

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday January 23, 2021. "Reloading apps, what will be the most useful to me?"

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from the message this Sunday. Whether you were able to participate in the service or not, this devotion is free-standing, and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We're a good bit into 2022, a brand new year, and we're excited about where God is leading us. A great group of familiar and new faces join us each Sunday. Our children's area is expanding and we are retooling our student ministry. You can check that out through our social media sites. We're so encouraged by your love and presence when you gather with us. If you're still joining us online, we love and so appreciate your presence also. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is ANYTHING you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions, please pass them our way. We know the future is still uncertain, but we are committed to making our virtual congregation as central to NCC as our in person group.

II Recap.

The first three Sundays of this series covered an incredible amount of information, material, as we walked through unpacking a lot of scripture. Really too much to cover here. So, we'll be as brief as possible. If you want a more thorough recap, go back and check the past messages and devotionals. Our basic premise for this "**Reset**" series is to take advantage of a new year, and do some intentional and helpful inner work to help us live the life we were made for. This requires us understanding the things that are barriers, inhibit us, and how they actually affect us in our spiritual growth.. And to ask what are we willing to, and can, do in order to do an actual "reset". We also talked about our purpose, and if we can understand how we were designed, what we were made for, then we can live a life that has more impact, feels fuller and more meaningful, and really is the life we were made for. And last week we talked about the work of decluttering the unhelpful, unnecessary things out of our life. And how that's linked to purpose. There's a lot of info in those Sundays, so go back and watch and read it to get the full effect.

III Sunday.

Sunday we continued the natural flow of doing a "reset". Once you've focused on a purpose, set your sights on it, done the work of decluttering old "things and feelings" out, there is this work of adding practices and habits, (like downloading apps), that move us towards the person we want to be.

So, just for fun, what are some of your favorite apps on your phone?

What do you like about them?

And...how are they useful to you?

The conversation today is about the 'usefulness' of what we will add to our lives in order to do a "reset". Usefulness is a hard word to pin down. It's basically because usefulness is built on the idea of 'purpose'. Which is why we hit that concept of having a specific direction for our life two weeks ago.

Do you currently have any habits, practices, routines that you feel you benefit from?

What habits, practices, routines do you wish you could start?

Scripture Sunday was **Colossians 3:1-3, then 12-17**. Read them and then answer the questions.

What jumped out to you from these passages?

What attributes do you find in these passages that provide a good guide for determining what is useful?

Here are some things we should look for to determine if a habit, practice, can be seen as useful.

These aren't specific practices or elements to add to your life. These are filters, questions, measuring devices, to determine if what you do download leads to the type of "reset" that would be beneficial.

1. Actively filter everything you do through; tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Is what I'm filling my life with lead to these? This is continually asking; **Do my words, actions, responses, interactions, the way I am with other people meet each of these 'fruit of the spirit'?** And what can you specifically add to your life that would grow these.

2. Actively forgiving. Having a well tested, and proven process in place to work through hurts and personal trauma. And you're continually working that process with the people in your life, knowing you're at different places with each of them. But you're continually moving my relationships towards reconciliation, (coming to an agreed upon place), or actual restoration.

3. Actively loving. Always consider others ahead of yourself, in a way that resembles Jesus. **Is the way I am treating this other person reflective of the love of Jesus?** Is what's in my life making me love others on a continually deeper and more scriptural level.

4. Actively being ruled, controlled, led by cultivating an environment of peace. Always looking to bring people together rather than dividing. This is as much about our words as anything else. This is why Jesus NEVER responded to forced choice questions. **Do you support or condemn? Are you one of us or one of them? Are you on our side or their side?** Those bad habits always create lines and divides. Work towards commonalities, similarities, what unites rather than things that divide.

5. Actively residing, living smack in the middle of thankfulness. We must begin here. We deserve, or expect, nothing. Everything is a gift. We're thankful even the things we believe we've earned or worked for, because the ability to earn and work itself is a gift. Growing our ability to live in thankfulness lessens our sense of entitlement. And is a great "reset" for the new year.

6. Actively place yourself in opportunities to learn and grow, sing. Learn. Grow. Sing. This best happens in community. Multiple voices, multiple perspectives, lots and lots of wisdom, insight, and experiences to draw from. We learn from each other, we grow with each other, we join our voices in community. When you come to this place and are full of learning, growing, singing, then you go and take all of that out into the world, and let it just lovingly, and nonjudgmentally flow out of you.

7. Actively ALWAYS be Jesus wherever you are. Be winsome, warm, kind, authentic, honest, with an abundance of grace. **Who would Jesus stand up for, stand with, minister to, love on?**

IV Challenge.

Like last week, there is a lot of just helpful, practical, wisdom from this passage. And the wisdom from this passage are traits of what a good “reset” looks like, and is a super helpful filter to determine if some habit or practice is ‘useful’ or not. There isn’t a universal list of habits or practices that would work for everyone. So, you will have to customize what apps, habits or practices you download that would help you do a “reset”. But there can be a first step.

What are one or two specific practices you could begin to do that would help grow you towards these behaviors?