

# Shape Our Identity

Adapted from “Who are You Spiritually?” series by Sam Rijkogel

Men often allow the wrong things to shape their identity. Who you think you are is what you become. **A lie believed as truth will affect you as if it were true.** Rick Warren writes about identity:

You cannot become all God created you to be until you understand the five factors that influence your identity. The first two are chemistry (how you are made) and connections (your relationships). You are a product of the way God created you and of the relationships in your life. Your identity is also influenced by your circumstances and your consciousness.

Circumstances are the things that happen to you and around you—none of which you control. You are a product of the trauma, troubles, suffering, shame, shock, pressures, and pain that have shaped your life. Perhaps even abuse has affected your identity. If

you've ever had a series of failures or a catastrophe, it has left an indelible mark on who you are.

Consciousness is how you talk to yourself.

You know what? If you talked to your friends the way you talk to yourself, you probably wouldn't be friends anymore, because our thoughts are filled with the lies we've heard from other people that we've let simmer and fester. When we repeat other people's thoughts in our head, they go deeper and deeper into our consciousness, and they begin to shape our identity.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rick Warren, *Your Life is Shaped by Your Thoughts*, May 6, 2017, <http://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/daily-hope-with-rick-warren/daily-hope-with-rick-warren-may-6-2017.html> (accessed July 7, 2017).

# “COURAGE” Level Questions

**C1:** Why do men allow what they think they are to determine their life course?

**C2:** Shaping a healthy identity requires a healthy thought process. In what areas do you have the easiest time with your thoughts? In which areas do you seem to struggle with your thought process?

# **“STRENGTH” Level Questions**

**S1:** The scriptures teach a lot about a healthy thought process. What can we learn from the following scriptures about a biblical thought pattern?

**Romans 12:1-2 (ESV)**

**1 Corinthians 15:45 (ESV)**

**2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (ESV)**

**Colossians 3:1-2 (ESV)**

We often separate our thoughts from our life. As if one does not have influence on the other. After reading and reflecting on the following verse, answer the questions.

**Proverbs 4:23 (NCV)** “Be careful what you think, because your thoughts run your life.”<sup>2</sup>

**S2:** How do your thoughts shape your identity?

**S3:** Have you ever allowed your emotions to shape your thought life?

**S4:** How has your thought life shaped your relationships with a friend? Your spouse? Your children?

**S5:** Do you find yourself driven to work more than needed? Why do you think this mindset drives you?

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<sup>2</sup> *The Everyday Bible: New Century Version*. (2005). (Pr 4:23). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

**S6:** Have you ever allowed wrong thoughts to put you on a direction to a wrong path?

**S7:** After reading the above Identity article answer the following:

**S8:** Are there things in your mind you need to clean out? What are they? When is your cleaning day?

**S9:** What things in your mind need to be tested by God's Word?

# “ENDURANCE” Level Questions

Read and answer the following.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (ESV)

**E1:** Describe how the following things shape your thoughts:

- Body
- Soul
- Spirit

**E2:** How do these parts play a role to shape your identity?

**E3:** Which one of the three do you find the easiest in your life? Which one is the most difficult?

Read the following verses and answer the questions.

### **Genesis 13.11-12 (ESV)**

**E4:** What do Lot's actions teach us about the role our minds play in shaping our identity?

**E5:** How easy is it to allow situations and circumstances around us to shape our identity?

**E6:** How much does finding acceptance play in shaping our identity?