



## DISCOVERING YOURSELF

*Note to leaders:*

*This Bible study is set up as a two-part series. It could be done at two consecutive LWML meetings or two home Bible study group sessions. It could also be used as a half-day workshop with a coffee and refreshment break between Part 1 and Part 2.*

*Work through the study on your own first. Familiarize yourself with the content so you can facilitate discussion without relying too heavily on the outline. Have several people respond to each question and affirm them for their contributions. Nurture an atmosphere of sharing insights from God's Word rather than looking for one precise "right" answer. As the leader, you will be able to gently guide the group to the central thought in each section. The fill-in-the-blank statements are given as summaries for each section. The leader should simply read the complete statement, having participants fill in the blanks as you read. This helps everyone stay on track and gets the whole group ready to move on to the next section.*

*The New American Standard Bible was used in preparing this study. However, it is not necessary that everyone have this version. As a matter of fact, having participants read the same verse from several different versions will enhance your discussion. Remember to look for underlying concepts or principles, which will be the same in all translations.*

*Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance as you and your group study together. Trust God to help you facilitate this study and bring something meaningful and helpful to each participant.*

## Discovering Yourself

## Part 1- Leader's Guide

*(Ask someone to read this opening paragraph.)*

Who am I? This is a question people have been asking for generations. Perhaps you have asked it. In this two-part series, we are going to consider this question. For our answers, we will look at God's Word. Our goal is that you will find deep security in your identity as God's child and be freed to use the gifts He has given you in a way that brings fulfillment to you, blessing to others and glory to God. We will also consider the life experiences God has allowed each of us.

*(Have participants find the Scripture references listed below and be ready to read them.)*

### **Truths From God's Word** (10-15 minutes)

1. Genesis 1:26-28, 31 - Who created people? What was God's opinion of His creation? What does this mean for you?

Psalm 8:3-6 - Compared with the grandeur of God's created world, you may sometimes feel small and insignificant. Yet what does this Psalm declare about you?

Matthew 10:29-31 - Try to think of some words that describe how much God values you. See if your group can come up with at least 10 words or phrases.

**You are a person created by God. You have worth. You have value.**

2. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11 - What is given to each believer in this passage? Who gives it? How does this verse affirm your uniqueness and your talents?

**You have been given special gifts and abilities as a child of God.**

3. 1 Peter 4:10-11 - Who benefits when each believer uses his or her gifts? How does this glorify God?

**You are given these special abilities and gifts to serve others.**

*(Read or summarize the following paragraph to transition to the next section.)*

We will be seeking to identify our special abilities and gifts as we go through this series. But to begin, we want to consider how our life experiences (both positive and negative) impact who we are. We want to explore how each of us has been equipped by our personal history for a unique ministry.

**Working Individually** (10-15 minutes)

- A. Create a timeline of your life. You may be as specific or general as you like, but consider including some of the following points:
- when and how you came to faith in Christ or your faith became an important part of your life
  - significant events that influenced who you are today (positively or negatively)
  - significant people in your life journey who influenced you (positively or negatively)
- B. Look back over your timeline. Can you see how your personal history has prepared you for what came next or what may be around the corner?

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- C. What would you say is the most important lesson you have learned in your life?

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**Sharing Time** (15-20 minutes)

In small groups of three or four, tell about your timeline and your answers to questions B and C. (Share only as much as you feel comfortable. Allow about 5 minutes per person.)

**Closing** (5 minutes)

*(Read or summarize the following paragraph.)*

Looking at our past can elicit many different emotions. We all have had joyful times as well as days of sorrow. We can find peace by placing both the good and the bad in the hands of our Savior.

In a quiet attitude, listen carefully while someone reads Isaiah 43:1-7 aloud. Close in prayer.

(Total time: 40-55 minutes)

*(Remind participants to bring their worksheets back for Part 2.)*

## Discovering Yourself

## Leader's Guide - Part 2

*(Ask someone to read this opening paragraph.)*

Let's review what happened in Part 1: You saw in God's Word that you are a beloved child of God. This is the first step in reaching your goal: to find deep security in your identity as God's child and be freed to use the gifts He has given you in a way that brings fulfillment to you, blessing to others and glory to God. You also looked at your personal history. In Part 2, you will look more specifically at your individual gifts and abilities and how they impact your purpose in life.

*(Have participants find the Scripture references listed below and be ready to read them.)*

### **Truths From God's Word** (5-10 minutes)

1. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 - Paul uses the human body as an analogy for the Body of Christ, which is made up of all believers. How are the parts of the body interdependent? How does that relate to you as part of your local fellowship? What confidence does it give you that God places the members in the body just as He chooses (v. 18)?

**As a child of the King, you have a special place and purpose in the Body of Christ.**

2. Ephesians 4:11-16 - Paul encourages believers to use their individual gifts so the whole group of believers can grow in Christ. How have you grown as a result of others using their gifts? Have others grown as a result of you using your gifts?

**You are important; what you do has an effect on others.**

### **Working Individually** (5-10 minutes)

- A. Look back on your timeline from Part 1. What types of activities or areas of work have you been involved in? What are you frequently asked to do?

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- B. Reflecting on your responses to A, what patterns do you observe? (For example: helping, teaching, serving, volunteering, comforting, encouraging, and leading)

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**More Truths From God's Word** (5-10 minutes)

3. Exodus 4:1-12 - Moses did not feel equal to the task God gave Him to do. God reassured Moses through miraculous signs. How else did God reassure Moses (v.11&12)? Have you ever felt inadequate, especially when called upon to do a new thing? Were you willing to take a step of faith and do it anyway?

**God wants us to be available and willing to be used by Him in different areas of ministry even though we may not feel ready or able.**

4. Galatians 2:20 - As believers, we have a new life in Christ; He lives within us! What does this mean for you day by day? What difference could it make to rely on Him moment by moment?

**God desires that we rely on His presence and power.**

**Working Individually Again** (5 minutes)

- C. What do you enjoy doing? What gives you energy? What motivates you?

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- D. Consider what you wrote for question C. Why do you do what you do or why do you want to do the things you listed above? What is really important to you? What do you value? What do you cherish? (For example: I enjoy helping others. I value healthy relationship. Helping people grow spiritually is important to me.)

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**Sharing Time** (10-15 minutes)

In small groups of three or four, share your responses to questions C and D. (Share only as much as you feel comfortable. Allow 3-4 minutes per person.)

**Working Individually - Last Time** (5 minutes)

- E. Considering who you are as God’s child, the experiences He has allowed in your life, and the gifts He has given you, try to put into words (in a concise manner) what you feel to be your purpose in life.

This is called a personal mission statement. Following are real-life mission statements from other believers in Christ.

“To actively seek opportunities to share my faith in Jesus Christ with others.”

“To serve the Lord willingly, effectively and capably in my work and to continue to grow in the knowledge of what He has done for me.”

“To love the Lord and to walk in His ways by using my gifts of listening, helping and encouraging those in my sphere of contact.”

“To rest in Jesus’ love, to live in His power and to touch people in ways that will count for eternity.”

My personal mission statement:

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(Your mission statement may change as you grow in grace and as God allows more experiences in your life. It may also change as you go through different seasons of life.)

**Closing** (5 minutes)

Have each person share his or her personal mission statement. No comments are necessary. In closing, lead a prayer of surrender and dedication to God’s glory.

(Total time: 40-55 minutes)

Resources:

- “Empowered to Give,” Bible study by Rev. Darold Reiner at LWML Assembly of Leaders. November 1992.  
“Spirit-Purpose” sessions, facilitated by Marilyn Bader at LWML convention, June 1993.

## Discovering Yourself

## Part 1

Who am I? This is a question people have been asking for generations. Perhaps you have asked it. In this two-part series, we are going to consider this question. For our answers, we will look at God's Word. Our goal is that you will find deep security in your identity as God's child and be freed to use the gifts He has given you in a way that brings fulfillment to you, blessing to others and glory to God. We will also consider the life experiences God has allowed each of us.

### Truths From God's Word

1. Genesis 1:26-28, 31 - Who created people? What was God's opinion of His creation? What does this mean for you?

Psalm 8:3-6 - Compared with the grandeur of God's created world, you may sometimes feel small and insignificant. Yet what does this Psalm declare about you?

Matthew 10:29-31 - Try to think of some words that describe how much God values you. See if your group can come up with at least 10 words or phrases.

You are a person \_\_\_\_\_ by God. You have \_\_\_\_\_. You have \_\_\_\_\_.

2. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7,11 - What is given to each believer in this passage? Who gives it? How does this verse affirm your uniqueness and your talents?

You have been given special \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as a child of God.

3. 1 Peter 4:10-11 - Who benefits when each believer uses his or her gifts? How does this glorify God?

You are given these special abilities and gifts to \_\_\_\_\_ others.

We will be seeking to identify our special abilities and gifts as we go through this series. But to begin, we want to consider how our life experiences (both positive and negative) impact who we are. We want to explore how each of us has been equipped by our personal history for a unique ministry.

### Working Individually

- A. Create a timeline of your life. You may be as specific or general as you like, but consider including some of the following points:
  - when and how you came to faith in Christ or your faith became an important part of your life
  - significant events that influenced who you are today (positively or negatively)

- significant people in your life journey who influenced you (positively or negatively)

My timeline:

- B. Look back over your timeline. Can you see how your personal history has prepared you for what came next or what may be around the corner?

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- C. What would you say is the most important lesson you have learned in your life?

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**Sharing Time**

In small groups of three or four, tell about your timeline and your answers to questions B and C. (Share only as much as you feel comfortable. Allow about 5 minutes per person).

**Closing**

Looking at our past can elicit many different emotions. We all have had joyful times as well as days of sorrow. We can find peace by placing both the good and the bad in the hands of our Savior.

In a quiet attitude, listen carefully while someone reads Isaiah 43:1-7 aloud. Close in prayer.

**Please bring these worksheets back for Part 2.**

## Discovering Yourself

## Part 2

Let's review what happened in Part 1: You saw in God's Word that you are a beloved child of God. This is the first step in reaching your goal: to find deep security in your identity as God's child and be freed to use the gifts He has given you in a way that brings fulfillment to you, blessing to others and glory to God. You also looked at your personal history. In Part 2, you will look more specifically at your individual gifts and abilities and how they impact your purpose in life.

### Truths From God's Word

1. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 - Paul uses the human body as an analogy for the Body of Christ, which is made up of all believers. How are the parts of the body interdependent? How does that relate to you as part of your local fellowship? What confidence does it give you that God places the members in the body just as He chooses (v. 18)?

As a child of the King, you have a special \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in the Body of Christ.

2. Ephesians 4:11-16 - Paul encourages believers to use their individual gifts so the whole group of believers can grow in Christ. How have you grown as a result of others using their gifts? Have others grown as a result of you using your gifts?

You are \_\_\_\_\_; what you do has an \_\_\_\_\_ on others.

### Working Individually

- A. Look back on your timeline from Part 1. What types of activities or areas of work have you been involved in? What are you frequently asked to do?

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- B. Reflecting on your responses to A, what patterns do you observe? (For example: helping, teaching, serving, volunteering, comforting, encouraging, and leading)

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**More Truths From God's Word**

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God wants us to be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to be used by Him in different areas of ministry even though we may not feel ready or able.

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God desires that we rely on His \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Working Individually Again**

- C. What do you enjoy doing? What gives you energy? What motivates you?

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- D. Consider what you wrote for question C. Why do you do what you do, or why do you want to do the things you listed above? What is really important to you? What do you value, what do you cherish? (For example: I enjoy helping others. I value healthy relationships. Helping people grow spiritually is important to me.)

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