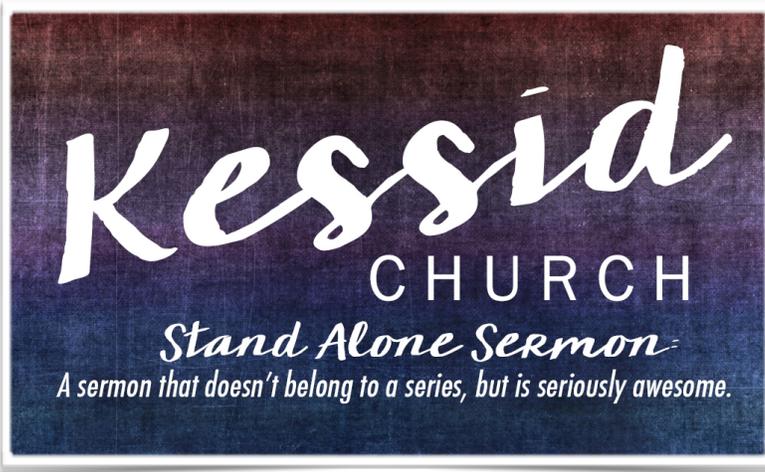


KESSID HIGHLIGHTS



Sermon
"Creating Space"

Date
11-20-16

Speaker
Pastor Chris Potter

Question: What will make this holiday season successful for you? (Executing the Holiday Plan)

Jesus met Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Needs

- Is it possible to get carried away with one goal and lose sight of our greater goals?
- So often we focus on the getting rid of the "Bad Things" in our lives, and doing more of the "good things." But what about managing the many good things available?
- How do we find balance in what we put our time, energy, and resources into?

James 4:1 – "What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?"

What will you create space for?

Jesus created space in His life for a few disciplines which allowed Him to achieve this balance and wholeness that I believe we are all searching and longing for. And it was nothing new...

Micah 6:8 (ESV) – "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

RHYTHM OF LIFE

PRAYER / HOSPITALITY / JUSTICE

Luke 5:16 – "But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer."

PRAYER: Creating Space for Awareness

Do you create space in your life for prayer?

What was Jesus doing when He prayed? How do we model the space to create for prayer?

1. Breathing the Life of God in
2. Listening to God's love and heart --- Rooted Affirmations
3. Finding our own truest self in that listening --- No hiding/Energized to live out this love

How are you doing in these disciplines? Are you creating this space?

“Only when we have come in touch with our own life experiences and have learned to listen to our inner cravings for liberation and new life can we realize that Jesus did not just speak, but that he reached out to us in our most personal needs. The Gospel doesn’t just contain ideas worth remembering. It is a message responding to our individual human condition. The Church is not an institution forcing us to follow its rules. It is a community of people inviting us to still our hunger and thirst at its tables.” - Henri Nouwen

HOSPITALITY: Creating Space for Otherness: Bible begins this way/God’s Character

The term ‘hospitality’ has been hijacked. Hospitality isn’t trendy; its Christ-like!

“Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy.” - Henri Nouwen

- Jesus makes room for other people, especially those that are not welcome in other peoples lives. Tax collectors, sick, unclean.... In this space its possible for them to be transformed. They can receive God’s love, or they can reject it, but there is space there for them.
- We have a deeply human need to be received.

How many people are making space for you every day? How many people do you make space for?

Church Discipline --- 1 Cor. 5

- Providing space, a place for people to come together and find out that we have more in common that is visible on the surface.
- We have a gift to offer: it’s the gift of safe space, unconditional love.

There are just as many types of Christians, as there are Christians...

- “Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place.”
– Henri Nouwen

“The beginning of love is the will to let those we love be perfectly themselves, the resolution not to twist them to fit our own image.” - Thomas Merton

It is in this created space that we begin to see not only where our stories overlap, but where the deepest need lies.

JUSTICE: Creating Space For Healing

- When we create space for awareness through prayer and space for others through hospitality, we start to see beyond the surface and begin to see the injustice happening around us.

Isaiah 61:8 – “ For I, the LORD, love justice....”

- How does God do Justice? He makes all things new.
- The act of confronting injustice can be more harmful
- Once you are involved in justice work, you are driven back to prayer because it is really hard!

We all lean one direction...

- **Prayer People: May find it difficult to connect with others**
 - "We need to spend more time in prayer, Bible study, and fasting."
- **Hospitality People: May find it difficult to draw boundaries with others**
 - "We need to create an environment that is safe for people." – Co-Dependency
- **Justice People – May find it difficult to show kindness to others**
 - "We need to feed, clothe, and provide resources for those in need."

Because we cannot honor and value the otherness of the people around us, we segregate into groups of likeminded people. We rarely have new experiences that question and refine our worldview.

- The picture that our Savior gives us of Hell is a gated community.
- How often are you creating space in your life allowing those who think differently than you to approach you? How often are you allowing yourself to create space outside of your comfort zone?

In creating space for God to speak life and love over us, I cast off fear.

When I neglect prayer, I allow fear to dictate my actions.

Instead of hospitality, hostility drives me. Hostility brings with it bitterness, jealousy, suspiciousness, scarcity, and all of these need time and space to be healed. I expect the worst in others.

But Old and New Testament stories not only show how serious our obligation is to welcome the stranger in our home, but they also tell us that guests are carrying precious gifts with them, which they are eager to reveal to a receptive host.

- When Abraham received three strangers at Mamre and offered them water, bread and a fine tender calf, they revealed themselves to him as the Lord announcing that Sarah his wife would give birth to a son (Genesis 18: 1– 15).
- When the two travelers to Emmaus invited the stranger, who had joined them on the road to stay with them for the night, he made himself known in the breaking of the bread as their Lord and Savior (Luke 24: 13– 35)

We must become this individually before we can become it collectively....

1 Peter 2:1-5 (ESV) *"So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."*

Micah 6:8 (ESV) – *"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"*

"In our world full of strangers, estranged from their own past, culture and country, from their neighbors, friends and family, from their deepest self and their God, we witness a painful search for a hospitable place where life can be lived without fear and where community can be found." - Henri Nouwen

What Will You Create Space For?

What as a Community Will We Create Space For?

