let the laziness, the pressures of daily life, and her feelings of inadequacy keep her from enjoying what she was made to do. What are some of the things that keep you from doing what you were made to do?*

Explain that Rose got back into playing the piano through the gentle encouragement of a friend. The group is going to come up with several concrete examples of how they can rediscover the joy we were meant to have in Christ. Ask:

- *What are some things that you used to enjoy doing, that helped you stay close to God?*
- *Help students be specific (i.e., rather than reading the Bible, getting up early to do ABS devo.)*

Bible Application (20 minutes)

Last week we saw that people who have been born into God's family become His children and are described by him as holy, righteous, pure, and dearly loved saints. The Bible says that our new birth is a gift from him that we do not do anything to earn:

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2: 8)

We call that act of salvation "justification" and it determines who we are. If you have been justified by Christ's death, you are part of God's family.

The problem is that those of us who know we are part of God's family often find it hard to understand how we can be called holy and pure when we know that we sin every day. What we see when we look in the mirror is not what God says that He sees. Before we can go any farther in our study we have to decide who we are going to believe—God or ourselves? If our point of view differs from God's, somebody is right and somebody is wrong. Whenever we have a different point of view than God does it usually means that there is something He understands that we don't.

From the very beginning of this series we have said that the world tells us that what we do determines who we are. That is why we keep thinking that if we sin it means we are still sinners and cannot be saints. But God says that who we are will determine what we do; that if he has given us a new life we will change from the inside out, we will start

What You'll Need:

- notes of encouragement that you have prepared in advance (see "closing" for directions)
- extra blank notes for unexpected students
- extra Bibles for students who don't have one with them
- pens & copies of handout "Living like a Child of God"

Lesson Five

The Ultimate Rescue cont'd

to become like Him and love what He loves and hate what He hates. We are going to study what this life should look like, as Paul describes it in his letter to the Colossians.

Hand out "Living like a Child of God" and make sure all students have a Bible and something to write with. Ask them to answer only the first eight questions based on the verses specified on the sheet. When they have finished, ask:

- ***Why should we fix our eyes on heavenly things?*** [because we have died to our old life and have been raised with Christ and our life is now hidden with Christ in God.]

Have several students share some specific things that we should and shouldn't focus on. Then ask what similarities they see between clothing and the actions and attitudes these verses mention. [The clothing we wear doesn't change who we are, but it changes how others see us. Clothing is something you choose to put on or not. etc]

Just like we choose what we are going to wear every day, we also choose what we think about, what we say, and how we treat others. What we wear, and how we act, doesn't change who we are; I am my parent's child no matter what I have on. But most of us have experienced that people treat us differently depending on what we have on and sometimes our clothing or our haircut may even cause problems in our relationships with other people.

Our goal as children of God is to "dress ourselves" with the characteristics of Jesus so that we look like Him.

Commitment (10 minutes)

Frequently we struggle to understand how God's power and our efforts work together. To help us see how two things can work together at the same time, each one necessary but not independent from the other, God has given us examples in the world around us.

For example, birds fly as a result of both their efforts and the air currents. A bird cannot fly in a vacuum; it needs the air going over its wings to give it lift. But even hurricane force winds cannot make a bird fly (tumble maybe but not fly) if the bird doesn't stretch out its wings, take off, and catch the air.

Explain that in the same way, the wind of God's spirit works with our efforts to make us more and more like Christ. Hand out 3 x 5 cards and ask students to write down at least 3 specific things that they can do to be more like Christ (staying away from certain friends, etc.) Then ask them to write down 3 specific ways they can rely on God (praying and asking for his help; reading the Bible each day, spending time with Christian friends, etc.).

When you see that the students have finished close in prayer where each student asks for God's help in one of the specific activities they have written down.

Closing (10 minutes)

Before class, write a note of encouragement to give to each group member. As much as possible, focus on ways that each student reflects Christ. You can use Colossians 3:12-17 and Galatians 5:22, 23 to help you. For example: *"Mark, I want you to know that I appreciate the way you are patient and kind, especially with your little brother. You are fun to be around and have a good sense of humor and I especially appreciate the way you are loving and encouraging to the other students in our group. I thank God for who you are and what you are allowing Him to do in your life. Your sister in Christ, Annette"*

Note: Bring some extra paper to write on in case there are students you did not anticipate being there. Make sure that each student receives a note even if they are just visiting!]

Pass out the notes of encouragement and ask that the students wait until they are alone to open and read them.

Living your Identity (Creative Reading)

John could hardly contain his excitement the first day of school. Since he was very young he had loved music, especially the piano. He had spent the past few years working his hardest with the best teachers his parents could afford. At last it had paid off and he had been awarded a scholarship to the school with the most acclaimed piano program in the country. He would finally be able to learn from the best teachers and have access to the best facilities. But there was another reason John couldn't wait to get to school: he had found out that Rose, the daughter of the world's best concert pianist, would be in his class. Once when John was very young, his parents had taken him to a concerto and he had heard Rose play a duet with her father. He had been entranced listening to a girl his own age playing something so beautiful. From that time on John had been completely infatuated with learning to produce such beauty.

Once at school, John went first to the practice rooms to look at the pianos he would be able to use. A teacher showed him the chart of rehearsal times and he was surprised that he didn't see Rose's name on the list. Throughout the day he eagerly looked for her and finally saw her when a teacher called her name in class. Later when he saw her eating her lunch alone he joined her and the two quickly became friends. A few weeks later when they knew each other better, John asked her what kind of piano she had at home. He was surprised to hear that she didn't have a piano in the apartment she rented near the school. He had always assumed that she didn't practice at school because she had a better piano at home. He was even more surprised when she told him that she hadn't played for several years. He couldn't restrain himself any longer and burst out telling her about the concert where he had heard her play and how that had been his inspiration all of the years he had studied piano. When he finished she just sat and looked at him sadly.

Then he asked, "Why don't you play anymore?"

She sighed. "I'm not quite sure. I used to love to play, especially with my Dad. I think that as I got older, I realized that you have to practice a lot."

John replied, "Sure, there are times when I'm not in the mood to practice. But there are other times when I play for hours and don't even notice the time."

"That's true," she said, "but also I realized that even though people told me I was good, when I listen to my dad, I would realize. I'm not that good."

"Nobody is good at first," answered John. "But you could be that good someday."

She shrugged her shoulders and said, "I guess you're right."

The two sat in silence until finally John said, "Don't you miss it?"

She answered, "I don't really think about it, you know, with school and all."

Then he asked, "Are you busy tomorrow afternoon?"

"Um, not really, just have some homework."

"Would you come to rehearsal with me then? One of my life long dreams is to play a duet with you. It doesn't have to be anything fancy."

She finally agreed and the next afternoon met him at his rehearsal room. At first Rose seemed almost scared to touch the piano keys, but once they started playing they were having so much fun that they only stopped when the next student knocked insistently on the door.

"John, thank you so much." She said. "I can't believe it has been so long. Nothing makes me feel that good."

"Of course not," he smiled. "You're a pianist. You were made to play."

Living Like a Child of God

Look up Colossians 3

1. According to Colossians 3:1-4 you should set your heart and mind on _____ and not _____. What does that mean?
2. Give two specific examples of things you should set your mind on. (Use Colossians 3:15-17 for hints.)
3. Give two specific examples of what you should NOT set your mind on.
4. According to Colossians 3:5-10, list the "old clothing" that you should take off:
5. Of these, which "old clothing" do you still wear?
6. According to Colossians 3:12-15, list the "new clothing" you should put on.
7. Of these, which "new clothing" is the hardest for you to put on?
8. Write down the name of one person you need to "bear with" or forgive (v. 13)?

What I can do to "re-dress" myself:

How I can let God "re-dress me":

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.
2 Peter 1:3

Lesson Six

Lasting Impressions

Lesson Objective: That students desire to acknowledge the worth of those around them.

Bible Passage: 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21

Bible Truth: We should see those around us as God sees them: either as a new creation in Christ, or as someone God wants to be reconciled with.

Optional opener (15 minutes)

Either make copies of the following statements and responses and cut them into individual strips, or write them on pieces of paper and then before class tape one onto the bottom of each chair. It is important that there is a response for each statement and vice versa, so you will need an even number of chairs.

After the students are seated, have them retrieve the pieces of paper. After reading them, they should walk around the room saying only what is on their paper. Explain that some people have statements and some people have responses and that they are looking for people whose statement or response is the appropriate complement to their own. When they find a partner they should stay together until everyone has a partner, at which point they should form three "teams" based on the three pairs of statements and responses. Ask them to stay in those teams for the interactive learning section.

Say: "My dog was run over by a car this morning."	Respond: Look sad and say, "I am so sorry to hear that."
Say: "Hi, my name is _____" [say your name].	Respond: "It is very nice to meet you."
Say: "Look, this morning I was so tired I put on a white sock and a black sock."	Respond: Smile and laugh out loud.

- What made it easy or hard to find your partner?
- Those of you who had statements, how did you feel when someone responded inappropriately?
- Those of you who had responses, how did you feel responding in an inappropriate way?
- Can you think of a time when you have responded to someone in a way that was inappropriate for the situation?

For the last few weeks we have been learning about ourselves, examining what other people think about us, what we think about ourselves, and what God thinks about us. My hope is that as a result of this study you have a more clear idea of your worth as a person and the foundation of that worth. Today we are going to talk about how to respond to other people appropriately so that we reflect the truth about them in love.

Interactive Learning (20 minutes)

Before class, cut the sets of statements from the statement sheet into strips. Keep the sets of the same color together. Then place 3 mirrors, or 3 sheets of paper labeled as mirrors, around the room.

Label them: 1) the distorted reflection the world shows us 2) God's perfect reflection of unsaved mankind, and 3) Gods perfect reflection of his children. If you use actual mirrors, put titles over them (with Vaseline on the distorted one).

With the students still in same pairs from the opening, explain that you will give each pair a stack of statements that express things that are reflected from these mirrors. The teams will decide which statement goes best with which mirror and then the appointed person will run and stick it on that mirror. (Provide tape for them.) The game begins when you give the statements to the teams. When the first team finishes, stop. Then review the statements and return to the team all of the statements that were put in the wrong place. The winner is the team with the highest number of right answers.

What You'll Need:

- copies of individual "say" and "respond" paper strips for opening section
- 3 sets of the 10 statements cut into strips, tape, and three "mirrors"
- copies of verse handout
- fresh copies of "Mirror, Mirror"
- "Mirror, Mirror" handouts from the first week filled in by the students

Lesson Six

Lasting Impressions cont'd

[This section for leader only: Do not give this part to the teams!]

You are important if you are talented or if you have money.	Distorted mirror
You are desirable if you have a good body or a nice face.	Distorted mirror
I really need to work harder for God to be able to love me.	Distorted mirror
Every human being is created in the image of God and is valuable.	God's view of humanity
All mankind has turned it's back on God and is sinful.	God's view of humanity
I deserve death and separation from God.	God's view of humanity
Jesus paid the penalty I should receive for my sin.	God's view of his children
When God looks at me he sees someone perfectly righteous.	God's view of his children
When God looks at me he sees a son or daughter that he loves a lot.	God's view of his children
I really need to work harder so others see Christ in me.	Gods' view of his children

Use this time as a review of the whole series. Create discussion about any of the statements they might have placed on the wrong mirror and lead the students to participate in a review of the basic messages of the mirrors:

- Distorted mirror: your value depends on what you do or produce, people show distorted reflections of who you are and you also distort the way you understand what they "reflect" to you.
- God's view of humanity: every human being is created in the image of God and has immeasurable worth but all have sinned and brought upon themselves misery and punishment.
- God's view of people who have been adopted into his family through Christ: a new creation, dearly loved, and robed with Christ's righteousness and holiness.

Bible Application (15 minutes)

Make sure everyone has something to write with and give each student a copy of the verse handout. Instruct them to draw a line between each word until they have deciphered the Bible verse. Have the first student to complete the assignment read his or hers aloud and then,

- **What are some specific examples of how the way we view someone affects how we treat them.** [a rich person might treat a waiter rudely because they think they are superior, etc]
- **What is the worldly way to view people?** [judge them for what they have or for what they can do for us or how they treat us, encourage them to give specific answers like "put physically perfect people out to be seen and hide physically imperfect people"]
- **How can we show people around us that they have value because they are created in God's image?**
- **How will we treat other believers if we view them as new creations in Christ, totally forgiven and loved by God?** [don't be satisfied with "churchy" sounding answers like "love them" but make the students get specific, "we will not snicker at the old lady who sings off key", "we will not feel superior to someone who has less money or status than us"]

Commitment (10 minutes)

Hand out copies of "Mirror, Mirror." Explain that last time they used this sheet it was to analyze how others see us. This time we are going to think about what we reflect to them. Encourage students to take time to think about each person or group and consider how God sees them. Then compare what the student thinks about them with how God sees them. (For example, they could have a parent or sibling who does not have a personal relationship with God, so although the student thinks of them as someone who makes unfair rules or borrows clothing without asking, God calls them to be an ambassador to that person.)

Closing (5 minutes)

Return to the students their copies of “Mirror, Mirror” from the first lesson. Give them a chance to look them over and then ask how their understanding of who they are has changed throughout the series.

Close with “popcorn” prayers, where students, in no particular order, can express brief prayers of thanksgiving or asking for help.



Copies of Statements for Interactive Learning

You are important if you are talented or if you have money.
You are desirable if you have a good body or a nice face.
I really need to work harder for God to be able to love me.
Every human being is created in the image of God and is valuable.
All mankind has turned it's back on God and is sinful.
The punishment I deserve for my sins is death and separation from God.
The punishment I should receive for my sins has been poured out on Jesus.
When God looks at me he sees someone perfectly righteous and acceptable.
When God looks at me he sees a son or daughter that he loves a lot.
I really need to work harder for God to be able to love me.
I really need to work harder so others see Christ in me.

You are important if you are talented or if you have money.
You are desirable if you have a good body or a nice face.
I really need to work harder for God to be able to love me.
Every human being is created in the image of God and is valuable.
All mankind has turned it's back on God and is sinful.
The punishment I deserve for my sins is death and separation from God.
The punishment I should receive for my sins has been poured out on Jesus.
When God looks at me he sees someone perfectly righteous and acceptable.
When God looks at me he sees a son or daughter that he loves a lot.
I really need to work harder for God to be able to love me.
I really need to work harder so others see Christ in me.

You are important if you are talented or if you have money.
You are desirable if you have a good body or a nice face.
I really need to work harder for God to be able to love me.
Every human being is created in the image of God and is valuable.
All mankind has turned it's back on God and is sinful.
The punishment I deserve for my sins is death and separation from God.
The punishment I should receive for my sins has been poured out on Jesus.
When God looks at me he sees someone perfectly righteous and acceptable.
When God looks at me he sees a son or daughter that he loves a lot.
I really need to work harder for God to be able to love me.
I really need to work harder so others see Christ in me.

Instructions: Place a line between each word in order to decipher the verse below.

SOFROMNOWONWEREGARDNOONEFROMAWORLD
LYPOINTOFVIEWIFANYONEISINCHRISTHEISANEWCREAT
IONALLTHISISFROMGODWHORECONCILEDU
STOHIMSELFTHROUGHCHRISTANDHEHASCOM
MITTEDTOUSTHEMINISTRYOFRECONCILIATIONWEARETHE
RFORECHRISTSAMBASSADORSASTHOUGHGODWEREMA
KINGHISAPEALTHROUGHUS.
2CORINTHIANS516TO20

Instructions: Place a line between each word in order to decipher the verse below.

SOFROMNOWONWEREGARDNOONEFROMAWORLD
LYPOINTOFVIEWIFANYONEISINCHRISTHEISANEWCREAT
IONALLTHISISFROMGODWHORECONCILEDU
STOHIMSELFTHROUGHCHRISTANDHEHASCOM
MITTEDTOUSTHEMINISTRYOFRECONCILIATIONWEARETHE
RFORECHRISTSAMBASSADORSASTHOUGHGODWEREMA
KINGHISAPEALTHROUGHUS.
2CORINTHIANS516TO20

Instructions: Place a line between each word in order to decipher the verse below.

SOFROMNOWONWEREGARDNOONEFROMAWORLD
LYPOINTOFVIEWIFANYONEISINCHRISTHEISANEWCREAT
IONALLTHISISFROMGODWHORECONCILEDU
STOHIMSELFTHROUGHCHRISTANDHEHASCOM
MITTEDTOUSTHEMINISTRYOFRECONCILIATIONWEARETHE
RFORECHRISTSAMBASSADORSASTHOUGHGODWEREMA
KINGHISAPEALTHROUGHUS.
2CORINTHIANS516TO20

Instructions: Place a line between each word in order to decipher the verse below.

SOFROMNOWONWEREGARDNOONEFROMAWORLD
LYPOINTOFVIEWIFANYONEISINCHRISTHEISANEWCREAT
IONALLTHISISFROMGODWHORECONCILEDU
STOHIMSELFTHROUGHCHRISTANDHEHASCOM
MITTEDTOUSTHEMINISTRYOFRECONCILIATIONWEARETHE
RFORECHRISTSAMBASSADORSASTHOUGHGODWEREMA
KINGHISAPEALTHROUGHUS.
2CORINTHIANS516TO20

Thoughts...



Thoughts...