

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 5/4/2020-5/8/2020

The following content is based on the message on 5/3/20 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. It is not meant to be a full synopsis, but rather a resource to help you analyze and apply the main ideas. To use this devotional effectively, please listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

MONDAY // FORMED BY GOD

Read Genesis 2:1-25. God created us by the power of touch. Much like a potter forms a precious jar by hand, God formed humanity with His own hands. He physically breathed life into Adam and Eve. For us today, that means that it is engrained in us, from the created order, to need the physical presence of others. Science reveals the same truth that we already know from the Scripture. In the appropriate context, the physical touch of another person brings much comfort. Touch can lower heart rates. It can raise levels of oxytocin. It can even lower levels of cortisol in the body (when elevated to high levels, cortisol can negatively impact our immune systems). We need the power of touch, and many of us are missing out on that connection with others right now.

What we are experiencing today is the act of living disembodied lives.

- *Reflect on a time when someone's touch comforted you. What were the messages that your brain received from them through the power of their touch?*
- *Start a 5-minute timer (or longer). Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you someone who needs encouragement and how you could do that.*

TUESDAY // AN EMBODIED GOD

Read John 1:1-16. What you just read describes the incarnation. In other words, the God of the universe embodied Himself. He put on flesh and made Himself available on our level. This is incredible because God didn't tell us that we had to come find Him. Instead, He came to find us! Jesus came to earth to rescue us. God knew the power of touch. He knew that we couldn't live disembodied lives, so He came to earth physically in order for us to know the lengths in which He would go to save us.

We are embodied creatures and our God is an embodied God.

- *What does the incarnation tell you about Jesus' commitment to you?*
- *How should the incarnation motivate you to care for other people?*
- *Start a 5-minute timer (or longer). Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you someone who needs encouragement and how you could do that.*

WEDNESDAY // HANDS ON MINISTRY

Read Matthew 8:1-17. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus shows us the power of touch. Over and over again, Jesus reaches out to touch people when He heals them. This passage highlights a couple of times that Jesus does just that. Matthew didn't have to

include the details of Jesus touching people to heal them, but that's exactly what Matthew does. Why? Because part of our nature is to be in physical community with others, and Jesus models that for us. If you are currently feeling an absence of touch from others, then you probably feel a gap in your life.

The longing to physically be in the presence of others should show you that you are operating in your created design.

- *Write out some ways that you realize you took for granted the physical presence of others before the stay-at-home order?*
- *Start a 5-minute timer (or longer). Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you someone who needs encouragement and how you could do that.*

THURSDAY // TOUCHING THE UNTOUCHABLE

Read Matthew 9:18-26. From both yesterday's passage and today's passage, Matthew draws our attention to the fact that Jesus reaches out and touches people who were considered ritually unclean. It was socially unacceptable for these people to be touched, but Jesus did it anyway. By doing so, Jesus Himself would have been considered unclean. That means Jesus was directly putting His reputation on the line. But Jesus knew that these individuals needed something deeper. When Jesus physically touched these people, they were emotionally healed as well because He broke down the walls that had been built around them.

Jesus wants you to experience a physical, emotional, and spiritual healing.

- *In what ways do you want Jesus to heal you? Write out some of the things that come to mind.*
- *Start a 5-minute timer (or longer). Invite the Holy Spirit into these areas that you wrote down. In silence, let Him speak to you.*

FRIDAY // AN INVITATION TO TOUCH

Read Luke 24:36-49. As we said yesterday, Jesus wants you to be healed holistically. But chances are, there is something in your life where you don't believe that Jesus wants you to be healed. Well, you are in good company. Even some of Jesus' closest followers doubted Jesus. He addressed them by saying, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?" In order to help them in their unbelief, Jesus invited His followers to touch His scars. Again, the power of touch is brought to light for us. Today, Jesus asks us to touch His scars when we take communion. It is our physical reminder that Jesus loves us and wants to heal us.

Jesus makes us completely new when we come to Him.

- *What are some of the doubts that you are believing today?*
- *How is it encouraging to you to see that Jesus helped His disciples even though they doubted Him?*