

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday May 31, 2020 "Surely it was happening all around us, it's true...and we couldn't see it. Surely we can trust in the promises of God".

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? We're not even counting time anymore for. It's just been endless. We are still plugging along. Taking care of things behind the scenes. As we announced, we're also putting a strategy and protocols in place for when we do reopen. We don't have a date to announce yet, but we'll keep you posted. And when we do, you can trust that we are doing everything we can to provide the safest place to gather. But until then, 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.

Well, Sunday we wrapped up our "Surely" series. It's been a kind of fun, lighthearted, way to learn new things about ourselves and about God. Again, we defined a "surely" moment as; ***an obvious truth that should be apparent, we should know this, but we needed some help in discovering it.*** And we hope that we were able to reveal some unknown, but now obvious truths, in this series. This Sunday our last "surely" was about promises. And we started this topic with these understandings about what promises are. First, promises are not contractual. That means they are not dependent on what the other person does or doesn't do. Just like wedding vows/promises, each person is promising to do these specific things even if the other person doesn't. Second, promises are not an assurance of good or easy times. If everything went just as you want or hope, then you don't need promises. Promises hold you in place when things aren't good or easy. Third, promises are only what the other person states, not based on your expectations. That's why communication is so important in our relationships. We all carry unspoken expectations about the other person, and then we cast them as promises. Now sometimes promises can be broken by the other person. We're all imperfect. But many times the promises we feel were broken were more our expectations than what the other person actually promised. So, let's talk about promises.

How do you understand and practice promises?

Think back to a time when someone kept a promise to you. Now think about a time someone broke a promise to you. What happened in those situations? How did you experience those?

The passage Sunday was **Hebrews 6:11-20**. Read this passage, then we'll ask the usual questions.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

How do you view God, and the specific promises in this passage?

There were several truths we pulled out of this passage.

1. Promises must be made in something bigger than ourselves. A basic need of ours is something called transcendence. And transcendence is defined as a mystical/spiritual moment in which we experience something that we cannot explain naturally. And these transcendence experiences can only come from things that are bigger than we are.

Where have you experienced or had moments of transcendence where you experienced something bigger than you?

2. Promises are based in trust. Trust is a tough word, and has an obvious connection to faith. When we trust, we understand the nature of who we are placing our trust in, and we fill any gap in understanding or knowledge with grace and kindness. And a true dependable trust has to be in things that are bigger than us. Trust is essential in putting our faith in God.

Think about relationships in your past. Where did someone prove trustworthy? What grew that trust? And where was trust broken or betrayed? What happened and were you able to rebuild and restore trust?

3. In order to have this kind of trust, we have to understand the nature of what a promise is.

This particular truth is key. A promise is not what we expect or want, but it's in the nature of who the other person is. We all have expectations, spoken or not, of what we want other people to be. These usually surround our needs, not the nature of relationships, and can color how we view promises. When we choose to trust in the promises of God, we have to understand who God is, and what he desires. We have to grow our relationship with him. And when we do this well, then we will begin to see that what God desires us for us to know him, to find joy and meaning in him, and to bring others into this relationship with him. Unfortunately we tend to grow religion, (rules and laws), out of our relationship with God, and then slide into legalism trying to get everyone to live how we live out our faith, rather than this life-giving understanding of the promises of God.

So, how do you understand the promises of God?

What does this passage say about God's nature, and what he wants for us?

III Challenge.

On this final Sunday we were challenged to grow into a relationship with God in which we can “surely” trust in his promises. But in order to do this well we have to understand the nature of God, what trust really is, and what God wants for us. The closer we align ourselves with the heart of God, the more we can experience the joys of his promises.

In closing this series, we want to know that God has so much for us to learn, experience, and in new and fresh ways. And “surely” we know there is so much God wants for us, and all we have to do is be humble, open, and willing to learn and experience new things.

So, in closing, what specific things can you work into your daily life to help you have your own “surely” moments?