

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday May 24, 2020 "Surely it was happening all around us, it's true...and we couldn't see it. Surely I will remember the wonders of the Lord".

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.

So, how is everyone doing? Here we are at week...whatever. Time has no meaning anymore, does it. We are still plugging along. Taking care of things behind the scenes, working on both providing opportunities for growth and learning, taking care of the facilities at the church, and preparing for that eventual time in the future when we can gather again. 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.

We apologize for the disrupted YouTube live stream this past Sunday, and losing a lot of the graphics and video. Our media computer automatically updated, then we got the dreaded blue screen of frozenness, and could only stream on FaceBook. There will need to be some upgrades to be able to continue to do this. We'll let you know about that in our future too.

Anyway, Sunday we continued in our "*Surely*" series, this time looking at the power of remembering. First a brief recap. We're defining "*surely*" as; **"an obvious truth that should be apparent, we should know this, but we needed some help in discovering it."** We always have to be at a place of openness, willingness to be available to hear and see things that we currently aren't aware of. This comes from a foundation of a growing intimate relationship with God. We KNOW him. In addition it comes from a place of humility, holy curiosity, search for wonder and awe. There are truths, understandings, experiences, we have not had yet, and a "*surely*" mind set grows inside of us a desire for new and fresh encounters with God.

So, giving away the point of this particular message, let's talk about remembering.

What are some of your fondest, most cherished memories from your past?

The passage this Sunday was a fairly lengthy psalm. We're going to split it and read it a half at a time.

Read psalm 77:1-10 first.

What jumped out to you about this first half of the psalm?

What do you believe this person was experiencing in their life?

How did they react to it?

There are just several obvious truths we can pull from these first 10 verses.

1. Life is hard. This is just the first and primary truth about life. It is difficult, a struggle, and this HAS to be our baseline understanding of what it means to exist on this planet.

2. We can be prone to hyperbole or exaggeration.

When we face the difficulties of life, we can easily fall into the 'hyperbole hole'. *"All is lost, I'll never, it will always be, this is the worst EVER..."* The psalmist uses "forever" three times and one "never again" for good measure. We have to watch and be aware of our tendency to get all caught in the feelings of what's happening, and to lose perspective.

3. God can feel distant...and may be distant.

This thing, event, situation, ordeal, is so big, in my line of sight, God disappears. It's a perspective thing. No one wants perspective in the middle of a really tough situation, but there is a time when we have to admit that even though things may be really bad, God has not abandoned us.

4. Important to drain the infection, pour out the pain, to give space for healing.

There is a time and need for pouring out the hurt and pain within. However, this is a delicate balance of proper venting without just pitiful, endless wallowing. The psalms are full of people venting all of the hurt and frustration, and then we always see intentional movement forward following that lament.

5. When I'm anxious I tend to forget.

And then finally, we just have to admit in the midst of struggle we get swept up in the fear, anxiety of the moment. We get stuck in whatever it is that's happening, and we forget all of the goodness of God, and his faithfulness in the past. Lack of remembering is often at the heart of prolonged struggle.

So, read the second half of **psalm 77:11-20**, and we'll unpack it.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

How do you explain the shift in mood and perspective?

How do you see the act of 'remembering' fitting into this shift?

There is only one truth to pull out of the second half of psalm 77. And that is the power of remembering. To look back to our past, and pull experiences and truths and use that wisdom to navigate current struggles. And this is most likely a two-fold remembering. First, remembering that life is hard and hard things happen. We're kind of reminded about that during this pandemic. Second, we're here to talk about the fact that hard things happen...and we're still here. I had to say that twice.

So, reflect back on your life, think about the times you made it through a difficult time, and how did you experience God in that moment?

III Challenge.

These are such weird times. I mean REALLY weird. But we've made it through past hard situations, and so many more, and you're still here. This testifies to the dependability of God, AND our ability to use the way we've been created and have grown to not only survive but grow from those moments.

So, what can you depend on, know, learn from this current situation that can help you remember the trustworthiness of God?