

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

**Sunday March 28, 2021. "I Believe: there is a purpose for my life."**

### **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 this 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 deep into 2021 and thankfully, we're still gathering in person. A small but growing group who follow all the safety guidelines joins us at the church. We have opened our children's and youth area also and are seeing a good response. We're so encouraged with 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 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 Recap.**

Okay...I'm just trying to figure out how to do an adequate recap without falling into the hole of too much. This was such a complex and deep series, it's difficult to wrap it up in a brief sentence or two. But, I'll give it my best shot. In this "*I Believe...*" series we were hoping to give you some specific things you could hold onto, that would give you a foundation so that your faith and relationship with God would grow. The first Sunday we saw that we were prewired, a piece of the divine was placed within us, to seek God. It feeds the holy curiosity within us, and draws us to things that then lead to God. The second week we made a case for a higher power, or God as we believe. We didn't do this by composing an irrefutable argument. No one is moved to change their life by courtroom style evidence. But the greatest way we can convince others there is a God is living a compelling life that inspires them. And then last week we talked about the difference between certainty and assurance. Bottom line, certainty is the confidence found in our own ability to figure things out. To acquire the right beliefs. And none of us will be doing that. Assurance is found in trusting in the truth of promise of the continual presence of God, not in our ability to get it right. And it's in this understanding of truth we feel confident, not our ability to assemble all the right truths.

So, there it is. The most informational and briefest recap we could muster for you.

### **III Sunday.**

Sunday we wrapped up this series with where belief, truth, the teachings of Jesus, and a relationship with God should lead us. And it's this one thing...and we'll get to it in a bit.

**But first, how do you understand the idea of finding your purpose?**

**How does that fit into your understanding of God's will?**

There were two scriptures used, so we will read one at a time, ask a few questions after each one, and then we'll go into a little bit of detail about this topic of being created for a purpose.

**Read Ephesians 2:1-10.**

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

**What do you see in the natural process of understanding and embracing spiritual growth?**

**What do you believe this passage says is our purpose?**

This first passage talks about the nature of salvation, spiritual growth, who God is, and where that all should naturally lead to. The church has been notorious for making holiness, your relationship with God, as THE final product of a relationship with God. And so we become really good at being religious. Following the rules and trying to do the shoulds and not do the shouldn'ts. And this passage seems to say that all of the work of salvation, spiritual growth is not just to make things good between you and God. But there is this greater purpose, our purpose, and that is to do *"good works"*.

**How would this change our understanding of what it looks like to embrace and live out our salvation, if it was more about doing *"good works"* rather than just trying to be good?**

**Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-19.**

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

**What is the work God has been doing?**

**What does that mean for us in this work God is doing?**

**What does that look like?**

This passage covered a very similar understanding of salvation, holiness, and spiritual growth. And it ended at a very similar place also when it talked about a greater end game, or purpose to all of this work being done. This work of salvation that God has been, and is continuing to do, is called reconciliation. Which simply means what was separated, torn apart, is now being brought back together. To be reunited, for you old school people. It's about relationships and the nature of our world. This is the ultimate goal and purpose of the work of salvation. And we can make a very strong case that the *"good works"* talked about in Ephesians is the work of reconciliation. God is working to bring creation, his children back to him, and we are to be a part of that work also. Bringing people back together and also back to God. Let's play with this word a bit.

**How do you understand and have experienced reconciliation?**

**Were there any relationships or situations in which there was a process of reconciliation?**

**How could you currently be a part of the work of reconciliation?**

**IV Challenge.**

We closed this series *"I Believe..."* with the belief, (yes I just did that), that all things we believe lead to this place. Our desire for understanding, seeking God, finding truth we can trust in, all found in the person of Jesus leads us to this final belief. We were created to do great things. The **purpose of salvation isn't to be saved from...it's to be saved for**. And that for is *"good works"*. This can be small movements of getting to know people in our world, or making new connections. Or they can be significant next steps into volunteering and being part of greater work. So, as we always do; **What *"good works"* of reconciliation, bridging gaps and building bridges can you be a part of?** Go and begin that work.