

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

**Sunday December 1, 2019. "Advent Conspiracy. Worship Fully. Hope".**

### **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 Sunday.**

So...here we go...the countdown to Christmas. We're only four Sundays out, and Advent begins on that first Sunday. Let me spend a little time unpacking the idea of Advent. First, you won't find a celebration of anything called Advent in scripture. So it's not the implementation of a scriptural event. However, the truths behind, and the understanding of Advent, are found all through scripture. And that is the announcement of, and preparations for the coming of the Christ. In Isaiah 40 there is an announcement of preparing for the coming of the Lord. And John the Baptist, who went ahead and proclaimed the coming of Jesus, referenced this passage to call us to a season of preparation. And Advent helps us do that spiritual inner work, alongside most of the decorating, shopping, and more physical work we're doing to prepare for Christmas.

We know Christmas is coming. But are we ready and preparing for the coming of Jesus?

**What are your plans for this Christmas?**

**What are you looking forward to for this Christmas?**

For this first Sunday of our celebration of Advent, we're building it around this thing called "**Advent Conspiracy**", (you'll just have to watch the message to learn about what this is). And we focused on the Advent theme of Hope through an understanding of what it means to "**Worship Fully**". We're saying hope is born out of the act of growing our ability to worship. The first passage read was the very last psalm, **Psalm 150**. So read that and we'll just touch on a few points.

Kal shared worship comes from two understandings.

**1. We have to experience something bigger than us.**

**2. But we are still made to feel important as we lift up that object more important than us.**

The act of worship is important in growing closer to God, discovering his nature, and what he wants for us. But we have to be careful not to worship our worship. That means we tend to think worship only happens on a Sunday morning and only a certain way, and only then is it worship. Worship has to be more than just a preference but the condition and posture of our heart.

**What helps you worship?**

**How and when do you most feel the presence of God?**

**Have you ever had any surprise moments experiencing God in places or ways you weren't expecting?**

The second passage was a conversation Jesus had with a woman he met at a well. They began talking about her personal life, but the woman became uncomfortable and changed the topic to worship. It seemed that Jesus felt worship was important, and he just followed her lead. The passage is **John 4:19-24**, but you can begin at the beginning of chapter 4 to get the entire picture.

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

**What did it say to you about the true nature of worship?**

It seems worship isn't about a style, place or preference. It's what we understand about God, and what he is doing in our lives.

**TRUTH**- our understanding of who God is, his nature, and our relationship with him.

**What are you including in your daily life that reveals to you the presence of God?**

About who he is and his nature.

**What do you believe about God? What do you actively do that informs that?**

**SPIRIT**- this continual work being done inside of us, growing within us how we live out this truth.

And when we have this Hope, of God being who God is, and his faithfulness and trustworthiness, it can't help but fill us up, and pour out of us.

**What can you see happening in your life currently that shows you God is working in you?**

Spirit and truth are a way of life and practice that helps us find God everywhere we go, not just in church. So there is no compartmentalized worship an hour a week, but this continual, active, vital awareness of God that is continually growing us AND growing hope within us.

The final passage was how we actively practice this thing called worship. **Romans 12:1-2**, and Kal read it out of The Message version, because it contains the phrase he uses all the time to describe our life. Read this passage and we'll wind this thing down.

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

**How did it describe the act of worship to you?**

The daily act of offering ourselves as a LIVING sacrifice, is what worship truly is. We continually seek and sense the presence of God wherever we are, acknowledge who he is in all his fullness, surrender ourselves to his desires, and craft a life where we do that in our...**everyday, ordinary life—sleeping, eating, going-to-work, walking-around life**. This is what real, life-changing worship is, and this is how and where true hope is grown. And as Kal quoted from **"The Shawshank Redemption"** at the beginning of his message *"hope is a good thing, the best of things, and no good thing ever dies"*. So as we begin this Advent season hoping to prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus.

**What habits or practices can you incorporate into your daily life to know God?**

**What would you like, wish to see formed in you over these next four weeks?**

Be a person who brings hope into the world this Christmas...REAL hope!