

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**Sunday July 19, 2020 "All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten" "The Velveteen Rabbit. How to become real"**

### **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 watch the live stream 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.

We're still gathering in person for now. A small but dedicated and respectful group who follow all the guidelines and were so encouraging with your love and presence. If you're still joining us online we love and so appreciate your presence also. We still are your church family and if there is ANYTHING you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions you have, please pass them our way. We feel just as isolated as you, and we want to maintain that connection with each of you.

### **II Sunday.**

Sunday we hit our third children's book in this series, and it was an old favorite. "***The Velveteen Rabbit***". The original "***Toy Story***". Or if we really want to push the comparison, "***The Velveteen Rabbit***" is the PBS version as compared to the HGTV version.

A little backstory first. "***The Velveteen Rabbit***" is a classic children's book written in 1922, that tells the story of a stuffed animal who is the beloved toy of a young boy who battles scarlet fever, then is cast aside after the boy recovers. The rabbit discovers from other toys that being loved intensely by this boy has made him become 'real'. The story is kind of a combination of "***Pinochio***" and "***It's a Wonderful Life***", a magical discovery along the journey of life is how we become our truest self. A video of the specific passage used is available on our Facebook page and our YouTube Channel. This book was laid alongside a really interesting passage about the end of Paul the apostle's life. And how all that he had been through and done, had made him 'real' also. So read this passage, **Acts 28:23-31**, and reflect on it a bit.

**What jumped out to you about this passage?**

**What things in this passage speak to you about the life Paul had lived?**

**Was there anything in this passage that you would want for yourself?**

Kal pulled four things from this section of "***The Velveteen Rabbit***", and this account of the end of the life of Paul from Acts, that we can look at to help us in our "***becoming real***", or as Kal also described, becoming wise, a true disciple of Jesus.

**1. Living with no fear.** Our world is filled with fear. And this isn't just our handling of this whole COVID thing. Fighting fear doesn't mean being irresponsible or foolish. Wear a mask!! It means not letting fear keep us from living the full life designed for us.

Paul traveled around his world starting churches, facing all sorts of challenges. And then we see in his letter to these churches under house arrest, he then poured wisdom and advice into them. In *“The Velveteen Rabbit”* we see in the advice from the skin horse, that *“becoming real”* means pushing past the desire to live protected lives. To become real we have to recognize and acknowledge our fears, and then live beyond them towards this ‘real’ life.

**What does this living beyond fear look like for you?**

**2. Living with no barriers.** Paul had to push past all sorts of barriers, walls, things that should have stopped him from sharing the story of Jesus...his story of Jesus. Shipwreck, jail, beatings, rival preachers and religious groups all threw themselves in Paul’s way, and often at him. Yet he never gave up. The rabbit in our story was loved by a young boy battling scarlet fever, and all that involved. This was a tough path to move along the journey of *“becoming real”*. In our fear, we can be drawn to living protected, gated, lives. But both Paul and this rabbit showed us truly *“becoming real”* means pushing past our natural tendencies to protect ourselves to be able to live fully.

**What barriers or walls do you tend to surround yourself with?**

**What would it take to push through/over them?**

**3. Living with no regrets.** We all will have regrets of things we did and shouldn’t have. These will be poor choices, sins, monster mistakes. However, we will also have regrets for things we should have stepped out to do, and we didn’t. Being bold, courageous, and that means being present in situations that would make most people just stay in place. Both Paul, and this bunny, lived life fully into what they were created to do. Using their specialness and giftedness to live for others. And both got to a place at the end of their lives, where they could reap the rewards and benefits of living with no regrets. This was a huge part of *“becoming real”*.

**What would living with no regrets look like for you?**

**4. Living with no...”no”.** Finally, living a life toward *“becoming real”*, wise, a disciple, is a life saying *“yes”* in situations where it would be all too easy to say *“no”*. This doesn’t mean saying *“yes”* to everything that comes along. We say *“yes”* to really silly things. It means not saying *“no”* to important and possibly hard things that come along. Again, both Paul and the rabbit, lived a life saying *“yes”* to the really important things. To sacrifice, surrender, selflessness, to a life lived outwardly, and both of them experienced truly *“becoming real”* by not saying *“no”* to the things that mattered.

**What would it look like to not say “no” to the important things in your life?**

### **III Challenge.**

This book and passage about Paul are really challenging. *“Becoming real”* isn’t for the fearful or faint of heart. To live this life of *“becoming real”* we have to take some real inventory of our lives.

**What could you place into your daily lives that would include these four truths about *“becoming real”*?**