

CITY CHURCH DNA DEVOTIONAL – WEEK 11

DNA Day 61 - Diverse family and you

During our final two weeks of devotionals we'll be looking at the value of our church being a diverse family. We'll be considering the implications in a sense of identity and purpose for you, your friends and family, your place of work, our church, the place where we live and the wider world.

In today's devotional, we'll be asking the question: **What does the value of diverse family mean for you and your identity?**

Let's start with thinking about how we see and understand ourselves. How we describe ourselves or are described by others. There might be all kinds of ways that we get to be described, depending on where we come from or were born, what gender we are, how we use our time, our status... We live in a very diverse world. But the most important thing above all is what God says about you, and what He calls you.

For anyone who has trusted Jesus, and put their faith in His salvation, we have a wonderful truth that we can know each day. This is what the apostle John writing in his gospel tells us about identity when we believe in Jesus' name:

*Yet to all those who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. **John 1:12.***

We are God's children - His sons and daughters, and members of his worldwide family. Throughout life, whatever our age or stage we are in, the labels that we collect along the way will change. But there is an unchangeable identity we have in Christ.

Pray

Lord, thank you that I am known by You, called and chosen through your mercy. Your own child, Your own handiwork, which is good. What a joy to know this! By your Spirit, help me to keep dwelling on how You have given me a new identity and a place in Your family.

DNA Day 62 - Diverse family and your purpose

Today, let us consider what the value of a diverse family means for you and your purpose?

God calls us into a relationship of love - towards him and others. Part of our purpose is to live in the truth of being His beloved people, with a mission of inviting others to know Him. Paul tells the church in Corinth that it is love that compels us, in this way:

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all. 2
Corinthians 5:14.

As part of God's diverse family, we are called to be witnesses to God's Kingdom, just like the disciples who were told by Jesus to be 'witnesses to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

In Bristol, with God's help we can share this gospel message with others, wherever we are. It's a wonderful opportunity to be witnesses to people across the city, which has seen a growth in diversity in recent years. God has given us a vision of HELPING BRISTOL BELIEVE: a place where 91 languages are spoken and 187 countries of birth represented. What does God's Kingdom look like among this diverse population who all live within a few miles of each other?

Pray

Thank you Jesus that I can share with others that You came to bring salvation to all peoples. By your Spirit, help me to play my part, make me brave in what I say and do, may your love compel me to share Your good news.

DNA Day 63 - Diverse family and your friends and family's identity

Today, we'll be asking the question: **What does the value of a diverse family mean for your friends and family's identity?**

Jesus spoke about a radical way of understanding family:

*Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?' Pointing to his disciples, he said, 'here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother. **Matthew 12: 48-50.***

As followers of Jesus doing the will of our Father in heaven, we are transformed from orphans (John 14:17-18) into friends and siblings (John 15:14-15).

We are now a family that has suddenly got much bigger than our birth family. The Spirit of truth lives in us, to help us see that how we treat this family now looks different because of what Jesus did for us (Heb 2: 10-11). That impacts how we use our money, clothes and food (James 2:16-17).

Pray

Thank you God that You have adopted me and brought me into a family that is bigger, broader and more global than I could ever imagine. Help me to be generous in my deeds as well as faith, as James taught us.

DNA Day 64 - Diverse family and your friends and family's purpose

Today we will be looking at this question: **What does the value of a diverse family mean for your friends and family's purpose?**

Because God is changing our hearts, how we view our friends and family is also changed. All this comes from following the words of Jesus to his disciples:

*A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. **John 13: 34-35.***

We might find our friends and family being drawn from all kinds of ethnicity, backgrounds and situations. We know what it is to be adopted into God's family, and how that has changed our lives. So one expression of the value of diverse family might be adopting or fostering children, or providing lodgings to those in need. Another expression of diverse family could be examining who we call our friends and spend time with. Is it always with people who look or sound just like us? We can draw in others, and share God's love with them too.

Pray

Lord, help me by Your Spirit to love others in a way that points to You. May friends and family know that you are a God of welcome and hospitality.

DNA Day 65 - Diverse family and peoples' sense of identity in the workplace

Yesterday, we considered how the value of diverse family affects our friends and family's purpose. Today, let's reflect on this question: **How does this value affect peoples' sense of identity in the workplace?**

Followers of Jesus have a shared culture and identity in God's Kingdom, as people whose citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). Being an employee offers opportunities to display God's light and Kingdom to our friends and colleagues, who might come from many walks of life.

*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light. **Ephesians 5:8.***

We can share with others how God has helped us to see people in a new way, and even changed our behaviour. That's because in God's Kingdom, our differences are set aside because we have been baptised into Christ and clothed with Christ (Galatians 3:26-28).

Pray

Father, thank you for my workplace and all the people I work with. Please bless them, show them your love and your power. Give me courage to speak and show some of the beauty of diversity of God's Kingdom.

DNA Day 66 - Diverse family and peoples' sense of purpose in the workplace

In today's devotional, we'll be asking the question: **How does the value of diverse family affect peoples' sense of purpose in the workplace?**

Being part of a diverse family, we associate that with a broad spectrum of people. At work, colleagues' understanding of family might be narrower. So we can work and speak in such a way about being part of God's family that shows what is different, and why.

The words we use are powerful, and they can be seasoned with generosity, kindness, and mercy. Paul taught the Colossian believers this:

*Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. **Colossians 4: 5-6***

Let's ask for courage and humility in how we speak.

Pray

Father, may my words when I am with colleagues always glorify you, and point to Your eternal Kingdom. Thank You that I can always ask You for the right words, at the right time, and that You will give wisdom and courage when I ask.