Lesson 1

Our Identities

The Big Idea

We're all made in God's image, but our unique stories, cultures, and experiences also shape who we are. God invites us to discover our full identities in God, together.

Lesson Snapshot

This week, your teen explored the foundational truth that every person is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-31). We discussed how, like Jesus asking his disciples "Who do you say I am?" (Luke 9:18-20), we all navigate competing messages about our identities. The goal was to begin seeing our uniqueness not as a barrier, but as a God-given aspect of who we are.

Conversation Starters

Use these to open a conversation, maybe on a drive or over dinner. The goal isn't to get the "right" answer, but just to listen.

- "When you were younger, how would you have answered the question 'Who are you?' How has that changed?"
- "Have you ever felt like people see you in a way that doesn't feel true to who you really are? What's that like?"
- "I was thinking about how God sees me. What do you think God sees when He looks at you?"

Connection Point

Two Truths & A Lie (Parent Edition)

Share your own "two truths and a lie" with your teen, but focus on your identity. For example: "I'm a parent, I'm an accountant, and I'm secretly a great singer." It opens the door to show them the different layers of your own identity beyond just being their parent.

Lesson 2

Our Origin Stories

The Big Idea

Where we come from—our family's history of movement and migration—is a significant part of who we are and how God has shaped us.

Lesson Snapshot

Your teen learned that migration is a central theme in the Bible. From Abram and Sarai (Genesis 12) to Jesus' own family fleeing to Egypt as refugees (Matthew 2), God's people have often been on the move. We discussed how these journeys, whether chosen or forced, shape our families and our faith.

Conversation Starters

- "I was thinking about our own family's 'moves.' What's the biggest move or change you can remember?"
- "Did you know that [share a brief story about where a grandparent or ancestor came from]? How do you think that has shaped our family?"
- "The lesson talked about Jesus being a refugee. How does that change how you think about him, or how we should treat newcomers in our community?"

Connection Point

Map Your Story

Pull up a map online (or use a physical one). Together, trace the places your family has lived, going back as far as you know. Talk about why people moved. It's a visual way to see that your family has an origin story, just like the people in the Bible.

Lesson 3

Our Cultures

The Big Idea

Our cultures—the traditions, values, and unspoken rules of our families and communities—deeply affect how we see the world and God. God meets us and wants to be known within our unique cultures.

Lesson Snapshot

We explored culture using the "iceberg" model—10% is visible (food, music) while 90% is below the surface (beliefs, communication styles). We saw how Jesus was fully part of his Jewish culture, celebrating Passover with his family (Luke 2:41-51). The goal was to see our own cultural backgrounds as gifts that help us understand God and each other better.

Conversation Starters

- "What's one tradition in our family that you really like? What's one you don't totally get?"
- "Have you ever been at a friend's house and realized, 'Wow, they do things totally differently than we do'?"
- "How do you think our family's way of doing things affects how we think about God or church?"

Connection Point

Share a Cultural Artifact

Pick something in your home—a recipe, a photograph, a piece of art, a holiday decoration—and tell the story behind it. "This recipe came from your great-grandmother because..." It makes the invisible parts of your family culture visible and valuable.

Lesson 4

Our Rejection and Resilience

The Big Idea

Pain and rejection are real parts of our stories, but God meets us in our suffering, sees us, and builds resilience in us.

Lesson Snapshot

This was a heavier topic. We looked at the story of Hagar, who was mistreated and cast out but was met by "the God who sees me" (Genesis 16). We also talked about how Jesus himself was rejected by his community and the authorities (Luke 23). The focus was on acknowledging that pain is real, but it doesn't have the final word—God's presence with us does.

Conversation Starters

- "Who is someone you know (or have read about) who has been through something really hard and come out stronger?"
- "When you're having a tough time, what's something that actually helps? What's something people do that doesn't help?"
- "The story of Hagar reminds us God sees us in our pain. When has it been comforting for you to know that God is with you, even if things are hard?"

Connection Point

Listen to a Song

Find a song about resilience or overcoming hardship that you both know (or introduce one to the other). Listen to it together and just ask, "What part of that song stands out to you?" Music can be a powerful, low-pressure way to talk about difficult emotions.

Lesson 5

Our Neighborhoods

The Big Idea

Our neighborhoods are shaped by history and unseen boundaries, but Jesus calls us to be bridge-builders who cross divides to love our neighbors.

Lesson Snapshot

We studied the story of Jesus and the Woman at the Well (John 4), highlighting the deep historical and cultural divides Jesus crossed to speak with her. We also touched on how our own neighborhoods have histories (like redlining) that can create divisions. The challenge was to see our own communities with new eyes and ask how we can be like Jesus—a boundary crosser.

Conversation Starters

- "What's one thing you really like about our neighborhood? What's one thing you wish was different?"
- "Are there parts of our town or city you've never been to? Why do you think that is?"
- "Jesus intentionally went to a place he was 'supposed' to avoid. Who are the people in our world that we are often taught to avoid? How can we be more like Jesus?"

Connection Point

Take a Different Route

The next time you're driving or walking somewhere familiar, intentionally take a different route. Pay attention to what you see—different houses, businesses, parks, people. Talk about what you noticed. It's a simple way to break out of our usual patterns and see our community more fully.

Lesson 6

Our Response

The Big Idea

God calls us to use our unique, God-given identities to love one another, seek the well-being of our communities, and build a church where everyone belongs.

Lesson Snapshot

This final lesson was about integration and action. We looked at God's call to the exiles in Babylon to "seek the peace and prosperity of the city" (Jeremiah 29:7) and Paul's vision of the church as a new, unified family in Christ (Ephesians 2:14-22). The main question was: Now that we know more about who we are, how will we live as a community that reflects God's love for diversity and unity?

Conversation Starters

- "After all these conversations, what's one new thing you've thought about your own identity?"
- "What's one gift you think you bring to our family? What's a gift I bring?"
- "If we wanted to be a family that really 'seeks the well-being' of our neighborhood, what's one small thing we could start doing?"

Connection Point

Name the Gifts

At the end of a meal, go around the table and have each person name one specific gift they see in the person to their right. It could be a character trait, a talent, or a way they make others feel. (e.g., "A gift I see in you is your sense of humor," or "your loyalty to your friends."). It's a powerful way to affirm the unique, God-given identity of each person in your family.