

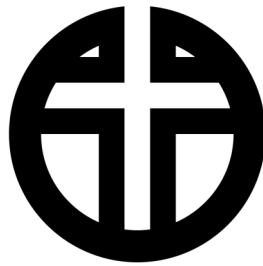
**CONFIDENT
IDENTITY
PREVIEW**

CONFIDENT IDENTITY

**Christian Strategies to
Forget Who You Aren't and
Discover Who You Really Are**

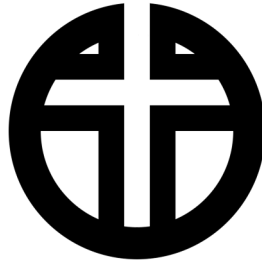
MATT PAVLIK MA, LPCC-S

BRINGING YOUR POTENTIAL TO LIGHT



Christian Concepts
New Reflections Counseling, Inc.
Dayton, Ohio, USA

Confident Identity
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PDF Version 1.0 20170726 \$12.00 USD
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Published in the United States of America by Christian Concepts (christianconcepts.com), an imprint of New Reflections Counseling, Inc. (newreflections counseling.com).

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Some of the examples are composites from several situations. Details and names have been changed to protect anonymity. Any resemblance to persons alive or dead is purely coincidental.

This book is not intended to be a replacement for professional counseling.

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Pavlik, Matthew Edward, 1971-

Confident Identity: Christian Strategies to Forget Who You Aren't and Discover Who You Really Are / Matt Pavlik.

ISBN-10: 0-9863831-5-5 (softcover)

ISBN-13: 978-0-9863831-5-1 (softcover)

1. Identity (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity
2. Confidence—Religious aspects—Christianity
3. Personality—Religious aspects—Christianity
4. Shame—Religious aspects—Christianity
5. Hope—Religious aspects—Christianity
6. Purpose—Religious aspects—Christianity
7. Self-esteem—Religious aspects—Christianity

BV4509.5 P38 2017

248.4—dc23

Self-perception, Truth, Healing, Stress, Work, Emotions, Counseling, Change, Growth, Brain, Anxiety, Encouragement, Self-acceptance, Burnout, Meaning (Philosophy), Codependency, Addiction, Vocation, Developmental psychology, Rejection (Psychology), Femininity, Masculinity, Perfectionism, Spiritual Gifting, Self-deception, Authority, Gender identity, Object relations (Psychoanalysis), Intelligence, Compulsive eating

Dedication

To my children, Abby, Christy, Daniel, and Luke:

May God always grant you a Confident Identity.

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Foreword

Have you ever read a book that leaves you in a thoughtful place of contemplation long after the last page has been turned and the book is closed?

Confident Identity is that kind of book.

Days after reading its final pages, I found myself deliberately and intentionally processing the content of this book. Thinking through my personality, pondering my gifts, and praying through my God-given and life-shaped identity, I couldn't shake the significance of its words. I felt a sense of purpose after reading its words — a driving challenge to explore, expand, and exercise my identity for not only myself but also for the edification of those around me and for the glorification of my Heavenly Father.

Confident Identity is a conversation-starter, a thought-generator, and a game-changer.

Combining Scripture, clinical theories, and practical tools, Matt has thoughtfully crafted a beautiful resource for not only those seeking to better understand and strengthen their identity but also for those who work in both lay and professional settings. The book is filled with an abundance of insightful questions, constructive ideas, easy-to-read charts, and meaningful activities and tests which allow an individual to thoroughly explore and contemplate their identity.

This resource does a wonderful job of providing the reader with mini therapeutic sessions that can be done in the confines of a home, over a cup of coffee with a trusted friend, in a church community group, or even in the safety of a therapist's office. As a therapist myself, this will be in a quick-to-reach spot in my office, as I see this book being a helpful clinical resource when thinking through treatment plans and case conceptualization for those who are struggling in understanding, defining, and forming their identity.

Every follower of Christ could benefit from reading and engaging with the content of this book; I know I have.

Jessica Buczek MS, LPC
June 2017

Preface

I've always wanted my life to have meaning. I spent my teenage years trying to make sense of life. What is the meaning of life? Until I became a Christian at 20 years old, I couldn't find an answer.

I'm still working on my answer today, but I have a much better one than I did 30 years ago. I don't stumble around in the dark as much. I spend more time figuring out the best way to make use of my time — and actually using it.

This book is, in a sense, my story of a search for an identity. I believe it's your story, too, because it's everyone's story.

Who you think you are has more power to determine the course of your life than anything else. I can think of only four possible answers to "Who am I?"

1. Are you a randomly assembled group of cells — a culmination of billions of years of evolution? Nothing more than an animal with a brief 100 years to live and then you'll cease to exist?
2. Are you a species planted by an extraterrestrial life form — the descendants of a people who didn't care to explain where you come from and why you're on this planet?
3. Were you created by a distant and indifferent god who delights in seeing you suffer and is too lazy or too selfish to mount a rescue mission?
4. Or, instead, are you the intentional and specific creation of a God who loves and cares about you so much that He did rescue you out of a sick world?

Life is really hard because you don't live in Paradise. If you don't have an identity or don't know God's love, then all that remains is attempting to extract the most pleasure from every moment you have. What happens when life doesn't go the way you want it to? There's only more despair now and/or more later when you face death.

But life isn't that bleak. You don't live in a meaningless vacuum, and this makes all the difference. Hope exists for today in the life you have here because of the reality you have beyond this life.

Who you are changes the course of the world because of all God has done to set you free and empower you with His Holy Spirit. God has defeated and disarmed your primary obstacles (death, sin, and the curse), thereby opening a path before you.

Be on a journey of discovery. Look beyond your obstacles, be they rejection, failure, or fear. The enemy makes use of these to block your vision of a glorious hope.

Seek to know and understand the God who created you. Jesus said to love your neighbor as yourself. To truly love someone, you need to know them warts, wonder, and all. You have a backstage pass to your own life. You and the Holy Spirit get to witness the internal workings of God's creation: you. The more you fully understand your identity in relation to Jesus, the more you can understand and love others.

Too often, people ignore themselves as they seek to love others. But you can't possibly love others until you're intimately aware of all that God has placed in you. Then you can experience love for God and yourself and, finally, genuine affection for others. So pursue your Confident Identity; don't shy away from investing in discovering God's amazing creation.

I've struggled to understand my significance over the years. I've felt lost and adrift on a great, empty ocean. This book will give you a major boost forward in life. It's not a shortcut, because

you'll need to do the work for yourself, but it should keep you from wandering aimlessly in shark-infested waters and point you toward a safe haven called *home*. You can be at home with yourself because Jesus is your Immanuel — God with you.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to God, who loves me, works to ensure I have a Confident Identity, and empowers me to complete His work.

Thanks to my parents for their dedication to pray as I follow God's calling.

Thanks to my clients, who teach me every day how to be a better counselor.

Thanks to Will Alejandro, who helped me talk through what I wanted to say.

Thanks to the following test readers who provided feedback that made this a better book:

Jessica Buczek, Ingrid DeDecker, Tim Hill, Abby Pavlik, Christy Pavlik,
Ed Pavlik, Georgette Pavlik, Sophia Sparks, Renette Steele, and Crisinda Tackett

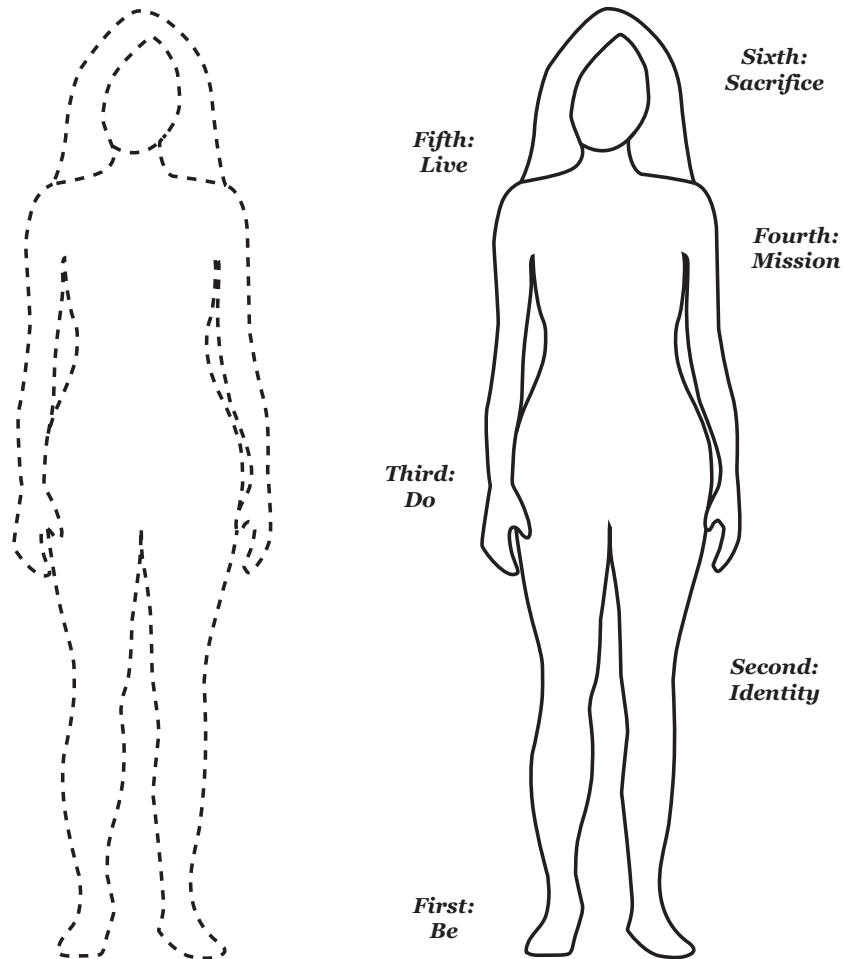
Introduction

*By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established;
by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*

—Proverbs 24:3–4

Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

—Psalm 127:1a



The Lord, with wisdom and understanding, establishes your identity —
like a house filled with precious and pleasant riches.

Six Steps to Confident Living

1. **Be:** Simply exist and receive love.
2. **Identity:** Develop the sense of who you are.
3. **Do:** Practice and grow in skills.
4. **Mission:** Fulfill your purpose.

5. **Live:** Enjoy the time you have.
6. **Sacrifice:** Invest your time in others.

What I Believe about Identity

Beyond God Himself, your identity is the most important and powerful gift God has given you. You wouldn't exist without your identity. Here is what I believe to be true:

- Every human is created in God's image.
- You have an identity that exists only in the context of your relationship with God.
- If you want to enjoy life and make the most of it, you must understand exactly who you are. This includes a spiritual and a practical understanding of why God made you the way He did.
- Every Christian has a general spiritual identity. This book covers this identity and so much more. You need to understand your personality and your uniqueness.

Who Will Benefit from This Book

You can be alive and understand some things about yourself but still be far away from God's intentions for your life. I wrote this book while thinking about an identity crisis — an opportunity for growth. Everyone has to face a crisis of identity. I'm convinced it's part of God's plan in a fallen world to shape and mature us into who He made us to be.

Both men and women struggle with identity, often in different ways, but both will benefit from this book. This book is especially for you if you:

- Are struggling with how to make your life work
- Like to understand how things work — how each part functions in relation to the whole
- Want to learn the details of God's design
- Like to reflect in order to gain understanding
- Want a full-brain learning experience
- Appreciate visual diagrams to gain understanding
- Learn best by seeing principles and ideas in their simplest form
- Want to apply the appropriate principles and ideas to bring about positive change
- Want to make the most of your time in counseling

How to Get the Most out of This Book

- As you complete the readings and exercises, I suggest sharing your insights and questions with your trusted friends, fiancé(e), partner, and/or counselor. You can even use this book in group discussions.
- Read the chapters in the order presented. If you haven't already done so, read the Preface. Although some chapters can stand alone, most chapters build upon previously developed ideas.
- Move slowly through the book by fully digesting a chapter before moving on to the next one.
- Expect further insights with each chapter you read.
- Have fun with this! You're about to embark on a full-scale learning experience.
- Use the checkboxes (☐) in the Next Steps sections to mark when you've completed the exercises at the end of each chapter.

- For the movie exercises, be sure to use the questions in Appendix B and review the comments and cautions (some movies are rated R).
- Journal your thoughts and feelings while reading each chapter.
- Draw images that represent your learning experiences; this will engage more of your brain.
- Use the Blueprint Space to journal and draw.
- Share your insights with your partner or others with whom you share a close relationship; ask them questions about what you're reading.
- Seek counseling to address those topics that identify one of your tender spots.
- Use this book as part of your counseling.
- When making tough, life-changing decisions, allow one or more trusted advisors or counselors the opportunity to offer their perspective (Proverbs 15:22). I've made every effort to be clear and accurate, but even the inerrant truth of the Bible can be applied incorrectly.
- As you work through the material, it will stretch you, and some of your emotional baggage will surface. You may feel encouraged but also uncomfortable. This is by design. Pursue the material at a pace you can manage, but don't give up. Those who push through will benefit the most.

Editorial Notes

- See the copyright page for disclaimers.
- When referring to singular nouns where the gender is unimportant or unknown, I often use the plural pronouns "they" or "their" instead of the more awkward "he or she" or "his or her."
- I alternate between "he" and "she" except where the example naturally calls for one gender over the other. Although each gender has its own strengths and weaknesses, either gender can, at some point, struggle with just about any problem. The use of a particular gender in an example doesn't mean I'm excluding the other.
- Unless otherwise noted, when I speak of identity, I'm assuming the reader is a Christian. If you're not a Christian yet, you'll benefit from the book, but some of the attributes of a Christian identity (for example, spiritual gifts) won't apply to you. This is because the Holy Spirit provides the gift, and only Christians gain the Holy Spirit.

How This Book Is Structured to Help You

If you were going on a geological excavation, you would first need to have a clear picture of what you were looking for. Then you'd use the appropriate tools to investigate. After you found something, you'd assimilate your discovery into your working knowledge. That is exactly what you'll be doing with your identity in this book.

Part I	Chapters 1–6	Understanding God's Design of Your Identity
Part II	Chapters 7–15	Discovering God's Design of Your Identity
Part III	Chapters 16–18	Using God's Design of Your Identity

End of Preview

This is the end of the preview. If you would like to continue reading, you can purchase the EBook version at <http://gum.co/ConfidentIdentity>.

The print version is available for purchase at amazon.com/author/mattpavlik.

Part I — Understanding Your Identity

Chapter 1 Ashamed or Confident

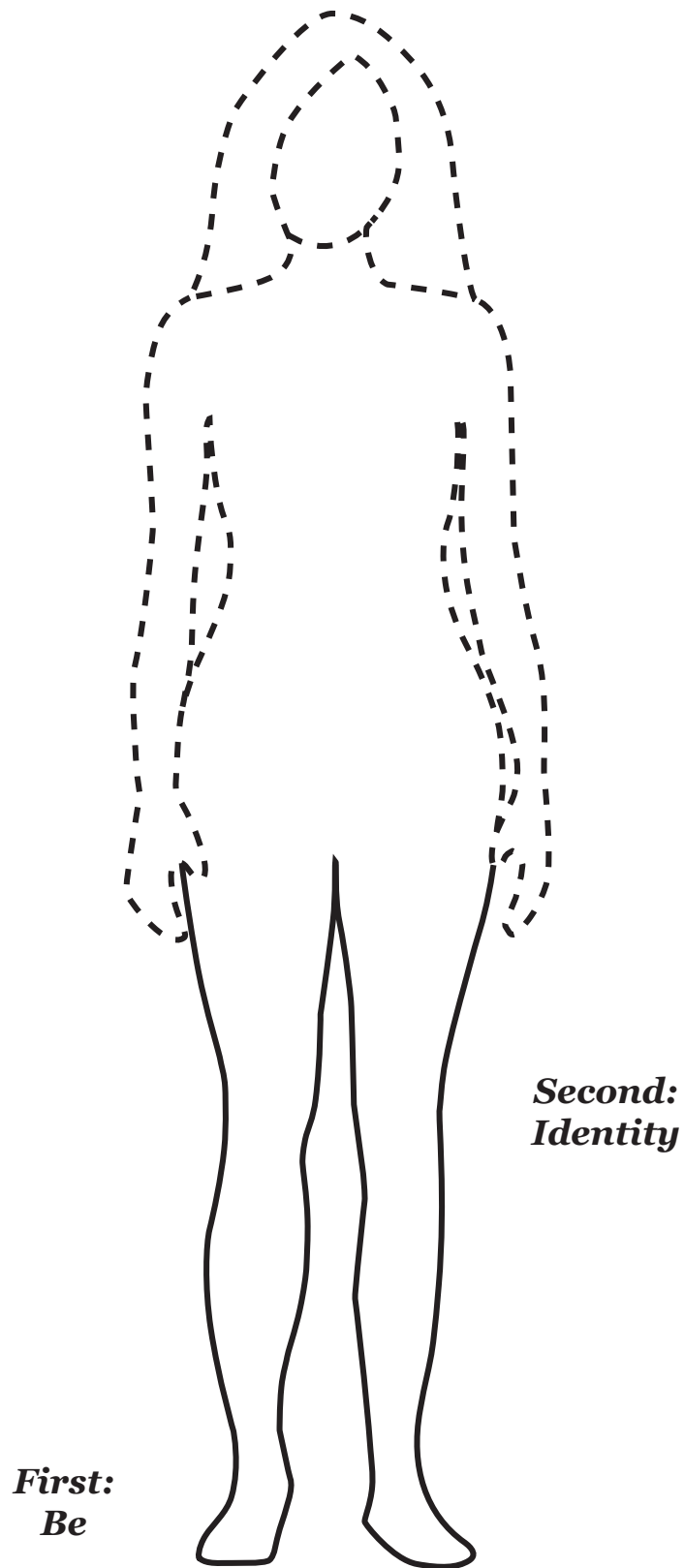
Chapter 2 Fearful or Secure

Chapter 3 Doubtful or Hopeful

Chapter 4 Rejected or Accepted

Chapter 5 Isolated and Desolate

Chapter 6 Connected and Fruitful



Understanding (God's Design of Your Identity)

Chapter 1

Ashamed or Confident

Amy wipes away her tears and steps outside. The door clicks behind her. As she walks toward her car, she pushes down intrusive feelings of rejection and forces herself to focus on her communications class.

At least now I'll have more time to make progress on my final project.

As she nears her car, the left side of her face twitches. She stops abruptly. Then her face betrays her again. She counts each twitch.

Three . . . Ack!

She retrieves her keys and unlocks the door.

Four . . . What's going on with me? Stop it! People are staring. Keep going. Don't look.

As she gets in her car, she throws down her purse. Her breathing quickens and a wave of nausea sweeps over her. She touches her face, but it doesn't feel like it's hers.

Five . . . Six . . . Why is this happening? I'm freaking out!

She grips her steering wheel with both hands. The tighter she grips, the more she believes she can make the twitching stop.

Seven . . . Eight . . . I'm okay. I'm okay. I'm okay. No, I'm not okay. I'm such a loser. I'll never be able to find the right man. I don't know who to be. Being me isn't working.

Nine . . . Ten . . . This isn't funny, God. I can't handle this!

She starts the car and drives away.

I hope I never feel this humiliated again.

Shamed into Who You Aren't

Shame is the deep-down sense that who you are is defective and worthless and therefore, you aren't needed or wanted by anyone. Shame is a problem of epidemic proportions. All who struggle with it become isolated from the cause and the cure: relationship. Relationships have the potential to affirm or to reject who you are.

Going without acceptance is not an option. In terms of basic needs, affirmation of who you are is second only to water, food, and shelter. Without acceptance, you'll be tempted to try to be someone else. But this *never* produces a Confident Identity. At best, under extreme psychological

trauma, it prevents more serious harm — but even then, avoiding your identity is only a temporary solution. To return to health, you'll have to reconcile with your identity later in life.

This isn't the first time Amy has felt the sting of rejection. Each time she loses a relationship, she suffers devastating loss because she emotionally overinvests in the men in her life.

Amy is faced with a seemingly lose-lose situation. She can have the pain of staying in a dysfunctional relationship, or she can have the pain of being alone. She knows all too well that loneliness can be as painful as a going-nowhere relationship. There has to be another option for her. What is going to help her move toward health?

Amy is experiencing a classic identity crisis. Identity crises come in different flavors, but the root of the problem is always an insufficient amount of internal resources to meet the demands of life. Amy doesn't want to remain as she is; however, her current emotional resources aren't sophisticated enough to resolve her problem in a way that's good for her.

A weak identity can result in a whole host of problems. Instead of a losing a relationship, she could have been stuck in a going-nowhere job or, even worse, a going-nowhere life. When a challenge pops up in her life, she faces uncertainty. Does she have enough within her to meet life's demands? Is she willing to put in the effort to move past the obstacles?

How deep Amy goes to address her problems will determine whether this pattern will continue. Has she experienced enough pain to motivate her to put in the effort to move forward? Or will she try again in much the same way, unwilling to face her pain, passively wishing for a new and better path to present itself?

Amy's identity crisis reveals her vulnerability. Some finite number of negative experiences (such as her failed relationships) result in pervasive, negative, and overwhelming beliefs.

What Is Identity?

Who am I? Doesn't everyone long to know the answer to this question? Yes and no. Yes, we want to know the positives. We have a built-in desire to be recognized and to be significant. No, we fear making contact with the parts we're ashamed of. Instead, we hide those parts so we don't have to feel shame.

You can't make up your identity as you go. Instead, you discover the identity God has already planned and created. You live in the context of a story greater than yourself. God wants you to dig, as if for a treasure, to uncover your part in His story. Seek and you shall find, He says; knock and the door will be opened. To understand yourself completely, you need both a deep internal understanding of yourself and an extensive understanding of God and the rest of creation.

Your *self-image* is how positive or negative you see yourself. Your *self-worth* or *self-esteem* is how much you value yourself.

God makes each person in His image. Each person is one-of-a-kind: sufficiently intricate to be recognizably distinct from every other person. Given a complicated enough task, everyone will approach the same task differently in some way.

These four dictionary definitions¹ capture the essence of identity. Identity is:

1. "Who you are." This definition encapsulates what I mean by *identity*.
2. "The set of characteristics by which you are definitively recognizable." This definition clarifies that we can use *identity* to distinguish you from others.
3. "Your unique characteristics held by no other person." This definition clarifies that *having an identity* means you have something that no one else will ever have.

¹ Compiled from yourdictionary.com/identity and dictionary.com/browse/identity.

4. “What remains the same, constant, persisting over time, under varying circumstances.” This definition provides the insight that identity must be permanently yours, or else it really isn’t part of you.

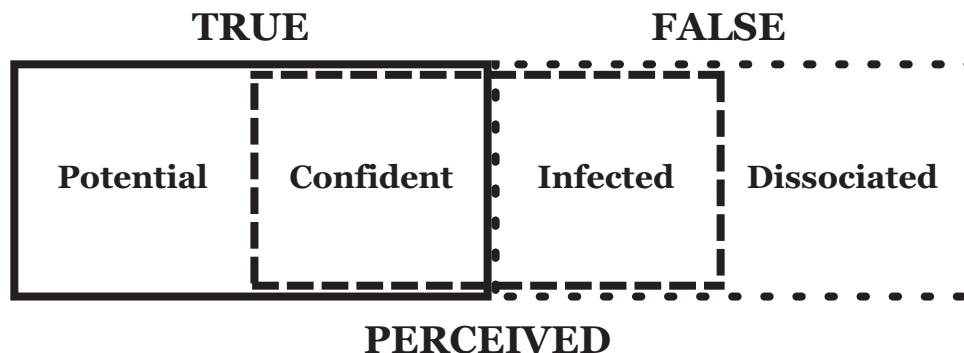
Unfortunately, what you understand as your identity includes both accurate and inaccurate information mixed together. These true and false parts — some of which you know, and some of which you don’t know about yourself — make up your Earthly Identity.

Imagine your Earthly Identity as a passenger balloon. The balloon ride won’t be pleasant if the basket never completely leaves the ground. Dragging along the ground would rattle you to your core as you bumped into boulders, hillsides, trees . . . The sandbags represent what is false because they weigh you down and keep you from your True Identity. The balloon and the basket represent what is true. The balloon provides lift, and the basket contains and carries you where you need to go.



God designed you to fly at a certain height. Your False Identity keeps you from attaining the optimal altitude. However, sometimes God allows you a False Identity to keep your pride in check — so you don’t think too highly of yourself (2 Corinthians 12:7). A weakness like this helps you see your need for God.

Your Earthly Identity is based on present day reality. I’ve divided Earthly Identity into three overlapping parts or perspectives to help you better understand identity: True (Potential plus



Confident Identity), False (Infected plus Dissociated Identity), and Perceived (Confident plus Infected Identity). In heaven, only your True Identity will be present.

True Identity

Your True Identity is God's original design for you, intentionally planned before you were born (Ephesians 2:10). Imagine yourself in heaven standing next to Jesus, complete, confident, and fully aware of who you are (1 Corinthians 13:12). Your True Identity will no longer be partially hidden from you.

Although you haven't yet fully realized your True Identity, it is permanent and complete (in God's mind). Identity cannot be permanently lost, but we frequently lose sight of it. You know some of it, and some of it you don't. Your True Identity represents your new self and includes the positive aspects of your strengths and weaknesses (Ephesians 4:22–24).

True Identity can be divided into Potential Identity and Confident Identity.

Potential Identity

Only God knows everything about you. Your Potential Identity is the part God knows but you have yet to discover (or have discovered but forgotten). It's the part of your True Identity that you aren't in touch with or that hasn't yet emerged.

Confident Identity

Identity is what something *is*, as distinguishable from everything else. *Confidence* is the assurance of something. To have a Confident Identity means you're living with the assurance of knowing who you are. You know yourself and aren't ashamed. Your identity is not nearly as relevant when it is hidden, nor when it's discovered but not appreciated, embraced, and put into play. You function with your Confident Identity as you achieve awareness and acceptance of your True Identity, resulting in a unique set of actions that ultimately further God's kingdom.

False Identity

Your False Identity is the opposite of your True identity. Whatever is outside of God's intentional design is false. Your False Identity develops because of negative life experiences, some of which you're aware of, some of which you aren't.

Your False Identity includes the negative self-concepts resulting from negative experiences wrongly attributed as defining your identity. These false beliefs, or lies, actively feed your self-image, creating interference during your battle for a Confident Identity.

Your False Identity is like cancer in some ways and a cloak in others. Cancer is otherwise healthy cells gone bad because of defective instructions.² The cancerous part of your identity includes the aspects of yourself that are diseased (or in spiritual terms, sinful; see Romans 8:1–11). These parts need to be removed. A cloak can hide something, making it appear to be something that it isn't. You can deceive yourself into believing you're well when you aren't. You can bury negative beliefs, preventing you from realizing you're sick. Also, you can cover in shame what is good but vulnerable and hurting. These parts need redemption, or to be brought out of hiding and healed.

Together, your Infected Identity and Dissociated Identity make up your False Identity.

² For an intriguing description, see cancercenter.com/discussions/blog/cancer-when-good-cells-go-bad.

Infected Identity

Your Infected Identity is who you falsely believe you are. When you buy into a lie about yourself, you're infected. The cure involves separating out and removing the infection without destroying the true but hurting parts of yourself. What can be especially debilitating is brooding over the lie — punishing yourself with how true you think the lie must be. This is like exposing an infected wound to more germs. For example, Amy, who struggles with her face twitching, has conscious thoughts that she is a loser. At an emotional level, she really believes she is a loser.

Dissociated Identity

Your Dissociated Identity is a false, subconscious idea that impacts your self-image. When an event is too painful to dwell on, one option is to disconnect from the memory of it. On the surface, this can save you from the event's distress (and the resulting shame), but it also prevents you from healing the wound. For example, Amy lacks insight into exactly why her face is twitching. Therefore, her reason for being stuck in a negative cycle likely has something to do with a part of her she isn't quite ready to be in touch with.

The only way to heal the part of you that is dissociated is to first become aware of it. In counseling terms, this step is called *integration*, *re-association*, or even *remembering*. Integration is like stitching your broken pieces back together; awareness effectively converts those pieces to Infected (see the preceding section) so you can continue the healing process.

Perceived Identity

Your Perceived Identity (depicted as the middle dashed rectangle in the Earthly Identity figure earlier in this chapter) is the identity you're conscious of — the image of who you believe you are at any given moment. Only part of your Perceived Identity is your True Identity; the other part includes your False Identity, or what feels true but isn't. The true part of your Perceived Identity is your Confident Identity. The false part is your Infected identity.

The ABCs of a Confident Identity

God is the ultimate powerful weapon against evil. You, being made in God's image, have an identity that is also powerful. If God has secret weapons, your identity is one of them. Not knowing your identity is like being a superhero who isn't aware of their superpowers.

Your identity is a gift from God, possessing both power and permanence. When you have a Confident Identity, you approach life head-on instead of running away. Moving toward your God-given identity increases your capacity for His power to be active in your life, whereas moving away decreases your potential.

To successfully find a lost person, a bloodhound must first learn the target's scent. For you to find your true self, you first need to learn the essential characteristics of your true self. Here are the ABCs (and more) of a Confident Identity: You want to be Aware of your significance, Belonging in your place, Convinced of your design, Devoted to God, Established by God, and a Formidable weapon.

At the end of each section, I've included a list of words that represent each characteristic. Reflect on each word; then select the word you feel best captures the meaning of your identity, or write in a word you feel is a better fit. This will help you create a personalized definition of a Confident Identity.

Aware of Your Significance

If you're a Christian, then you're the salt and light Jesus mentions in Matthew 5. Jesus teaches about two aspects of identity: One, you're like salt, an invaluable mineral that has multiple, unique purposes. Two, you're like light, meant to illuminate God and His truth to others. God intends that you become aware of who you are for the benefit of others.

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its savor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they set it on a lampstand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

—Matthew 5:13–16

A salt identity is potent, powerful, valuable, and useful. A salt-without-savor identity would be bland, dull, worthless, and useless. Jesus says you're savory!

A bright identity is helpful, beautiful, and worshipful. It illuminates, is meant to be on display, and glorifies God. A shamefully hidden identity serves no purpose. Jesus says you're bright!

Fear and shame block you from knowing your identity. You can't discard the shame-covered parts. You can hide from yourself, but you can't hide from God. Because God created you, you're better off experiencing God examining you so He can lead you into greater awareness and understanding.

*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.*

*Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.*

—Psalm 139:15, 23–24 (NIV)

You're significant because of your existence — the way God made you — not because of what you do. Your first responsibility is to simply be; then be who you were made to be. Are you willing to know yourself more deeply?

Select the word or words which best fit with your identity as Aware of Your Significance:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wise to | <input type="checkbox"/> Cognizant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alive | <input type="checkbox"/> Expanding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curious | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Belonging in Your Place

When you belong, you're in your proper place (not lost, not an outcast). You're in relationship with others, not in isolation. In order to belong, you need to be able to share who you are. Are you willing to spend time with others and share your understanding of your identity? Can you spend time being the light and allowing others to be the light to you?

Select the word or words which best fit with your identity as Belonging in Your Place:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fit in | <input type="checkbox"/> Revealing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Connected | <input type="checkbox"/> Accepted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Valued | <input type="checkbox"/> Involved |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Convinced of Your Design

A person with a Confident Identity pursues God's design — their True Identity. To achieve a Confident Identity, you need to increase your perception of your potential and decrease your beliefs in your false perceptions.

All Christians have a spiritual identity. Your spiritual identity consists of these primary truths:

1. You were created/designed/made in God's image (Genesis 1:27).
2. You're a child of God (Galatians 4:3–7).
3. You're loved by God (Romans 8:35–39).
4. You're predestined and chosen by God (Ephesians 1:11, 2:10).
5. You're a place for God's power/glory (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 3:16).
6. You're a part of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12).
7. You're salt and light (Matthew 5:13–16).

Some of these truths you might not completely understand, and that's okay for now. Chapter 11 explains them in more detail.

Your belief in your design will be tested. Going through trials strengthens your belief in your identity. You don't doubt God created you. The more you're confident of your spiritual identity, the more you can be salt and light to those around you.

Select the word or words which best fit with your identity as Convinced of Your Design:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proven | <input type="checkbox"/> Solid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tested | <input type="checkbox"/> Sound |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unwavering | <input type="checkbox"/> Confident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bold | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Devoted to God

You want to know God. You recognize when your relationship with God becomes polluted or diluted. You relentlessly weed out whatever blocks your connection to God. You're addicted to God and not anything else.

Select the word or words which best fit with your identity as Devoted to God:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependent on God | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyal to God |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hope is in God | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity (you're not double-minded) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Sincere |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attached | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Established by God

You, as a trusting child, are able to look to God. You've experienced God's affirmation (you're not orphaned). You accept God as Father and allow Him to be Father to you as He was Father to the returning prodigal son. You understand that you can't be confident in yourself without being confident in God.

Select the word or words which best fit with your identity as Established by God:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affirmed | <input type="checkbox"/> Authoritative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vouched for | <input type="checkbox"/> Rooted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secure | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protected | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Formidable Weapon

The first five ABCs are all about growing and establishing your identity. As God is strengthening your identity, He is defining your purpose. The natural next step is acting upon what you know. You're ready and willing to act (you're not passive). You resist and rebuke evil like Jesus did.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

—Ephesians 2:10

Select the word or words which best fit with your identity as a Formidable Weapon:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fearless | <input type="checkbox"/> In force |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potent | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrefutable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Significant | <input type="checkbox"/> Unwavering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Powerful | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Moving Beyond an Identity Crisis

While facing an identity crisis, you'll ask questions like these: *Who am I? What's the purpose of my existence? What's the meaning of life?* And most conclusively, *Can I face the challenges of life?*

Passage through an identity crisis is a necessary step toward (and only way to) freedom and maturity. An identity crisis can be an internal conflict between settling for the status quo and taking the risk to become something more. Successfully resolving the conflict requires that you expand your capabilities in some way. Anything less than this leaves you unchanged and likely discouraged.

An identity crisis could also be called the challenge of growing pains. Your available responses to an identity crisis are limited by how willing you are to confront the challenge. Consider the following four options, presented in order from least to greatest effort required: Drifting, Conforming, Transforming, and Achieving.³ The four options correspond to the attitudes of the two sons in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32).

³ See the flowchart at the end of the chapter for more detail.

Drifting

Remain dependent on others. Be immature and unwilling to care or act.

This person could be described as a capricious drifter who lacks responsibility. The younger son demanded his inheritance. He lacked respect for both his father and the wealth. He squandered the inheritance with careless living (v. 11–13).

Conforming

Ignore the identity conflict. Be willing to act responsibly by conforming to others' ideas but not enough to invest the energy to develop your own ideas.

The older son worked dutifully for his father. He also lacked respect for his father and the wealth. His heart was closed to his father; he didn't experience his father's generosity. He didn't dare to risk pursuing his own life; he resented working for his father (v. 25–32).

Transforming

Honestly pursue and search for your own answers. Be willing to invest in developing your ideas but not yet willing to embrace God's ideas.

The younger son dared to leave behind the default security of his father's house. He squandered the money he had but eventually moved toward responsibility by accepting whatever job he could find. When his attempts at responsibility failed, he considered returning to his father but without the status of son (v. 14–19).

Achieving

Confidently embrace God's answers. Be willing to invest in discovering and then accepting who God made you to be.

This is not conforming; this is integrating and reconciling your identity with God's identity. Success means an honest appraisal that results in an identity with integrity. The father loved his son and didn't accept his son's diminished self-image. The son accepted his father's love and celebrated with him (v. 20–24).

Choose a Level of RISC

The younger son took the greater risk and lost his wealth. However, his newfound appreciation of his father's love was worth it. The older son didn't consider risk as an option, so he had resentment instead of appreciation.

When you're faced with an identity crisis, choose a level of investment and therefore RISC:

1. Remain immature.
2. Ignore the challenge.
3. Search for answers.
4. Come together with God.

Each successive option requires greater investment, awareness, and confrontation, but results in a stronger identity. What level of RISC are you willing to take?

Having an identity crisis is like becoming lost in the woods. Believing God doesn't have anything for you and that you'll be okay if you work hard is an easy trap to step on. But while the threat of becoming painfully and permanently lost is ever-present, there are multiple ways out, no matter what problem you are experiencing or how long you've been stuck. These paths will lead you out of the woods and back to civilization, where healthy relationships can be formed.

God can speak to you about your direction, making a shortcut through dense woods. God can help you find a lake and tell you where to fish (John 21). He knows the best direction because He

knows the destination — the end goal. You can become confused by too many options, but God can lead you home. Then you can focus your energies on being true to yourself and your values in the midst of your day-to-day life. Achieving a Confident Identity demands your willingness to take the greatest RISC.

What Is Ahead

By reading and applying this book, you'll significantly increase your awareness of who you are. You'll grow in your Confident Identity and live a fruitful life. You have a unique combination of characteristics that point to a purpose only you can fulfill. You can step further into all that God made you to be.

The remainder of Part I will help you further understand identity so you can increase your Confident Identity and decrease your sense of False Identity.

Part II of this book focuses on helping you discover your uniqueness by looking at specific aspects of your identity: physical, gender, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, personality, strengths, and abilities.

Part III will help you pull all these ideas and discoveries together and motivate you to be strong in the battle for your Confident Identity. You'll define a vision and a mission for your identity.

For Reflection

1. Do you believe you are salt and light? Because Jesus said you are, being salt and light is part of your True Identity.
2. An identity crisis is actually an opportunity for you because the struggle can produce growth. Unfortunately, the crisis is usually forced into your awareness by something negative (failure, rejection, low self-worth, loss, trauma). What negative circumstances reinforce this struggle for you? Whether you succeed or fail, God is cheering you on!
3. Imagine going through life without ever making the effort to search for your identity. Then imagine learning who you are on each step along the way.
4. To what degree are you willing to make an investment to see your potential come to light?
5. Non-Christians and Christians alike can achieve an identity, each having a strong sense of who they are. But the core of their identities will be in opposition, like darkness and light (see Matthew 13:24–30, 2 Corinthians 6:14, John 8:39–47).

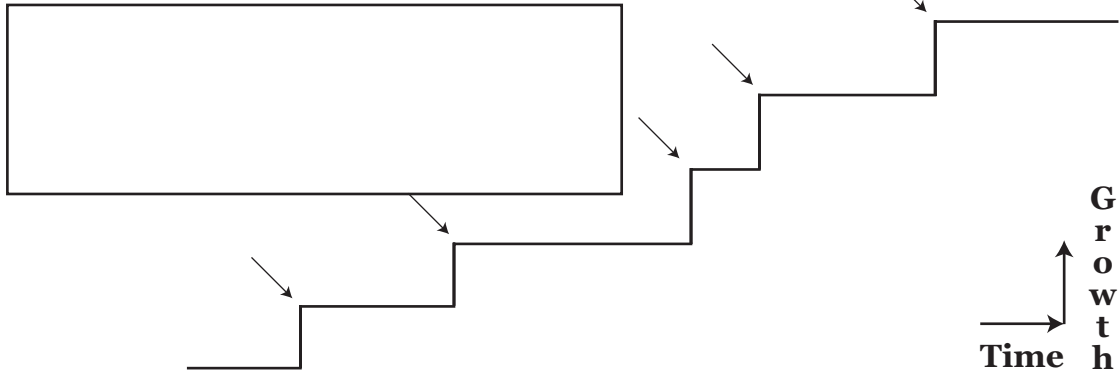
Next Steps

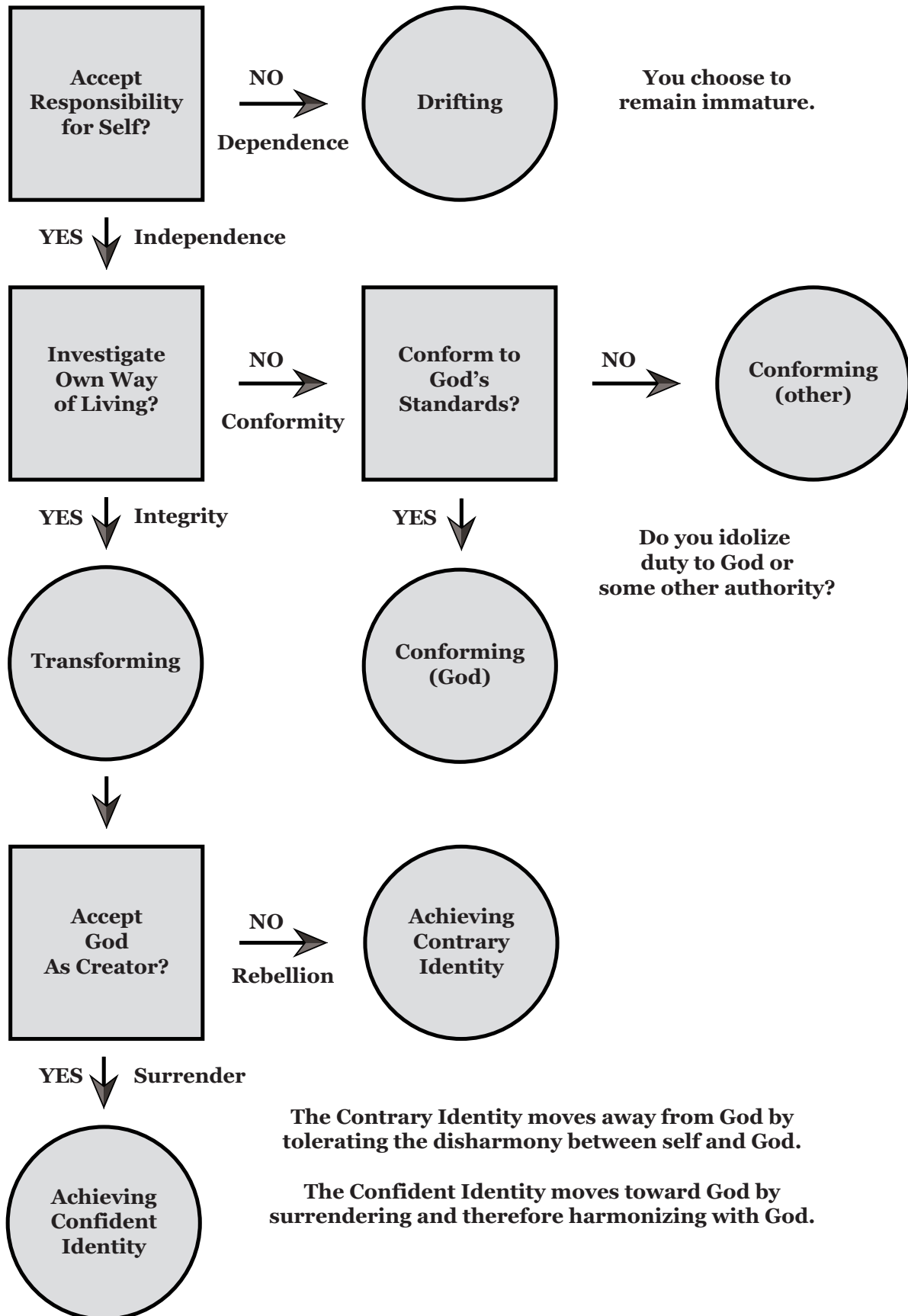
- ☐ Review the words you selected that best fit your identity (see the section “The ABCs of a Confident Identity”). Thank God if you already feel these words are true about you. Ask God to help you experience these words so you can grow into your Confident Identity.
- ☐ Follow the flowchart at the end of this chapter. Where are you? Realize that reversing course by choosing maturity and moving toward God is possible at any time.
- ☐ Media for Further Learning (see Appendix B for more questions)
 - ☐ Movie: *The Lion King*. How does Simba learn from the past and accept his identity?
 - ☐ Music: *I'll Lead You Home* by Michael W. Smith
- ☐ Write out your definition of Confident Identity and Infected Identity in your Blueprint Space. Then describe these parts of your identity as you know them by being as specific as possible.

- Ask God to increase your awareness of your Potential and Dissociated Identities and to decrease your belief in your Infected Identity.
- What identity crisis are you facing that blocks you from moving forward? Describe your “wall” in your Blueprint Space. Journal about how stuck or trapped you feel. Are you able to see how growing your Confident Identity can move you up and over the wall? Return to this question as you complete each part of this book to see how much better you’re becoming at scaling these walls.

BLUEPRINT SPACE

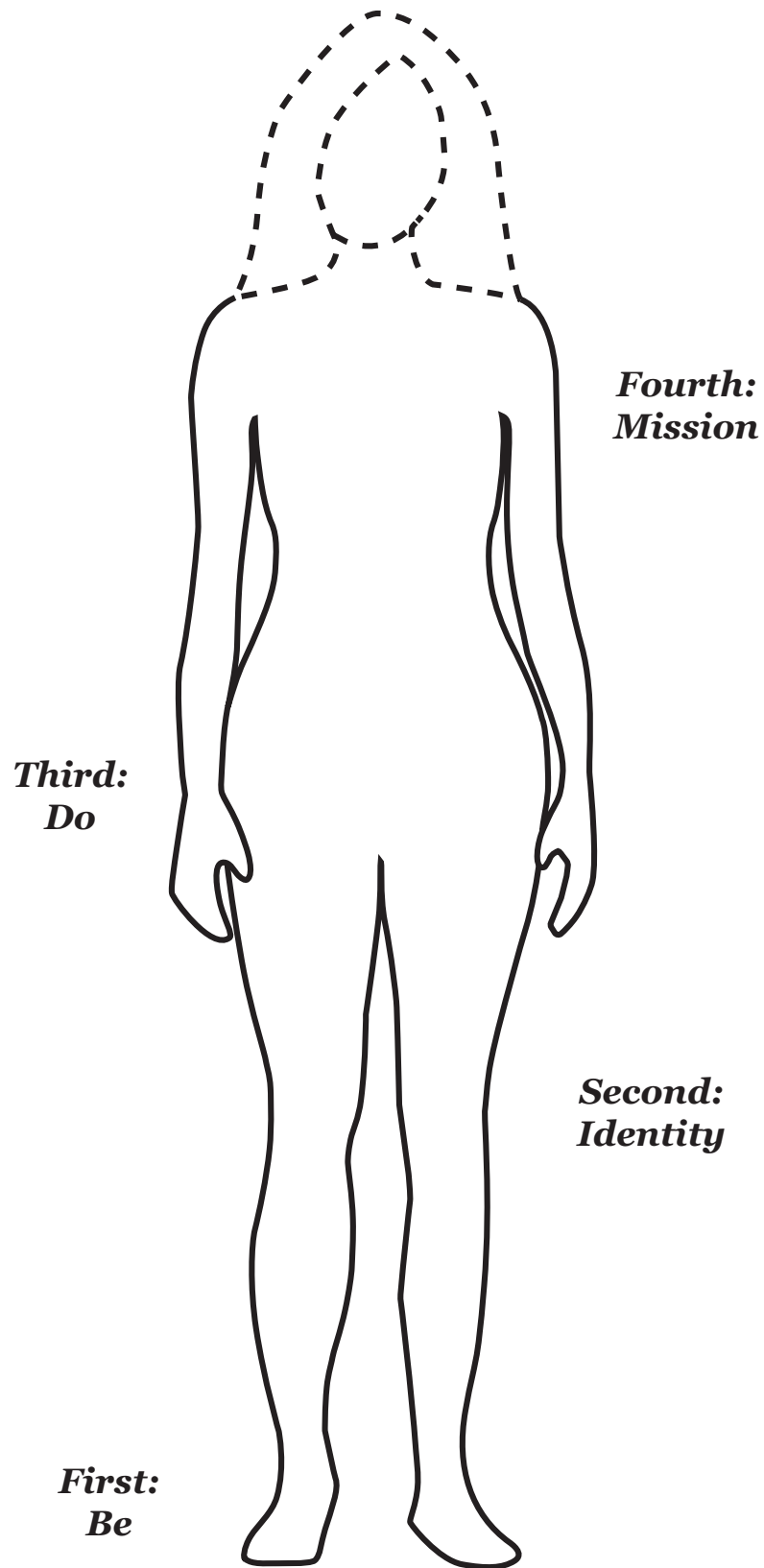
**Vertical lines represent a crisis to overcome.
Describe your wall in the box below:**





Part II – Discovering Your Identity

Chapter 7	Digging for Identity Clues
Chapter 8	Your Physical Identity
Chapter 9	Your Gender Identity
Chapter 10	Your Cognitive and Emotional Identity
Chapter 11	Your General Spiritual Identity
Chapter 12	Your Specific Spiritual Identity
Chapter 13	Your Personality
Chapter 14	Your Strengths at Work
Chapter 15	Assembling Your Identity Clues



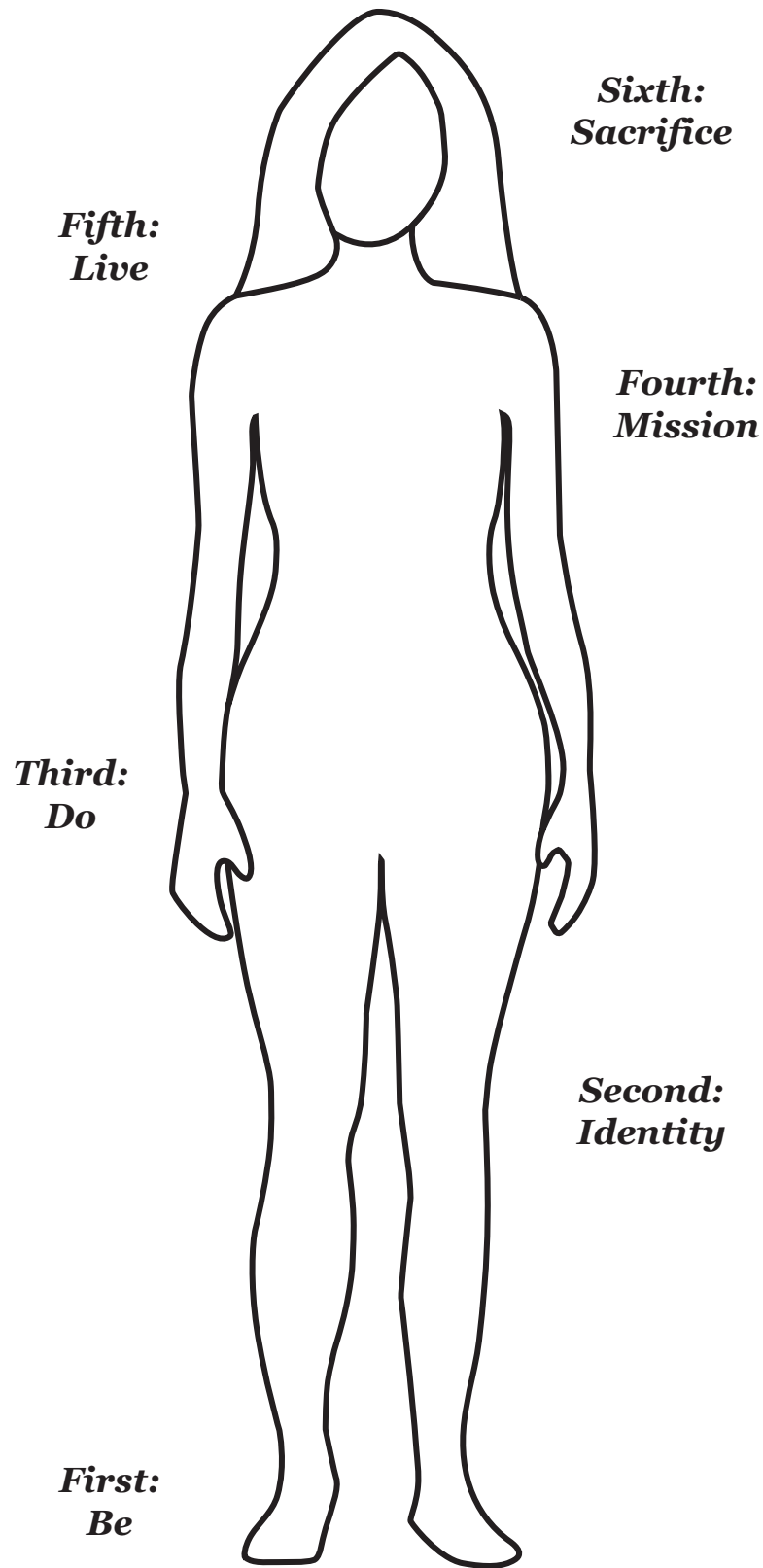
Discovering (God's Design of Your Identity)

Part III – Using Your Identity

Chapter 16 Vision: How Far I Can Go

Chapter 17 Consecration: Be Prepared to Go

Chapter 18 Mission: Go Make a Difference



Using (God's Design of Your Identity)

The Next Step for Your Career

Are you reading this book to decide on a college major or a new career? Now that you've developed a mission statement, you should revisit Chapters 13 and 14 in the context of your mission. Search online using phrases like "MBTI career choices" and "Holland career choices."

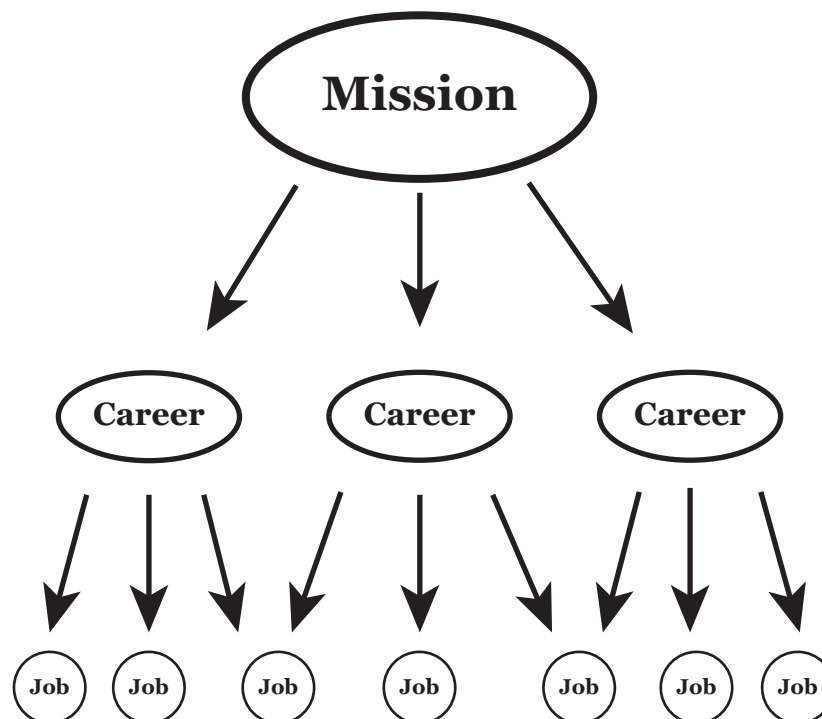
Many people are unsatisfied with their jobs. When this happens, what is the first thing most people do? They look for another job. Frequently, this approach results in the person being dissatisfied again in months or maybe one or two years down the road. Why? Because a "job" is primarily a means to cover the bills that need to be paid in order to survive. While this idea is important, it emphasizes a short-term outlook on a life made for God's purposes.

Instead, I suggest a long-term approach that involves more up-front work. With this approach, you'll do well if you can identify your "life mission" apart from any specific career or job.

While the purpose of this book isn't necessarily to help you find your next job, examining how job relates to mission will help you understand how to define your mission:

- **Mission (or "Calling" or "Vocation"):** The purpose(s) for which God created you.
- **Career:** An area of occupational focus which you're well-suited to work in; however, career stops short of looking at any specific job. A person may have multiple careers in a lifetime.
- **Job:** A job at a specific company at a specific location. A person may have multiple jobs while pursuing a career.

Knowing your life mission will allow you to most effectively find satisfying careers and ultimately best-fit jobs. There will be more than one career that can fulfill your life mission, and there will be more than one job that will match your career choice.



Supplemental Material

Closing Thoughts

Appendix A You 2.0 Prayer

Appendix B Movie and Music List

Appendix C Spiritual Identity Scriptures

Appendix D Values Cutouts

Appendix E Discover More Interests

Appendix F Example Statements

Selected Bibliography

Index of Scriptures

Closing Thoughts

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

—2 Timothy 1:6–14

Does achieving your vision sometimes feel far away? Press on. Don't hesitate. Don't hold back. The truth that God entrusts you with is special and of the utmost importance.

God blesses you with the gift of physical and spiritual life which is essentially your identity. God has set you free. Use your identity to make a difference. He deposits with you revelation of the truth through His Holy Spirit so you can in turn entrust God with your whole self.²⁷ Your life is in God's hands. At the same time, the gospel message is in your hands.

Grow where God plants you. Your environment is always changing. A changing environment is food for the hungry brain. You can fulfill God's calling no matter where you're physically located. You can find outcasts who need Christ next door, or you can find them around the world.

What Jesus has done for us goes beyond saving us from a negative, to providing entrance into glorious life and immortality. This is too amazing to completely comprehend. When you choose to be friends with God, you'll experience suffering because the world will reject you (John 15:18–19). Hold tightly to the truth because it anchors you in the midst of the storm.

Don't stop seeking to understand God's identity. Don't stop seeking to understand and use your identity. God created you to do great things. Be confident in the identity God gave you.

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

—Philippians 1:6

²⁷ biblehub.com/commentaries/2_timothy/1-12.htm

Next Steps

What next? How can you continue to position yourself to grow and become everything God made you to be? Seek out other people who want to grow in their identity and learn from each other.

Identity Checkup

Return at least once a year to this book for a checkup. We all tend to drift off center when we take our eyes off the goal. During your checkup, review the past year and then plan for the next year. These questions will help with that process. In the past year, with respect to your identity:

- What are the top positive and negative experiences you endured? What unexpected blessings did you have? What difficulties or challenges? Append your experiences to your Life Experiences Exercise from Chapter 7. Have your experiences illuminated your True Identity any further?
- What are the most significant things you wanted to accomplish but didn't?
- What are the most significant things you learned about yourself?
- Review your identity, vision, and mission statements. How have you grown? How has your perspective changed? How have your values, interests, or passions changed in the past year? Is God moving you in a new direction? Update your statements based on everything that has changed.

Further Study Resources and Help

ConfidentIdentity.com

- Bonus material specifically for this book. At some point, I'm planning to have an online assessment that pulls together all the ideas from this book into one place.

ChristianConcepts.com

- Additional material about individual and marital growth
- Opportunities to ask questions and post comments
- News about upcoming products and resources

NewReflectionsCounseling.com

- Coaching, counseling, and other more intensive help is available. Do you need career counseling or life coaching? Would intensive counseling be of value to you?

MarriageFromRootsToFruits.com

- Website for my first book on preparing for and having a better marriage.

Comments

I'll gladly receive your comments and feedback about this book. If you have a specific question you're wondering about or need some further direction, don't hesitate to contact me — I'll do the best I can to help. Contact me at mpavlik@nrcounseling.com or visit one of the websites above for more information.

Appendix A — You 2.0 Prayer

“Lord Jesus, I know that I have fallen short of your perfect standard and I don’t deserve eternal life. But I believe you paid the full penalty for my sin when you died and rose from the grave. I surrender control of my life to You. Jesus, come into my life, take control of my life, forgive my sins, and save me. I place my trust in You for my salvation, and I accept Your free gift of eternal life. Now, having accepted Your gift, I’m a new creation that will live with You for all eternity. I further welcome Your Holy Spirit into my heart to mold my identity into Your image.”

If you prayed this prayer for the first time, all the blessings of a Confident Identity are yours.

Appendix B — Movie and Music List

This appendix lists the movies and songs found in each chapter.

Movies

For each movie, I've included a few words to describe its theme and any cautions. The ratings span from G to R. The R movies are rated for intense violence or trauma necessary to tell the story. However, some movies have offensive material. If you have concerns, research the movies before you watch them.

Use these questions to help you organize your experience into a plan for growth:

1. What are the main themes and principles of the movie?
2. With which character do you identify most? Least?
3. How does the movie support the current chapter you're reading?
4. How does this movie speak to the reason you're reading this book?
5. How has your understanding of identity changed?
6. In what ways did the movie inspire you?
7. How will you live differently based on what you learned?

Chapter	Movie	Year	Themes	Rating
1	<i>The Lion King</i>	1994	Finding your identity	G
2	<i>Evan Almighty</i>	2007	Leading, following; faith, trust	PG
	<i>Toy Story</i>	1995	Discovering and accepting who you really are	G
3	<i>The Shawshank Redemption</i>	1994	Hope and perseverance	R; graphic pictures of prison rape
	<i>The Matrix</i>	1999	Choose what is true over what is false	R; sci-fi violence and brief language
4	<i>The Truman Show</i>	1998	Confidence vs self-doubt	PG
	<i>The King's Speech</i>	2010	Confidence vs self-doubt	R; some language
5	<i>Groundhog Day</i>	1993	Self-awareness; growth is fun	PG
	<i>The Lord of the Rings</i> trilogy	2001	Perseverance; teamwork, trust	PG-13
6	<i>Back to the Future</i> trilogy	1985	Confidence vs self-doubt; self-control	PG
	<i>A Beautiful Mind</i>	2001	Sorting fact from fiction	PG-13
7	<i>Ragamuffin</i>	2014	Inadequacy; addiction	PG-13
	<i>Up</i>	2009	Enjoying the moment you have; no regrets	PG
8	<i>Beauty and the Beast</i> (Disney)	1991	Intimacy; beauty isn't skin deep	G
9	none	-	-	-
10	<i>Inside Out</i>	2015	Emotion's role in healing	PG
11	<i>I'm Not Ashamed</i>	2016	Making Jesus a priority	PG-13
	<i>Slumdog Millionaire</i>	2008	Growing up without parents; perseverance	R; graphic pictures of abuse and neglect
12	none	-	-	-
13	<i>The Incredibles</i>	2004	Distinct abilities; teamwork	PG
	<i>Bridge to Terabithia</i>	2007	True friendship	PG

14	<i>How to Train Your Dragon</i>	2010	Be yourself; use your strengths	PG
	<i>Simon Birch</i>	1998	Purpose; significance	PG
15	<i>Prince of Egypt</i>	1998	Choosing between Earthly and True Identity	PG
16	<i>The Dark Knight</i> (Batman trilogy)	2005	What is identity?	PG-13
	<i>The Butterfly Circus</i>	2009	Overcoming limitations	NR (PG)
17	<i>Curious George</i>	2006	Innocence; attachment	G
	<i>The Ultimate Gift</i>	2006	Finding meaning and purpose	PG
18	<i>The Passion of the Christ</i>	2004	Jesus' life and sacrifice	R; graphic depiction of crucifixion
	<i>Gladiator</i>	2000	Fighting for what is important; self-sacrifice; legacy	R; war violence

Additional movies to consider: Sybil, Identity, Dances with Wolves, Nacho Libre.

Music

Most of these songs can apply to any chapter, but I listed them one per chapter so you can gain encouragement from music throughout the book.

Chapter	Song	Year	Theme	Artist
1	<i>I'll Lead You Home</i>	1995	Don't worry; God will lead you	Michael W. Smith
2	<i>You Are I Am</i>	2012	God is sovereign, almighty	MercyMe
3	<i>I Have This Hope</i>	2016	Don't despair or fear; have hope	Tenth Avenue North
4	<i>Hard Love</i>	2016	Let your old self die	Needtobreathe
5	<i>Remind Me Who I am</i>	2011	Be reminded of your true identity	Jason Gray
	<i>Who I am</i>	2015		Blanca
6	<i>No Longer Slaves</i>	2015	You're a child of God	J Helser; M Helser
7	<i>One Step Away</i>	2016	Don't be ashamed	Casting Crowns
8	<i>Beautiful</i>	2013	You're beautiful even at your worst	Plumb
9	<i>My Lighthouse</i>	2014	God is absolute truth, peace	Rend Collective
10	<i>Keep Making Me</i>	2012	Empty to be filled by God	Sidewalk Prophets
11	<i>Never Been a Moment</i>	2016	I'm always loved by God	Micah Tyler
12	<i>Overcomer</i>	2013	You're an overcomer	Mandissa
13	<i>Greater</i>	2014	Redeemed (not wrong)	Mercy Me
14	<i>Tell Me</i>	2015	Tell me who I am (loved)	Carrollton
15	<i>All That Matters</i>	2017	You matter to God	Colton Dixon
16	<i>Tell the Mountain</i>	2013	God is bigger than your problems	Back Home/Collingsworth
17	<i>Live It Well</i>	2016	Life is short; live it well	Switchfoot
18	<i>Nothing Is Wasted</i>	2011	God uses all of you	Jason Gray

Appendix C — Spiritual Identity Scriptures

I am redeemed from the curse of the law.	Galatians 3:13–14
I am free from the written code, the law, and its regulations.	Colossians 2:14
I am free because of the truth.	John 8:32
I am a new creation.	2 Corinthians 5:17
I am redeemed and forgiven.	Ephesians 1:7
I am dead to sin but alive to God.	Romans 6:2, 11
I am free from all condemnation.	Romans 8:1
I am holy and blameless in God’s sight.	Ephesians 1:4
I am a royal priest. I belong to God.	1 Peter 2:4–10
I am the dwelling place of God.	Ephesians 2:19–22
I am God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works.	Ephesians 2:10
I am saved by God’s grace, not by anything I do.	Ephesians 2:9
I always triumph in Christ.	2 Corinthians 2:14
I am the righteousness of God through Christ	2 Corinthians 5:21
I am enriched in every way; I do not lack any spiritual gift in Christ.	1 Corinthians 1:5–7
I have the mind of Christ.	1 Corinthians. 2:16
I have been rescued from the dominion of darkness, brought into Christ’s kingdom.	Colossians 1:13
My God will meet all my needs according to the glorious riches in Christ Jesus.	Philippians 4:19
I can do everything through God who gives me strength.	Philippians 4:13
I am being made into God’s image . . . the completion of which is guaranteed.	Philippians 1:6
I am a child of God; God is my Father; I am an heir of God, co-heir with Christ.	Romans 8:16–17
I am sealed with the Holy Spirit, a deposit guaranteeing my inheritance.	Ephesians 1:13–14
I am born again of imperishable seed. I will live forever.	1 Peter 1:23
I am complete in Christ.	Colossians 2:10
I am chosen and loved by God.	1 Thess. 1:4
I have abundant life.	John 10:10
I know Christ, His voice, and He knows me.	John 10:14–16
I am a conqueror.	Romans 8:37
I have all I need to abound in every good work.	2 Corinthians 9:8
Designs to harm me shall fail.	Isaiah 54:17
My worries are over.	1 Peter 5:7
Fear is not my practice.	2 Timothy 1:7
I have plans, a hope, and a future.	Jeremiah 29:11

Appendix D — Values Cutouts

Appendix E — Discover More Interests

<p style="text-align: center;">Things you really love doing</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Hobbies you love or would love to try</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Things that make you feel good</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Activities that energize you</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Things you like to do while on vacation</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Activities that de-stress you</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Things you enjoy learning or want to learn</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Skills you have, things you know you're good at</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Subjects you most enjoy reading about</p> <p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p> <p>6)</p> <p>7)</p> <p>8)</p> <p>9)</p>

Appendix F — Example Statements

I provided the following examples to help you write your statements. But don't closely model your statements after these. Remember, identity is who you are (not what you do specifically). Vision is who you will be according to God's design. Finally, mission is specifically what you'll do to make the world a better place.

Example #1

Identity Statement

I'm known and befriended by the king of everything; therefore, He helps me according to my needs. I am both smart and merciful, and I can easily use my fun-loving intuition to:

- Think of awesome ideas
- Encourage people with my optimistic spirit and sense of humor
- See the big picture as I go through life

I enjoy a challenge and the satisfaction of giving my all, so I try my hardest in most everything I do. A community with good friends is important to me.

Vision Statement

I will be my best self as I show others hope and joy. I'll meet more people and become more open to relationships. Wherever God has me living, playing, or working, I will brighten another's day and allow them to brighten mine.

Mission Statement

I help people who are hurting by giving them a chance. I encourage unlikely people who are feeling lonely by loving them and showing them that they matter. I use my creativity to invent new ideas that help others enjoy living.

Example #2

Identity Statement

I'm saved and loved by God. He has given me talents such as being sensitive to the needs of others and being loyal and caring. I'm intelligent and willing to help others with anything they might need. I'm able to encourage my friends when they have an emotional problem or serve them if they need some work done.

Vision Statement

I will grow in my ability to be sensitive to others' needs. With God's help, I'll become more aware of what they need before they ask. I'll be closer to God, stronger in my identity, and ready to be there for those around me who need it.

Mission Statement

God's purpose for my life is to help people with their emotional or physical problems. By doing so, I will show them God's love. I will use my love for animals to help others overcome their emotional wounds.

Example #3**Identity Statement**

I am a daughter of God. God created me in love and purposed me for significant work. God blessed me with artistic ability, strength, coordination, and flexibility. I enjoy teaching others in ways they can easily grasp the ideas that are important to their lives.

Vision Statement

I will work hard to stay in shape. My goal is to continually increase my skills so that I'm able to teach others what I've learned. I will grow in my identity and character by studying the Bible with other women.

Mission Statement

God's purpose for my life is to bring joy to others through physical arts. I share the image of God through beautifully choreographed dance. As an expert choreographer, I teach others the skills they need to excel in the physical arts. While pouring my life into others, I will share God as the great Choreographer. As a result, many people will praise God and put their faith in Jesus.

Example #4**Identity Statement**

I am a son of God: God created me with love and purposed me for significant work. With my analytical ability, I can understand how anything works. God has gifted me with the ability to discern right from wrong in another's heart.

Vision Statement

I will grow in understanding God's truth so I can communicate it to others who are thinkers like me. Others will feel they are not alone when I'm around. I will use my gift of discernment to protect others from those influenced by evil.

Mission Statement

God's purpose for my life is to lead the hearts of others, first and foremost my wife and children. I devote my effort to discipling others so they can genuinely understand who God is. As a result, many people will become strong in their True Identity.

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Other Books by Matt Pavlik

Will W Alejandro, M.Div. MA had this to say:

As I read through Matt's book, *Marriage From Roots to Fruits*, I felt hopeful. I thought of all the couples I have met along the way who looked at their relationship, present and future, with a sense of futility and hopelessness. The author gives details of God's design for a healthy relationship, with very practical tools, filled with real life examples to encourage them along the path of healing and living victoriously.

I have not read a book (manual) like it before. I believe it will help couples who are at the point of hopelessness and emotional pain to truly heal. I also feel it is very applicable for married couples who feel good about the relationship they have but want to have a stronger and deeper relationship with God and with themselves. Matt designed the book to be a tool for pastors and counselors, to use as a guide for premarital counseling, and to help hurting marriages. I feel that this book is a must-read for all caregivers.

I am genuinely excited about this book because I work with so many people with broken relationships. I will be using this book with my clients. It represents unique counseling insights with strong biblical applications, and the author does a wonderful job in expressing those ideas in a way that is understandable and applicable for those who are in need.

MarriageFromRootsToFruits.com

