

“How To Discover and Develop Your True Identity”

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Bible-First Lifestyle reading: Esther; 1 & 2 Timothy

Plug GIC – Kids Min help

Conquer Series Purity group – Justys Interview

Questions for Purity Group interview

1. What is the group and why do you want to start it? Why should people come?
2. In your pastoral experience do you see this problem of thought life addictions and other sexual addictions as a common thing?
3. What is the curriculum like and how effective is it?
4. What will people expect when they come to a group?
5. How does a person sign up?

Story of Esther

Identity, Family and Purpose markers

Who we are, who we are with and what we do! All of these are tied together.
Story of Esther brings in the 4th marker of sacrifice too!

Who you are and what you do.

Esther was a Jewess but also the Queen.

She could have adopted a new identity as Queen and ignored her heritage.

In her heart she was and always would be a Jew.

We can live in various places and do various things but at the end we are still God's people.

Close relationship with her people made it possible to stand before the king and intercede for them even at risk of her own life.

You are children of God. Created and bought by the Lord.

The boy and the boat – I made you and I bought you – you are mine twice.

Thus we develop that identity – do what the Lord says.

Fellowship with one another is a staple and foundation of the Christian life.

I won't go so far as to say you are sinning if you are not in a small group. I will say that if a person says they are a Christian yet resists Christian fellowship – family ties, there is a problem either with understanding or the will. For this is not God's intention to be independent from the body of Christ.

How can the head be independent from the body, the arm from the body or the legs from the body?

As Esther realized her identity and she acted according to her identity so we must also realize and act according to the name we were our family name – Christian

1. Esther realized the difference between her **identity** and her **position**.

“Now the king was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor...So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen...But Esther had kept secret her family background and nationality just as Mordecai had told her to do, for she continued to follow Mordecai's instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up.” Esther 2:17-20

2. Mordecai understood that a **position** could be leveraged for **good purposes**.

“And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”
Esther 4:14

3. Esther was willing to **sacrifice everything** for the sake of her people.

“Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my handmaids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”
Esther 4:15-16

4. Because Esther stayed true to her **identity** her people were blessed.

“For the Jews it was a time of happiness and joy, gladness and honor. In every province and in every city, wherever the edict of the king went, there was joy and gladness among the Jews, with feasting and celebrating...And many people of other nationalities became Jews...” Esther 8:16-17

1 and 2 Timothy give us many wonderful encouragements and instructions to follow to develop our Christian identity.

“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” 1 Tim. 4:8

What are the things that we both a part of who we are but we also have to nurture them?

One is our togetherness. It's not optional, but imperative to understand that we are a body together! We rely, trust, grow and challenge each other.

1 & 2 Timothy

Godliness with contentment is great gain

We brought nothing in and can take nothing out – except people!

Fellowship with others provides accountability

2 Tim. 2:22 – Flee evil desires, pursue righteousness, faith love and peace – along with all those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Family is who we are – less about dos and don'ts and more about how we function together, build each other up and protect each other.

1 Tim. 2:9 – think about each other even in the way we dress and present ourselves.

2 Tim. 4:3 – people will throw off good teaching and gravitate to what they want to do.

You may not want to be in a small group but if you do not, when the time comes, you may not have anyone there to be with you.

2 Tim. 3:14-15 – develop the disciplines!

The building blocks are important.

1 Tim. 4:15 – be diligent in these matters, give yourself wholly to them....

1 Tim. 4:8 – spiritual training produces great gains....

Summary of the story

Esther defined herself as a Jew not the Queen – God's people

She saw her Queen position as a strategic opportunity to save her people.

Her identity was a choice. She could have chosen to be Queen alone and not a Jew because it was too costly.

We are defined as God's people first! Nothing else matters.

We don't know when the moment will come when we have to live true to who we are.

Christians do certain things and don't do certain things.

Small groups is where we work through all of our issues. This is where the definition of who we are is fleshed out.

Sunday only is easy to come in and out and not change. In small groups you get pressed and people talk to you and will challenge you.

We are only in church once a week – if we don't make the effort to define ourselves than we will miss the moment.