

Session 3 of Identity Bible Study

In the first session, we met Harry and his life issue. We discussed creation, the fall into sin, and how our culture influences us as the world and our own sinful flesh. We often turn away from the order of God and are enticed to seek the love and intimacy that we all crave in all the wrong places. The second session introduced us to two married couples who have dealt with life issues which stem from today's "sexual revolution." We learned about the importance of and reason for marriage and the consequences of succumbing to the world's ways concerning our sexual behaviors and identities. The third session of this study will focus on chastity and the importance of the relationship between the body and soul and how that guides us in our lives in meaningful relationships. These concepts affect some of the life issues we have encountered in our journey with Harry wanting to become Sally as well as the Joneses and the Smiths.

1. What is chastity and why is it important?
 - What does Luther's Small Catechism teach about the Sixth Commandment?
 - Why does God give us this commandment?
 - How are sexual purity and chastity different from virginity?
 - Why do you think chastity and virginity are often confused with each other?
 - Why is chastity important? What are some of the physical and spiritual benefits of practicing chastity?

Summary: Chastity is the pure and decent behavior of people baptized into Christ. Sexual intimacy is to be reserved for and enjoyed in the estate of marriage only, as discussed in session two. Chastity is addressed in the Sixth Commandment, which provides boundaries for everyone so that we can understand what is good and right as well as what is considered wrong and dangerous since there are consequences. Chastity is something that can be reclaimed after repentance and a renewal of faith through Christ.

1. What does God say about the relationship between our bodies and souls?
 - **Read Matthew 10:28.** What does it teach us about the body and the soul?
 - **Read Hebrews 10:39; 1 Peter 1:9; 1 Peter 3:19; Revelations 6:9.** What do these verses teach us about the body and the soul?
 - **Read Hebrews 4:12.** What does this teach about the body and the soul?
 - **Read 2 Corinthians 5:3-5.** What do these verses teach about the body and the soul?
 - **Read Luke 10:20.** What does this tell us about who we are?
 - **Read Isaiah 43:1.** Who names us?
 - **Read Revelations 3:5.** Whom does this verse say we belong to?

Summary: The importance of the understanding the body and the soul are essential in understanding our identities in Christ through our Baptism and how we are to be in a personal relationship with God and with each other. God has designed us to be alive forever with both body and soul. The body and the soul are distinguished from each other, but they are not separated until physical death in this time. It is a profound mystery, just like marriage and the

Holy Trinity. Because we are baptized into Jesus, our flesh and our souls will be reunited at the second coming of Jesus. This gives importance to the physical body as we have been created, an importance that the world tries to deny. God has given us our bodies as either male or female, and He has also given us our souls, which can be lost or separated from Him forever without faith in His forgiveness.

Additional discussion questions:

- How can this knowledge help individuals like Harry who struggle with their gender identity?
- What can Carol and Mark do to alleviate the guilt they have for the actions of their sons?
- Are they justified in explaining to their sons that chastity is expected, even when they didn't practice it when they were younger and unmarried?

In the fourth and last session of this study, we will take a closer look at our Christian identity. We will review the purpose for chastity and how to reclaim it in our lives as we confess Christ to our families and neighbors. We will look at what it means to have a clear conscience and spend some time discussing the difference between tolerance and speaking the truth in love.

Close with prayer: Dear Author of Life, we give thanks for Your creation of our bodies and souls. You have knit us together perfectly. Help us to always be mindful of the great gifts You have given us through this life and through Your salvation. Keep us from the evil one who tries to lead us astray with lies about who we are and to whom we belong. Keep us in Christ as we live in this time until You bring us to completion on the Last Day. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Departing Hymn: "Lord of Our Life" LSB 659