

Cultivate Reflection Guide

December 12 & 13, 2020
Light: The Gift of Being Known

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

NEW Series: The coming of Christmas isn't just a chance to manufacture hope – it represents the coming of a very real gift to every single one of us. Join us over the next several weeks as we find out about the real hope God has promised to us. Whether in community or through your own personal reflection time, respond to one or more of the following questions to live out what we're learning on the weekends.

1. Being Known: Christmas is a time of wonder and cheer, but for many people it can be a time of loneliness and isolation. One of our deepest desires as humans is to be seen, known and understood.

- What does “being known” mean to you? What makes you feel most seen and understood?
- Who in your life makes you feel that way? Reach out to them this week and express your gratitude.
- Who is someone in your life you could invest in so that they feel seen and known? Pray about intentionally serving them with your time and presence. God could be answering someone's prayers by sending you!

{ **Cultivate Community:** If you're missing a “seen and known” connection in your life, are you ready to pursue community? This might mean you step OUT and join others or you step UP and invite others to join you. Learn how to join or start a group at sandalschurch.com/next.

2. Known by God: Many believe God is too big to intimately connect with our lives, but the opposite is true. Jesus knows us completely – our flaws & imperfections, our hopes & dreams, our innermost thoughts and choices yet to come. Jesus knows our REAL life and He still loves us and longs for relationship with us. While it may not always feel like it, that's a gift because it means we are never alone.

“Lord, you know everything there is to know about me. You perceive every movement of my heart and soul, and you understand my every thought before it even enters my mind. You are so intimately aware of me, Lord. You read my heart like an open book and you know all the words I'm about to speak before I even start a sentence! You know every step I will take before my journey even begins.” Psalm 139:1-4 TPT

- How does the truth that Jesus knows your REAL life either encourage you or challenge you? Why?
- When you know nothing is hidden from God, you have the freedom to be REAL with self, God and others. Is there a change that needs to happen in you? Do you need to confess something to God? Do you need to have an honest conversation with someone? Respond, and step out in faith and obedience.

{ **Dig Deeper:** Read Psalm 139 to both linger in and learn about what it means to be known by God.

3. Knowing God: Relationship is a two-way street. God knows us, which means we should know Him too.

“Move your heart closer and closer to God, and he will come even closer to you.” James 1:5 TPT

- What would you like to know more or learn about God?
- How will you commit to pursuing growth or gaining understanding in that area? Be specific – what will you do and how will you do it? This could be between you and God or it could mean inviting others to come alongside you as mentors, disciples and friends.
- Pray and ask God to draw closer to you as you seek more of Him. Invite Him to show you what He wants to do in your life, then walk forward seeking, listening and trusting that God knows exactly what to give you.

4. Cultivate Prayer: Find some time this week to get alone with God and pray. Don't asking for anything – He already knows, after all. Simply give God thanks for seeing and knowing you; for hearing you. Express your love and gratitude for who He is and who He is to you.

“And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me.” John 1:41-42 ESV

“I love the Lord because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath!” Psalm 116:1-2 NLT