

Cultivate Reflection Guide

Pivot: How to Change When You Don't Want To Week of September 13, 2020 – Moving from Apathy to Empathy

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

Whether we want it or not, change happens. The more we cling to the way things have always been, the more miserable we can be. What if God wants to use change to change YOU? Use our weekly reflection guide, along with the weekend message, to respond in community and/or through daily personal study. *Your goal is not to get through the content, but to get the content through you SO THAT you grow as you cultivate God's word into your life.*

1. Noteworthy: Claude focused our attention on heart change and pivoting toward empathy which is “the ability to sense other people's emotions and imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling.” Depending on your personality, empathy may or may not come easily. Are you a naturally empathetic person or is it something you have to work at? How was your perspective on empathy changed this weekend?

2. Cultivate Wholeness: Our perspectives are shaped by our upbringing, life experiences and the habits, opinions and ideals we attain along the way. When we give our life to Christ, some of that stays with us and some gets put to death as we pivot our whole life to pursue obedience to Christ. We choose Jesus' ways over our own because He chose our life over His. As Claude challenged us, “we can't just take the high road, we need to take the most high road.”

⁵So put to death anything that comes from sinful desires. Get rid of sexual sins and impure acts. Don't let your feelings get out of control. Remove from your life all evil desires. Stop always wanting more and more...⁸You must get rid of anger, rage, hate and lies. Let no dirty words come out of your mouths. ⁹You have gotten rid of your old way of life and its habits. ¹⁰You have started living a new life...¹²You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient. ¹³Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these good things put on love.” Colossians 1:5, 8-10, 12-14 NIRV

These aren't just words, but a life we are called to live – even when it's hard, even when we don't feel like it. Yes, there is always grace to cover our sins, but we cannot ignore what Christ says must go. What needs to die in you SO THAT your life shows others that Jesus is real and you are His? How will you hold yourself accountable to do that? What is one good thing you want to work on putting on instead?

Cultivate Community: The first step is being REAL. Share what needs to die in you with your community or someone you trust and ask them to hold you accountable. When you struggle, reach out for prayer & support. When you have a victory, share what God is doing in your life!

3. Pivot Drill: Read *Matthew 5:43-45*. While bitterness, resentment and anger disconnect us from God, prayer plugs us back in and pivots our perspective. Invite God to search your heart and show you if there is an “enemy” in your life you need to pray for. Remember – this might not be someone you've had a falling out with, but someone you've been unwilling to see with an eternal perspective. Ask God to lead you in how you can begin to pray.

4. Don't Give Up: We didn't see 2020 coming, but God did. Without a doubt, we've all had moments when we felt like flying a white flag of surrender. But God...encourages us to not give up, not out of a lack of awareness for what we're going through, but as a reminder that He is with us. Read *2 Corinthians 4:16-18 TPT*:

¹⁶Don't give up. For even though our outer person gradually wears out, our inner being is renewed every single day. ¹⁷We view our slight, short-lived troubles in the light of eternity. We see our difficulties as the substance that produces for us an eternal, weighty glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸because we don't focus our attention on what is seen but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but the unseen realm is eternal.”

Take a few moments to reflect on how you have seen God move this year. How has He changed you from the inside out? How has He provided in ways you never saw coming? Thank God for what He's done in you, for you and through you. Ask Him to help you pivot your attention from the temporary to the promise of eternity with Him.

5. REAL Growth: Read *Ephesians 3:16-18 in the Message Translation*. We'd love for you to join us for our fall bible study as we cultivate wholeness, REAL spiritual growth and equip ourselves with the armor of God. Go to cultivate.sc/fall20 to learn more and register to join us. Our virtual study begins October 1.