

# Getting Deep

- Identity in Christ
- Prayer and Fasting
- Giving: Tithes and Offering
- Confidence in God

# Identity in Christ

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” (Psalm 139:13-14)

## Welcome

### First Impressions

1. For each group member, prepare a piece of paper, tape, and pen.
2. Tape the paper onto each other’s back
3. Everyone will write their first impressions of the person on the paper.
4. After everyone has participated, each one may now look at the papers on their back and have them confirm or negate the things written on it.

Transition Statement: Some got their first impressions right, some didn’t. But that’s not all we are. We are not defined by what others think, but by how God looks at us.

## Worship

Lead the group into singing “Who Am I” by the Casting Crowns or listen to it together.

## Word

1. Hook: Has anyone ever made you feel like you are worth nothing? Can you share to the group about it?
2. Book: Read Ephesians 2:1-10

## How to Use this material

1. Learn it for yourself and take its message to heart.
2. Answer the questions and reflect on them, especially on God’s Word, and what it means to your personal life.
3. Share this material with the people around you. God wants to use your life, so others would come to know Christ! Feel free to share to them this material. 😊

*Ephesians 2:1-10*

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

- a. How did the Apostle Paul describe us?
- b. Prior to being saved, what penalty do we deserve?
- c. How have we been “made alive”?
- d. Based on Psalm 139:13-16, what is the extent of God’s love for us?

*Psalm 139:13-16*

*13 For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.  
15 My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place,  
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.  
16 Your eyes saw my unformed body;  
all the days ordained for me were written in your book  
before one of them came to be.*

3. Look: Can you say that you have experienced the saving grace of the Lord? How?
4. Took: How does knowing you are “fearfully and wonderfully made” help you in how you look at yourself?

**Works**

Lead the group into prayer, according to their responses to the Word. Encourage them to look at themselves like how God looks at them: sinners saved by grace.

# Prayer & Fasting

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?” (Isaiah 58:6-7)

## Welcome

Ask the members: Have you experienced an earthquake, flood, or a disaster?

1. If yes, have you lost “important” things from that disaster?
2. If not yet, what do you think would you do in an emergency? Who or what would you save first?
3. Suppose you are in a hospital bed and unconscious. Whose person’s name would you call out first?
4. What are the things you think you can’t live without?”

Transition Statement: We all have necessities, or the things we need to “survive” the day. However, they are still just material things that can get lost or destroyed. When they do, we cannot just cry over the loss all day; we still have to move on with life, and eventually, we will get used to not having them around.

## Worship

Have each group member share the top 5 things they are thankful for at the moment.

## How to Use this material

1. Learn it for yourself and take its message to heart.
2. Answer the questions and reflect on them, especially on God’s Word, and what it means to your personal life.
3. Share this material with the people around you. God wants to use your life, so others would come to know Christ! Feel free to share to them this material. 😊

## Word

1. Hook: What are the things you are praying for at the moment?
2. Book: Read Isaiah 58:3-7

*Isaiah 58:3-7 "Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it? Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers. Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast and a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"*

Fasting is subtracting something from our lives in order to give more attention to praying for various concerns, and to the Lord. One could fast from a basic necessity like food, or an addictive habit.

Prayer and fasting also prepares us for different spiritual battles and temptations. If we can fast from simple basic necessities, then we can be more prepared in resisting temptations.

- a. How have the Israelites failed in their fasting?
3. Look: Fasting alone would render our sacrifice meaningless. It is accompanied by reverent prayer and letting the Lord speak to us.
  - a. How do you think should we fast?
  - b. Going back to our icebreaker, would you accept the challenge to fast from the things you think you can't live without? Why or why not?
4. Took: What should be the end result of true prayer and fasting?

## Works

Pray for one another. Ask one another one thing they could fast from for a week, for them to focus more on prayer. They could also "pay it forward" or fast from something and give it to those in need; for example, if they choose to fast from excessive buying, they could give the money they saved to the ministry or to someone in need. Encourage them that this is an act of love for the Lord, and a means of His grace.

Be prepared to share your experience on the next meeting.

# Giving

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

(2 Corinthians 9:7)

## Welcome

Ask the members the following:

1. What is the best gift you have ever received? How did you express your delight and gratitude?
2. What is the best gift you have given? How did you express your delight and gratitude?

Transition statement: We like to receive gifts. Who doesn't? But isn't there an inexplicable joy when it is our turn to give—something unmatched by the feeling of just receiving?

## Worship

Take time to thank the Lord for the greatest blessing you have received.

## Word

1. Hook: How much was the biggest amount you have given away? How did you feel?
2. Book: Have the members take turns in reading the following verses:

*Malachi 3:8-10*

*“Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ in your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be*

## How to Use this material

1. Learn it for yourself and take its message to heart.

2. Answer the questions and reflect on them, especially on God's Word, and what it means to your personal life.

3. Share this material with the people around you. God wants to use your life, so others would come to know Christ! Feel free to share to them this material. 😊

*food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.”*

*Proverbs 3:9-10*

*“Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.”*

*2 Corinthians 9:7*

*“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

*Job 1:20-21*

*At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.”*

*Romans 12:1*

*“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”*

- a. Based on the first set of passages, do you think we own anything in this world?
  - b. How can we give honor to the Lord, our Creator (Malachi 3:8-10)?
  - c. Since we have experienced His immense grace, and since we don’t really own anything on earth, what can we give to bring Him honor (Romans 12:1)?
3. Look: Do you think we can “out give” the Lord? Why or why not?
  4. Took: What does the Lord ask us to give?

The Lord is honored when we give our tithes, or one-tenth of our income. After all, He should always come first. But giving a tenth of our income is not the whole point. The Lord wants us to give our all in worshipping and serving Him, and out of our willingness to be used for His glory, cheerful giving follows. In tithing and offering, we do not simply give our resources, but we offer our all.

The Lord is not concerned with our money and resources—everything came from Him. He is concerned with the way we worship Him through our giving and in the state of our heart when we give.

## Works

Challenge one another to give more than the greatest amount they have ever given. Have them also share what they can offer to the Lord this week. Be prepared to share your answers on the next meeting.

# Confidence in God

“God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1)

## Welcome

Ask the members:

1. What is your talent, or what do your friends say you are good at? Can you share it to the group (if applicable)?
2. What talent do you wish to have but could not do as of the moment?

Transition Statement: We have talents, skills and intelligences that we may be confident to do. However, being human, we have limitations. If we are asked to do something we are not good at, it could cause us much stress or fear.

Having confidence is not bad. But having overconfidence or underconfidence are equally bad.

It is a great thing that God is our source of strength and confidence when we are weak.

## Worship

Lead the group into singing “Made Me Glad” by Hillsong United.

## How to Use this material

1. Learn it for yourself and take its message to heart.
2. Answer the questions and reflect on them, especially on God’s Word, and what it means to your personal life.
3. Share this material with the people around you. God wants to use your life, so others would come to know Christ! Feel free to share to them this material. 😊

## Word

1. Hook: Have you ever trusted someone's promises yet they broke it? Have you also broken a promise yourself?
2. Book: Read Proverbs 14:26; Psalm 46:1; Psalm 118:8 and Luke 18:27. Who can we trust in all circumstances?

*Proverbs 14:26*

*In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.*

*Psalm 46:1*

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*

*Psalm 118:8*

*It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man.*

*Luke 18:27*

*There are some things that humans cannot do, but God can do anything.*

3. Look: How has the Lord filled your limitation during a stressful time or during a time you were fearful or insecure?
4. Took: What should we do when overcome by fear, stress or insecurity?

Whatever the circumstance, we can be sure that we can put our confidence in the Lord who does not lack anything.

## Works

Have each one share if anything causes them stress or trouble in school or at home. Have a time of prayer and ask God for strength and courage. Acknowledge that the Lord will be their strength in their weaknesses, and encourage them to carry this outlook throughout the week and beyond.

"Godfidence"- A feeling or consciousness of God's power or reliance on God's promises; also the faith or belief that God will act in a right, proper or effective way.

This coming week and beyond, face your fears, worries and everything with Godfidence!