

## IDENTITY

Finding Truth Among the Lies

### Lesson 2: Lie #1—Other People Define Your Value

#### 1. LEADER PREPARATION

##### LESSON OVERVIEW

- 1) Many of us are trapped by other people's lies about our identity—we are unable to continue on our journey to freedom because of what others say or think of us.
- 2) The good news is that it is possible to hear the clear truth about who we are and how God defines us.
- 3) Jesus wants to free us from the trap of letting other people define our value.

##### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. WHAT: Other people can negatively influence our view of ourselves and of God—but Jesus offers freedom from those traps.
2. WHY: We struggle to experience true freedom when we rely too heavily on others to give us value.
3. HOW: Recognize the ways in which other people can attempt to define us or our value.

##### PRIMARY SCRIPTURE

1 Samuel 16:6-13

##### SECONDARY SCRIPTURES

(Matthew 10:26-33)

##### TEACHING PREP

Read 1 Samuel 16:6-13

In ancient Israel the king was usually chosen based on his prowess in battle, his popularity with the people and even how handsome he was. King Saul was chosen because he was tall and strong and on the outside, he *looked* like a great king. King Saul disobeyed the Lord during his reign and was rejected as king over Israel.

The Lord sent His prophet Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint a new King over his people. Jesse had 8 sons and they all looked like a king on the *outside*. As each son of Jesse passed by Samuel, the prophet thought to himself, "surely this is the next king" but God rejected all of them. Finally, after all of Jesse's sons, (except David), had been denied by as the next king of Israel, Samuel asked Jesse if he had any other sons to show him.

David was the youngest of all his brothers, and he was not considered important enough to see the prophet of God and possibly be chosen as king. David was instead given the lowly position of taking care of the sheep his father owned. He was called in from the pasture to see the prophet and as he came before him, God spoke to Samuel telling him that it was David who would be king, because God looks at the heart, not at outward appearance like men do.

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#### 2. LESSON GUIDE

##### GETTING THINGS STARTED [optional]

For the opening activity, you'll need adhesive notes or slips of scrap paper—enough so each student can have at least 10 to 15 notes or slips of paper—plus pens or pencils.

You'll also need a trash can or shredder for a tie-in at the end of the lesson.

Welcome your students and invite them into your meeting area. Open in prayer, and then give each student a stack of adhesive notes or scrap paper, plus a pen or pencil. Then SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

*On each adhesive note (or scrap paper), write a name or label that someone else has called you. Write a mix of words that are positive or negative, encouraging or discouraging. But don't worry: You won't be asked to read these names and labels to the rest of the group or to even show them to anyone. This is just a moment for you to reflect and think about what other people have said to you or about you.*

Encourage students to find an isolated spot in your meeting area, and give them time to write their names and labels. You may want some upbeat or mid-tempo music in the background, as a subtle reminder that they don't have to write down only negative or discouraging things. After a few minutes, bring everyone back together for discussion.

##### ASK:

- *Was that activity emotionally easier or harder than you expected? Why?*
- *How do these names or words affect your feelings about the people who called you these names or gave you these labels?*
- *Why is it often hard to ignore these words and not let them affect you?*
- *How have these words shaped the way you see yourself? the way you see Jesus?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Those papers represent some of the words that shape how you see yourself. Some of those names and labels were good and encouraging—they can point you in a healthy direction. Some were bad and discouraging—they can make you feel trapped or ashamed or unloved. It can become easy to define yourself based on what others say, and you may start to see your value—whether high or low—based on other people's perspective of you. But Jesus wants you to experience freedom from the trap of letting other people define your value.*

##### AT THE END:

Direct students' attention to the trash can (or shredder).

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Through the freedom Jesus offers, you can reject the negative words that people have used to define you—and you can choose to embrace the good, encouraging words that people have spoken. To symbolize this decision, throw away (or shred) the paper with those negative words or statements—and then take home the paper with the encouraging words, as a reminder of the identity you experience through Jesus.*

## 1. Other people can shape how we see ourselves

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Everyone thought that the next king had to be big and strong and look the part on the outside. God's lesson to the prophet Samuel was that it is not what is on the outside that makes us who we are, it is what is on the inside that counts. If we see ourselves as lowly shepherds and stay out in the field because other people have told us we are not good enough, what will we be missing out on?*

### ASK:

- *Tell us one positive way another person has influenced how you see yourself.*
- *What are some negative ways other people influence how you see yourself?*
- *What are some ways other people can "deliberately twist the truth" about your identity and your value?*

## 2. Other people can shape how we see God

### ASK:

- *Tell us one positive way another person has influenced how you see God.*
- *If David needed to be bigger or stronger, or fight more battles before he could be chosen as king, what does that say about God? Can't God use ANYONE?*
- *What are some ways other people can "deliberately twist the truth" about who God is?*
- *Even if you're surrounded by people with deep faith and amazing trust in Jesus, what are the risks of letting other people's voices be the only things that shape how you view God?*

## 3. We can choose to let God's gift of grace define us

- *What are some of the gifts God has given you?*
- *What does God's grace say about how he feels towards us?*
- *What does it say about us when God chooses to anoint us with His Spirit?*

**SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** *Our value does not come from people who can mess up the simple truth of Jesus. Our value does not come from broken or hurting people. Our value is not defined by what other people may think or say. Our true value, worth, and identity come from God—the one who wants to call all of us his children through Jesus.*

## LIVING IT OUT

### ASK:

- *What is a good, healthy response to the outside voices and the negative things they say about your value?*
- *Is that easy or hard to do? Why?*
- *When you start to hear lies about your identity, what can help you remember the truth of who you are in Jesus?*
- *How can you embrace your true value and identity this week? What kind of freedom can you find in the security of being a son or daughter of God?*