



What is the meaning of life?



What is my purpose?



identity



Who am I?



Where do I find happiness?



What is true about me?



**LIFE GROUP
RESOURCE**

IDENTITY SERIES

WHO AM I?

Like many of us today, the people of first century Ephesus were confronted by a narrative that engaged in questions around identity. Ephesus was a political centre. It was the Roman capital of Asia, a busy trade port and a cultural centre known for its beautiful architecture. Power sat at the heart of the city. It was also a deeply spiritual city. Ephesus was famous for its temple to Diana (or Artemis), one of the seven ancient wonders of the world. The cultic worship of this figure of fertility celebrated various forms of personal and sexual expression. That is how their identity was shaped. Ultimately, the demand for every Roman Citizen was to declare 'Caesar is Lord'. For those in Ephesus, identity was profoundly wrapped in the social, cultural, political, and religious practices of the city.

Into this space Paul writes, from prison in Rome, to the church in Ephesus that the Christian identity was located in a different king and a difference community. It is clear in Paul's letter to the Ephesian church that their identity was not to be found in the surrounding culture, or in Caesar, but 'in Christ'. And to be in Christ changes everything. It changes where power is located. It changes where love is to be found. It changes where joy is to be found. It changes what community you are to be found in. It changes where morality is to be found. And the good news of this new identity is that it is something bestowed upon us, graciously given to us through the wonderful redeeming work of Christ.

THANKSGIVING DAY

Invite your family and friends to celebrate in your campus on
Sunday 21st August

RED BAG APPEAL

Help us restock your Campus Care Centre! To see the shopping list go to gatewaybaptist.com.au/thanksgivingday

I am chosen

EPHESIANS 1

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us.

Ephesians 1:3-8

Using the SOAP method, reflect on the entire chapter or the selected passage above.

Scripture - write down the verse that stood out to you.

Observation - what is the author saying? What does this tell you about God, yourself and the world in which we live?

Application - what is one thing from these verses that you can apply to your life today?

Prayer - what is your prayer?

Reflection space

You can use this space to write notes from Sunday's sermon, or you can engage with a reflection on Ephesians 1 by scanning the QR code or finding us online gatewaybaptist.com.au/media/series/identity



Who am I? I am chosen

True Identity: I am chosen...by Jesus who blesses me with every spiritual blessing.

False Identity: I choose...my own identity and am responsible for cultivating it.

Application

Ask: What spiritual blessings do you see at work in your life?

Ask: What implications does being adopted into God's family have for our lives?

Ask: What is His pleasure and will for your life? What would you say your purpose in life is?

Pray: For your perspective to grow that you may see yourself and those around you as chosen by God and called with purpose.

I am saved

EPHESIANS 2

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Ephesians 2:3-5

Using the SOAP method, reflect on the entire chapter or the selected passage above.

Scripture - write down the verse that stood out to you.

Observation - what is the author saying? What does this tell you about God, yourself and the world in which we live?

Application - what is one thing from these verses that you can apply to your life today?

Prayer - what is your prayer?

Reflection space

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Who am I? I am saved

True Identity: I am saved...forgiven and free. It is a gift that cannot be earned but received.

False Identity: I am slaved...trapped in my past shame no matter how hard I try to escape.

Application

Ask: Paul says, we are dead in our sin. While this is a hard truth, why is it important that we acknowledge and confess this?

Ask: How do you define grace? Share how you've seen God's grace in your life.

Ask: Paul also says 'we are God's handiwork.' Spend some time encouraging one another around the unique characteristics you see in each other.

Pray: That you would continue to live by grace and not by works, and for those in your life you wish to be saved by grace.

I am loved

EPHESIANS 3

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:16-19

Using the SOAP method, reflect on the entire chapter or the selected passage above.

Scripture - write down the verse that stood out to you.

Observation - what is the author saying? What does this tell you about God, yourself and the world in which we live?

Application - what is one thing from these verses that you can apply to your life today?

Prayer - what is your prayer?

Reflection space

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Who am I? I am loved

True Identity: I am loved...because of my **position**.

False Identity: I am loved...because of my **performance**.

Application

Ask: Describe what being 'rooted and established in love' looks like for you in your everyday life.

Ask: How often do you slip into finding your worth in what you do rather than who you are as a beloved child of God?

Ask: What practices/disciplines can you start to be sure you keep coming back to the foundation of 'I am loved'?

Pray: For an increase in love in your life group, family, workplace, our church, your neighbourhood and beyond.

I am family

EPHESIANS 4

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all...

Ephesians 4:2-5

Using the SOAP method, reflect on the entire chapter or the selected passage above.

Scripture - write down the verse that stood out to you.

Observation - what is the author saying? What does this tell you about God, yourself and the world in which we live?

Application - what is one thing from these verses that you can apply to your life today?

Prayer - what is your prayer?

Reflection space

You can use this space to write notes from Sunday's sermon, or you can engage with a reflection on Ephesians 4 by scanning the QR code or finding us online gatewaybaptist.com.au/media/series/identity



Who am I? I am family

True Identity: I am committed...to a family that gives me purpose.

False Identity: I am a consumer...where my individual preferences must be served.

Application

Ask: What does unity look like even when we have disagreement or different perspectives in the family of God?

Ask: What part of the body do you see yourself as? What is your unique gift/contribution to the body of believers?

Ask: Ephesians 4:17-32 has a list of instructions for Christian living. Which attribute stands out to you most and why?

Pray: That we would continue to grow in unity as one big church family.

I am holy

EPHESIANS 5

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:15-20

Using the SOAP method, reflect on the entire chapter or the selected passage above.

Scripture - write down the verse that stood out to you.

Observation - what is the author saying? What does this tell you about God, yourself and the world in which we live?

Application - what is one thing from these verses that you can apply to your life today?

Prayer - what is your prayer?

Reflection space

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Who am I? I am holy

True Identity: I am set apart...by God's power and grace, he helps me live with obedience and joy.

False Identity: I set myself apart...free to express my desires and feelings in pursuit of happiness.

Application

Ask: Why does Paul say that making the most of every opportunity is wise? What might these opportunities look like and how can you seek them out?

Ask: Why is personal holiness so important to life with Jesus?

Heart Week: As a life group how will you be a blessing in the lead up to Thanksgiving Day? Head to our website, gatewaybaptist.com.au/thanksgivingday to see how you can get involved with your campus!

Pray: For the opportunities to live with abundant generosity as you serve the local community this week.

I am sent

EPHESIANS 6

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:10-12

Using the SOAP method, reflect on the entire chapter or the selected passage above.

Scripture - write down the verse that stood out to you.

Observation - what is the author saying? What does this tell you about God, yourself and the world in which we live?

Application - what is one thing from these verses that you can apply to your life today?

Prayer - what is your prayer?

Reflection space

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WHO AM I? I AM CHOSEN

True Identity: I am sent...on a mission with a purpose to serve and share the good news of Jesus.

False Identity: I am self...serving my needs is the most important thing to me.

Application

Ask: If Paul was writing about the Armour of God in today's context, what examples might he use instead?

Ask: What are some examples of rulers, authorities, powers and spiritual forces we fight against today?

Ask: What focuses you to keep looking outward to serve, rather than inward to your own selfish desires?

Pray: That we would be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power to be sent to share the good news wherever we go.



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