

WAVE

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Identity Crisis

I didn't realize it at the time, but I was in the middle of a serious crisis, questioning my identity and self-worth. There's a huge identity crisis in my generation and even worse among Millennials and the Internet Generation. We are asking questions that others have never asked before. Questions that have seemed so simple are now so complicated: *Who am I? Are we the result of random mutation or an alien experiment? Why am I here? How can I know? Who cares?*

Some might condemn these questions of identity, but not God! David (who wrote 100's of pages of the Bible) asked it more than any other person in the Bible. He was "*the man after God's own heart*" – yet he wasn't afraid to ask questions of his purpose and existence. In fact, he asked it at least six times. One of my favorites: *What is man, that You are mindful of him?*⁷

⁷ Ps. 8:4

The reason that God doesn't condemn our questions of self-consciousness is that they actually come from Him! He placed them in you to drive you back to Him. We are supposed to realize that our identity begins with Him – not apart from Him. So many today attempt to find their identity without Him (humanism) and are left empty.

Issues of self-esteem run rampant today – you know what I'm talking about! We either have too little or too much – never balanced. Am I right? People are either stuck on themselves in conceit or self-loathing.

We will never find the cure
while avoiding the cause.

As long as we only treat the symptoms, we will always have to deal with them. This will happen every time we try to answer the question of identity apart from God.

That's exactly where I found myself. I had projected an image of S.F.B. (slick, fine, and beautiful) and yet I was weak and vulnerable

on the inside. This little, insecure boy put on his double-breasted suit and stood tall, doing his dead-level best to trick everyone into thinking he had it together, but he didn't.

Why is it SO IMPORTANT to answer the question of “Who am I?” The answer will give you a core set of values – a “GRID” that will help form your worldview and focus your beliefs. Jesus spoke of this as a solid foundation.⁸ In truth, I will never find anything that will give me a solid sense of identity apart from God.

Your real identity
begins and ends with God.

Your beliefs will ultimately determine your behavior. Your attitudes will affect your actions – often unconsciously. We don't even really have to try – we act out what we think. If a person believes that mutual fund investing is a great idea, he will find the money to invest. If parents feel that God's Word is important, they

⁸ Matthew 7:24, 26

will find ways to integrate it into the lives of their children. If you believe Jesus is the only way to Heaven, you will do what He says to get there... that just makes sense!

The problem enters when we don't behave like we believe. We say that we believe something – yet we behave differently. For example, a husband might say that he values his wife, yet if he doesn't make her a priority, he will not find the happiness in his identity as a husband. Emotions go all wrong when our grid doesn't match our life – when our values and actions don't line up. This happens all the time in marriages, in church, and in our relationship with God – doesn't it?! That's why the Bible commands: *Let us not love in word or speech, but in action and in truth.*⁹

Life is built so that your inner-most values might guide and govern your lifestyle. When these two are in line, there is great joy and your feelings are satisfied. When what you believe and what you do aren't together, you begin to feel like you're investing in things that

⁹ 1 John 3:18

do not matter. This only brings more frustration, anger, and bitterness against those you love (or even your grid itself).

“Integrity is
keeping the promises
you make to yourself.”¹⁰

I challenge you to write down the two or three things that are most important to you – right now (below & on the next page). If it’s a relationship, then determine what you can do for that person today. Take a step – just one – in the right direction. Right now. If it’s a spiritual calling, then find a Scripture that will fuel your vision to go forward. You’ll get so much hope and happiness from investing effort into what’s important.

¹⁰ Dick Savage