

Small Group Notes

Sermon: 23 June 2024

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Face your shadow



SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 4:23

John 2:24

Psalms 139:23

Romans 12:2

2 Corinthians 12:8-9

OVERVIEW

Emotional health is crucial for all of us. We've explored how emotional unhealth manifests itself through a lack of awareness in various areas—our feelings, weaknesses, limits, the impact of our past on our present, and how others see us. This preaching series is significantly influenced by Pete Scazzero's book *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*, which outlines four characteristics of emotional unhealth:

1. Low self-awareness

2. Prioritising work over marriage/singleness
3. Doing more activity for God than our relationship with God can sustain
4. Lacking a work/sabbath rhythm

Scazzero also outlines four commandments that the emotionally unhealthy disciple lives by:

1. It's not a success unless it's bigger.
2. What you do is more important than who you are.
3. Superficial spirituality is acceptable.
4. Don't rock the boat.

To grow as emotionally healthy disciples, we need to face our shadow.

What is our Shadow?

We learned that the shadow is the damaged and mostly hidden version of who we are. Jesus didn't entrust himself to others because he knew their hearts, as we read in John 2:24. This means He could see their shadows. Our shadows reveal themselves in two key ways:

1. In our sinful behaviours:

- Judgementalism
- Perfectionism
- Outbursts of anger
- Jealousy
- Lust
- Greed

2. In more subtle ways:

- The need to rescue others
- The need to be liked
- The need to be noticed
- An inability to stop working

We need to grow in recognising our shadow and invite the Lord to reveal it to us, as suggested in Psalm 139:23.

Consequences of Ignoring Our Shadow

1. It undermines the best of who you are (Romans 12:2).
2. It limits our ability to serve others, making us curators of our own image.
3. It blinds us to the shadow of others, creating an unhealthy view of others and ourselves.

Gifts of Facing Our Shadow

1. It breaks the shadow's hidden power (2 Corinthians 12:8).
2. It helps us discover the shadow's hidden treasure (2 Corinthians 12:9).

How Can We Face Our Shadow?

1. Tame your feelings by naming them (ask the "what" and "why" questions).
2. Identify negative scripts handed down to you.
3. Seek feedback from trusted sources.

QUESTIONS

1. Which of the four unhealthy commandments do you think you are living under?
2. How does your shadow reveal itself? Why do you think that is? (Consider what negative scripts you may be carrying.)
3. What treasure do you think Jesus could be showing you in your shadow?