

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday August 9, 2020 "Invitation to a Journey: the road to self-discovery".

Caring for our heart.

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from the message this Sunday. Whether you were able to watch the live stream service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk.

Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

We're still gathering in person. Every Sunday we have a small but dedicated group who follow all the guidelines and join us. We're so encouraged with your love and presence when you join us. If you're still joining us online we love and so appreciate your presence also. We still are your church family and if there is ANYTHING you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions you have, please pass them our way. We feel just as isolated as you, and we want to maintain that connection with each of you.

II Recap.

Ok...we did our second Sunday of our August series "**Invitation to a Journey: the Road to Self-Discovery**". In setting up this series, we talked about the necessity and importance of, cultivating and developing a life of self-awareness. What other people experience when they experience you. We shared last week there are two specific behaviors we can adopt to help us grow this awareness of self. **One, catch ourselves in the act.** Develop this third person awareness of ourselves being...ourselves. And **two, wake up.** We spend so much of our awake time...not awake. We kind of sleepily drift through life with little intentionality. In order to fully be who God created us to be, we have to **continually grow this ability to test our inner world to see how we're doing.** We used this idea to begin a dive into a personality inventory called the Enneagram. It is a deep dive into understanding why we do the things we do. Hopefully we gave you enough info to give you a foundation to stand on, but not so much you were overwhelmed. Which we know you most likely were. Anyway, all of that info about the Enneagram is available on last week's devotion.

III Sunday.

Sunday we narrowed our focus down to three specific number types, 2's, 3's, and 4's... the heart triad, (we'll explain that in a bit). And how those three types experience the world and relationships. But let's start with a conversation about the heart. These primary passages were the foundation for our conversation about the heart. Go ahead and read; **Proverbs 4:23**, and **Philippians 4:6-7**, and we'll talk about how we guard and care for our hearts.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

What did it say to you about your heart?

How important is it, and why should we care about our hearts?

What is the danger of not caring for our hearts?

Scripture has a lot to say about what our heart is, and why it's important to care for it. And we'll spend most of our time here talking about caring for the heart. But since we did focus on the 'heart triad' of the Enneagram, 2's, 3's, and 4's, we'll hit that a bit.

Type 2 (The Helper) : Warm, caring, giving, outwardly focused on others. Can be sacrificial of their own needs. People-pleasing, generous, nurturing. They're motivated by a need to be loved and needed, and often avoid acknowledging their own needs. Either the servant or the hostess.

Famous 2's. -Dolly Parton, Mr Rogers, Mother Teresa, Stevie Wonder, Maya Angelou, Jessica Alba.

When healthy- Authentic, real, feel deeply, unselfish, great at sitting at your side. Anticipating needs before you feel it. You can feel what a privilege it is for them to care for you.

When stressed. Can slide into domineering, manipulative, and coercive. Can impose their own desire to care for others on others. Can neglect their own needs. Can begin to feel negative feelings, resentment, towards the same people they're trying to help.

HEART- because they feel, motivated by, meeting people's expectations, their heart can be unprotected looking for someone to appreciate them. And the unprotected heart of a 2 will give itself to people who do not have their best interest at...heart.

2's need to find their affirmation in a loving God, loving others, not in what others think.

Type 3 (The Performer) : Success-oriented, image-conscious. Wired for productivity and excelling. They are motivated by achievement, recognition, reaching milestones, and a need to be (or appear to be) successful and avoid failure. Can get frustrated with others who feel like they're in their way.

Famous 3's- Lizzo, Beyonce, Oprah, The Rock, Will Smith, Muhammad Ali, and The Biebs.

When healthy. Combine getting things done with being all there with you. Can live in the balance of getting things done but with compassion and gentleness. The world runs smoothly because 3's are healthy and making things happen. Self-motivated and directed. Energetic. Inspiring. Natural leaders.

When stressed. Can become ruthless, selfish, and aggressive. Sometimes bending rules and taking shortcuts. Sometimes so focused on success, getting things done they can run over people. Success becomes more important and valued than relationships and others. They can also experience the stress, repressing their own feelings, that comes from competing in the corporate world.

HEART- is surrendered to impressing, pleasing, the important people in their life. Perceive worth, their value, is based on their ability to achieve, become successful. Their heart can be wrapped up in worldly definitions of success just to impress, find validation.

3's need to find their affirmation and validation not in material possessions, or status, that will rust and decay but in spiritual things that will last.

Type 4 (The Romantic) : Creative, sensitive and sometimes moody. Often artistic and creative. They are motivated by a desire to be understood, while still being unique and authentic. They experience oversized feelings and fear being ordinary and inauthentic.

Famous 4's- Taylor Swift, Gene Wilder, Dakota Fanning, Anne Frank, Amy Winehouse, Harper Lee.

When healthy. A healthy 4 will be a great source of wisdom and insight for improving things around them. Profoundly creative, expressing themselves in ways others appreciate. Compassionate. Gentle. Self-aware. Can often identify their own little quirks and idiosyncrasies. They see the world around them clearly and with remarkable insight. And love and help others find themselves.

When stressed. Struggle with low self-image, self-contempt, and often genuine depression. No one understands them. Prone to alcohol and drug abuse. Can slide into self-destructive behavior. An unhealthy 4 will slide into a needy, “*am I okay, do you like me*”, and then pushing them away to see if they’re loved. Trying to please other people to scratch an itch they can’t reach.

HEART- because 4’s feel so deeply, and often can fall into the bottomless well of feelings, they are mostly or all in their heart, and can make poor choices from there.

4’s need the assurance and affirmation that can only come from God.

Even if you’re not a 2, 3, or 4, our hearts struggle with similar things that these types do.

So.

Are there times you let the expectations or demands of others take your heart to places it doesn’t need to go?

Are there times you let the values of the world, success, achievement, material things drive your heart more than the desires of God?

Are there times you let your feelings about things be how you make decisions, (the classic go with your heart), more than the truths of God?

III Challenge.

In addition to “*prayers and petitions*”, (Philippians 4:6-7), there is also actual work, **practices** we can do, to grow our ability to grow self-awareness and build in guardrails to protect our hearts.

Practices- actual application of ideas and beliefs, as opposed to just information about them, that are regularly repeated so to become more proficient.

Practices to protect your heart.

What things, routines in your life that may be motivated by the need to be needed, loved or accepted?

What are you hoping to achieve, accomplish, earn, because someone has told you how important it is to them?

In what ways do you feel misunderstood, unappreciated, unheard, that you are looking for human affirmation?

A healthy heart- is undivided that obeys God and loves others with joy. Wants only the things of God, and to build his kingdom. Is drawn towards things that stretch us and produce growth and health. Grow the ability to sense when your heart is going places, and motivated by things it shouldn’t be, and know the things you need to do to turn your heart back towards God.

What are some specific ways you can care for and grow your heart?