

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

**Sunday September 26, 2021. "Terraform: Building a Better Life. The Place We Are is Sacred."**

### **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 participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We're pushing through 2021, and in spite of the current spiking of cases, we're still fully committed to gathering in person. A growing group of familiar and new faces join us each Sunday. Our children's, youth areas and coffee spot are fully open also and we're seeing a good response. We're so encouraged by your love and presence when you gather with us. If you're still joining us online, we love and so appreciate your presence also. We are seeing so many more of you and are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We still are your church family, and if there is ANYTHING you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions, please pass them our way. We know the future is still uncertain, but we are committed to making our virtual congregation as central to NCC as our in person group.

### **II Recap.**

Last Sunday we began a new series that needs some explanation and context. It's based on a book by hip hop artist and activist Propaganda. The basic idea of this series is we have agency, control, over how we live our life. Yes, there are external circumstances that affect us we can't always control. But we get to choose how we respond to those events, situations, and what we'll do with them. The concept behind the phrase "terraform" comes from the science fiction world of bringing sustainable life to a dead planet. We began by asking these three questions.

**What do you want out of life? Why?**

**What are you currently doing to help you get there?**

**What do you need to change, do differently, to get there?**

This series will serve two primary purposes.

1. Lead us through what it looks like to cast our own **personal vision** working a process of 4 specific stages to build what we want our lives to look like.
2. Being guided by the Holy Spirit, build a place to gather and experience God. Doing NEW and INNOVATIVE things to be a place, church, where other people can meet God.

Last Sunday we talked about writing a better story of our past. Today we talk about everywhere we find ourselves is sacred.

### **III Sunday.**

The specific theme we hit Sunday was the practice of finding wherever we are as sacred. Even if we don't feel a sense of sacredness where we are ourselves, we can grow an awareness of the sacredness of wherever we are by experiencing it through others. So, let's start there.

**Where have you been where you experienced a sense of sacredness to that place? Why do you think you felt it?**

**When was there a time when you felt a sense of sacredness through another person?**

There were three different passages woven together that reinforced the idea of the sacredness of wherever we find ourselves. And if we don't recognize it, then we can bring a sense of cursedness to that place. We'll give you the three passages and make a quick point about each of them.

**Genesis 2:4-9a. Genesis 3:17-19. John 9:1-7.**

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

**Did you find any common thread?**

**What did that common thread show you about sacredness?**

You may have struggled with answering the last two questions. I wanted to give you a chance to honestly engage the passages. The recurring theme was dust/dirt, the ground. The dust of the earth being the origin of us, cursed to return to it because of our disobedience, but in the final story the 'uncursing' of the ground, as Jesus used it to heal a person born blind.

So, three ideas about the sacredness of wherever we find ourselves.

**1. There is a sacredness to everything because it's of God.** We go through life in such a frenzy, basically tuned out, we miss the sacredness of everything around us. The word for Adam was born out of the word for ground Adamah. This has a double meaning. Adam was from Adamah. Man is from the ground. The ground was sacred and holy, because God made it, and everything, including us, comes from and is made of the place we are. **To build a better world/life, we have to grow an awareness of the sacredness of place.** Not because of the actual location, but our connection to it.

**2. If anything curses, destroys the sacredness ... it's us.** We have to be aware of our tendency to bring a curse to the sacredness of what God has created and called good/sacred. We bring cursedness, destruction, judgment, to the places around us, mostly because we don't recognize the sacredness. We disrespect people, places, because they don't match ours, then we bring curse. It's not God's punishment. It's the consequences of our actions and choices. **Wherever you find yourself, with whomever you find yourself, can you see, feel, know the sacredness of that place?** Adam and Eve did not honor, find sacred, the connection between them and their place. Because of their choices, THEY brought the curse to the garden. **When you can't embrace the sacredness of where you are, then for all practical purposes, you bring a curse.**

**3. Jesus restored the sacredness to place, and we are to continue this work of making where we are sacred.** In this one act, Jesus reestablishes the sacredness of where we are, the place we find ourselves. And we are to continue this sacred work. Jesus used this unique healing to talk about spiritual blindness. We **miss the sacredness of places, people, because we are spiritually blind.** Story is lengthy, and super interesting, because the reaction to this man's healing is an example of

missing the sacredness of this man, where he was from, the place he was because the religious leaders couldn't see the sacredness. Saw only rules and regulations, and they missed the sacredness. **This healing is the uncursing.** Uncursing is removing the stigma, which causes us to miss the sacredness. What did this man do to be born blind? Why is he cursed? Truth is this man isn't cursed. **You are just 'blind' to his sacredness.** We have to grow the ability to 'see' him through different, spiritual, eyes and you will 'see' everything is sacred. And when we do this we're not restoring sacredness, but simply reminding of the union of all things as sacred and God made. **When we can 'see' others, places, wherever we find ourselves as sacred, then we can be an important part of building a better world.**

#### **IV Challenge.**

As you can see there was a lot of info in this particular aspect of building a better world. Understanding our past is relatively easy to understand. But to fully grasp the idea and truth of the sacredness of everywhere we find ourselves, and that leading to a growing understanding of the sacredness of others, (we'll hit that next week), is a bit more difficult. But it is an essential step in helping us build the world we want to live in. EVERYWHERE is sacred. So, for this week your assignment. Is to find a new place for you so that you can see the sacredness of it to others. A playground, a park, a local establishment people like to congregate, (I'll leave that up to you). And just be there and answer for yourself why is that place sacred, and how that would change how you see and interact with the people who are there. This is an essential part of the process of building a better world.