

## Swift Transitions: Anticipating, Welcoming, and Celebrating the Moves of God

### Physical and Social Identity Transitions

Session #4 – October 10, 2024

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Change comes for us all, including changes to our physical and social identities. How we process these changes is a matter of how we view them and what we intend to do about them. Part of anticipating, welcoming, and celebrating how God moves throughout our lives is to appreciate that God can use physical and social transitions to bless us and be glorified by us.

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*Physical identity:* the distinguishing traits of an individual. This may be beyond an individual's ability to control, yet it can be subject to one's desires and resources to create. Often, physical identity is determined by what can be seen by others.

*Social identity:* the relation established by psychological identification. The term implies "sameness" especially when one's individuality is constructed by virtue of one's relationship with/to others. Also refers to how one sees themselves as part of a whole.

*What happens when the way you could be identified has changed?*

**Physical identity.** Physical identity includes height, hair color or style, skin tone, among other obvious personal markers. If you are reading this, then you know that the way someone described you twenty years ago was different than they might describe you today. This points to the reality that physical transitions can change how people are identified.

Question 1: How has your physical identity changed over the years? \_\_\_\_\_

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Question 2: How have changes to your physical identity caused you to change? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Social identity.** Who do you spend most of your time with? How do you spend your leisure time? Are you energized by large groups or by private time? What informs your decisions about with whom and how you spend your time? What group(s) of people do you most identify with? Answers to these and other questions can inform our understanding of social identity.

Question 1: How has your social identity changed over the years? \_\_\_\_\_

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Question 2: How would you describe the common bonds of your social circle? \_\_\_\_\_

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**John 9:1-34**

**Navigating physical and social transitions**

As we read, note any physical and social changes and the transitions we can anticipate, welcome, and celebrate as part of our growth process:

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Strategies for joyful physical and social transitions**

Today’s text offers several ways to respond to the question: How can I joyfully navigate the seasons of life when I experience physical and social transitions?

1. Recognize that Jesus can use physical conditions and social locations to glorify God.

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2. Believe that some transitions are miracles that can point people to Jesus.

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3. Be courageous. You are the evidence you need to demonstrate that God is still at work.

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4. Be grateful. Some people and places are detrimental to the “new” us.

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**NOTES:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**God-honoring ways to manage physical and social transitions**

What biblical principles and precepts exist to help us navigate and manage the physical and social transitions that are a part of life?

- Psalm 37:25: \_\_\_\_\_
- Proverbs 17:22: \_\_\_\_\_
- Romans 12:1-2: \_\_\_\_\_
- Philippians 4:6-9: \_\_\_\_\_