

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday March 29, 2020 "A service of music and scripture."

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.

Obviously, things have changed a bit since last week, and I don't even want to imagine what next week will be like. But we're still church, and we still have things to do. So we will be here making sure we all stay connected, and be church, even though we may be meeting and hanging out remotely, virtually, for a while.

II Sunday.

Well, Sunday was our second remote time of worship practicing the physical distancing requested by our government officials. And we're still tweaking the details to provide the most inspiring, hope filled, useful digital gathering time we can. This isn't for us to keep some kind of tradition going. 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.

This service Sunday was a time of worship and scripture. There was no specific theme, other than to step into the presence of God, find hope and encouragement, and to wallow, yes...wallow in the connectedness to each other knowing even though we're separated we're in this together. So we won't have a specific topic to talk about this morning, but we want this to be helpful in helping get you through this time of isolation.

So, some general jumping off questions.

How has your life changed through this COVID outbreak?

What have you given up, sacrificed, maybe even lost through this?

What frustrates you about all the changes you've had to make?

Have you found any personal life hacks that have helped you deal with some of the massive changes?

We used several scriptures Sunday morning and we'll just walk through them to give us some specific things to wrestle with.

The first scripture was the story of the prodigal son found in **Luke 15:11-32**. This is a super familiar story chock full of all sorts of cool images and ideas. So read it, and we'll just pull some good stuff out of it. As always the usual questions.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

Was there anything new that you may have missed or forgotten about in this story?

Now here is something you may not have noticed or paid attention to before.

This story involved a famine, a time of shortage and struggle. And in that famine, living during a difficult time, the son realized that his father had everything he needed. And he ran back to him.

So, how does this speak to our situation today?

Think about a time in your past in which you felt like you had reached the end of your rope, and you found with God you had more there to make it through that time than you thought?

It's unfortunate that this story has come to be known as the story of the prodigal son. Even though he is the center figure in this story, it's not his journey that amazes us. It's the continual, lavish, unconditional love his dad has for him. This is the profound truth of this passage, and what gives us hope and encouragement every day.

And one final truth. If God can be counted on to love us no matter what, won't that love move him to see us through these next few...uummm however long this lasts.

The second passage was **Hebrews 12:2**. One short verse but so packed with how we make it through this time. So read it and we'll drill down through the process and talk about the specific work that living a life for God looks like.

What jumped out to you from this passage?

What does it say to you about these times?

This was just a simple statement about how we find solace and comfort through difficult times. And that is to 'fix' our eyes on Jesus and watch how he survived what he went through. This really isn't a command or a promise. There are no warnings, or proposed outcomes. This is just a; "*do this*" to help grow inside of you this internal resolve, grit, determination, ability to persevere that you probably don't have like you need currently.

So, what does this verse say to you about Jesus?

What does it say to you about struggle?

What does it take to make it through a tough time?

We are in such odd days...really odd days. And we have no idea what the next weeks and possibly months will look like and what will happen. But we know we have a father we can run to to find comfort and courage through really shaky times. And we know we have each other to help encourage and carry us when we're in that tough spot.

So, know we've got you, and we can so feel that you have us. Please let us know how you're doing, and what we can do to help you during this time. It's going to be a challenge, but when we're on the other side of this it will be because we all hung in there together.

Grace and Peace.