



## NEAR

2020 has been one of the most challenging and disruptive years that many of us have ever experienced. Countless individuals and families are feeling discouraged, frustrated and down and out. If you're weary and disenchanted, you likely need some specific truths and promises that will help encourage and reorient your current mindset. Through our next message series, NEAR, we will investigate and reflect on God's heart for sinners and sufferers. Don't miss this opportunity to be encouraged as well as to invite your family and friends to experience God's heart for them.

Pastor Jay Haugh

### Pursue God

#### *Immersed in Scripture*

As we investigate the heart of God, it would be helpful to reflect on who you think God is and how He views you. Each week spend time on your own ruminating over the following questions. Record your thoughts so you can look back at how God is changing and shaping you.

When you think of God what image comes to mind? What words would you use to describe God?

When God thinks of you what does He see? What words would He use to describe you?

How do your answers to 1 and 2 affect your relationship with God?

### Pursue Others

#### *Engage One Another & Our Community*

God has enlisted His people to love, serve, and reach those who have not yet submitted their lives to Him.

A small group willing to embrace this call takes intentionality. It is in our small groups where we best learn and grow in our faith.

We encourage your group to spend some time allowing people to share what they learned from God's Word in their own personal time. In addition, spend time sharing what God is teaching you through our NEAR series.

### Practice His Ways

#### *Adopt the Lifestyle*

J. I. Packer offers four measurements to help determine how well we see God. Where would you rate yourself this week on the following scales?

#### **Do you have energy for God and His work?**

When you have an accurate view of God, you have energy to get into His Word. When you see people in need, you have energy to move in for God and to pray. Where do you fit on the continuum today?

LOW ENERGY      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10      HIGH ENERGY

#### **What are your thoughts about God?**

Do you find your mind stimulated as you anticipate thinking about God? What comes to mind when you quiet your mind to pray? How often in your prayer time do you find yourself overwhelmed with God's majesty, glory, righteousness, holiness, or greatness?

LOW THOUGHTS      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10      HIGH THOUGHTS

#### **How bold are you?**

People with an accurate view of God are bold in their choices and convictions without being controlled by what other people think. Among the early apostles, the greatest evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with gifts, but rather with boldness.

LOW BOLDNESS      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10      HIGH BOLDNESS

#### **Are you content?**

An accurate view of God gives peace that surpasses understanding. When you know God is for you, you can encounter difficulties with confidence because the King of the universe with His unlimited resources and who gave up His son dwells in you.

LOW CONTENTMENT      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10      HIGH CONTENTMENT

# NEAR

**Message 2: *His Sympathy***

**Hebrews 4:15**

**Sunday, November 22, 2020**

**Big Idea:** *Jesus sympathizes with us in our suffering and walks with us through it.*

1. Do you believe Jesus is able to sympathize with our weaknesses? What experiences so far in your life have helped shape this belief either toward or away from this view of Jesus?
2. We are not able to pursue others without the ability to feel with them. Jesus demonstrates this in His pursuit of us. Who are the people near you that you have an easy time sympathizing with? Who are those around you that this is more difficult?
3. In what ways do you receive sympathy from other people well or how do others make you feel felt? What can you do to give sympathy to those around you where it is harder to feel with them?
4. Does knowing Jesus understands your pain, your struggles, and your hardships shift something for you? If so, what shifts and how does that impact your everyday life? What makes your day-to-day different knowing we have a God who is willing to co-suffer with you?
5. How would you help someone move from an intellectual understanding of Jesus as our sympathetic high priest to an understanding in their heart? What would be the impact of this in the life of another? How would someone know there has been a shift from intellectually knowing something to experiencing that knowledge?