

Flint Hills Bible Church
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School
Identity Crisis Part 3 - The Hope of The Gospel

I. Introduction

Over the last two weeks we have talked a lot about the problems that our culture has created for itself in finding our identity apart from Scripture. There are many ways for people to identify themselves, but they all lead to sin and brokenness.

Thought question: What are the signs that we have made something besides image bearers of God (even good things - church membership, family, values, etc.) our primary identity?

Objectives:

We will see how the gospel is good news to those who find their identity in things beside what God created us to be.

II. The Idolatry - Identity Connection

1. Why do so many unbelievers in our culture struggle with identity?
2. What are the assumptions we make when finding our identity in something besides as image bearers and worshipers of God?

The foundation of identity problems equation:

The following are ideas about humanity and our purpose that have been accepted unanimously in our culture, and lead to the Identity chaos around us:

- a. Humanity is fundamentally good, and pure
 - b. Because I am fundamentally good and pure, then the desires that are natural to me are good and pure.
 - c. True fulfillment is embracing my desires and my “authentic self” - to obey my urges and feelings.
3. How do each of the above statements (a-c) lead people astray? What Scriptures would you share with someone who believes each point?

Humanity is fundamentally good and pure

4. Where does this lead?

5. Scriptures that correct this thinking:

I'm pure so my deepest desires are pure also

6. Where does this lead?

7. Scriptures that correct this thinking:

I'm only fulfilled when I obey my desires!

8. Where does this lead?

9. Scriptures that correct this thinking:

III. The Good News of The Gospel

Have you noticed that people who are clearly struggling with their identity - whether they are trying to form their identity themselves, or if they are taking another “sub-identity” and making it their core identity - are exhausted, and do not experience lasting joy? Why do you think that is?

In this next section, we are going to consider the foundational teaching of the gospel and why it is good news to those experiencing an identity crisis!

God is the Creator!

Acts 17:24–25 (ESV) — **24** The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, **25** nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

10. How does this truth challenge the ideas of self defined identity?

11. How does it give hope to people who are struggling in this way?

We were created in His image!

Genesis 1:26–27 (ESV) — **26** Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” **27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

We

12. How does this truth challenge the ideas of self defined identity?

13. How does it give hope to people who are struggling in this way?

We have rebelled and deserve His wrath!

Romans 1:18–23 (ESV) — **18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. **19** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. **20** For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. **21** For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. **22** Claiming to be wise, they became fools, **23** and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

*see also Romans 3:10-20

14. How does this truth challenge the ideas of self defined identity?

15. How does it give hope to people who are struggling in this way?

Jesus Christ came to redeem us!

Galatians 4:4–5 (ESV) — **4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV) — **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Romans 3:23–26 (ESV) — **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, **25** whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. **26** It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

16. How does this truth challenge the ideas of self defined identity?

17. How does it give hope to people who are struggling in this way?

Repent and Believe!

Acts 2:37–38 (ESV) — **37** Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” **38** And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:1–4 (ESV) — **1** Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, **2** and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. **3** For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, **4** that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

18. How does this truth challenge the ideas of self defined identity?

19. How does it give hope to people who are struggling in this way?

Walk in love and obedience to God!

Ephesians 2:8–10 (ESV) — **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 4:17–24 (ESV) — **17** Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. **18** They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. **19** They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. **20** But that is not the way you learned Christ!— **21** assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, **22** to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, **23** and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, **24** and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

20. How does this truth challenge the ideas of self defined identity?

21. How does it give hope to people who are struggling in this way?

IV. Scenarios

For the following scenarios we will consider how the Scriptures could be brought to individuals who find their identity in created things or in themselves:

Eddie: Gender Identity

Eddie is a young man who feels uncomfortable in his own body. He has never liked the things that “typical” boys liked and at times has been teased and or excluded from many of his peers as a result. He was exposed to the transgender ideology through social media and through his own research. He now identifies as a “transgender girl” with preferred pronouns she/her, and a new name - Jane. But after two years of exploring and obeying his desires and identifying as a girl, he has not experienced the joy and self satisfaction that he was promised would result in living his authentic self.

22. What lies has Eddie believed about himself and his identity?
23. What will be the result of Eddie’s pursuit of self expression and identity?
24. What could you say to help Eddie understand God’s purpose for him?
25. What do you think you should avoid saying to Eddie?

How does the gospel offer hope to Eddie?

Gwen: Motherhood

Gwen is a Christian mother of 3. She spends almost all of her waking hours teaching, serving, loving, and caring for them to the neglect of other parts of her life - marriage, church involvement, fellowship with believers.

What is she believing about her role as a mother?

26. What are the dangers of Gwen finding her core identity in being a mom - *while her children are young?*
27. What are the dangers Gwen could face as her children enter into their teenage years?

28. What are the dangers Gwen could face as her children move out of the house?

29. How would you counsel Gwen with the gospel at each stage of life in the questions above?

- Young children:

- Teenagers:

- Young adults moving out:

As we continue our series on Identity, we will next turn our attention to the blessings of union with Christ. As believers our position in Christ forms the foundation of who we are, and serves to remind and motivate us to live for the glory of God!