

## LESSON 5 - IDENTITY **I AM HIS MASTERPIECE**

**To the Teacher:** It is so important to realize that God created each of us with His own hands and we are not an accident. (Ps 139:9-17) Everything about us has been uniquely designed to fulfill His purpose for us and that is part of God's plan - including our weaknesses. A masterpiece is a one-of-a-kind, original design. It is not flawless, but it is precious. God knew it would be difficult for our fleshly nature to accept this so he sent us the Holy Spirit to encourage us, empower us, and guide us each step of the way.

### **Concept:**

**True Identity**

### **Objectives/Goal:**

- To understand how special we are to God and that He created each of us with forethought and as one-of-a-kind.
- To understand that we do not have to be perfect because God in us makes up for our weaknesses through His grace.
- To understand that God created us to be dependent on the encouragement and the power of the Holy Spirit to live a fulfilled life.

### **Plan Ahead:**

- Spend time this week meditating on the discussion questions in the "Looking Forward" section.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you examples from your own life or others that you can use to illustrate the points of this lesson.
- If you are doing the Optional Activity, prepare the necessary items.

### **Launch Out:**

#### **Introduction:**

You are God's own masterpiece. That means, you are not ordinary or average; you are precious, a one-of-a-kind original! A masterpiece is not perfect, but it is flawless because it is exactly what the hands of the Creator fashioned. When God created you, He went to great lengths to make you exactly the way He wanted you. You're not meant to be like anyone else; God designed you the way you are for a purpose. Everything about you is unique and everything about you matters. You may feel like your life looks ordinary today, but when you understand your value - not only who you are, but also, whose you are - then you will love yourself more; and you will also love those people around you in a greater way. Realize that because you belong to Him, you are extremely valuable. He gave His only Son in exchange for your new identity.

There was a story in the news once about a man who lived in a tiny apartment and died in extreme poverty. At one point in his life he had even been homeless - living on the streets. This man never had any successes to speak of, nor any noted victories. He lived and died as just another face in the crowd.

After the funeral, some family members went to his little run-down apartment to clear out his belongings. They found a painting hanging on the wall, so they decided to sell it at a garage sale. The woman who bought the painting from the garage sale took it to a local art gallery for an appraisal and was shocked to discover that the painting was extremely valuable. The piece of art that hung for so many years in a little run-down apartment was painted by a famous artist who lived in the early 1800s. The woman decided to auction off that painting and ended up selling it for several million dollars!

Just think how that poor man's life might have changed if he had known the value of what he possessed. He was a multimillionaire and didn't even know it! So many people today are living with priceless treasures inside and they don't even know it. Sometimes we have to explore what's on the inside of us to really understand what we have. Don't settle for living a mediocre existence. You are a masterpiece, created by the most famous Artist of all, but if you don't understand your value, you'll go on thinking: I'm just average; I'm not that talented; I could never do that; I'm not that smart. Don't allow those negative thoughts to play in your memory box. Instead, every morning when you get out of bed remind yourself: I am important. I am handpicked by God. I am a person of extreme value and significance. Read your "Who I Am In Christ" bookmark out loud frequently and remind yourself of the truth!

Remember you are God's special treasure - selected by Him and for Him. You are created in the image of Almighty God with a piece of His very DNA inside of you that nobody else has. He made you exactly the way He intended; and He equipped you with everything you need through the power of the Holy Spirit.

You have the strength to stand strong in the midst of difficult situations and the wisdom it takes to make good decisions. Understanding exactly whose you are, and how you fit in God's plan, creates purpose, confidence and true identity. You are a person of destiny. You have a rich treasure inside of you that people need. You have more in you than you realize; and you can accomplish more than you ever thought possible. Dare to be bold and believe that you are a person of destiny because you can leave your mark on your generation. Understand you are important and out of your importance, know that you are called to add value to the world around you. You have a unique piece of God's DNA inside of you that the world will never see unless you discover and embrace who God has created you to be. No matter where you are in life today, you have the potential *to: increase, grow, and move forward* because of His Spirit *dwelling* in you and *strengthening* you. God created you for His good purpose and know that, beyond a shadow of a doubt, you are His masterpiece!

### **Looking Forward:**

**Teacher introduces whole group discussion and elicits student responses:**

From the beginning, God created you to be someone special and gave you a job of reflecting Him that only you are uniquely qualified to do.. Discovering and embracing your gifts and special qualities is a journey that takes time and prayer; but we know that God does not make mistakes. Seeing yourself through God's eyes, rather than those of your peers or your own self-critical eyes, can really set your feet on the right path.

1. Do you feel that sometimes you are trying to be something that you are not - just to “fit in”?
2. How do you think that trying to see yourself through God’s eyes might make a difference?
3. Often God cares more about your willingness than your qualifications. Have you ever felt that God was calling you to do something that you felt completely inadequate or unqualified to do?
4. Why do you think God often uses people that are not the most qualified to do great things?

**Teacher introduces main scripture:**

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NLT) Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness. So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Grace is God’s ability to do what we cannot do on our own.

How does God turn our weaknesses into strengths?

How can perfectionism cripple me?

What would happen to us if we never faced difficult situations?

Why is it so important that we learn to depend on God in all circumstances?

**Break out:**

The above questions can either be discussed in the whole group or as a small group activity.

**Take Away:**

It is so important to understand that each of us has a unique role in God’s big plan and that we are each extremely valuable to Him. Both our strengths and our weaknesses can be used by Him. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God has equipped us to fulfill the plan and purpose for which he created us.

**Going Forward:**

(Activation) Over the week set aside quiet time with God and ask him to help you see yourself as He sees you and to help you identify any obstacles that Satan has tried to put in your way to keep you from following His plan for your life.

**Teacher’s Summary:**

We often look at others with envy, wishing we had their gifts or talents. Through this lesson we discovered that God gave us a unique set of gifts and talents by design. Satan wants to keep us from realizing them. It is our job to allow the power of His Spirit to work in us and through us, releasing those gifts into the world that they might see God in us.

**Teacher ends with prayer:** “Let us end this lesson with a prayer.”

Father – Thank you for making me special; a one-of-a-kind masterpiece. Thank you that you carefully thought out every detail about me from the color of my hair to my personality and the size of my feet. Help me to see myself as you see me and to believe what your Word says about me because I truly do want to be a reflection of you to the world. In Jesus Name – Amen.

**(Optional activity following prayer.)**

**Optional Activity:**

This is a fun exercise to help students identify their gifts and weaknesses as well as witness the impact of interacting with others in the Body of Christ. This will take about 25 minutes so this activity might be used during a game time or separate lesson time.

Equipment needed for each group:

1 cup small marshmallows

6 large marshmallows

25 uncooked spaghetti noodles

Place these items in a lunch bag to keep them out of sight until task begins.

Challenge:

Each group has 10 minutes to create the tallest free-standing structure using only the materials provided.

Growth:

How did your team work together as a group?

Did you feel like you added any value? (Why or why not?)

What did you discover about yourself through this activity?

How can discovering these things about yourself help you move forward?

Summary: It is good to know our strengths and weaknesses and how to draw on the gifts of others. The Body of Christ is all about each of us contributing and working together. When each of us embraces the DNA God has placed within us, we make an incredible reflection of Him to the world.