



All Christians' Fellowship International

INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE FOR YOUTHS AND YOUNG ADULTS

Who Am I?

Overview

Summary

Through the *Who Am I?* You will invite students to explore their identity, how they search for it and find it. Identity is found in and received from God, So why are so many of us still exhausting ourselves trying to find meaning and purpose? In today's lesson, you and your students will go back to the original source of our pain and suffering: the Fall. You'll explore how our identity and search for truth has been warped by sin and how God offers us hope, healing, and restoration through the person of Jesus.

Key Takeaways

1. We have all sinned.
2. Sin changes everything.
3. We are restored through a relationship with Jesus.

Scriptures

Genesis 1-3 / Luke 15:11-24 / Romans 3:23; 5:8-11; 10:9 / 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

Lesson 2 Script

Introduction

Last week, we compared the various ways that the world tells us to find our identity with what God says about us and how culture encourages us to look to ourselves - our feelings and desires - in order to define ourselves.

[*NOTE TO YOUTH PASTOR: Consider including a personal reference here about how you once defined your identity.]

If you recall, our identity isn't something we need to discover or achieve but, instead, something we receive from God. So why are so many of us still exhausting ourselves trying to find meaning and purpose?

The Bible is clear - we are more than our emotions and what we've done - we are God's masterpiece. But in order to fully understand this, we have to go back to the beginning. Our story doesn't start with us; it begins with God and the first humans, Adam and Eve. Understanding that story helps us understand who we are, what went wrong, and the hope that God offers us through Jesus.

We read in Genesis, chapters 1 and 2, that in the beginning, God created everything from the vast oceans to the smallest insects, and it was perfect! The last thing God made, his finishing touch, was the first man and woman.

God created both the man and woman in his image, designed to reflect his character to the world and rule over his perfect creation. Those first people, Adam and Eve, had complete clarity about who they were and what they were made to do. They knew they belonged to God, that he loved them, and that they resembled him in their ability to care for the world and each other.

Transition

So what went wrong?

In Genesis 3, we see Adam and Eve rebel against God. When this happened, they unleashed the curse of sin into the world and upon all of their descendants.

Romans 3:23 puts it this way: **For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.**

Our identity starts with recognizing that God is our Creator, and we are his creation.

Point #1: We have all sinned.

Even though we inherited the curse of sin, each of us has rebelled against God in the way we live, think, and act - we try to live without his guidance and do things our own way.

In Luke, chapter 15, Jesus tells a story of a young man who chose his own way. Turning against his father, he demanded his inheritance and went off, living a life of sin and rebellion.

[*Note to Youth Pastor: Set up the story before reading the Scripture; add a personal illustration if it fits here.]

A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, "I want my share of your estate now before you die." So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything." Luke 15:11-16

Have you ever found yourself here - where your way seemed so much better than your parents', your teachers', God's? That's what sin does - it lies to us and tells us our way, our thoughts, are better. It makes things confusing and complicated.

Just like with Adam and Eve and the prodigal son, sin breaks our relationship with God and distorts our understanding of who God is and who we were created to be.

Point #2: Sin changes everything.

Think of it like this. Imagine a mirror. Before the curse of sin entered the world, humans were a flawless reflection of God the creator. Now imagine a funhouse mirror at a carnival; the curse of sin distorted that reflection for Adam and Eve and all of us who came after them.

Sin distorts everything - the way we view others, ourselves, and God. It alters our understanding of who we are and what we were created to do: to know and be known by him and to live as a reflection of God's love into the world. Sin even warps the way we search for truth and our identity.

Instead of looking to God for understanding, we try to figure things out all by ourselves. We look to our friends, or the number of likes and comments we have on our online posts, for approval.

We look for answers in all the wrong places and wonder why all of our attempts to feel satisfied and secure leave us feeling empty and lost.

The prodigal son, after trying to go his own way, realized that he was empty and lost. We pick back up in Luke 15: 17-24:

When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, "At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'"

So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. His son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son."

But his father said to the servants, "Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We

must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found!" So the party began.

This story of the prodigal son is a beautiful picture of how sin (choosing our own way over God's and rebelling against him) leaves us feeling empty and lost, confused and alone. And how it separates us from God and severs our relationship with him. But, in spite of our sin and rebellion, God is always willing to welcome us back home as his children!

So how do you take hold of your identity given by God? It requires a change in direction. The Bible calls that repentance. Think of repentance as a spiritual U-turn: You stop running toward sin and the things you think will make you happy, and instead, you start running toward God. And because of God's great love for us, he joyfully welcomes us back when we turn from our sinful ways and repent - much like the reaction of the father of the prodigal son. You'll find that when you run towards God, he's running in your direction, too. He proved this by sending his Son, Jesus, to die for your sins so that you could be restored and have a relationship with him.

Romans 5:8-11 tells us:

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

Point #3: We are restored through a relationship with Jesus.

Instead of living in constant worry or fear, we live in freedom, knowing God isn't far-off. He's close, he loves us, and we can rest assured that we belong to him as his children.

From the very beginning, God promised to rescue his people from the curse of sin. That promise is fulfilled in the person of Jesus, whose life, death, and resurrection make it possible for us to know God and experience a relationship with him again. Even before we chose Jesus, he chose us! This is good news; it means that nothing can separate us from God's love. Even when we were his ENEMIES, God chose us and made a way for us to have access to him through the life and sacrifice of Jesus.

The Bible tells us, *If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* Romans 10:9.

When we decide to follow Jesus and his ways, we can have confidence in knowing that we are saved from our sins when we repent and declare that Jesus is the Lord and Savior over our lives. From this point on, the Holy Spirit - God's personal presence - works in our hearts and minds to transform us into a new person.

One of the writers of the New Testament, Paul, describes what it's like to belong to God and enter into a new life with Jesus. He says:

So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

We are given a new life in Jesus. And we can start living that new life now, enjoying the freedom that comes with knowing God and finding our identity in him. We can become who we were always meant to be! God transforms everything about you, the way you think, feel, and act. But the amazing part is that this “new person” God is creating in you is exactly who you were made to be all along.

Closing

Remember, sin is like a funhouse mirror. It distorts our view of ourselves, our identity, and our relationship with God. The prodigal son’s choices affected how he saw his worth, just like our choices affect how we see ourselves.

But we don’t have to choose to sin or to keep looking into that twisted reflection in the funhouse mirror. Instead, we can trust that God’s compassion and love toward us turns our hearts and minds, reminding us of who God calls us to be.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the consequences of sin? How did Jesus restore our relationship with God?
2. Why do you think it is significant that Jesus died for us while we were still sinners and enemies of God?
3. In what ways has the curse of sin distorted how you understand your identity?