

SOUL SHAPER

The *Soul Shaper* is a convenient tool that takes the subject matter from the Spiritual Talk series and breaks it down even further. This self-study guide is also the source of lively discussions in our weekly Community Groups. You may download the accompanying Spiritual Talks or listen online at www.threadschurch.org. There's always a place for you in our Community Groups and our Sunday Worship Gatherings at 9:15am or 11:00am. Questions?...Email connect@threadschurch.org or call the office at 269.327.0445.



Spiritual Talk Series—October 14, 21, 28, November 4

AM All Present

Psalm 139:7-14

¹⁴ God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." – Exodus 3:14

- God has asked Moses to carry a message to His people. How is God referring to Himself as I AM significant?
- If we went on to check out the very next verse we would see God telling Moses that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. All men to whom He made covenant promises. What does this reminder, coupled with God referring to Himself as I AM, mean for us? We may know who He was for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but who is He to us in 2007?
- What does it mean for us individually that God is eternal and unchanging? Is that something that we are able to value living in the culture in which we live?
- If God is eternal, that is to say that He was first and He will have the final say in all things, what does that mean for us in a culture where we can make our reality or truth what we want it to be? Can you think of some concrete examples in which the eternal God shapes our understanding of what is true and real?
- What is your personal experience with God's presence in your life? How do you feel His presence, feel close to Him?
- God is present when we experience our greatest joys and our deepest sorrows. He was even there when we sneaked that cigarette behind the garage with our friends way back in middle school. Sometimes we try to hide ourselves or parts of ourselves from him. Take some time to reflect on the things you may have tried to hide from Him in the past or may be hiding now. Does knowing that God is the great I AM change how you feel about those things you think you have or are hiding from Him?

AM All Knowing

Psalm 139:1-6

¹⁴ God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." –Exodus 3:14

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all you heart; do not depend on your own understanding. ⁶ Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. –Proverbs 3:5-6

- In our Google culture, we can know almost anything we want with the click of a mouse. We survey our friends when we have a decision to make and many times after checking with everyone else and doing the research, we make the choice we want regardless of what we heard. God is there through every step. How often do we relegate Him to the role of silent partner?
- How often do you ask for directions or instructions and then ignore them to pursue your own route or method? Can we really say that we are following God if we seek his guidance and then go our own way regardless of what we understand Him to be telling us?
- In making a decision using *the* all knowing God as our barometer of truth, what are our resources for knowing or understanding his counsel in our decisions?
- Looking at Psalm 139, are there parts of you that you are hiding from others? By hiding from others, do you feel as though you are hiding these parts from God? How does David address this in his Psalm?
- What does it mean for you to trust God with your journey into tomorrow? What about today. What will it look like to trust Him right now? What about trusting him with your past? What is that going to look like for you?
- How does what David says in Psalm 139 and what verses 5 & 6 in Proverbs 3 affect how we live in community with one another?

AM All Powerful

¹⁴ God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." – Exodus 3:14

²⁰ For the Kingdom of God's is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power. – 1 Corinthians 4:20

- Think back to your childhood. Can you remember a time when you felt like you were the most powerful person on the planet? What was the situation and how powerful do you feel now looking back on it from your adult perspective?
- How does our perception of our power in any particular moment affect how we feel? How does it affect how we act?
- What are the sources of power upon which people in our culture today rely? How reliable are those power sources?
- What does it look like to rely on God's power to live our lives? What about in situations where it seems like our individual contribution would make little difference?
- If you were reassured that God's power was carrying you forward, what do you think that you might be able to do that now in your own power you would be too afraid to try?
- How does seeking to understand God's will for your path go hand in hand with letting Him be the power that moves you along?
- In what ways are those of us living in community with one another letting God move us with His power, and in what ways are we relying on our own power, collectively or individually?
- How would letting God's power work through you affect how you contribute within the body of Threads? What about in your neighborhood, your community?

AM All Loving

Ephesians 3:18
Matthew 11:28-30

¹⁴ God replied to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." – Exodus 3:14

³⁸ 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. ³⁹ 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. – Romans 8:38-39

- Colossians 4:2 encourages us to devote ourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart. Why is that so important given what Paul wrote to the Ephesians concerning their spiritual growth in 3:18?
- In what situations or moments do you best understand God's love for you? What about those times make it so plain for you to understand?
- Look at the verse above from Romans. How is the kind of love expressed here different from that which we experience in our culture?
- What about our own understanding or experience of love makes it difficult for us to understand the kind of love that God is expressing to us throughout the Bible and highlighted in these verses from Romans, Matthew and Ephesians?
- Is the kind of love described here an emotion or a choice? What is the difference and why is that so important?
- Looking at Matthew chapter 11 we understand that Christ never promises us a life with no work or no struggle, He is very clear that like a beast of burden we will have a yoke to bear. But what does He mean when He says that the burden He gives us is light?
- How as a community do we help one another to understand and experience God's love for each of us individually? What does it look like for us to live out this kind of love toward one another? Those in the other areas of our life? Those whom we may not yet know? What about those whom we may never know.