

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

**Sunday August 18, 2019. "At the Movies: Hunger Games"**

### **I. Intro.**

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work thru 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 Recap.**

We're in our second Sunday of our "**At the Movies**" series, and the topic is relationships. What we're doing is finding movies that highlight a particular point, truth about relationships, and then we use that specific clip or scene from that movie coupled with scripture to teach practical useful truths about how to navigate the world of relationships. So far we've talked about the basic importance of good relationships in our lives, and finding the inner beauty within ourselves and others. You can watch the previous messages, and find the devotionals on the NCC website.

### **III Sunday.**

We hit the topic that seems to be an unfortunate value in our western culture. And that is the drift towards self-reliance. This isn't saying we should create a culture of dependency and take away personal responsibility. This is a culture that is infatuated with this false notion of self-sufficiency, that we can completely determine our own future and are solely responsible only for ourselves, and can actually rely on our own wisdom and abilities to make our own path. This sounds somewhat threatening, and possibly 'unamerican' to question self sovereignty, but this is the lure of living overly self-reliant, (I can do it all by myself), and often what gets us into trouble.

So...some thinking about this before we start.

**Do we as a nation lift up self-reliance as a desirable trait? How so?**

**What are the benefits and dangers of this mentality and lifestyle?**

**Begin to think about how this affects the church, and how the church should speak into this?**

Kal began with an understanding of the details and aspects that surround the tendency towards self-reliance.

Here are the basic premises he laid out for us.

#### **1. Self-reliance is rooted in self-preservation.**

Self-reliance typically grows out of a 'survivor' mindset. It's about control, and the temptation is strong. We have to begin to understand that the draw of self reliance is feeling that we are in control of our own lives, and only we can have our best interests at heart.

#### **2. Self-reliance, over dependence on self, is often rooted in hurt/fear.**

You've been hurt, disappointed, taken advantage of, abandoned, and you've built up this lack of trust over the years, and that has imploded into; *"I'll just do it myself"*. All of us have been in that place, situation, in which we trusted someone, counted on another person to be there for us, do something for us, and they let us down, and so we're just going to take that on ourselves.

### **3. The danger of relying on self-reliance, is there is stuff we don't know.**

Depending solely on yourself ignores the truth we don't know everything. How many of you have said: *"If I could go back to when I was \_\_\_\_\_, (fill in age), knowing what I know now"*. So, we all admit that if we didn't know back then what we know now, then there must be things we don't know now.

#### **So, what don't I know now? Is there a way to know what I don't know?**

As much as we know, there is stuff we don't know, can't see, aren't aware of. And we're all admitting we have blind spots...right? Self-reliance keeps us from admitting and seeing those things that we don't know...you know?

### **4. The key is finding 'balance' between taking care of ourselves and becoming too self-reliant.**

Balance doesn't involve percentages, or allocations. It's about seasons, and rhythms. There are times and situations where we can and should take care of ourselves. And then there are times and situations where we just need to fess up, and admit we can't. And in growing this ability to live well, the life we want, we have to constantly monitor ourselves and our lives, to move back and forth between appropriate self-sufficiency and interdependence.

### **5. The other key is developing a healthy interdependence.**

***An interdependent relationship is where both partners, or group of people, are mutually reliant on each other. It is a safe bond where each person can rely on each other but also maintain their autonomous identity.***

Means finding a community; family, groups of people (you can belong to more than one), who want the best for themselves, for the community, and for each other.

The scripture used Sunday morning was the story of Adam and Eve being tempted in the garden. And it gives us a great picture of the process and dangers of self-reliance. It's found in **Genesis 3:1-23**. Read this passage, and then we'll walk thru the specifics of why self-reliance is dangerous.

### **What does unhealthy self-reliance look like from this story.**

#### **1. Both Pride and false confidence are unhealthy.**

Thinking your perspective is THE one, and doesn't need to be tested. **How many poor decisions started with "surely..."?** *"Surely other people who have warned me can't be right. I'm ... different."* And this is always based on some information, but not all information. The lure of self sufficiency is denying truth, and thinking the rules and other people's example doesn't apply to us.

**Could your pride be influencing your ability to understand the situation?**

**Do you have ways of checking?**

#### **2. Lack of trustworthy community.**

Bottom line...Eve and Adam didn't have the best counsel. Don't know if you know this or not, but at all of the worst decisions and moments in your life...you were there. You are the common thread to the disasters, mistakes in your life. You need wise, mature, a little further ahead of you in life people.

### **3. Both of which lead to self-deception.**

The deadly combination of pride, and not having a trustworthy community will ALWAYS lead to self-deception. *"They're trying to steal your happiness."* *"Don't let anyone tell you what to do!"* Because of our ability to **DRIFT** off course, we have to have things in place that call out our self-deception that 'we've got it'. Self-reliance says you can trust your own judgment...all the time. Interdependence says you ought to regularly check the gauges of relationships.

### **4. Overly self-reliance often leads to shame and embarrassment.**

Being consumed by pride, lack of wise counsel, self-deception leads to really poor choices. So what did Adam and Eve do? Hide. Because that's what society makes self-reliant people do when they mess up. Our culture and society loves shaming people. And historically the church has been the worst about doing this. And because we love to shame...we hide. Shame should be; *"we know better or now we know better"*, NOT *"I'm a horrible person"*. It may feel good to get that dig in on someone else, but rarely does it teach, or cause a change in behavior in the long run.

### **5. And self-reliance can lead to blaming.**

Both Adam and Eve pointed the finger at someone else, and didn't own any of their responsibility. Self reliance tends to place results of poor choices on others. Even though we may have been fully responsible for whatever happened, we're going to find someone/something else to blame.

## **IV Challenge.**

**What is the purpose of gathering together?**

**Why does it matter? Why is it important to be careful of not becoming too self-reliant?**

There is significant benefit that comes from not staying to ourselves and trying to take care of everything and do life on our own. **There is something supernatural that happens when a group of different, diverse people come together with a common purpose and God at the center.**

**What does it look like to become interdependent on God and each other?**

**What things do/ can we do to not fall into the trap of self-reliance?**

Healthy interdependence is growing the ability to understand we do need each other. **We cannot do life alone. We still need each other**, and to be in communities like this. Life is full of situations and issues that will overwhelm us. Needing others is not a sign of weakness. **We were built and designed for connection, to do life interdependent on each other.**

**How can you build healthy, life-giving interdependence in your daily life?**