

Identity¹

False Sources of Identity	True Sources of Identity
<p>A. <u>Reactions of others</u> – Gal 1:10 - <i>For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.</i></p> <p>B. <u>Comparison</u> – 2 Corinthians 10:12 - <i>For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.</i></p> <p>C. <u>Sins or failures</u> - Psalm 103:12 - <i>As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.</i></p> <p>D. <u>Circumstances</u> – Luke 13:2-5 - <i>And Jesus said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."</i></p> <p>E. <u>Feelings of superiority or inferiority</u> - 1 Corinthians 4:7 - <i>For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?</i></p> <p>2 Corinthians 3:5 - <i>Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,</i></p>	<p>A. <u>God's reactions</u> – 2 Chronicles 16:9a - <i>"For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His."</i> I Peter 2:4b - <i>...rejected by men, but... choice and precious in the sight of God</i></p> <p>B. <u>God's unique creation of each person in order to fulfill His unique call</u> - Psalm 139:13-16 - <i>For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.</i></p> <p>C. <u>Ability to move forward, free from sin</u> - Romans 6:11-14 - <i>Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.</i></p> <p>D. <u>God's higher purposes fulfilled</u> - Romans 9:16,17 - <i>So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH."</i></p> <p>E. <u>Truth regarding God's view of us</u> - Romans 12:3 - <i>For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith</i></p> <p>Isaiah 43:4 - <i>Since you are precious in My sight, Since you are honored and I love you....</i></p>

¹ Colleen Stortvedt, *On the Road to Freedom* (Kearney, Nebraska: Morill Publishing, 2010), 181-182.

False Sources of Identity: Reactions of Others Homework Assignment²

1. Try to identify any negative expectations you have about how others will treat you.

Examples would include:

No one will want to spend time with me.

No matter what I do I will be criticized.

No one will ever truly like/love me.

I will always be rejected.

I will never be good enough for a decent person to want to marry me.

It is normal for others to make fun of me or verbally abuse me.

2. List and describe any painful experiences you have had where others have reacted negatively toward you. Your negative expectations may help you to identify the experiences which led to them.

3. Describe any decisions you may have made about how you will respond based on these expectations and experiences. Examples would include:

I will not initiate socially with others.

I must try to do things perfectly to avoid being criticized.

There is no point in trying to do things well.

I must resign myself to accepting unhealthy relationships; it's the best I can do.

I must always be ready to defend myself from those who are rejecting me.

² Colleen Stortvedt, *On the Road to Freedom* (Kearney, Nebraska: Morill Publishing, 2010), 182.

4. Take one of the following passages about God's view of you each day this week and read and meditate on it. Put your name in it to personalize it to you.
- “For you made us only a little lower than God, and you crowned us with glory and honor. You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things” Psalm 8:5-6, NLT
 - “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you” Jeremiah 31:3, NKJV
 - “As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord is thinking about me right now” Psalm 40:17, NLT
 - “The Lord fastened His affection upon you and chose you...because the Lord loved you, and on account of His oath which He had sworn” Deuteronomy 7:6-8, Berkeley
 - “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away...O my dove...let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely” Song of Solomon 2:10-14, NKJV
 - “I have chosen you and not rejected you” Isaiah 41:9, NASB
 - “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us”

False Sources of Identity: Comparison Homework Assignment³

1. Try to identify any negative expectations you have about being compared to others.
Examples would include:
I'll never be as good as...
What I do will never be good enough.
I am ugly/stupid/inept/incompetent, poor, etc.

2. List and describe any painful experiences you have had where others have compared you or you have compared yourself to others. Your negative expectations may help you to identify the experiences which led to them.

3. Describe any decisions you may have made about how you will respond based on these expectations and experiences. Examples would include:
I must drive myself to do things well.
I must try to do things perfectly to avoid being negatively compared to others.
There is no point in trying to do things well (i.e. taking care of my appearance, studying, trying to get a good job, etc.).
I must prove my value through what I do.
I must far surpass the performance of others to feel I have performed acceptably.

³ Colleen Stortvedt, *On the Road to Freedom* (Kearney, Nebraska: Morill Publishing, 2010), 183.

4. Take one of the following passages about God's view of you each day this week and read and meditate on it. Put your name in it to personalize it to you.
 - a. "Who would dare to accuse us, whom God has chosen? The judge himself has declared us free from sin. Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us!" Romans 8:33-34, Phillips
 - b. "And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified." Romans 8:30, ESV
 - c. "God has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God has had in mind for us to be" Romans 5:2, TLB
 - d. "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10, ESV
 - e. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" Mark 12:30, NASB
 - f. "Your hands have made and fashioned me" Psalm 119:73, ESV
 - g. "For you made us only a little lower than God, and you crowned us with glory and honor. You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things" Psalm 8:5-6, NLT

4. Take one of the following passages about God's view of you each day this week and read and meditate on it. Put your name in it to personalize it to you.
 - a. "God crossed out the whole debt against us in His account books. He no longer counted the laws that we had broken. He nailed the account book to the cross and closed the account." Colossians 2:14, Laubach
 - b. "For by the death He died He once for all ended His relation to sin, so you too must consider yourselves as having ended your relation to sin but living in unbroken relation to God through union with Christ Jesus" Romans 6:10-11, Williams
 - c. "Who would dare to accuse us, whom God has chosen? The judge himself has declared us free from sin. Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us!" Romans 8:33-34, Phillips
 - d. "Already you are clean" John 13:10, 15:3, ESV
 - e. "No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you as white as wool" Isaiah 1:18, NLT
 - f. "If we confess our sins, He is to be depended on, since He is just, to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from every wrong" 1 John 1:9, Williams
 - g. "Our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin" Romans 6:6, NIV

False Sources of Identity: Circumstances Homework Assignment⁵

1. Try to identify any negative expectations you have about your circumstances. Examples would include:

If anything can go wrong, it will.

If things go well for me, it is only a matter of time until things will turn bad.

God loves others more than me; I am not His favored one.

My circumstances will never change.

I am a victim who will always be victimized.

2. List and describe any painful experiences you have had where there was a series of painful circumstances. Your negative expectations may help you to identify the experiences which led to them.

3. Describe any decisions you may have made about how you will respond based on these expectations and experiences. Examples would include:

I must sabotage any opportunity I have to experience happiness.

I will take and/or accept the role of a victim.

I will pull away from God since He is not there for me.

There is no point in trying to make a better life for myself.

⁵ Colleen Stortvedt, *On the Road to Freedom* (Kearney, Nebraska: Morill Publishing, 2010), 185.

4. Take one of the following passages about God's view of you each day this week and read and meditate on it. Put your name in it to personalize it to you.
 - a. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the father of lights" James 1:17, NKJV
 - b. "Whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me." 1 Corinthians 15:10
 - c. "Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? Isaiah 43:19, NASB
 - d. "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work" 2 Corinthians 9:8, RSV
 - e. "This doesn't mean, of course, that we have only a hope of future joys—we can be full of joy here and now even in our trials and troubles" Romans 5:3, Phillips
 - f. "As we know Jesus better, his divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life" 2 Peter 1:3, NLT
 - g. "For all things are yours...and you are Christ's and Christ is God's" 1 Corinthians 3:21,23,ESV