

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message. Sunday April 12, 2020 "Easter."**

### **I Intro.**

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through 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 Sunday.**

Well, Sunday was Easter and our fourth remote time of worship practicing the physical distancing requested by our government officials. And we're still tweaking how we do worship to provide the most inspiring, hope filled, useful digital gathering time we can. We want to give you a moment of connected presence of God that gives you something for the rest of the week. So, all of that to say, this is for you, so PLEASE let us know what and how we can serve you best through all of this. Both through our worship, and how we can serve you as the church.

Again Sunday was Easter, and following our Good Friday streaming service, Sunday's message was divided into two parts. The first half of the message we entered into the Easter story of resurrection and asked what Jesus needed to be able to do what he did. We came up with two thoughts. So read the first primary passage and answer the usual questions. **John 15:9-17.**

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

**What did it say to you about how Jesus was able to go to the cross?**

There were two truths pulled from this passage.

#### **1. His commitment to an 'other side' mentality.**

Hebrews tells us Jesus was able to handle the shame and scorn of the cross because of the joy set before him. The key word in here is "set". Jesus didn't see joy as something he could grasp or manufacture on his own. Joy was a product, result, of him being obedient, and willingness to sacrifice himself. This is how we make it through difficult times. If we can pre-experience the results, the benefits of the other side, then we can make it through those tough times.

#### **2. His commitment to this type of sacrifice was the greatest motivation.**

And we are told all through scripture, and by Jesus himself, that the greatest love is one that is willing to give up their life for another. This is the "Why?" Jesus was able to do what he did. Because of his love for each of us. The right "Why?" will be the fuel that powers us through any tough time.

Then the second half of the message Kal challenged us to find those same motivations as we face these really difficult times, our own dark Fridays. And he encouraged us that the same things that carried Jesus through Good Friday to Easter are available to carry us through our own difficult times.

Applying these truths to our individual lives we found these.

**1. We have the hope and assurance that even in the darkest Fridays of grief, loss, struggle, and hopelessness there is a resurrection.**

There will be Fridays of struggle in our lives. There will just be those dark days that overwhelm our souls. And we are in one of those moments now...one of the most difficult ever! None of us has ever experienced anything like this. But there is always a good work being done THROUGH times like these. (Watch the message to see the difference between resuscitation and resurrection).

**2. We are called to live into this truth of resurrection and do something important, meaningful, that matters, with our lives.**

Easter cannot just be something we remember, celebrate, and then we move on. Has to be more than a date once a year. If we truly engage, fully embrace the story of Easter, our lives cannot stay the same. The story of the death and resurrection of Jesus demands a FORWARD response from us. We only have Easter, the 'otherside', because Jesus was willing to go through Good Friday, not be saved from it. We only have Easter because Jesus found an answer to the "Why?" that was greater than his own safety...and that was his love for us.

**Applying what we've learned from the Easter story, what do those truths demand from us.**

**1. To hold our difficult times impermanently.**

This difficulty will not last. It may feel like it's going to go on indefinitely, but it won't. Means we have to live like there is an 'other side'. Honestly, this is super hard for us to do. In the middle it feels endless. As with everything else, we will get through this. And I have to prepare myself for life after this.

**What can you do to remind you this difficulty won't last forever?**

**2. To define what real full on commitment to the 'other side' looks like for YOU.**

This is going to be different for each of us. You decide, think about, pray about, what this kind of commitment looks like for you. The starting place for that is to determine where you are, what your life looks like now, and what it would look like to step it up. You have agency. You may not be in control of this, or even your situation, but you have control of how you go into this, go through it, and especially what you will be on the 'otherside' of it.

**For you, what would it look like for you to commit to something that matters?**

**3. To find a cause, purpose, meaning that's bigger/greater than ourselves.**

This is the "Why?". What is it you're living for that's worth more than just existing? What do you need to incorporate into your motivation; "*this is why I'm doing what I'm doing*" in order for you to do it.

**What can be your "Why?", that will give you the motivation to work for the 'other side'?**

A closing quote and question.

**In this season of struggle, darkness, difficulty, in the midst of this shutdown and sacrifice, what will emerge from the otherside?**

***"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"***

**-Mary Oliver.**