

Cultivating Daily Reflection

How to Bring Healing in a Racially Charged Culture June 13 & 14, 2020

If you missed this weekend's messages, watch at cultivate.sc/discussion

The reality is all good things require work. What we really need when life gets challenging is a new way to look at ourselves, our relationships and the world around us. Join us for our weekday reflections as we respond and get REAL, so that Jesus can elevate our lives.

Day 1 – Cultivate Wholeness: Our world is full of opinions, ideas and solutions for how to bring healing to our racially charged culture. While many of those voices are valuable, as Christians, we have a responsibility to first seek the kingdom of God – His word and His way – and to first follow His lead. That isn't always easy or comfortable but if our desire is to live a life wholly devoted to God, what we believe must change how we behave.

“Don't fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear! Those who hear and don't act are like those who glance in the mirror, walk away, and two minutes later have no idea who they are, what they look like.” James 1:22-24 MSG

“Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.” John 14:21 NLT

Be REAL with self. Do you seek God's truth then allow it to shape your words, choices, attitude and actions? Or do you glance at His truth then walk away forgetting what it looks like to belong to God? Allow God to search your heart and show you any areas where you are following your own way more than His way. Ask Him for what you need (forgiveness, humility, faith, courage, etc.) to not only accept His commands [hear] but live according to them [obey] SO THAT others first see Christ in you.

Day 2: Jesus brought healing by listening first. His willingness to listen didn't always indicate agreement, but rather demonstrated care, consideration and compassion for the speaker. Because He wants to grow that same character in us, God is clear about the order of operations:

“Dear friends: Lead with your ears, follow up with your tongue, and let anger straggle along in the rear. God's righteousness doesn't grow from human anger.” James 1:19 MSG

Do you listen to seek understanding or to formulate your own argument? Are you considerate of other's opinions or rushing to share your own? Can you disagree graciously, or do you argue angrily? Are you growing in faith or are emotions fueling your life? Reflect on some practical ways you can live out James 1:19 so that you listen before you speak and put anger in its proper place. Be intentional and try one way today.

Day 3: Jesus brought healing by seeing potential. He doesn't judge us by what we've done because He believes the best about us and sees who we can become. How does that encourage you in how God sees you? How does it challenge you in how you see others? What healing needs to happen – either in your beliefs about how God sees you or in how you see others? Reflect and respond to God asking Him to right your thinking, heal your heart and give you eyes to see potential in yourself and others.

Day 4: With so many uncertainties and unknowns in our world, worry can be a real battle. It's been said that it's hard to worship when you worry, but it's harder to worry when you worship. Take some time today to cast your cares on God and worship Him because He cares for you. Tell Him what's on your heart and reflect on His goodness in your life – his provision, protection and presence. Let Him remind you that He is with you and for you.

Day 5: Last weekend, Pastor Matt led us in a time of communion, reminding us that Jesus died so that we could ALL have a seat at His table. He alone can break down the walls of hostility because He alone can change human hearts. What encouraged you from that time around the table? What did you learn? How were you challenged? Reflect, asking God to give you both the willingness to change and the desire to be the change. Pray about a first step you could take this week in either direction. No change is too small and every bit of progress counts!