



- We lack the training that gives us strength for the long term.
- Difficulties can develop a new you.

2 My friends, be glad, even if you have a lot of trouble. 3 You know that you learn to endure by having your faith tested. 4 But you must learn to endure everything, so that you will be completely mature and not lacking in anything. James 1:2-4 (CEV)

- Boot Camp will break you down and then rebuild you again.
- Our identity changes as we embrace our new culture.

**Culture:** Values that are accepted, and rewarded, that shape desired behaviors.

- The culture we embrace shapes who we become.

2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Romans 12:2 (NLT)

Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God..... Romans 12:2 (MSG)

- The culture we embrace shapes our identity.
- Your identity is the lens through which you see and value yourself.
- We become who God created us to be as our identity changes.
- What you were may describe you but it doesn't have to define you.

#### A starting point to a new identity:

- We have to unlearn what keeps us tied to our old identity.
- We have to learn to accept an identity that doesn't seem to fit us.

10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

27 So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:27 (NLT)

It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone. Ephesians 1:11-12 (Msg)

#### A common misunderstanding:

- God loving you doesn't mean you're in relationship with God.
  - God's love is unconditional, but relationship has conditions.

9 If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9 (NLT)

14 "If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you.

15 But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matthew 6:14-15 (NLT)

21 The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both. 1 John 4:21 (MSG)

- God's love makes a relationship possible.

8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. Romans 5:8 (NLT)

35 It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open. Acts 10:35 (MSG)

- Relationship with Jesus changes our identity.

It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Ephesians 1:11 (Msg)

When our identity is not in Christ, success goes to our head and failure goes to our heart.

#### How to embrace a new identity:

- I will start valuing myself, not by my past or how others label me, but by God's love.
- I will stop believing God's love is limited or conditional.
- I will rely on God's love to change me.

I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources that He will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Ephesians 3:16-19 (NLT)



**TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE  
IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.**

#### Questions for Connection Groups:

*These questions also work well for personal time with God.*

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- Talk about the definition of culture provided on your notes. How does the military provide a culture of a soldier? What are some environments we choose that provide a culture to follow God?
- Your identity is the lens through which you see and value yourself. Would you say you see yourself through God's lens or another lens? Explain.
- What are some things we might have to unlearn that keeps us tied to an old identity?
- What are some things that God says about us that we might need to accept, even though they don't seem to fit us?
- Why is it so important that we seek to discover God's love for us? If we viewed ourselves the way God views us, how would we change?
- How does relationship with Jesus change our identity?
- Talk about the statement on your notes that says: "When our identity is not in Christ, success goes to our head and failure goes to our heart."
- How can you change the lens by which you see and value yourself?

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