

2

Leader Guide

Influence With Love

August 14, 2022

Main Passage: Deuteronomy 7:6-11; 1 Peter 2:9-10; 1 John 4:19

Theological Theme

While people struggle to know who they are and live in identity confusion, God's people should be strong in our identity because of who we are in Him.

Introduction

- ❓ Have you ever been a victim identity theft? How did it make you feel?
- ❓ Why do many of us protect our physical identity yet overlook our spiritual identity?

Though the world continually attempts to create confusion and even crisis over identity, God's people are unique and set apart. Because we have a faithful and loving God, we can live in freedom and victory as we live out our God given purpose here on earth. We must be intentional in leading the next generation to know who they are, to recognize God's love for them and to respond by striving to be holy and set apart. Being involved in the local church is one of the ways we continue to grow in our own faith.

1. Who are we? (Deuteronomy 7:6; 1 Peter 2:9)

Until you see the reality of who you are and the value you have, you will be easily taken in by whatever someone else says about you. God is our Creator; therefore, He alone gets to dictate what is true about us. His Word is full of truths that specify just how valuable He thinks you are. The world seeks to tear you down and keep you wrapped up in shame or insecurity while God seeks to set you free just as He set free the children of Israel. The Lord sees the big picture while we are limited by our human eyesight.

2. Why are we special? (Deuteronomy 7:7-8; 1 Peter 2:10)

In order to truly understand who we are and what God wants for us, we need to know the “why.” It usually takes more to change the way we think, feel, or act than just declaring that we are holy or treasured. It is natural to respond to the words in Deuteronomy 7:6 and 1 Peter with questions. Why are we special? Why are we set apart? How could God love us as a precious treasure? The people of Moses’s day likely had similar questions, so he immediately began explaining how it was even possible that they could be viewed as such a special people.

3. What is our response? (Deuteronomy 7:9-11; 1 John 4:19)

God has made it clear what He thinks about His people. God’s people are loved, accepted, and special without doing anything to earn that favor. In a culture where we constantly feel pressure to keep up or compare ourselves to everyone else, it is a beautiful thing to know you can be loved and treasured even if you don’t feel like you measure up. You can leave behind the pressure to earn God’s love and mercy as you recognize it is all about who He is and not about what you do. We do not have to work ourselves to death to gain God’s favor— He already loves us.

Questions to Guide Your Group’s Discussion

- ❓ What does this passage say?
- ❓ What did this passage mean to its original audience?
- ❓ What does this passage tell us about God?
- ❓ What does this passage tell us about man?
- ❓ What does this passage demand of me?
- ❓ How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
- ❓ How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC