

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

**Sunday July 26, 2020 "All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten" "Sulwe" and "When God Made You". The beauty in uniqueness and diversity.**

### **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 invited one of our favorites back...Kristen Hill. Just to remind you, Kristen is actually Dr. Hill, an English professor who brings a lot of skill, perspective, and knowledge to her messages. She finished our series **"Everything I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten"**. And this one was embracing diversity from two different books. **"When God Made You"**, by Matthew Paul Turner, and **"Sulwe"**, written by Lupita Nyong'o. These two books were an excellent way to finish off this fun series. We will definitely do this series again, with another group of children's books.

The issue of diversity, how to live in a place of recognizing and celebrating it, and still building boundaries of what a society will accept, is such an important conversation in our current culture. As we grapple with a past in our country that used differences to place one group above another, that created different systems and structures for different nationalities, and people of color, we have to work to figure this out. We all are keenly aware there is a beautiful diversity that exists in our country. Color, race, sexual orientation, gender, marital status, educational background, geographical location, income, and this doesn't even include all of the experiences we've each had in our life that has formed us into the person we are.

The pressing issue is; **how do you create a society that recognizes and celebrates diversity?**

That doesn't place one as better, superior, than another. And we are at such an important crossroads in history to try to be and do better in doing the hard work in identifying and recognizing the different expressions of diversity. And creating a society that has needed and necessary boundaries that builds freedom and liberty in it, and still sees everyone, no matter who they are, as holy.

So, a lot of questions to start this off.

**How would you define diversity?**

**Are there outer limits to an understanding and embracing of diversity?**

**The key in growing a community that embraces and celebrates diversity is as Kristen said; “knowing how to relate”. So, what does “knowing how to relate” look like for you?**

The passage used Sunday is from **1 Corinthians 12:12-26**. It's a fairly well known passage, and dives deep into the purpose and reasoning behind why the world is so diverse. So, read this passage, and then we'll unpack some of the points made.

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

**What did it say to you about what diversity is, and the reason for it?**

**Did it challenge you in any particular areas where you may struggle with embracing diversity?**

Kristen highlighted three truths from this passage in how to relate to people who are not like us. And of course she had three points. She's a preacher also.

**1. We are all unique and our uniqueness has a purpose.**

*“When God made you, somehow God knew that the world needed someone exactly like you”.*

If we believe in a God who has intentionally designed people to be like they are, some of them VERY different than us, then we have to look for the purpose and intent of this diversity.

**What are some things you feel make you different from other people? Why?**

**2. Other people's uniqueness is no less valuable or purposeful than our own.**

*“But what I do know is that we need you just the way you are”.*

This means we cannot use our uniqueness as THE standard of what other people should be like. Diversity doesn't place us in the middle of 'normal', but rather an important part of a greater understanding of why there is so much diversity. We ALL are different.

**Why is it, and what is it, that causes us to struggle with other people's differences?**

**3. As followers of Jesus, we need to be the exception, the ones who listen to and live those different from others, whether it's popular or not.**

*“They were inseparable from that moment on, and promised to celebrate the brightness in each other, whether people chose to see it or not”.*

The church has had an on and off relationship with being the lead in embracing diversity. The early followers of Jesus helped the church grow because they radically accepted everyone...always. Of course there are moments in history, present day included, that the church has done this poorly.

**What would this look like for the church, the hands and feet of Jesus, to recognize and celebrate diversity more than even the world does?**

### **III Challenge.**

This is such an important, and timely topic, and conversation to have. As followers of Jesus, and as the church, we HAVE to lead the way in embracing and celebrating the amazing job God did making us all so different.

**So, what would it look like for each of us in our world to do this well?**