

# The Waters We Swim In

## GETTING STARTED

*We get so used to the world we live in. Day in, day out; we breathe in its air and swim in its waters. But like the proverbial frog in the pot, rarely do we think about the temperature of what we are swimming in.*

*The world invites us to swim in its waters, but the Gospel calls us to live lives that are distinctly different from the world around us. Different in values; different in belief; different in who we serve and what we love.*

*In this series we will examine 6 cultural norms that the world invites us to embrace in contrast to the Gospel realities that Jesus calls us to embody.*

## KEYS TO A GREAT DISCUSSION:

**\*Best Practice Suggestions: Reading the following “Guardrails” will help your conversations stay on the tracks.**

**Guardrail #1: Show Grace-** Believe it or not, topics such as race, politics, and gender can be challenging for everyone. Give each other grace and the benefit of the doubt—it will go a long way. Embrace discomfort as an opportunity for growth, acknowledging that challenging conversations can lead to deeper understanding and connection.

**Guardrail #2: Practice Respect-** Respect confidentiality within the group, ensuring that what is shared remains within the confines of the discussion.

**Guardrail #3: Have a Posture of Humility**-This is a chance for us to understand culture, how it influences us, and how we can live in this world in a faithful way. It has much more to do with us and our response to the "waters we swim in" than it does with critiquing society. In short, "work on you."

**Guardrail #4: Go to Scripture**-Scripture is the Word of God. It is powerful, living, and the final and ultimate authority. Refer to it often, trust in it in all areas, and seek to apply it to your life.

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

Read the following Scriptures together and then use the questions below (or any you wish to add) to discuss the text and unpack its meaning.



Have someone in your group read **Genesis 1:26-31**

- What stands out to you about today's text?
- Genesis 1:26-31 talks about people being made in God's image. What does it mean to be made in God's image?
- How does the understanding of identity impact our understanding of purpose?
- God created people as, "*male and female he created them...*" How does this description deepen our understanding of identity and purpose as image bearers of God?

## GETTING PRACTICAL

- 1) Identity can be complex, constantly being shaped and reshaped by stages of life, experiences, and influences. What are some factors that influence how we see ourselves?
- 2) How does our culture sometimes mislead us about what identity truly means?
- 3) How can **we practically** embrace the biblical view of identity in a culture that often prioritizes self-expression and individualism?
- 4) How should this impact our purpose? How might it impact relationships like marriage, friendships, parenthood, and dating?