

WHO AM I AND WHY DO I MATTER?

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

CHAPTER 1: SEARCHING FOR THE REAL YOU

- ▼ Look at the questions Chris asks on pages 8-10 (“Do you ever...?”). Which of those would you answer “yes” to?
- ▼ What different voices do you have in your life telling you who you are and who you should be? (See p 10.) Name specific people/things.
- ▼ Which of these are helpful to pay attention to? Are there any that are unhelpful?

CHAPTER 2: HOW DO I KNOW I MATTER?

Chapter 2 talked about three places people go to find significance in life: money, looks, and achieving their goals.

- ▼ Which of those are you most likely to find your significance in? In what way?
- ▼ Has that thing ever disappointed you or turned out to be a dead end?
- ▼ Do you know a follower of Jesus who finds their significance in following him? What difference does that make to what they are like?

CHAPTER 3: WHY CAN'T I JUST BE TRUE TO MYSELF?

- ▼ “Be true to yourself. Follow your heart. Do more of what makes you happy.” Have you ever heard messages like those? If so, where from?
- ▼ Why does “do what makes you happy” as a way of navigating life not actually work?
- ▼ On pages 26-27, Chris talks about the experience of trying to help someone, only to end up making the situation worse; of chasing after something you’re sure will make you happy, only to find that it’s doesn’t; of experiencing desires that aren’t good for you or for other people. Can you relate to any of those?
- ▼ We need a voice outside of us to help us figure out who we are, who we want to be, and how to live in a way that matches up with that. Where can we find that, do you think?



CHAPTER 4: WHY CAN'T I JUST LISTEN TO MY FRIENDS?

- ▼ “The truth is, even the deepest, most secret parts of my own heart and mind have been shaped by the people all around me.” In what ways do we get shaped or influenced by other people? Who do you think has shaped you, either in a good way or a bad way?
- ▼ What’s the problem with depending on other people’s opinions?
- ▼ Re-read 1 Corinthians 4 v 3-4 (on p 34). Whose opinion did Paul care about?



CHAPTER 5: HOW CAN I FIND REAL FREEDOM?

- ▼ How would you describe what “freedom” is? Did anything about the way Chris talked about freedom surprise you?
- ▼ Based on this chapter, how would you answer if someone asked you, “How can I find real freedom?”

CHAPTER 6: WHO DOES GOD SAY I AM?

- ▼ What does Genesis 1 tell us about who made us and what the purpose of our lives is?
- ▼ Does it ever feel like God loves you the way that Chris loves M&Ms (p 47)? What’s the difference between that and the way that a shepherd loves his lost sheep?
- ▼ “God doesn’t just say people matter. He says you matter. God doesn’t just love people. He loves you.” What would you like to say to God in response?

CHAPTER 7: WHAT ABOUT ALL THE WAYS I MESS UP?

- ▼ What surprising news did Jesus have for the Pharisees and teachers?
- ▼ What surprising news did Jesus have for the tax collectors and sinners?
- ▼ Which of those groups do you think you’re more like? Was there any news in this chapter that surprised you?
- ▼ Why is Jesus able to offer forgiveness to those who mess up?



CHAPTER 8: WHAT DIFFERENCES DOES GOD MAKE?

- ▼ Who did God say Jesus was? In what ways was Jesus tempted to doubt his identity? How did he stay on track?
- ▼ Who does God say that you are? In what ways are you tempted to doubt that? How can you stay on track?
- ▼ Have you accepted Jesus' offer of forgiveness and life yet? If not, what's stopping you?



CHAPTER 9: FOLLOWING THE WAY OF JESUS

- ▼ "Down here in the middle of our ordinary lives, it can sometimes feel like following Jesus doesn't actually make any difference at all." Can you relate to that feeling? In what areas of your life do you wish that following Jesus made more of a difference?
- ▼ What kind of habits do you have? (For example, what's the first thing you do when you get up in the morning?) Can you see how your habits have led you to be a particular kind of person?
- ▼ The habits Chris talked about in this chapter were: "Pray. Read the Bible. Spend time with other followers of Jesus. Focus your attention on God." (p 74). Are those habits that you have? If so, what do they look like? If not, what's one step you could take to get you going?



CHAPTER 10: RESTING IN THE LOVE OF JESUS

- ▼ What do you think about this idea of having a day each week to stop and reconnect with God? How would you have responded if you were in Chris's class (p 79)?
- ▼ Why did God tell his people to rest in the Old Testament? What about us?
- ▼ What's the difference between resting from being busy and resting in who God says you are? How are they connected?
- ▼ Would you like to make this kind of rest a part of your routine? How could you start?