



PREGNANCY  
RESOURCE CENTER

*A place to find help and hope, care and compassion*

*Devotional Series:*

**A journey through the  
“Spaces” of our lives.**

**- Fall 2021 -**



## Known Space

By Jodi Girard, Agape Office Manager

### PSALMS 16:5

*"You, Lord, are all I have, and you give me all I need; my future is in your hands."*

When I think about how people know me, "hats" come to mind. In my early life there were the "obedient daughter", "ethnically confused", "people-pleaser", "determined athlete" and "perfectionist" hats. When I got married and had children there were the "wife", "stay at home mom", "church-goer", and "school volunteer" hats. Some of these hats I wore only for a particular season. Some I've worn throughout my life. These "hats" I don't worry about people seeing. If you asked the average person in my life, these are the things that they might even use to describe me.

Ponder this quote by Timothy Keller, *"To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us."*

(Timothy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God*)

I have been living in that comfortable but superficial space my whole life. Always afraid that if anyone saw the "hats" I was hiding, they wouldn't love me anymore. I feared others would judge me for my past or present mistakes and failures. I had spent a lifetime making sure no one saw these hats, wading them up and stuffing them so far down into the recesses of my soul that I was sure no one would ever see them. You might say I had made an idol of how people saw me. I had not only stuffed down my "secrets" from people, but I had tried to "stuff down" these secrets from my God. I had pushed to the back of my mind what I knew to be true: *nothing is hidden from God.*

Two years ago, I felt led to become a volunteer at Agape. When I filled out the application, there was a question on there, "Have you ever had an abortion?" Admitting that I owned that "hat" was not something I was prepared to do. Then the question, "Have you ever had post abortive counseling?" Instead of allowing myself to lie and run away (which I wanted to do), God prompted me to tell the truth and stay, to dig that secret

“hat” out of the crevices of my soul, dusting it off, and then showing it to someone.

Little did I know, my journey of being “known” had begun:

One of the first things I read in the abortion healing Bible study was about Hagar. She had fled with her son into the desert and the Lord found her by a spring of water, a well. After God had spoken to her, she said, **“You are the God who sees me.”** It broke me, right then and there. *God knows me, He sees me- All of me.* He knows every hat I've ever owned and worn, those I display proudly and those I try to hide. I envisioned my heart like that well, named

Beer-lahai-roi, which means “well of the Living One who sees me”. Now, instead of my heart holding shame, guilt, and embarrassment, I can let the love of God flow freely. God knows me better than I know myself and He still sent His Son to die for me. That kind of love is beyond our human comprehension. I can live in the freedom of that love. It doesn't mean people won't judge me. It doesn't mean I might not lose the respect of some but my freedom from the guilt and shame is secure in the shed blood of my Savior.

My TRUE identity, the only “hat” that I need to wear, is *Child of God*. I am now in a space where I know for certain, I am fully known and loved!

**Scripture Readings:**

1 John 3:1-2  
Colossians 3:1-3  
Psalms 139

**Worship Song:**

“Known” by Tauren Wells  
<https://bit.ly/Known-TW>



## Seeking Space

By Leanna Simpson,  
Agape Executive Director

Have you ever wondered how to know if you are choosing the path God has for your life? Have you ever felt like God is being silent when you are seeking His direction? Have you ever believed you knew and then it just seemed to fade away?

I believe that we have all been there and felt all these things at one point or another. I would love to share with you some ways that, as you are seeking to follow God's plan for your life, you can have some practical clarity.

Let me pose an interesting concept: **Instead of seeking God's "hidden" will for your life and future, what if you focus on God's revealed will for your present.**

Now that is worth a second read. Let it just sit there. Take a deep breath and let that just sink in.

### JEREMIAH 29:13

*"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."*

This concept is so simple yet so amazingly complicated. Let's delve into what this means.

God's hidden will is "what is to come" and future logistics of our lives. What decision are we to make? What is He calling me to? Am I making the right decision and how will I know? How can I decipher a correct path and an incorrect path? We often cry out and say "Lord, please show me what to do!"

The problem with this focus is that we often are so wanting God's hidden will for the future, that we choose to live a life that is contrary to God's revealed will for our "now".

God's revealed will is what He has made known to us in the Scriptures. We know it's God's will for us because He says so in His Word. (i.e., live justly, love mercy, walk humbly, love God and others as ourselves) We know when it is wrong

because He outlines this also in the Scriptures. (i.e., jealousy, sexual impurity, gossip, slander, lust, lying)

While we obey God's revealed will, we can trust that all unknowns will work out for our good (Rom. 8:28). We can trust that the specifics of our life and decisions are designed by a loving God for the good of our souls.

Let me share an example of how this shift in thinking can play out in our lives:

My oldest son had a medical crisis a few years back. He was standing in the kitchen and out of the corner of my eye; I could see him starting to fall backwards. He was stiff, eyes rolled back, and unable to communicate for a period. I immediately went into "medical mode". I got him into the car, started driving to Blank Children's ER and escorting him in. By the time we sat down, I took a breath and then I looked at him. His 6'2" 15-year-old frame was slouched over, and he could barely lift his head. Tears started to well up in my eyes as thoughts were chasing through my mind.

He looked up at me and said, "Mom, are you scared?" The tears started to roll down. "Yes." And then he said something that I will never forget. "Mom, no matter what happens to me, never forget that God is still on His throne."

Perspective. This comment stopped my mind from racing down all the paths and all the "what-if's" of what would come. In that moment, he pointed me back to what is true, what is revealed, what is known- **God is on His throne no matter what comes.**

As we seek God's will in our lives, I always pray for open doors and closed doors. If I have filtered it through the revealed will of God, I proceed with walking, as I continue to pray. When I walk into a closed door, I know that God wants me to start walking in a different direction.

What I have come to realize is this truth: **Our seeking journey is not about knowing God's plans for our lives BUT knowing our God and trusting in His plans.**

**Scripture Readings:**

Luke 15:11-32  
Matthew 18:10-14  
Luke 10:25-37

**Worship Song:**

"The More I Seek You" by Kari Jobe  
<https://bit.ly/Seek-You>

*\*Excerpts used from Steadfast: A Devotional Bible Study on the Book of James*



## Quiet Space

By Leanna Simpson,  
Agape Executive Director

Let's be honest, I am not one of those people who likes quiet. (If you know me, you are probably smiling right now!)

I am a highly relational person who loves to seek out people, conversations, and contemplations. I enjoy long walks with a friend, coffee dates, and philosophical moments where I grapple collectively with individuals about life's bigger concepts and issues. I never tend to wade in the "shallow" but plunge headfirst into the "deep".

I love busy. I love a house filled with people, kids, running, laughter, projects, pets, games, conversation, baking, and interest! I cannot sit for long and I seldom enjoy it. I must be moving forward. My conversations must have "weight". My life must have measurable outflows. I love life and want to breathe deeply of the colors, smells, moments, people, pleasures, tastes, and textures. I am passionate about it all. Life is intense and I want to feel it from head to toe. In the middle of all this living, I am seldom still.

### MATTHEW 11:28

*"Come to me, all you who are weary, and I will give you rest."*

Quiet happens when I sleep.

Years ago, in the middle of my busy life, I was woken smack dab in the middle of my only time of silence (my sleep). I lay there stumped. Why am I awake? My mind was racing thinking about ministry, hurting people, loving people, and helping people. I thought maybe I was supposed to pray for them...so I did. Sleep never came.

Night came again... I was woken. Silence. Once again, I prayed. Night after night.

I told one of my mentors what was happening and if he had any thoughts because I was VERY tired.

He looks at me and said, "Maybe God is wanting a moment of quiet with you. Just you and Him. You are so busy serving Him, but maybe you are not spending enough time **listening** to Him."

WOW...my world shook.

1 Samuel 3:9-11 immediately came to mind when Eli told Samuel to: "Go and lie down, and if he calls you say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So, Samuel went and lay down in his place. <sup>10</sup> The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."<sup>11</sup> And the LORD said to Samuel: **"See, I am about to do something that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle."**

Then came the night...I was woken. I lay in the dark and whispered, "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening." A calm came over me, the Spirit tended to my soul. It was like this secret moment where the world was asleep, but my Lord and I were having a moment of quiet communion, rest, and relationship.

I sought Him to show me His plans. I asked Him to teach me His ways. I asked Him to search my heart.

I began to look forward to the night and to these moments where God would wake me. I would talk with Him and listening in the dark. There is such peace, quiet, and singular focus in these moments.

As I reflect on living a life of seeking the "Quiet-space", I seek to grow to live a life where I take moments, "stealing" away times of quiet and contemplation where I can talk with my God and truly listen. I pray to be continually reminded to seek a life where I am willing to be woken in the night by God, while seeking to spend quiet moments in the day with Him as well.

Today, I pray that each of us will take the moments to listen to God and have the ears to hear and recognize His sweet voice when He speaks.

#### **Scripture Readings:**

1 Samuel 3  
Mark 1:35 (Read entire chapter, if time)  
Psalms 91

#### **Worship Song:**

"Spirit of the Living God" by Vertical Worship  
<https://bit.ly/SoftheLG>



## Healthy Space

By David Bush, Founder of  
*"Fit for the King"*

### 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19

*"Your bodies are a temple...they are not your own."*

Over the years of being part of Christian ministry, I have been asked many times how a follower of Jesus can participate in a balanced pursuit of body care in a culture so given to physiological idolatry, and what should our motivation be to do better.

Let's begin with reflecting on what Jesus had to say about this topic. Jesus offers a template for honoring God in all areas of our lives in the Great Commandment:

*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength... and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. -Luke 10:25-28*

At its core, loving God with your heart, soul, mind, and strength is the pursuit of a disciplined life. It's what makes this foundational command of the Bible so challenging. Loving God with all

your strength means developing and protecting your physical capacity to live vitally and accomplish all He desires with you for as long as He desires you to live. A sedentary lifestyle, poor nutrition choices, and a lack of concern regarding how God might want to use your physical capacity will result in working against loving God in this way.

Some questions we should ask ourselves regarding our availability to love God with all our strength include:

- Am I getting enough sleep so that I can be alert for a meaningful devotional time with the Lord each day?
- Do I have the energy to invest in other people through discipleship?
- Can I sustain a vital prayer life, or does "brain fog" and distraction cause me to lose my focus?



- Am I able to love God through my strength by being “zealous for good deeds?” (Titus 2:14)
- Am I available for whatever His purposes are for my life or am I placing limitations on what I’m available for because of my lifestyle decisions?

Loving our neighbor as ourselves means putting their needs and concerns on par with our own. My closest neighbors include my spouse and/or family and expands to my physical neighbors, co-workers, fellow believers, community, and world. Often, people need us to show our love to them through our physical capacity and acts of service. **We cannot tangibly love these people when our physical health prevents us from engaging them at their point of need.** As I’ve said to people many times, “we don’t love our neighbor as ourselves very well from a hammock or a Lazy Boy.”

Perhaps you’ll recognize some of these ways I’ve been asked to “love my neighbor”.

- A spouse that needs you to be able to “get in the game” when it comes to caring for children, doing work around the house, or just engaging with them after a long day.
- Aging parents who need your strength and assistance as their health fails.

- Sick, out-of-town, or widowed neighbors who need their lawns mowed or their driveways and sidewalks cleared of snow.
- Moving day for the single mom or family without the resources to have it done professionally.
- Leaf raking and gardening help for the couple whose husband is suffering from a debilitating disease.
- Walking or running in a fundraiser for a cancer victim.
- Cleaning the house for the family that is overwhelmed by foster care.

You can see that we don’t have to be primarily concerned with affirmation from social media selfies to find purpose in guarding and sustaining our physical health. The Great Commandment alone provides all the motivation we need to pursue good body stewardship.

Making Healthy Space in our lives may mean re-evaluating our diet and exercise routines and allowing the fruit of discipline and self-control to impact our body care. **Our faithfulness in this critical area will be a blessing both to ourselves and those God has called us to love and serve.**

#### Scripture Readings via Video:

[Run the Race - The Faith in Christ that Perseveres](#)

Hebrews 11:1-3

Ephesians 2:8-10

Hebrews 12:1-2

1 Corinthians 9:24-25

2 Timothy 4:7

#### Worship Song:

“Unfinished” by Mandisa

<https://bit.ly/Unfinished-Mandisa>



## Humble Space

By Leanna Simpson,  
Agape Executive Director

**JOHN 3:30**

*"More of Him, less of me."*

Nobody seeks to own the title of "Prideful". That would be a ridiculous idea.

Imagine this, instead of "Employee of the Month", what if your employer gave out accolades and prizes for being named "Most Prideful of the Month"? You go home to your wife or your kids and say "Guys, look at this amazing trophy and prize I received! I finally was acknowledged and recognized for being *Most Prideful of the Month*. It is just a ridiculous image, isn't it?

In contrast, think about the title of "Humble". What if that was a title given out? Would we be in line for that recognition? Would our employers see this as valuable or even desirable?

In this world, humility is not a characteristic that is sought. Taking it one step further, it is also not a characteristic that **we** naturally seek.

Pride goes clear back to Adam and Eve. The first people to hold the title of prideful. They thought they knew better than God. They wanted to be at the same level as God.

The harsh reality is Pride=Sin. That is super harsh because, guess what, we ALL have pride issues. Not fun to think about but very true none-the-less.

I want to weave for you some examples in the Scriptures and some personal stories that really shine the light on what humility looks like versus pride. Both attributes begin in the heart but are evidenced in our behavior.

In Luke 18:10-14, Jesus tells this story, *"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee (Spiritual leader of that day- like a pastor) and the other a tax collector (most reviled citizen of that day- thief, dishonest businessman, rejected by society). The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'*

*"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'*

*"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."*

Think about this story. Jesus literally said the people we admire are not only full of pride, but they are not of ME. They are lost and still in their sin. The one who we are judging is righteous and forgiven.

WOW.

Consider this truth: **Man's eyes are broken, our actions and aspirations are broken, and what and whom we desire to emulate is broken.**

Let me share with you another story:

Some years back, I was employed by the church inside the Mitchellville prison.

One week, I took a group of friends with me to attend church services inside the prison walls. By the time we made it through security, we were very late for the service.

We rounded the last bend of the complex and we could see the church not far off. The congregation had waited for us. Greeters were holding both doors wide open, smiling, voices ringing out: "Here they come, here they come"! We were greeted with jovial and aggressive handshakes, welcoming and thanking us. "We are so glad you're here! Thank you! Thank You for coming!" A group of inmates and one of my friends was huddled in the front holding hands and praying for the service.

The church service began, and a large group of the women bustled to the front of the sanctuary. It was the choir. A motley crew for sure, but they were beaming and singing with all of their might: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_rR\\_Rdb1CTE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rR_Rdb1CTE) (play this song as you read the next paragraph)

I sat and contemplated the words of the song I have sung so many times. But as I sat their watching these sisters in Christ, their spirits, their hope, I gazed through the window and looked out on the barbed wire in the backdrop. The realization of where we were and the gravity of the song we were singing, resulted in tears welling up and streaming down my face. Then began the time of prayer. Prayer could be offered silently or spoken out. A voice in the crowd started by saying:

"Pray for my brother who had a stroke...I don't know if he is going to make it and I won't see him again."

"Pray that I will be a witness to others in the prison."

"Pray for my children. I don't know where they are, but I pray they are safe and they know that I love them."

One of the quotes that I will not soon forget was:

*"It took me coming to prison to truly set me free."*

These Scriptures and experiences have drawn me to see that **humility is understanding that we are "prisoners" of our sin without Christ, "freedom" can only be found in Christ, and every outpouring of goodness that comes from this new life is only because of Christ.**

**Scripture Readings:**

Luke 18: 18-34  
Matthew 5:1-20  
Psalms 25

**Worship Song:**

"Chain Breaker" by Zach Williams  
<https://bit.ly/Chain-Breaker>



## Selfless Space

By Pastor Shawn Powers, Lead Pastor  
at Redemption Hill Church

Shawn's blogs and podcasts can be found at [www.cornfieldtheology.com](http://www.cornfieldtheology.com)

### ROMANS 12:10B

*"Honor one another above yourself."*

"Honor one another above yourself."

One of the first verses of the Bible my oldest daughter memorized was Philippians 2:3- *"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."*

Philippians 2:3 is a verse that challenges the inclinations of every individual. A person's tendency is not to be concerned about God and others but with self. Yet, we admire an athlete or movie character who demonstrates a remarkable level of self-sacrifice. Likewise, our military is honored for its self-sacrifice. Thus, we see glimpses of self-sacrifice, but it isn't easy when we are personally faced with an opportunity to place others before ourselves. So why does the tension exist? And how does a person lay down self-interest for the sake of others and, more importantly, for God?

### The Nature of Man: Sin

Every person born into this world has a sinful nature (Genesis 3). Because of sin, every person has an insatiable desire to put their needs and wants before others and God. For example, marriages that break down can often be attributed to a selfish desire. Siblings might fight over a toy, not because the toy is interesting, but because the other person has the toy. Sin corrupts the heart and can make a person hyper-focused on self. If all this is true, how can someone begin to live out Philippians 2:3? How does a person put the needs of others before self?

### The Path Toward Self-Sacrifice

After you read Philippians 2:3, we are told to take on the mind of Christ (v. 5). Taking on the mind of Christ means following the self-sacrificial humility of Christ. Consider for a moment how Jesus modeled self-sacrifice through humility.

Jesus knows about your sin and he took the hard path to the cross to forgive your sin and set you free from the power of sin. If you are a Christian, Jesus died on the cross in your place. If you keep reading Philippians 2, you will read this glorious verse about Jesus.

*And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.* - Philippians 2:8

Philippians 2:8 is the good news. If you are a Christian, you are called, every single day, to lay down your desires, wants, and needs for the sake of others and the glory of God. Christians are called to emulate Christ.

**These characteristics seem like sensible advice:**

- Taking on the mind of Christ.
- Living humbly before God and each other.
- Looking out for the interests of others before your own.

But when you consider that Christ humbled himself by dying on a cross and put our lives before His own, and THIS is what you are to model, the task seems insurmountable. Apart from God, it is but, with God, you can live out these life-giving words. With the Holy Spirit working in your life, humbly putting the needs of others before yourself is a joy.

As you ponder the joy of self-sacrifice, think of one person you can serve. What are the needs of that person? How do you demonstrate Christ to that person by humbly laying down your needs for the other? When a person has come to your mind, along with the need, take time to act. **Be like Christ.**

**Scripture Readings:**

Matthew 16:24-26  
Philippians 2:1-11  
John 15:13

**Worship Song:**

"Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me" by CityAlight  
<https://bit.ly/ThruChristInMe>



## Godly Space

By Dawson & Leanna Simpson

### DANIEL 10:12

*"Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them."*

Each one of these devotional "spaces" has walked us down the road to "putting on" the characteristics of Christ and ultimately moving us toward becoming more like Him and less like me.

Let me share with you the power of a human life walking through each one of these "spaces". This man's life was laid bare under an almighty God to impact history, move nations, prophesy, and change the world.

*At the age of 15, this boy was taken out of his home by an invading nation. He was made to stand by and watch his family and community slaughtered. He was taken as a refugee and made to walk 1600 miles as their prisoner. The leaders saw something special in this boy and began to rise him up through their ranks. His captors set the course on trying to conform him to their culture by changing his name, practices, faith, and mutilating his body. He stayed strong and uncompromising in his faith but found ways to respect and love his captors more than himself. God gifted him with both earthly intelligence and wisdom, but also gave him supernatural gifts of prophesy and the ability to communicate directly and supernaturally with God Himself. Nations rose and fell, and he was protected and preserved as God's remnant and messenger of*

*truth. No matter the national laws in place, he would pray, worship, read the Scriptures, and seek to follow God's directing. No earthly law could change his pursuit of His Divine Leader and Commander. He was sentenced to death by mutilation, but God preserved his life. No matter the calamity, he remained ever faithful throughout any amount of earthly hardship. He was so close with God that he would go to him for clarity on the Scriptures and God would send supernatural revelation. Near the end of his life, the angel Gabriel fought Satan and his army for three weeks to bring him an answer to a question he had regarding the Scriptures. God's message to him revealed the answer and so much more. He was shown visions of God's plan for redemption through His Son Jesus Christ, the coming tribulation, and the eventual resurrection of the saints.*

This powerful testimony is the life of Daniel. If you read the Book of Daniel, you will find yourself struck with the magnitude of how God did not hold back ANY earthly hardship from Daniel's life AND God also did not hold back any supernatural strength, wisdom, and intimacy either. God wielded their relationship and used hardship to create a **supernatural dependency** within Daniel to trust Him, seek Him, and serve Him alone with every conversation, action, and his very life.

Think about how God works. He gives us gifts to specifically use for a purpose, a time, and a use. He then allows us to choose if we will use it for ourselves or use it for Him. Look at what God did with Daniel's life: God took Daniel's talent and grew it in unearthly ways. **Daniel not only drew the attention of heaven, but he drew the attention of hell!** God rose-up a man who literally was bearing threat to the plans and the impact of all the evil forces walking the earth.

I believe in this God. I believe in His power.  
**I believe that Daniel was not the last to be used in a supernatural way for His purposes.**

He can use me. He can surely use you.

I petition you today...**Be a Daniel.**

### Prayer of petition:

*Lord,  
Help me to be as strong and courageous as Daniel.  
Help me to seek your face and listen quietly to your voice.  
Whatever you call me to do, help me to see it through.  
Whatever comes, help me to trust in you.  
I believe you are fighting battles I cannot see,  
continue to help my heart believe.  
Today I say with my mouth and in my heart  
"God, you are still on your throne".*

*Amen*

#### Scripture Readings:

The Book of Daniel  
Romans 8:31-39

#### Worship Song:

"Jesus is Better" by Austin  
Stone Worship  
<https://bit.ly/JesusIB>