

# CITY CHURCH DNA DEVOTIONAL – WEEK 6

## DNA Day 31 - God's Word for our church part 1

### How does God's word shape our identity as a church?

God's Word is fundamental to the identity, values and vision of our church. Because all of scripture is God-breathed, it is reliable, authoritative and powerful. That means that, as a church, we must be rooted in God's Word, and it should be deeply embedded within the work of all our ministries.

We recognise that we live in a world that is hostile to God's truth, and that the culture of the world around us can so easily entangle itself in the church. For us to be Kingdom-minded rather than world-minded, we need to have a deep understanding and knowledge of Truth. That's why, when we gather, we place such an emphasis on preaching and teaching with boldness and truth from God's Word. Thankfully we don't have to do this on our own. The disciple, John, wrote:

*But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. **John 14:26.***

The Holy Spirit, our helper, teacher and revealer of truth, dwells in us so that we can understand God's Word and be strengthened as we share the gospel as a church.

### **Pray**

**Thank you, Father God, that Your Word is powerful, and for the privilege of being able to hear You clearly through the Bible. Thank you that You have given us Your Spirit to help us understand the scriptures. Amen.**

## **DNA Day 32 - God's Word for our church part 2**

### **How does God's Word define our church's purpose?**

Sharing God's Word is central to our church's vision: **Helping Bristol believe**. Peter writes:

*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect... **1 Peter 3:15.***

The more we fill ourselves with God's Word and seek His Spirit, the more ready we will be for gospel-filled conversations with those around us. Peter writes that we should share the good news of Jesus with gentleness and respect. As we teach and apply God's Word to our lives, we must always adopt the heart of Jesus. We don't pursue theology for theology's sake, but so that we can know who God is and share Him faithfully with those around us

### ***Pray***

**Thank you, Father God, for giving us Your Word so that we might know You. Thank you for demonstrating Your great love for us by sending your Son. As we share the gospel, we pray that You would fill us with boldness to share the truth, and that You would give us Your love for those around us. Amen.**

## **DNA Day 33 - God's Word for Bristol part 1**

### **What does God's Word teach us about the city that God has placed us in?**

Cities are like big melting-pots where various worldviews and cultures come together. Similarly, in the Bible, cities were important social and religious centres. They were places that often experienced conflict and idolatry as well as being places of refuge and peace.

God's blessing and plan for His people was to 'Be fruitful, and multiply' (Genesis 1:28) by filling the earth with His worshippers. However, time and time again throughout God's Word, we read about how people fall into sin and idolatry. The city of Babel is a prime example of how people turn from loving and worshiping Him, and instead glorify and build themselves up.

We are all too aware that our city can be a place full of idolatry and self-glorification. We recognise that this city is not our final home—we look forward to a better city, an eternal city, with God at the centre.

*By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. **Hebrews 11:9-10.***

God's redemptive plan for His people culminates in a city that is to come—a city with firm foundations. Fix your eyes on that hope again today.

### ***Pray***

**Thank you, Lord God, that You have a heart for our city, and that You have made a place for us in Your kingdom. Help us to daily remember where our true hope is: in the city to come, rather than in this world. Amen.**

## **DNA Day 34 - God's Word for Bristol part 2**

God's Word is powerful and, applied by God's Spirit, it has the ability to transform hearts. In the book of Hebrews, we read:

*For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. **Hebrews 4:12.***

When we preach God's Word, we don't just do it so that we might know more about God. We expect that God, by His Spirit, will draw people to Himself. Through His Word, God exposes our sin, and teaches us the way to salvation and restoration: through His Son. The Word is at the heart of our evangelism and mission.

Consider how the people responded to Peter's preaching in the book of Acts:

*When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" **Acts 2:37.***

As God's word was heard by non-believers, they were cut to the heart and responded to Jesus. We believe that God's Word still has power, and that God desires to see His Kingdom come in this city. So, let's go out and equipped with His Word and filled His Spirit to our schools, workplaces and local community.

### ***Pray***

**Lord God, Your Word has the power to transform hearts. Thank you that Your Word is alive and active today. Fill us with Your Spirit as we go out into our city and share Your Word. Amen.**

## **DNA Day 35 - The Word for our world part 1**

The story of creation is a good starting point as we consider what God's Word says about who we are and what we were made to do. We read in Genesis:

*Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." **Genesis 1:26.***

We are created in God's image. This reality totally transforms how we view people in the world around us. Time and time again throughout history, peoples' worth has been defined (and rejected) because of the colour of their skin, their gender, their intellectual ability, or because they belong to a certain tribe or people group. God's Word teaches us that every person has inherent worth, dignity and value because all are made in God's image. It means that, of all people, the church should be at the forefront of the fight to uphold and protect the value of human life in all its beautifully diversity.

### ***Pray***

**Thank you, Father God, that our identity is in You. Thank You that we are made in Your image and likeness, and that You have given us Jesus as a perfect example. We pray that You would give us Your eyes to view people around us the way You do. Amen.**

## **DNA Day 36 - The Word for our world part 2**

Over the past week that God's Word is powerful, alive, and transformative. As Christians, we have a commission to go and make disciple of all nations. God's Word is at the heart of this calling and mission. It's a powerful double-edged sword that 'cuts to the heart' of those who hear it—so why wouldn't we use it?

*The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever. **Isaiah 40:8.***

God is the same yesterday, today and forever, and His word endures forever. Even though we face challenges for sharing the truth of who God is, we can be encouraged that His Word is powerful and will achieve His purposes. We can cling to this promise from Isaiah: that the Word "will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). It takes the pressure off us: we are simply God's messengers, carrying His truth into the world, and it is Him who changes hearts and minds!

### ***Pray***

**Thank you, Lord God, for Your Word and that it endures forever! Thank you that You provide us with everything we need to share Your good news. Give us a fresh enjoyment and understanding of who You are as we spend time in Your word. Amen.**