

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

### **Sunday January 19, 2020. "Growing. 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.**

We are in the second Sunday in our **"I Love My Church"** series where we hit our three core values at NCC. These are the things that drive who we are, and what makes us a vibrant, life-changing community of faith. Last week we talked about why we gather together. What happens when we all literally and figuratively 'show up', and why church is the best place to do this. We all have so much uniqueness to bring. And each of us, and ALL of us, are better when we all gather together. You may not 'feel' like you have much to offer, but each of you have resources, gifts, abilities, things you can do that make NCC a great place to meet God when we come together.

#### **III Sunday.**

Sunday we talked about a very specific thing that happens when we gather and contribute, and it's our second core value. And that is growth. Now this may be a bit challenging to hear, but since they're the words of Jesus, we have to wrestle with them. When Jesus was getting ready to leave his disciples, he gave them the command to *"go and make disciples."* In most of our history in the church we've interpreted that to 'win people for Christ'...make converts. As important as that is, that's not what Jesus said. He said make disciples. Which means this life, completeness/wholeness Jesus wanted for us wasn't an event...it was a process...of working to become a disciple. And we fully believe this is at the heart of our understanding of growth.

**So...let's start by defining "disciple". What does that word mean to you?**

**And, how do you understand the idea of "growth" and how it ties into being a disciple?**

The scripture for Sunday was **Hebrews 6:1-12**, and it's a super loaded passage of truths and challenges of what it means to live a life bent towards growth and maturity...or becoming a disciple. Read the passage, maybe even twice, and then we'll unpack it.

**What did that passage say to you?**

**What specific things within it spoke to you about this process and value of growth?**

Some of your bibles may have this heading on the passage; *"the necessity of progress"*. A perfectly appropriate understanding of what growth is.

Kal then said this passage gives us a process of growth that if we follow it, will help us develop, craft, a life that will fulfill this teaching of Jesus to become a disciple.

These things are.

### **1. Getting on with it.**

Christians and churches are notorious for getting bogged down in studies, debates, issues that really have no impact on the rest of the world. For some reason these nonessential things rise to the top of our attention within the church world and drain all of our energy and time. And even if they're solved, there is no real impact on the world or really our personal growth.

The first step in real growth is to identify those distracting things within our churches and personal lives, call them for what they are, and then begin the process to just remove them. This is anything that takes up time and energy and never will lead to life changing growth. Habits, practices, thoughts, beliefs, and possibly even some people that cause us to value comfort and familiar more than growth.

**This isn't "are there", but "what are" those things in our lives that we need to remove?**

### **2. Learning to focus.**

The next work the passage highlighted was the need to focus. To have a vision, picture, understanding of who we want to be, so we will know what to place in our lives to give us the growth we will need to get there. This is setting a direction and follows what some have called; "*the principle of the paths*". Basically this principle states it's not our intent that causes change and growth. It's action. And that action has to be choosing specific paths that will lead us in that direction. And we also know from this principle of the path, that when you choose a specific path it will decide which paths are available to you in the future.

**So, the question is; where might you be lacking focus about what future you want?**

**What specific things about you as a person would you like to see in your future?**

### **3. Believing we were meant for better things.**

And finally this all is rooted in a belief that there is a better us out there, and we were "meant for better things" as the passage states. Growth towards something only comes from believing that growth is possible and we can actually get there if we're willing to do the work.

**What are you willing to do to become that future you?**

**If you knew that future you, "*better things*", was out there waiting for the current you to get off the sidelines, and do the work to become that you, what would you be willing to do?**

I have said this before.

**YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO LOVE YOUR FUTURE SELF MORE THAN YOU LOVE YOUR CURRENT SELF.**

To wrap this up and give you some homework, consider this. **What would be said about you at your funeral today. If they were to be totally honest? What would you want said?**

And write the things down you want said, and then list and begin to work on the things that would get to be that person you want to be at your funeral. THIS is what growth is.