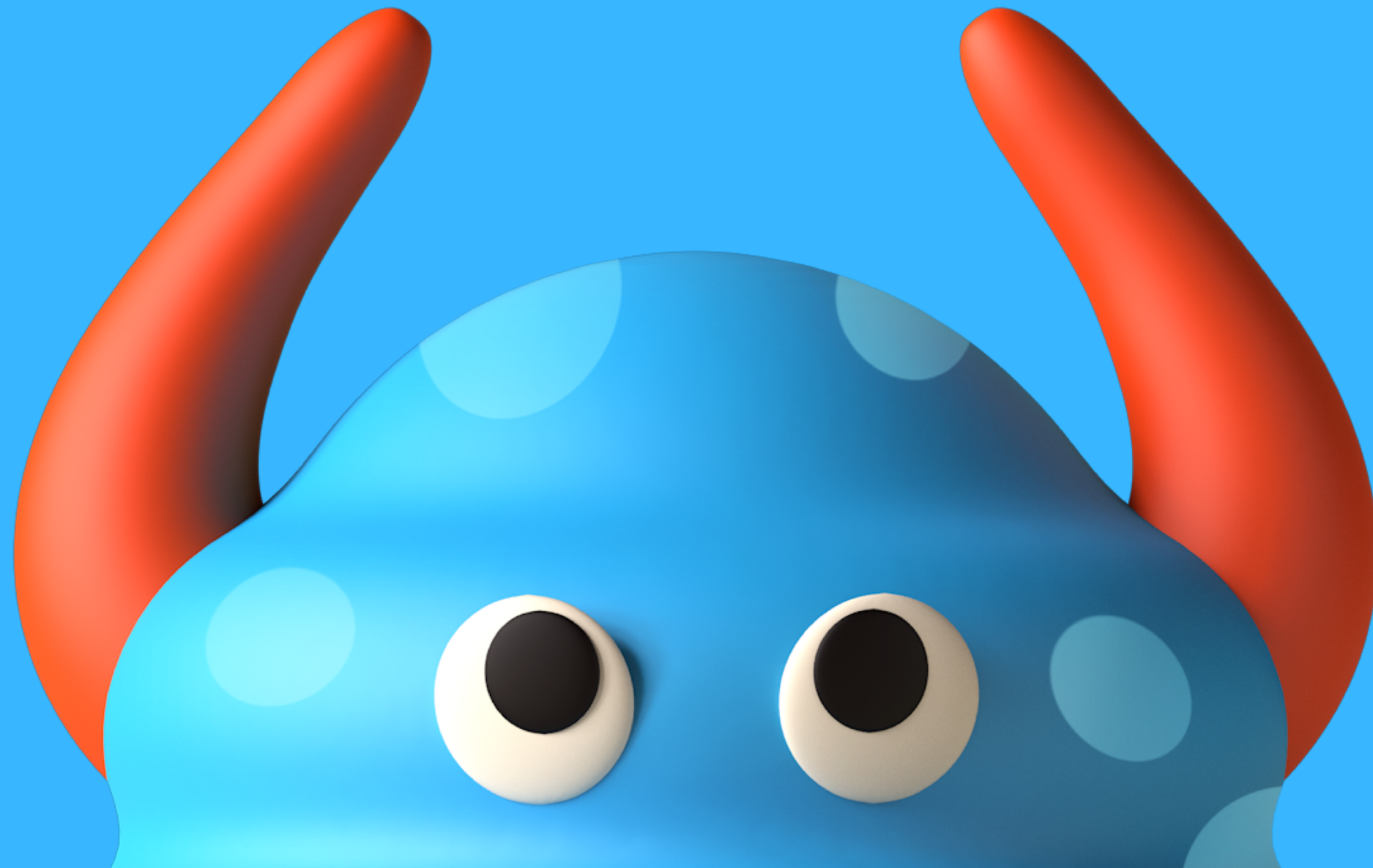


# Identity.

Discipling kids & youth toward identity rooted in Jesus





# WHO AM I?

## Christie Penner Worden

RaiseUpFaith

North American Director

Ministry Practitioner

Content Creator

Speaker




Writer

Mother, Wife, Friend, Leader,  
Speaker, Author, Daughter, Auntie,  
Canadian, Mennonite, Singer...

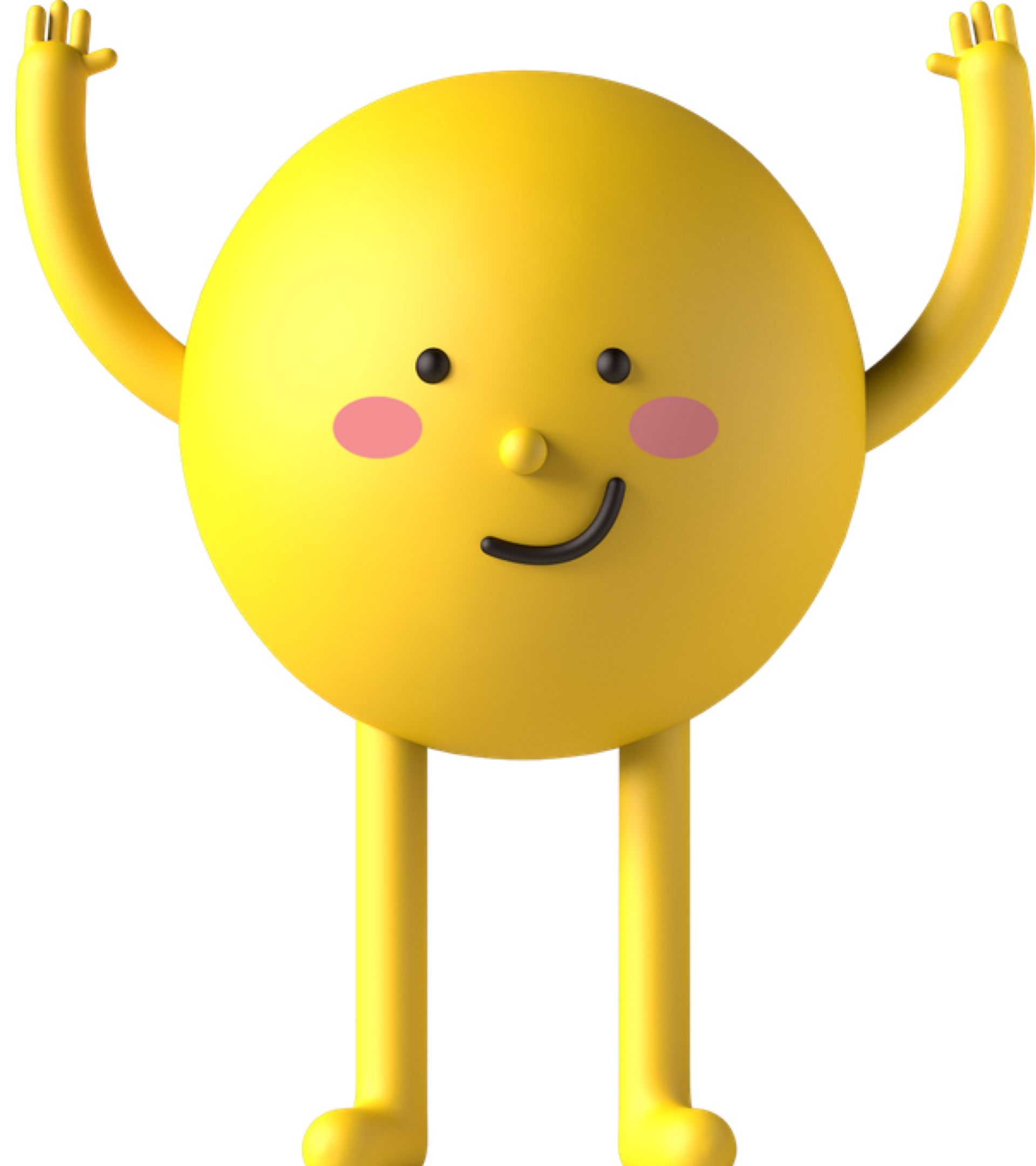




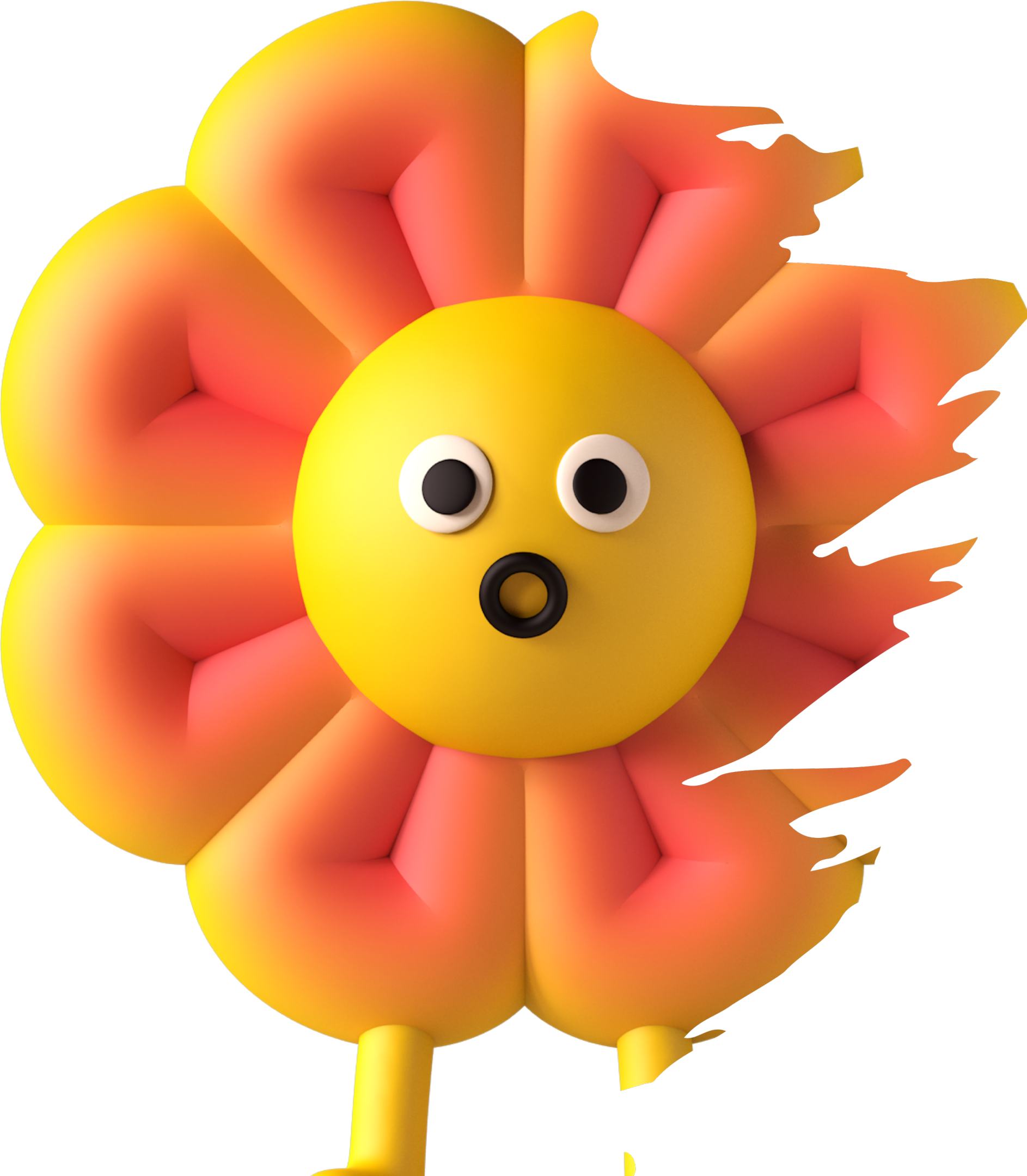
# How do you define IDENTITY?

- *Defining the Conversation*
    - What makes up your identity?
    - What doesn't make up your identity?
  - What complications does the word hold for you?
  - What real questions and challenges around identity and discipleship for families, kids, and youth are you wrestling with?
- 
- 
- 

That actions that you do to be the  
person that you are.  
There are identities that you may wish  
to be... but if your actions don't align  
with those identity-based goals... that  
is not your identity.







“Identity is the deep ache of our cultural moment. so much confusion, so much longing for validation, so much polarity around it, demand for it, and is one of the reasons we can't talk to each other about divisive issues. If my identity is in what I think, believe, and my ideas then if you disagree with me, you aren't just disagreeing with my ideas, you are fundamentally disagreeing with my being and now you are an existential threat that must be eliminated.”



My character, my soul and  
my spirit. The spirit that  
dwells inside of me who  
creates me to be my identity!





How you view yourself, and what your values are.

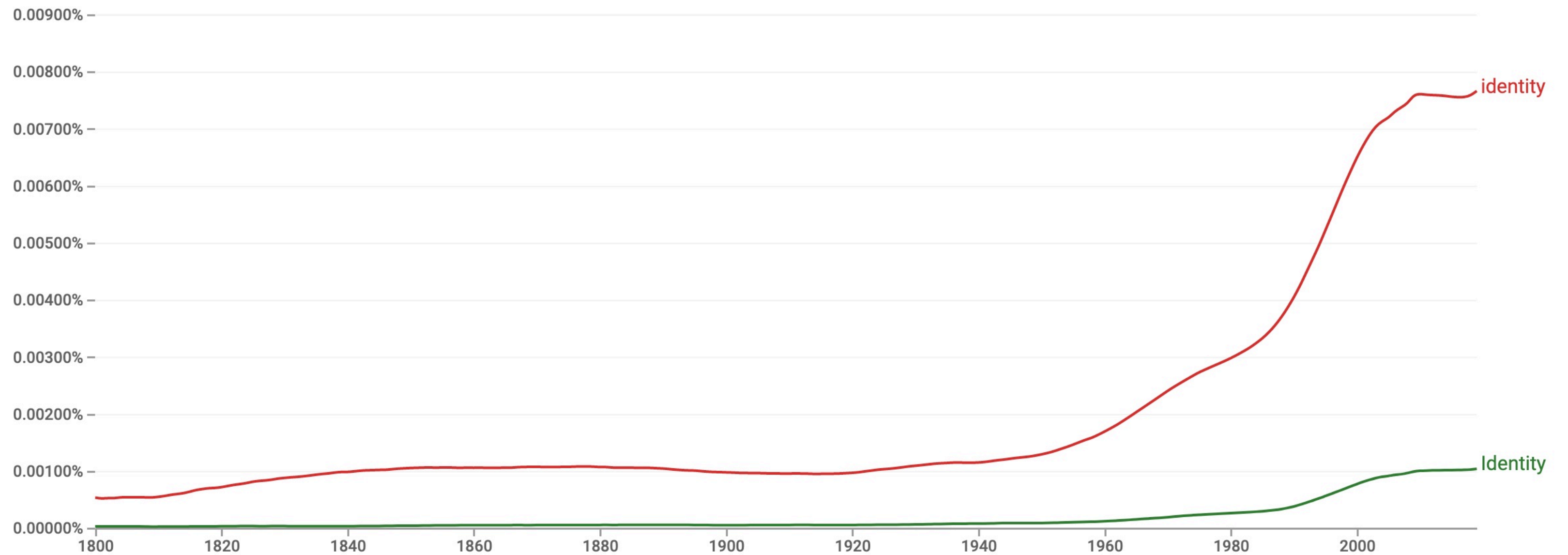
Your values don't determine your identity, but they are part of how your identity is expressed.



# Google Books Ngram Viewer

identity

1800 - 2019 English (2019) Case-Insensitive Smoothing of 7



# WHAT IS IDENTITY?



- The condition or fact of being the same or exactly alike; sameness; oneness.
- (math.) An equation which is true for all permissible sets of values of the variables which appear in it: Ex.:  $x^2 - y^2 = (x + y)(x - y)$
- ✗ Information, such as an identification number, used to establish or prove a person's individuality, as in providing access to a credit account.
- The definition of identity is who you are, the way you think about yourself, the way you are viewed by the world and the characteristics that define you.
- A sameness between two items or designs such that one violates patent rights held by the other.
- The sameness some individuals share to make up the same kind or universal.
- ✗ The difference or character that marks off an individual from the rest of the same kind, selfhood.
- ✗ A name or persona—the mask or appearance one presents to the world—by which one is known.
- Knowledge of who one is.

“Despite this vastly increased and broad-ranging interest in “identity,” the concept itself remains something of an enigma... “identity” in its present incarnation has a double sense. It refers at the same time to social categories and to the sources of an individual’s self-respect or dignity. There is no necessary linkage between these things. In ordinary language, at least, one can use “identity” to refer to personal characteristics or attributes that cannot naturally be expressed in terms of a social category, and in some contexts certain categories can be described as “identities” even though no one sees them as central to their personal identity.”

WHAT IS IDENTITY (AS WE NOW USE THE WORD)?

James D. Fearon, Department of Political Science, Stanford University





# Identity defined:

i·den·ti·ty

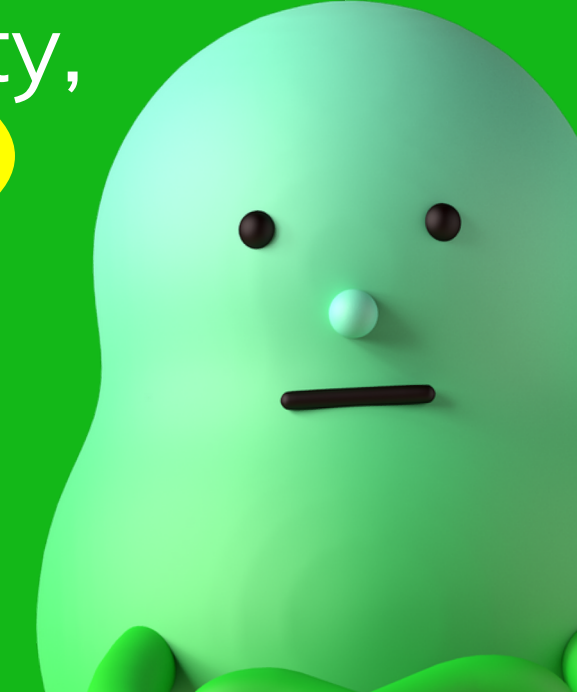
/,ī'den(t)ədē/

noun

- the fact of being who or what a person or thing is.
- the characteristics determining who or what a person or thing is.

Similar:

Individuality, self, selfhood, ego, personality, character, originality, distinctiveness, distinction, singularity, peculiarity, uniqueness





# Identity, going deeper:



*\*late 16th century (in the sense 'quality of being identical'): from late Latin identitas, from Latin idem 'same'.*



# Identity, as math:



*\*the equality of two expressions for all values of the quantities expressed by letters, or an equation expressing this:*

*e.g.  $(x + 1)^2 = x^2 + 2x + 1$*

# IDENTITY *REDEFINED:*

The more I look like Jesus,  
the more I am the me  
I was made to be.





# WHAT'S TRUE ABOUT ME?



**If our goal is for kids to have rooted identity in Jesus, then we must first know the soil in which we are planted.**

## **Discuss:**

- What is true no matter what, according to scripture?
- Who does God say I am?
- Are there truths about my identity that never change, even when my body, my ideas, and my story do?

# WHAT'S TRUE ABOUT ME?



## A few considerations for GenZ & Alpha:

What about children who have parts of their identity that ARE concrete (eg. racialized children)?

- social and racial differences do not change your relationship with God
- through our PHYSICAL bodies, we can love and interact with the world
- I am known, loved, and led by a God who understands and loves how I am physically present in the world, today.

# WHAT'S TRUE ABOUT ME?



## **God knows me.**

God is Creator of all. God is good, and I am made in the image of God. He made me *on* purpose, with a purpose, *for* a purpose, and He wants a relationship with me. God is my heavenly Father. I am a child of God.

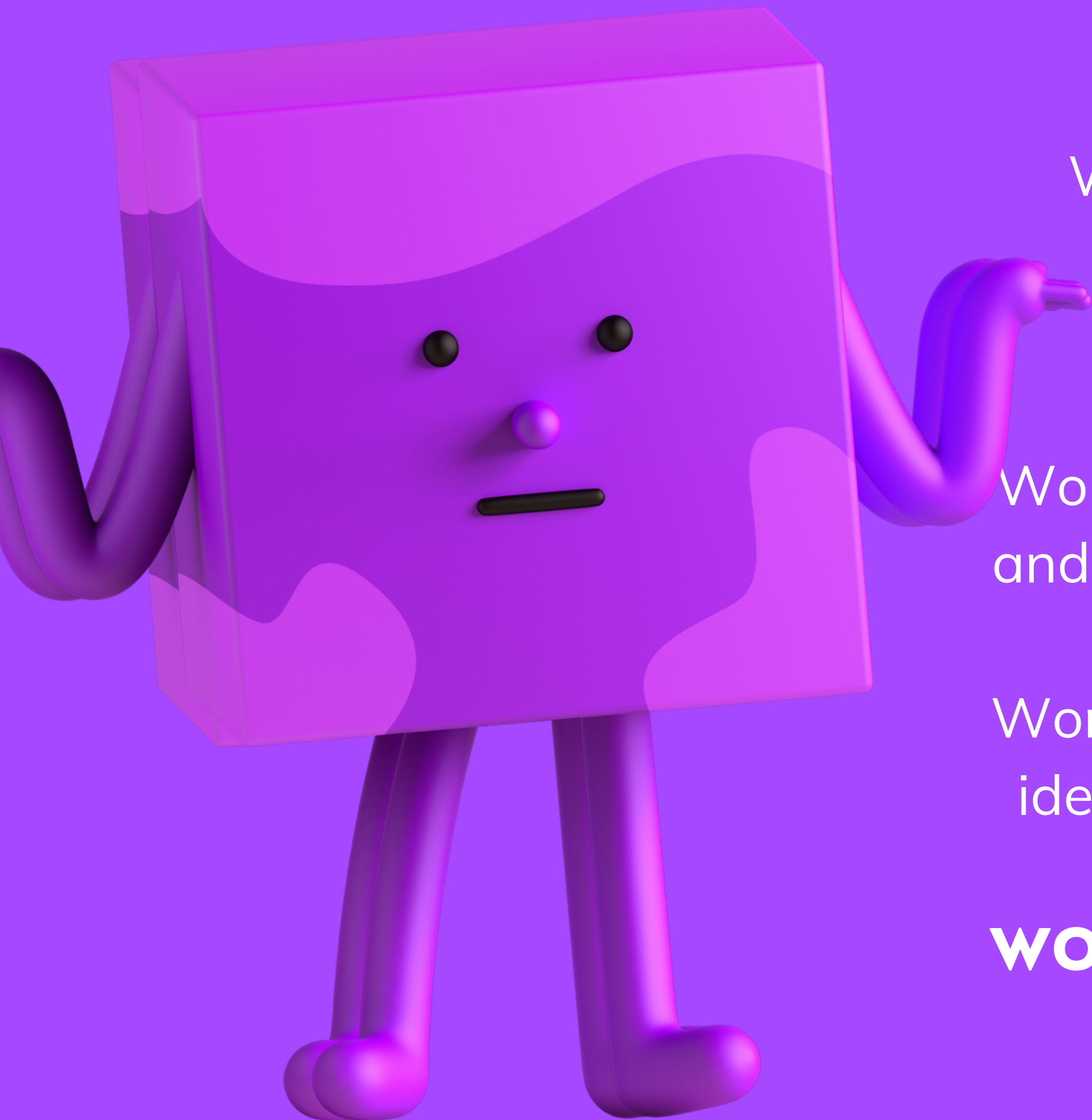
## **Jesus loves me.**

Jesus' perfect life, death, and resurrection are God's love story. Jesus came to fulfill God's promises to His children. Through Jesus, I have salvation. I can love because God loved me first and with the life of His Son. Even when I am unlovely, I am invited to be loved. Even when I make choices that aren't loving, Jesus loves me. When I turn from my way and follow His way, I am forgiven. Love forgives. Jesus' love is a miracle.

## **The Holy Spirit leads me.**

When I choose to live for Jesus, He gives me the gift of His Spirit. The Holy Spirit invites me to live in the Kingdom now *and* not yet. He encourages me to live like Jesus and points me back to the Way, the Truth, and the Life—even when I lose my way.

## **I am a wonder.**



# Why wonder?

Wonder roots curiosity in the belief that our identity is found in **God**'s big story, where **Jesus** is Lord and the **Holy Spirit** is present.

Wonder celebrates and explores childlike faith and the desire to know: to know ourselves, our world, and our Creator God deeply. Wonder makes room for big questions and big ideas while leaving no doubt about who I am.

**WONDER + CURIOSITY + BELIEF + FAITH**



# Why does this matter?

Research tells us that today's parents want to raise good kids with good character. But we also know faith journey is so much more than behavior management.

**The gospel defines our identity.**





# I am known.

God sees me. He knows me. He has always known me. He has had me in mind from the very beginning. He breathed life into me with a plan and purpose designed to fulfill His will on the planet.

Being **KNOWN** by the Creator means that I **BELONG**. I get to be part of His family.

Psalms 139:13-14



# I am loved.

God loves me no matter what. His love for me has no beginning and no end, but God gives me the choice to love Him back. And He waits for me to choose Jesus. Choosing Jesus, means choosing God's love, God's way. Jesus is the way to God's love.

I am **LOVED** by Jesus, and I get to share His **LOVE** too.

John 13:34-35





# I am led.

I am not alone. When I choose Jesus, I can trust that the Holy Spirit will lead me each day—one step at a time. When I let the Holy Spirit lead, I grow in belief. As I learn that God's way is better than my way, my faith grows too. And the Holy Spirit will lead and guide me so that I grow to be more like Jesus—the me I was made to be.

The Holy Spirit **LEADS** the way. I can **FOLLOW** Him.

Romans 8:14-15a





# I am a child of God.

Identity begins with a curiosity about who I am: I am a wonder. I get to be wonderful *and* wonder-filled. That isn't a goal—it's just true. The Bible tells me that I am fearfully and wonderfully made, knit together by a loving God who knows all about me and loves every inch of me. He delights in me, and I will celebrate His wonders!

I get to **BE** part of God's story and my story **TELLS** of God's wonder.

1 Peter 2:9





# IDENTITY CORE VALUES

**KNOWN**

Psalms 139:13-14

**BELONG**

**LOVED**

John 13:34-35

**LOVE**

**LED**

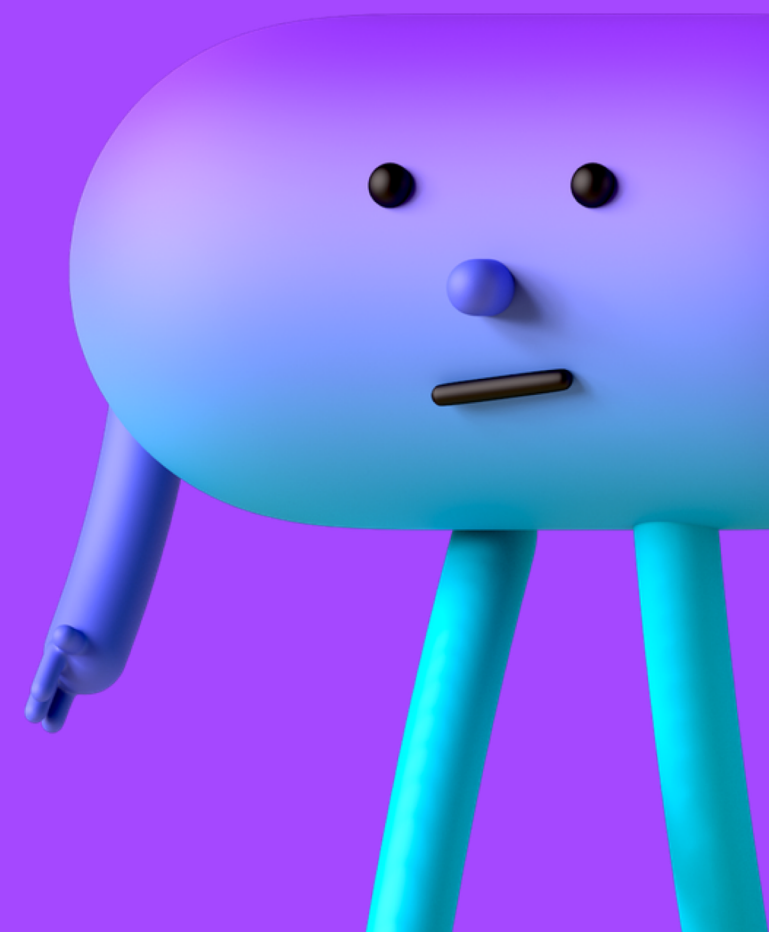
Romans 8:14-15a

**FOLLOW**

**BE**

1 Peter 2:9

**TELL**



# BECAUSE...

**God  
knows me**

**I am  
known**

**I belong in  
God's story**

**Jesus loves  
me**

**I am  
loved**

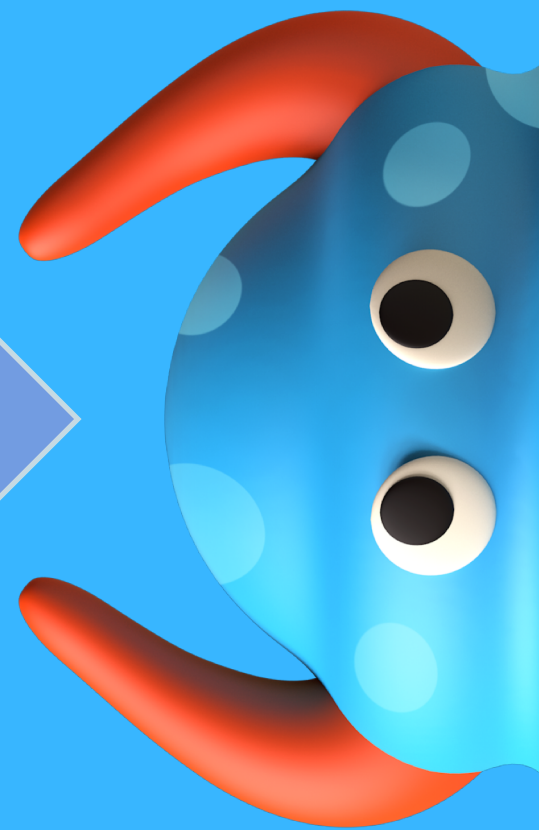
**I can share  
Jesus' love**

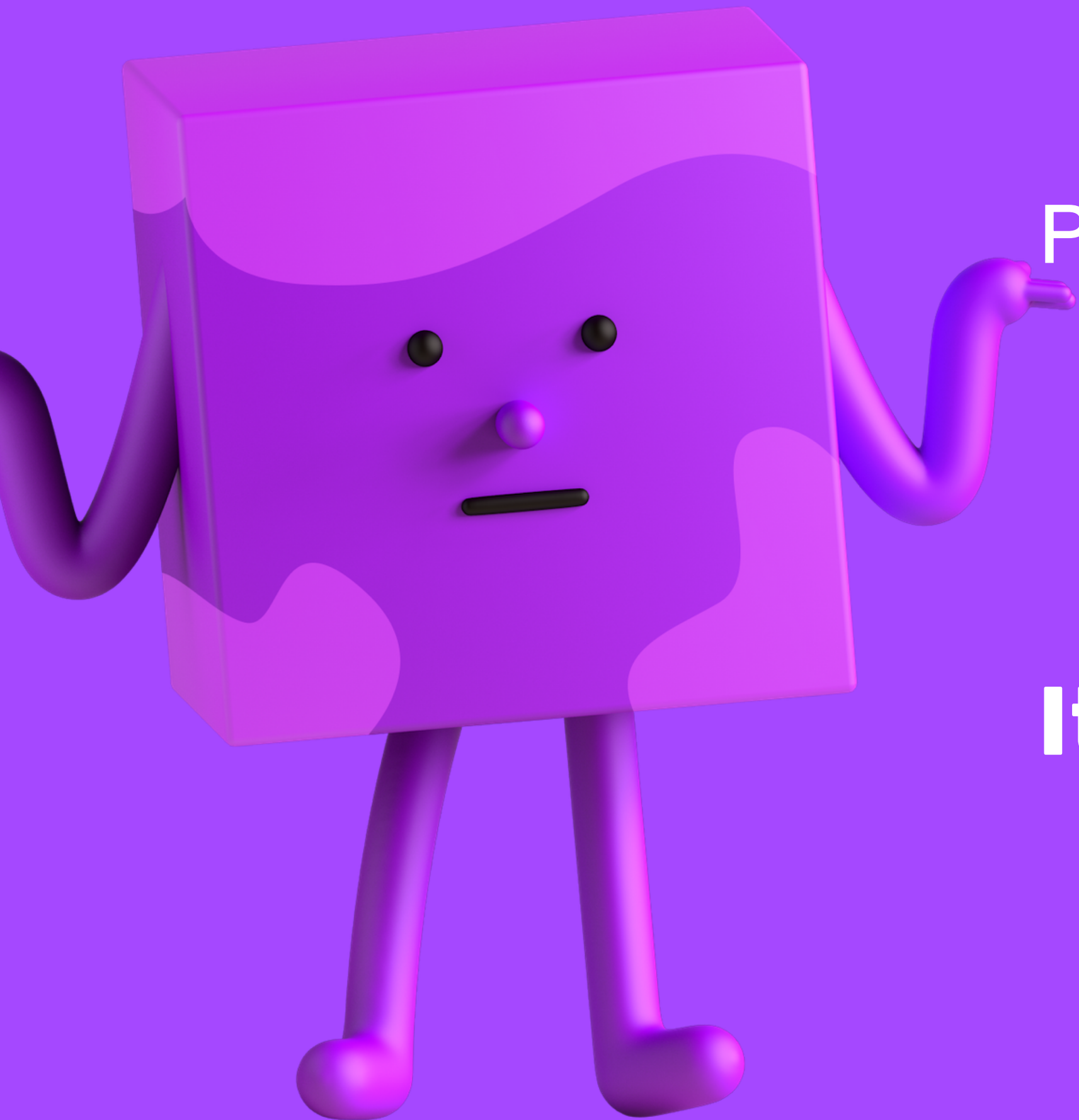
**The Holy  
Spirit  
leads me**

**I am led**

**I can follow  
the Holy  
Spirit**

# I AM A WONDER.





PUTTING JESUS AT THE CENTRE  
REDEFINES OUR IDENTITY.

**It does not disqualify the  
identifiers; it reimagines  
the starting point.**



# IDENTITY *REDEFINED:*

The more I look like Jesus, the more I am  
the me I was made to be.

