

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**May 26, 2024. "Who am I? How can I discover who I am? We were made to do."**

### **I Intro.**

Happy Memorial Day weekend. It's unofficially summer now. Welcome to our companion devotional to Sunday's message. It's just a part of all we have to offer to you. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. You can use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey. We don't want you to miss out on anything. So, make sure you stay connected to keep informed. We hope you are fed and ministered to by NCC. We consider you part of our community. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know.

### **II Recap.**

We're in the final Sunday of this series discovering who we are. A complete discussion is in the first Sunday's devotional, but here are a few foundational understandings that speak to this journey.

**1. Our identity is a combination of inherent traits and environment and experiences affecting those traits.** You are an aggregate of everything in your life.

**2. Sometimes we're the role we have to fill.** We're one way at school, work, in public, at church, and at home. And this can create some internal conflict filling these roles.

**3. There is one constant in our constantly evolving self.** There is a divine presence within us, implanted by God, to guide us to participate in, and experience certain things. There's a divinely designed, God-breathed, dependable, trustworthy identity inside you.

**4. Integration vs Disintegration.** Experts are discovering the importance of being integrated. Having an internal sense of harmony, united in heart, mind, body and soul. Being integrated leads to a healthy state of being. Psychologists, and mental health experts have discovered the root of mental health issues, and even physical health issues, apart from biological causes, is what's called 'disintegration' or being internally fragmented, divided, conflicted.

**5. Identity is found in relationship.** Identity is formed in relationship with something else. Answering who I am is in context to what is around you. You have to do this in community. We've talked about our innermost divine design is for joy, for growth, and to be filled. Today we hit the teaching that we were designed to do.

### **III Sunday.**

All of these "we were made for" in this series were to bring us to this point. We were doing the inner work of self-examination to see where we were missing some of the divine images of God placed within us. Those inner passions to experience joy, to grow, to be filled. And today we finished with the truth we were made to do. It's who we are. So, a little setting the tone first.

**What is something you made, did, or accomplished that brought you a lot of satisfaction?**

**Why do you think it meant so much to you?**

This final Sunday we're going to talk about who we are, at our core being; we were made to do things. This brings an incredible amount of satisfaction and fulfillment. And we get to choose what those things are. We are given a wide latitude and lots of freedom to discover our gifts and talents and then find our own unique way of adding to the good of society by putting these gifts to use. Now this service was very different, and just can't be translated to this devotion. You'll want to watch the entire service to get a feel for what we did, and to be inspired by it.

The scripture is a fairly well known one and pretty much explains itself. Read **Ephesians 2:4-10**.

**What jumped out to you about this passage?**

**What work does it say God is doing? Why is he doing this work?**

**What does this passage say to you about how we respond to this work of God?**

We have to first address Paul's felt harshness. Sometimes we either just pretend the scriptures aren't as uncomfortably direct as they are, or we unfortunately just adopt the same tone they present as the way we're supposed to live out our walk. Neither of these honors the intent and purpose of scripture. These are very contextual accounts of events and teachings that take place in a culture and society that we have no experience with nor understanding of. And the more we do the work to understand the context and the culture, the better we will be at unpacking how we are to live these truths out. Paul, when he was Saul, was a practicing expert of the law. In fact he described himself as "*the best of the best*". No one knew, or was as devoted and loyal to, The Law as Paul was. And even though he had a powerful conversion experience, he carried this same intensity and directness into his walk following Jesus. In fact, what's interesting is you can see in his letters he wrote later in his life, a growing tenderness that his earlier ones lacked. None of us are static creatures. We are constantly growing and maturing. And we give our earlier selves a lot of grace when we look back and see where we used to be, and how we used to live out our faith. This is called growth.

Enough about Paul. In the service we had people share how they're using their talents and skills 'to do'. To make an impact. To fulfill this inner design of who they are. So, some questions for you.

**What do you do in your daily life that brings you great satisfaction and a sense of purpose?**

**Is what you do adding to the greater good of our society?**

**Could you tweak or change it up a bit to have more of an impact?**

#### **IV Challenge.**

Okay let's wrap this puppy up with a verse that should be one of our life verses. Going back to our question; "*What is your rule of life?*" **What are you doing in your life that you can say the following words to?** Nehemiah working on rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem.

**Nehemiah 6:2-3 (RSV) *Sanbal'lat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come and let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do me harm. And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?"***

**Are you doing some kind of great work that it's not worth coming down for?**

If you don't have something, let us help you. We can plug you in a place here. Experiment to see what works for you. Let us help you find your 'do to do'. Know that this is a journey. You will spend your entire lifetime figuring out what you were made to do. Lots of experimenting, trial and error and self-discovery. AND...then it will change as you go along. I didn't want to say age. That's what makes life so much fun. You're a kid in a Lego store...go crazy!! You were made to do. It's who you are.