

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday January 26, 2020. "Going. Vision series"

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work thru from the message this past Sunday. Whether you were able to attend the worship service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

II Recap.

Sunday was our final Sunday of our **"I Love My Church"** series. We revisited our core values at NCC. The first week we talked about the importance of gathering regularly. Coming together for corporate worship, teaching, and to find strength, support, encouragement from each other. Our second value comes from gathering which is personal growth. This growth happens when we design and cultivate a life that's bent towards maturity, letting go of old outdated beliefs and things we've accumulated, decide who we want to be, and then focus our attention and efforts in that direction. Making the commitment to gather regularly, and intentionally design our lives towards personal and spiritual growth, the natural result and outflow of those two things is the natural desire to go. To take these truths and wisdom, life change out into the world and build this kingdom Jesus was about.

III Sunday.

So, Sunday we hit this last core value of NCC and that is to go. To take our faith, the love of God, and a heart to help others out into the world. A little inside info if you missed Sunday. It was an especially different service. We gave our worship and lobby volunteers the Sunday off. No tech, no regular greeters, (thank you to our youth for filling in), or any of the things our amazing volunteers cover EVERY Sunday. We hope those of you who attended realize just how much we need and lean on our volunteers, and were challenged to help out, if you're not currently serving anywhere.

Anyway, back to the final value of going. Kal gave everyone permission to have some fear and unsettledness about going. Stepping out into an unfamiliar setting always creates some discomfort. Knowing that going is important, and the natural outgrowth of gathering and growing, we admit it can be a bit intimidating, and just embrace that feeling as normal.

There were a lot of scriptures used to show what going involves, what we should expect, things we do while we go, and the heart we should have when we go. So we'll just list all of the scripture, read over it, and then we'll dive in, and discuss what these passages tell us about going. **Matthew 10:5-8, 11-20, 26-42. Luke 3:7-14. And Matthew 9:35-38.**

What jumped out to you about these passages?

What did it say to you, reveal to you, about what going looks like?

What were you familiar with, and what was a new understanding for you?

Some of the truths from these passages.

1. We have to expect and understand that we have no expectations of when we go.

Many of us have lived in a fairly privileged time with Christianity receiving some favoritism from our public institutions. Both government, schools, and just our public life in general was highly infused with Christian principles. This was nice and easy, but those days are waning, it feels threatening, and it forces us to admit that it wasn't really Christianity but rather Christendom. Christendom is defined as a cultural mandated Christian principles that doesn't really force us to have to live as Christians. We just let our institutions do that for us. Now this is changing, we are forced to personally live out our faith, and our expectation is not to find people who know Jesus and are like us, but to find people who need Jesus, and aren't like us.

How would this change our expectations and understanding of what going means?

2. We will have some fear, and no inherent power.

Because our institutions are becoming more secular and less likely to support Christian principles, our power will not be in legislating people to live the way they should, but our power will be based in our ability to love and to serve. We can make people obedient and do what we want them to do, but this is controlling people's behavior rather than introducing them to Jesus. So from this place of no power we must learn to win hearts rather than force behavior modification.

How is it an adjustment to live in a world where we serve from the bottom rather than from a place of power?

3. We go to bring God's definition of justice.

Justice is a word we like to throw around, and there are different understandings and definitions for this word. In our society, we define justice as people getting what they deserve. And what it really means is that people who do things we don't get what we think they have coming to them. A benign example is we want people who speed to get a ticket, and when we get caught we hope and pray for just a warning. However justice, as defined by scripture, is righting systems and structures in our society that oppress and push people to the margins. All through the Old Testament, Hebrew scriptures in places like Isaiah, Amos, Micah and more, God defines justice as leveling the playing fields and fixing systems that grow inequality. Widows and orphans are often the examples of people in that day who are taken advantage of. In today's world we know people of color, sexual or gender orientation, different faiths, are often the victims of unfair and unjust systems.

How would this understanding of justice change how you relate to others?

4. We go because we have compassion for those who don't know Jesus.

And lastly Jesus said, we go out into the world, because so many people don't know Jesus, have no one in their lives to guide and direct them, they are like sheep without a shepherd, and we are to have compassion for them. Rather than judging or getting angry at people who don't live like we do, our compassion should move us to move into their world, go, and be a guide and advocate for them.

What would it take and look like to relate to those far from Jesus with true compassion?

This final value of going will change the world for Jesus. And it starts with gathering and growing.