

Discussion Questions

September 21, 2025



Belong: To Be Known and Loved

This week, we explored our deep human need to be known and loved. While our fear of rejection often causes us to hide behind masks, God's design for the church is a community of deep vulnerability and acceptance. We learned that we can only feel loved to the degree that we allow ourselves to be known. Ultimately, our security is found not in perfect human relationships, but in the profound truth that in Christ, we are already fully known and unconditionally loved by God. This frees us to be real with Him and with one another.

1. Read James 5:16 and 1 Corinthians 12:21-26

James 5:16 (NIV): Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

1 Corinthians 12:25-26 (NLT): This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

- What is your initial, gut-level reaction to James's command to "confess your sins to each other"? What makes this idea so challenging or even terrifying?

- Paul says the parts of the body should "suffer with" and "rejoice with" one another. What level of connection and knowledge does that require? How does this challenge a view of church as just a Sunday morning event?

- The sermon mentioned the Greek word for "healed" in James 5:16 refers to holistic healing (spiritual, emotional, physical). How does being truly known and prayed for by others contribute to that kind of healing?

2. Read Psalm 139:1-6, 17-18, and 23-24

Psalm 139:1-4 (NLT): O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away... You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD.

Psalm 139:17 (NLT): How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered!

Psalm 139:23-24 (NIV): Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

- David celebrates the fact that God knows every single thing about him. Why do we often fear this reality instead of finding it "wonderful"?

- What is the crucial connection between verse 1 ("You know everything about me") and verse 17 ("How precious are your thoughts about me")? How does knowing we are loved change our perspective on being known?

- What would it take for you to pray David's prayer in verses 23-24 with genuine confidence and joy, rather than fear of what God might find?

3. Consider the four quadrants mentioned in the sermon:

Isolation (Not Known & Not Accepted)

Rejection (Known & Not Accepted)

Impression Management (Not Known & Accepted)

Belonging (Fully Known & Fully Loved)

Which quadrant do you find yourself living in most often?

Which one is the most tempting to settle for, and why?

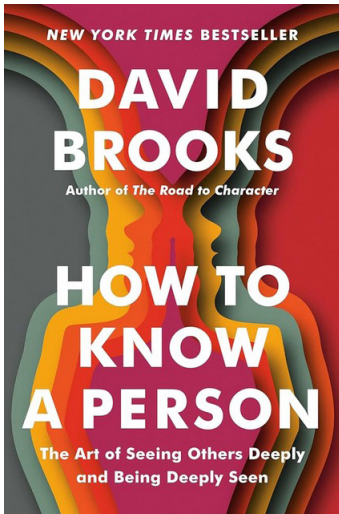
The sermon stated, "You can only be fully loved to the degree you are fully known." Discuss this idea. Do you agree or disagree? How have you seen this play out in your relationships.

4. How can we, as a group, intentionally create a safer space for each other - a place where we can be weak without being left there?

Take Time to share with one another areas of struggles and rejoicing, and then break into smaller groups and pray for one another.

Psalm 139:1–6,17-18 (NLT)

O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord. You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!

**Friendship and Connection: (taken from "How To Know A Person")**

- % of People who said they have "no close friends" quadrupled between 1990 and 2020.
- 54% of Americans reported that no one knows them well.
- 36% reported that they "felt lonely frequently or almost all of the time"
- 61% of young adults
- 51% of young mothers
- 2013: six and a half hours per week spent with friends
- 2021: two hours and forty-five minutes per week a 58% decline.

James 5:16 (NIV)

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

1 Corinthians 12:26 (NIV)

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

1 Corinthians 12:21 (NLT)

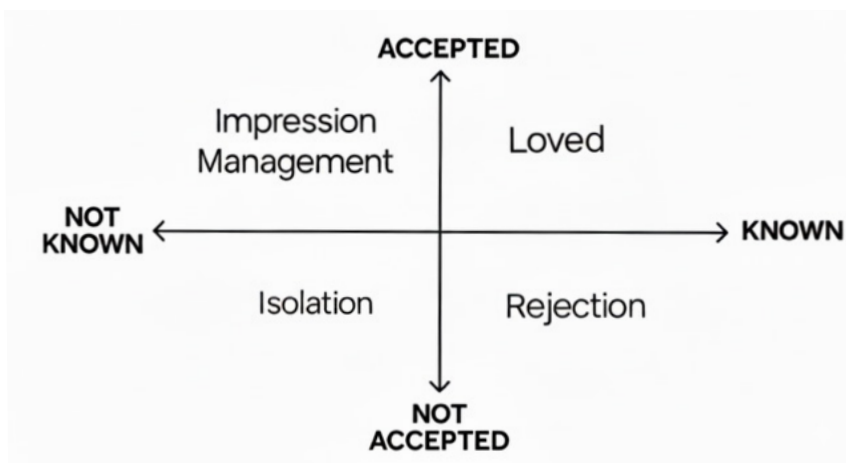
The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you."

1 Corinthians 12:25–26 (NLT)

This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

James 5:16 (NIV)

...confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.



Acts 2:46 (NLT)

They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity

Psalm 139:1–6,17-18 (NLT)

O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord. You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!

Psalm 139:23–24 (NIV)

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Romans 8:1 (NIV)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Romans 8:38–39 (NLT)

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow - not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below - indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

David could pray, "Search me, O God," because he knew that whatever God found He would heal, not humiliate. He would restore, not reject.