

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday May 20, 2018. Graduation Sunday.

A. Intro.

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

B. Sunday.

This past Sunday was Graduation Sunday and we celebrate our high school and college graduates who are moving on to the next stage of life. It was a fun and inspiring service.

But we know living in that transitional period is tough and can be disorienting. If you've ever moved to a completely new city, there is that long process of creating a sense of familiarity and comfort that's often more than just learning your way around town. There is this 'settled' feeling you're looking for and that takes time to grow that.

As these young adults move into this new stage, phase, of life Lamar challenged all of us to avoid asking the typical question of ***"what's next?"***, but rather ask the more inspirational and challenging question of ***"what if"***. The word IF gives us a template or model of how to move into a new place, our tomorrow, with more purpose and intentionality.

IF helps us ask better questions, and opens the door to take some control and direction of our life.

So...a couple of questions for you.

What does ***"What IF"*** mean to you?

What does it say about your future and your ability to make your ***"what if's"*** happen?

"What if" moves us to practice one of the most valuable skills we can ever learn. And that is the ability to do ***"IF...THEN"*** well. Practicing this skill is honing your ability to talk yourself thru the potential outcomes of specific choices you make. Learning to do ***"IF...THEN"*** well is embracing the truth you do have control over your future.

"IF I were to make this choice, do this particular thing, THEN here are the real possible outcomes".

There is so much power in growing our ability to learn to do ***"IF...THEN"*** well.

But we also know that learning to do ***"IF...THEN"*** well is difficult.

Why is it so difficult to do this well?

What do we have to overcome, either in our culture or within ourselves, to grow our ability to more accurately predict and control our future better?

Lamar used the scripture Romans 12:6-8 to help show us the power of IF when it comes to doing all we can to live into who God created us to be.

Read this passage, and I believe there are three things we can draw from this passage that can help us live into the “what if” life.

1. Learn what you’re good at.

What are you good at? Gifted?

What seems to come naturally for you?

If you can’t seem to think of anything **then** this is your first task. (See what I did there?).

2. Develop that skill or ability.

What are you doing to practice, use, grow that skill?

What does it take to fully embrace a life that encourages you to get better at what you’re already gifted at?

3. USE IT!!

Don’t wait till your proficient at this thing. Just get out there and starting learning how to use that skill better. You won’t be good at it until you’re ok with being bad at it.

“*What’s next*” implies you have to have it all figured out.

Here is how my life will go over the next several....days, weeks, months, etc.

“*What if*”, a better question, allows you to control and step into your possibilities and opportunities.

IF is potential and experimental.

IF takes risks... is not afraid to be brave, even if you could mess up and look stupid.

IF is a **journey of discovery and growth**.

Get your values lined up, (unchanging principles you hold), and it’ll create a great set of boundaries to guide you and give you some freedom as you discover who you are.

And you’ll begin to discover, this is a journey...a process, that when you can identify and line up the values you hold, and practice your ability to do “**IF...THEN**” better and better, you’ll discover this future out there for you that will take you to the most amazing places.

Pastor Lamar’s closing quote to wrap all of this up.

*“IF you are passionate, IF you are curious, IF you are able, IF you are gifted, and most importantly IF God is calling you to it, **go for it**”.*