

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 6/15/2020-6/19/2020

The following content is based on the message on 6/14/20 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 // CREATED FOR RELATIONSHIP

Read Genesis 1:26-31. Each of us has a longing to connect with others on some level. This is because we were all created to be like God. One of the many things that we know about God is that He is a relational god. All members of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) are in an eternal relationship with each other. Genesis 1 gives us unique language to show the unity of the Trinity at creation. This means that we were created to be in relationship with both God and with others.

Being in relationships with others is essential to being human.

- *How has the pandemic confirmed your foundational need to be in relationship with others?*
- *Reflect on the benefits of being in relationship with others. Thank God for creating us as relational beings.*

TUESDAY // NOT GOOD TO BE ALONE

Read Genesis 2:18; 21-24. As we saw yesterday in Genesis 1, God stepped back from creation and said that it was very good. However, there's more to the story. Genesis 2 re-tells the specific story of the creation of humanity. It gives us more insight into how God created Adam and Eve. Adam was created first and given work in the new world. But something was missing! When God looked at Adam, He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." In a perfect creation (sin hadn't entered the world yet), there was still something that wasn't right. Humanity was not meant to be alone, so God created Eve in His own image as well. Adam and Eve knew each other completely and honestly, to the point where God said that they were "one flesh."

It is a fundamental human need to know and to be known by others.

- *Reflect on your relationships. Who do you feel truly knows you? Who do you feel like you truly know? What relationships need nurturing to grow?*
- *What is one way that you avoid people (or God) in relationships? How does that habit leave those relationships feeling more empty?*

WEDNESDAY // KNOW AND BE KNOWN BY OTHERS

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. Just so we make it very clear, this created order isn't telling you that you need to find a spouse to be fully human. God uses language that is similar to "one flesh" in Genesis 1 in order to talk about the unity in His Church. The Church is considered "one body." We each make up the body of Christ, and we each need each other for this unified body of different individuals to work properly. As image bearers, our differences reflect the face of God. To be fully human, we must

know and be known by others. But many of us are not good at this because we don't know how to be honest and we don't know how to be gracious.

The Church would not be a proper reflection of Jesus if we all were the same.

- *Reflect on some of the ways that the Church is more complete because it is filled with people who are different.*
- *Reflect on your relationships. With whom do you need to be more gracious? Write out some ways that you can be gracious to this person.*

THURSDAY // KNOW AND BE KNOWN BY GOD

Read Genesis 16:1-13. This is actually a really painful story. Sarah and Abraham completely mistreat Hagar. We have to call it what it is: they were abusive to her. God never condones Abraham and Sarah's sin. He does ask Hagar to go back to them, but if she didn't, then culturally and physically it would have been a death sentence for her and her unborn baby. They would have died out in the desert alone. However, God promised Hagar that despite what had been done to her, He saw her and He would provide for her and her son. The same is true for us today. In whatever situation you are in, God sees you and God hears you.

God sees you and hears you just as you are.

- *Why is it important to be able to call out sinful behavior, even in people we respect?*
- *Why would God go out and find Hagar to make His presence known to her? What does that teach you about God?*

FRIDAY // YOU MATTER TO GOD

Read Genesis 21:10-20. As with the cycle of most abusers, Abraham and Sarah returned to their ways of abuse. Abuse is never acceptable in God's eyes, so He made a way of escape for Hagar and Ishmael. Despite the absolute mess that they were in, despite the sin that was done to them, Hagar and Ishmael were seen and heard by God in their distress. God saw them, He heard them, and He acted on their behalf. This reminds us that we don't have to get everything together to come to Jesus. Even if we are experiencing pain, God wants to know us. We have proof of this in what Jesus did. He wants to know you so deeply that He came to earth searching for you. Jesus knows everything about you, and still said that it was worth giving His life for you.

Jesus doesn't care what He finds. He just wants you.

- *Reflect on the fact that Jesus knows your darkest parts. What does it mean to you to know that you were worth Jesus giving up His life for you anyway?*
- *How should the actions of Jesus motivate you to interact with others who have a different story than you do?*