

Online Worship-March 15, 2020

Scripture Reading

Matthew 6:23-34

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. “So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

What It’s Like to be a Six from *The Road Back to You*

I’m always imagining and planning for the worst.

I often don’t trust people who are in authority.

People say I am loyal, understanding, funny, and compassionate.

Most of my friends don’t have as much anxiety as I do.

I act quickly in a crisis, but when things settle down I fall apart.

I’m aware that fear has dictated many of my choices in life.

I don’t like to find myself in unpredictable situations.

I find it hard to stop thinking about the things I’m worried about.

I’m generally not comfortable with extremes.

I’m most comfortable when I’m around people who are pretty much like me.

People tell me I can be overly pessimistic.

I don’t trust people who give me too many compliments.

I have to know people for a long time before I can really trust them.

I am skeptical of things that are new and unknown.

Enneagram Six Lesson By Pastor Laura Hannah

As we continue the Road Trip sermon series, we will turn our attention to the Enneagram Type 6. If you missed the first half of the sermon series, the Enneagram is a personality test that focuses on how our motivations impact how we view the world. Recognizing that we are all on a journey together, we should get to know each other and what makes us unique, and how each one of us are uniquely equipped to positively impact this community and the world.

It felt a little ironic that this week is about the type six because of some of the things that have been happening in the world. Type Sixes are painfully aware of all the things that can go wrong in the world, and hearing the news on Tuesday that the first case of COVID-19 in Anoka County was confirmed, I said a quiet prayer for all the sixes in our community. The level of anxiety that some of us have been feeling about the news about the COVID-19 virus may be the normal everyday anxiety level for a six.

The type six is known as a loyalist or a skeptic. The basic struggle of a type 6 is fear because they desperately want to feel secure. It may be helpful at this point to make the distinction between fear and anxiety to help us better understand this type. "Fear is what happens in a situation where there is a clear source of danger- like when you come upon a bear on a nature hike. Anxiety on the other hand is a sense of apprehension that arises in response to an unknown or potential threat that may never happen. Anxiety is what happens when you think about the possibility that you may encounter a bear on the nature hike you are taking next year. In the book *The Road Back to You* the authors describe the difference between fear and anxiety this way: "Fear says 'something wrong is actually happening!' while anxiety is more anticipatory: 'What if this happened or that happened? What if...what it...what if...?' That's the campaign slogan of a type six." Even when things are going well in life, that can feel like a false sense of security, they wonder what is going to happen next to ruin it. It is normal to think about what might go wrong in a situation, but catastrophizing things is a temptation for a Six. Hypothetical crises plague the brain of a six, and it is inevitable in the opinion of a six that one of these days one of these catastrophes will become a reality.

Because sixes fear being without support and guidance, there is a need to seek out plans, policies, rules, and guidelines that helps them know what to do. Sixes are often stuck in the tension between wanting to have a plan, and also not trusting that they are able to figure out what is the right plan. Referring to the plans and policies that an organization or another person has created gives a six a sense of relief that someone else has a good plan if everything goes up in flames. Sixes tend to think a lot about things. But in contrast with a type five, the things they think about or want to learn about relate to the fears about things going wrong.

Sixes tend to fear making important decisions, although at the same time, resist having anyone else make a decision for them. They want to avoid being controlled, but are also afraid of taking responsibility if things go wrong. Sixes have some difficulty trusting other people, but that is because they don't trust their understanding of other people.

When under stress, sixes want to stick to the plan because there is security in the plan, and you don't deviate from the tried and true plan. In a group the six may be the one that states the reasons why it is better to keep things the same, why risk doing something new when this plan has worked for decades. Or they will bring up the things that may go wrong, not because they want the project to fail, but all the things that could go wrong feel painfully obvious to them. They may feel excited about the possibility of doing something different, but feel conflicted that this new thing will bring instability and problems. Sixes can be counted on to help troubleshoot ideas, and analyze the possible outcomes of strategies and projects. You want a six on your team to ask the hard questions and offer possible solutions.

Despite sixes struggling with change or worrying about worst case scenarios, they are the most loyal of all the nine types. They put a high value on community, and once they commit to a church or an organization they take the commitment seriously. They are unlikely to leave a church if the announcements are too long, the music is not their favorite, or this live streaming today is a disaster. Sixes can be skeptical of others at first, but once you earn their trust, they are loyal to you for life. Family biological or not are important to sixes and are to build a sense of community and safety in the spaces they inhabit.

To help us understand this type a little more, let's return to the scenario we use each week. While all of us want to help in a situation, our motivations will impact how we act in the scenario. Here is the scenario: You are at church and a woman comes through the door and says she had a bike accident on the road in front of church, and asks you for help. Here is how a six may respond. They take a quick look at the person, and tell them that they will run out to their car and grab their first aid kit. The one that the church has is fine, but they bought the more deluxe version because you never know when you have to deal with a snake bite, or some other catastrophe. The six carefully cleans and bandages the wound, but in a urgent tone tells the woman that she needs to go see a doctor right away because you don't want the wounds to get infected. The six will also tell the person they should consider not riding their bike anymore, next time it could be much worse and don't take any chances being in that kind of danger. The six will also recommend some home remedies to deal with the soreness that will come after a collision type injury. Even though the woman says she is ok walking home, the six will insist that she get someone to come pick her up, because she could pass out

from the pain on the way home and her family will find her in the gutter later that night having died from her injuries. The six is trying to remain calm, but their mind is racing with all the things that could go wrong for this woman. The woman agrees that it is probably a good idea to have a friend come pick her up, and makes arrangements to leave the bike behind. The six brings the bike into the building and locks it in a service closet so it does not get stolen. Better safe than sorry is my motto the Six says.

A BLESSING FOR THE SIXES

May the Lord bless this grace-filled journey home to your true self.

May God the loving parent direct you with questions that rise from bravery and divine insight.

May the heart of Jesus open you to your own inner authority and brilliant light.

May the Holy Spirit ground you in patience and rest as you trust all will be well.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 4:35-41

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Sermon by Pastor Laura Hannah

As I prepared my sermon this past week, the motto better safe than sorry continued to go through my mind. If there were any sixes among Jesus' disciples would they have even gotten on the boat? Would they have seen that one ominous cloud in the sky and tell the rest of the group they will stay behind because better safe than sorry. Perhaps the rest of the group told him it would be ok, don't be such a worry wart. It will be ok, trust us. Even if it rains, a little rain never hurt anyone.

Imagine the scene as the sky grows darker and the wind begins to pick up and the rain starts coming down. The disciples reassure each other that the storm is nothing to worry about, but then the wind picks up and the rain begins to come down hard and the sky turns black. The group jumps into action to make sure that

they steer the boat in the direction of the shore. As the wind intensifies and the rain and waves beat against the side of the boat. You hear the lone voice cry out. I told you so! I warned you this would happen! Now we are all going to die! That would be the resident type six in the group. The situation is getting so bad, that now all the disciples are growing nervous. And they turn to the stern of the boat, and somehow Jesus is still sleeping. It must have been a draining day to be sleeping through a crisis situation. They wake up Jesus and ask him why it seems like he does not care if they all die in the storm. Jesus gathers himself and calms the storm with three words (pause)...peace! Be still! And just like that there was a dead calm. Nothing, no waves, not even a breeze. Jesus has it under control.

It is fascinating to watch people in tense or crisis situations. Some are as calm as can be, they know the drill and go into action. Some freeze up and can't respond because they are so afraid. While others fall apart. Things are going bad, but the panicking makes things worse. The passage in Mark does not give much detail about how the disciples acted leading up to waking Jesus up, but I don't get the impression they were all cool and collected. They thought they were going to die, and Jesus is sleeping as the boat goes down.

Friends, the whole world is in this situation together where the winds are howling, and the waves and the rain look like they could do quite a lot of damage and many lives could be lost. There are conflicting sources about the severity of the virus. People are waiting in line at the Costco in Coon Rapids when it opens to grab supplies that were restocked overnight. I have seen neighbors in our community post pictures of completely empty shelves where meat, water, toilet paper, and Clorox wipes used to be. I have talked with folks whose children have weakened immune system, and coming down with a virus could kill them because this is not the first close call they have had with a virus.

This is scary stuff, and to add onto that there are members of our community that can't afford to be in quarantine because they are already living paycheck to paycheck. They may never recover from even two week without a paycheck.

In times of intense fear and uncertainty, it is all too easy to say every man for themselves. You worry about your family, and I will worry about mine. It is the American way-rugged individualism. Every person should be self-sufficient and independent from any outside help. What I am not saying is to act recklessly and put yourself and your family in danger. Or not stock up on supplies and medicine in the event of a quarantine. What I am saying is that on this metaphoric boat that is our immediate community there are those that are in danger of losing hold of the side of the boat and may be swept overboard.

What is required of us in this current moment as Christ followers? I can't in good conscience say that everything is going to be ok, but we are children of the creator of the universe, and maybe just maybe we can take a deep breath and be a

light in the darkness. While people are hoarding supplies, and fending for themselves, might there be an opportunity to provide hope to our community? That is our vision after all-providing hope to our community. Take a moment in the next week to check in on your neighbors, do they have everything they need? How is the single mom down the street as she worries where her kids are going to go if school is canceled?

I think each one of us tuning in to this live stream has the capacity to provide hope in the midst of the virus outbreak. But first we all need to attend to our fears. Is our fears causing us to panic and see others as a threat or a liability instead of someone in need of love and care? In times such as these we have an opportunity to disrupt the fear, disrupt the anxiety, disrupt the loneliness and isolation, disrupt the worry and replace it with hope. Hope that comes from people being filled with the Holy Spirit and putting faith into action.

How do we do this? Good question. It starts with knowing what you as an individual are capable of given your time, energy, and ability. Here are some ideas to get the creative juices flowing- running an errand or two for a neighbor that is quarantined. Offer a friend or family member child care for a day so they can go to work and not have to use sick pay because schools are closing. Do you have an abundance of food or toilet paper on hand, more than 30 day's worth? Could some of your abundance be used by the single parent you now that can't afford to buy items in bulk. We were planning to do a Pack the Pews Event next Sunday to benefit ACBC our local food shelf. Tom our volunteer that brings the donations to ACBC, suggested that while items are helpful, what ACBC could really use right now is cash and check donations. I would love it if our church could bless ACBC with a large donation to help with the increase of community members in need. If you are able to help in this way, you can send a check to our church office designated to our Food Shelf fund.

As we have been learning over the past six weeks, we are a church that is made up of people with different gifts and passions. What unites us is that we are all on a journey of growing deeper in our relationship with God and being transformed through God grace at work in our lives. So let us all join together in the midst of the storm that rages on, and be a people that bring peace and hope to those that need it the most. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Healer God, you walked this earth and met people that were sick and dying, you brought healing to them both physically and spiritually. Christ, come to our aid right now as we face a Pandemic, and may we experience your healing and love. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.

Heal our fears, O God, that prevent us from reaching out to our neighbors in need. Help us be courageous in our love, hospitality and service to those most in need. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.

Heal those that are sick with the virus, and are worried about what comes next. Help them heal and be returned to full health. May each person in need receive quality health care. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayers.

Heal our systems that prevent us from accessing medical care. For those more worried about how to pay for testing and medical treatment than the actual virus, calm their anxieties. Bring forth resources to fulfill this need for all those that are ill or may become ill. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayers.

Heal our relationships that are broken, O God, bring reconciliation to us as we seek to love one another and seek to be the kingdom of God on earth with each other. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayers.

Please be by our side during this time of uncertainty, calm our fears about how to access food, supplies, and medicine. May we be surprised and humbled by the help of strangers that offer some of their abundance so we can eat, and run errands for those under quarantine. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayers.

Be those that have died from the virus. May their friends and family feel the comfort that can only come from you, our comfort and strength. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayers.

Be with those that are facing school closings and don't know where their kids are going to go when they have to work to put food on the table. May communities mobilize to meet those needs. Lord in your mercy...hear our prayers.

God we know that in the midst of the storms of life you are there with us. Help us walk in that truth with courage and boldness of faith. We pray all this in your name. Amen.

Benediction

“You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. But the most important thing is, even if we're apart...I'll always be with you.” A.A. Milne