

10.2.16 Identity

Discussion Questions

Leader Prep Section

Take time before your small group meeting to prepare by reading through the questions and scripture passage so that you can select 4-5 questions that are best suited to your group.

Try to work through at least one question from each of the sections - Hook, Book, Look, Took in order to move from observation to application.

When possible spend time in prayer for each member of your group.

Questions

Hook - Ice breaker type questions to help make the transition into the study time.

1. Do you remember playing hide and seek as a kid? If so what were some of your tricks for finding a great hiding spot? What tricks do you use to continue to hide as an adult?
2. Share a time you felt safe enough to let your truest self be visible. How did you feel?

Background

We will be looking at three separate passages in Genesis. The first takes place in the Garden and describes the moments following Adam and Eve eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The second passage takes place at the end of Isaac's life and involves Rebekah conspiring to get Isaac to bless Jacob rather than Esau. Rebekah overheard Isaac send Esau out to hunt wild game so that he could make a nice meal for his father and then be given the blessing. Rebekah knew exactly what to do to prevent that from happening and she left nothing to chance. At this point in his life Isaac could no longer see so he relied on his hearing and touch to identify people. Rebekah dressed Jacob in Esau's clothes and even covered his hands and face with goat skins to make him feel hairy like his brother. She cooked two young goats from the flock just the way Isaac liked them and sent Jacob in to see his father.

The third passage is take place as Jacob prepares to meet his brother for the first time since he stole his blessing. Jacob has done well for himself in the years between these two encounters and now he is returning home. On his way he sent a message to Esau and when the messengers returned they told Jacob that Esau is headed out to meet him with 400 of his own men. Jacob then divides his group into two parts and separates them in the hopes of one group surviving if Esau attacks. Then he goes a step further and selects a gift from his animals and sends them along ahead to Esau. Our part of the story picks up during the night right before Jacob crosses the Jabbok river.

Read Genesis 3:7-10, 27:18-24, 32:22-30

Book - These questions are designed to get you into the text itself.

1. What did Adam and Eve do after eating the fruit?
2. How many times did Isaac ask Jacob if he was Esau? Is there any doubt Jacob was a willing partner in this conspiracy?
3. What are the outcomes of the wrestling match that Jacob has during the night?

Look - These questions will take you on a deeper look at what the passage means for us today.

1. In what ways do we hide ourselves from each other and from God like Adam and Eve?

2. When have you been tempted to pretend to be someone you are not to get ahead?
3. What element of your true self has God revealed to you in your own wrestling with him?

Took - These questions are focused on applying the big idea from the text to our lives.

1. What can we do today to come out from our hiding spots? Where do we find the courage to stop hiding?
2. What would be a better approach the situation Jacob finds himself in? Why is it so hard to embrace who we are rather than who we think we should be?
3. What reminds you to live in the reality that you are deeply loved and that love can give you the confidence to let your true self be seen?

Closing

Hiding is easy and so part of our world that we often don't even notice. Take a bit of a risk with your group tonight and spend a few minutes sharing (if your group has built the kind of trust required for this) one thing about who you really are that you do not usually share. Then, spend some time praying for the wisdom to know when and with whom you should share that piece of yourself with next.

Reminder: We did not come into this world by chance or happenstance and our true identity is defined and refined by Jesus. It is to him and him alone that we ultimately belong and he gives us our story and the lens through which to understand it.