



## Week Four

### Opening Prayer

God, thank you for being with us now and always. We come before you today as we gather together to look at this idea of living in community and being known. Help us to honor you with our conversation. Amen.

### Talk It Over

This series is all about helping us see the ways in which God invites us to engage in the mission of Jesus. Each of us is invited to join the Jesus mission right where we live, work, and play. This is why EastLake aims to be a place where people are helping people find and follow Jesus. This week we looked at the gift of community and how we can create a place to be fully known and fully loved; how we can move from our false selves or masks and into our true selves or identity in God.

- Did you enjoy dressing up as a kid? What was your favorite costume or character?
- What was your style like in the '70s, '80s, '90s or when you were a teenager?
- What was your favorite junk food?

### Read 2 Corinthians 4:2 (Msg) and Genesis 3:7 (NLT)

At EastLake we often say we desire to live *Lights On; Windows Open*. In order to do this, it is important to have a safe community. One that is full of people who want to help other people live a life of authenticity before God. Shame can limit our ability to live this way both as individuals and as a community.

- Can you remember a moment from your childhood when you felt shame? How did that impact who you decided to become?
- Do you tend to let people see who you are or are you more cautious before allowing others to see the real you?
- Are you aware of the ways you cover up or put on a mask? Can you see how you have done that during different life stages? What comes to mind as you reflect back on various ways you have covered up and wore masks over time?

### Read Hebrews 9:22 (Voice) and Colossians 3:9-11 (Msg)

Jesus' gift to us through the work of the cross brings us back to a place of restoration. There is no reason to live in shame or remain covered up by our masks or false self. This gift of the cross is an invitation to step into our true self-identity as a child of God.

- Is the idea of a false self and a true self one that rings true to you?
- Would you say you spend more time in your false self or your true self? Has that changed over time?
- Do you know how loved you are and that God calls you his beloved?
- In what ways do you feel you live as his beloved? In what ways do you struggle?

(Content continued on the next page.)

### **Read 1 John 1:8-9 (Voice) and James 5:16 (Msg)**

How do we continue to grow into our true self and help others do the same? This week we looked at three ways: *Get real with God, Get real with one, Get real with a team.*

- Which of those three ways is the hardest for you to live out?
- When you have lived this way what do you notice about the way you show up for others?

### **Read Ephesians 4:32, 1 John 4:11, and 1 Corinthians 1:10 NIV**

- What do you think holds us back as individuals and as a group from being more authentic with each other?
- Do we feel good about where we are as a group on this topic of authenticity? Or do we want to stretch ourselves a little more? *As we talk this out, let's remember we may have different answers and it is not a given that you should be diving deeper with each other. Your level of transparency might be just right based on where you are in building safety and connection among the group. Let's have an honest conversation and honor and listen to each other as you share.*

### **Closing Prayer**

Thank you for the work we are invited into — individually with you, with those people you have placed close in our lives, and in our broader community. Help us continue to take steps toward healing by removing our masks and becoming our true selves, the child of God-self you call beloved. Amen.

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### **How To Use this Discussion Guide**

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create space to grow in friendship and faith. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, consider reviewing the guide before your group to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressured to read all the content or to hit all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help foster friendship and faith in your specific group.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead.