

“What If??” December 30th, 2018

Fellowship Bible Church Dallas | Adam Watson

Good morning FELLOWSHIP! My name is Adam Watson and I am the young adult’s director here at Fellowship. It is great to be with you church family in the midst of this holiday season. Here we are right after Christmas before the New Year needing to reflect on all that God has done. Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year because Jesus has come to earth! God humbled himself as a baby, born to die for my sins and for your sins, to the glory of God His father. He conquered death, rose again, and offers us new life, HOPE IN HIM, Eternal life in him. CHURCH IS HE your HOPE this morning?! So, we look ahead to 2019... FULL OF HOPE OF WHAT IS TO COME. LET’S GO People!

How many of you have already made new year’s resolutions? Excellent. New Year’s resolution will come and go.... unlike the pounds. Some of you will make goals to get in better shape, I know I am. Some, to learn new skills and abilities. Some will make resolutions to give up certain things. Some of you want to give up social media, Facebook, Instagram, even just being on your phones less. Instead of watching other people’s cats online. IN FACT, DO you know that right now [Vitaminwater](#) has an incredible sweepstakes going. They simply asked, “How addicted are you to your smartphone? Vitaminwater wants to find out. So, the company just launched a contest that WILL PAY one lucky (and disciplined) person \$100,000 to give up using their smartphone for a year.” Give up all smartphones for a year and you receive \$100,000 dollars! WOW! SIGN ME UP! Are you game? Get this, they even will let you have a “1996 era” cell phone... Yet, there are many in here who would want to but just couldn’t do it. You would think it would be easier to surrender material things which so easily steal our lives away. We pile on all these resolutions for the new year and buy all the gear to get motivated and then forget

about them in a month... it's crazy! ALL OF THESE GOALS THAT WE STOCKPILE SUPPLIES FOR, ALL POINT TO **LIFE**, don't they? Wanting to live longer, to enjoy life more, most resolutions are about us taking control of our lives. We want to live our way. **WANTING TO LIVE AGAIN IN SOME SENSE?**

AS we look ahead to 2019 anticipating another year of life. I want to tell you story of a MAN who was looking for life, and he certainly had no smartphone to surrender... this man grew up in a small town in the Northeast. He was a joyful kid, loved his parents and his brother. In fact, he even saved his brother's life one time. You might call him a hometown hero. He dreamed of escaping the small town he grew up in and dreamed of running away. Running away from the family business, really his greatest fear was that he would be stuck in that job for the rest of his life. He was an explorer at heart. He dreamt of taking his wife on a world adventure and seeing the world together. BUT those tickets were never bought, and the burden of the family business quickly did become his inheritance. All his BIG dreams of college, traveling the world, and getting out of that crummy little town vanished. He had built a life on putting others before himself. HE felt trapped. He was left asking "What if"? His world began to cave in. He got into major financial trouble, His wife, and kids didn't even recognize him anymore. The fear of losing everything caught up to him. Contemplating suicide at a bar on Christmas Eve night he cried out to God.

*(SLOW DOWN. DRAW IT OUT. BE DRAMATIC BUT PERSONABLE.)
Emotional Sitting at bar on Christmas he considers throwing his life away.*

He prayed, "God... God...dear Father in heaven, I'm not a praying man, but if you're up there and you can hear me, show me the way. I'm at the end of my rope. Show me the way, God..."

Now some of you realize who this man is. The lovable hometown hero George Bailey.

Picture 1 By Himself

He has the rare opportunity to see the world as if he had never been born. *He declares, “I WANT TO LIVE AGAIN”*

Picture 2 (With Family)

His “what if? Question eventually lead him from fear to gratitude for the life he had been given.

“What if?” This is simply a question that we ask someone to imagine what could possibly happen or what might in fact have already happened. We use the phrase “What if?” to worry all the time don’t we? What if she says this... what if Dad says no?

Behind that phrase there can be real fear, or hope. Who we believe God is effects what is behind those two simple words.

For Fear, what if the worst happens? What if the cancer doesn’t go away? What if my marriage doesn’t turn around. What if my parents don’t stop fighting? What if the economy tanks? What if I never live up to all the expectations? What if I was never born, would it matter? As George Bailey asked and wished.

For Hope, what if God answers my prayer? What if God restores my family? What if it all works out? What if? What if? What if? What if? What if? What if?

This morning I want to ask you two questions. Right now, 2019 is full of “What if?”, questions. My prayer is that as we REMEMBER WHO GOD is and how Jesus gives us life that we come alive again. So here are two of the most important questions to answer as you remember what God has done and head into 2019.

1. WHAT IF YOU COME ALIVE AGAIN?
2. WHAT IF GOD IS WHO HE SAYS HE IS?

With those questions being asked, in world full of questions we need certainty. In light of what Christ has done for us, we have been given an answer, the answer. We have been given

certainty and Hope and His name is Jesus. How then should we live? To glorify his name. We have been given life through Christ and life should be full of joy. Life is to be celebrated. Life is to be felt. Too many things (our responsibilities, work, even the enemy) can lend to us feeling exhausted and filling our plate with too many things. We're searching for life in all the wrong places. We've forgotten about who he says he is. Jesus is life.

Isaiah is a major prophet in the Old Testament. God uses Him to speak to His people, Israel on His behalf. Now go with me to Isaiah 42: And so, what we have in chapters 40-66 is Isaiah writing things down when people are facing the Assyrian pressure, they have been exiled from their land, they need HOPE. If anyone has ever asked "What If?" It is Israel right here. This section of the book of Isaiah is referred to as the book of Hope. In this we see a series of prophecies of Jesus, our same hope, God's suffering servant, the Messiah, the King of Kings, OUR HOPE, and OUR SAVIOR.

Before we go further, I want to define God's glory as honor and praise. When we glorify Him we are giving Him the honor and praise only He deserves. Let's walk through Isaiah 42 together. Isaiah 42:1-4 we see a Prophecy of Jesus. Here Jesus is being contrasted with a King named Cyrus. Isaiah is writing to Israel, so they HOPE in the Messiah to come, God's servant.

**Isaiah 42 "Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.**

² He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;

³ a bruised reed he will not break,
and a faintly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not grow faint or be discouraged
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law."

A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench. If your faith is bruised, he will not break you. If your faith is only a spark, he will not put it out! We see Isaiah prophesy of Jesus grace and compassion. Jesus, God's servant deserves your worship and my worship. He is worthy of living our lives for Him. For His glory and fame. **John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."** You might be here today and hear how exclusive Jesus is. You might struggle that he is the only way. I am glad you're here. Jesus is glad you're here. Let frame it this way. Imagine you have been surviving on a raft in the middle of the ocean for a month after your ship has sunk and a rescuer shows up. He tells you, I am the way, there is no one else coming for you. Do you go with the only rescuer who has come? JESUS IS THE ONLY GOD WHO HAS COME TO RESCUE US! He is the way because HE made the way. No other religion, no other god, nothing in this world has or will come to humanity to save us. Jesus is the ONLY way, the truth, and the Life. Jesus gives true life. So, don't waste your life. What can we waste? We can waste our time, our resources, our finances, our legacy, our relationships, our future, and our lives. We worry, we sin, we brag, we waste THE GIFT OF LIFE GOD HAS GIVEN US.

Currently the average life-span is 79 years. Let's be generous and say your 25 years old, on average then you have 473,040 hours, 19,710 days, 2,815 weekends, 647 months, 54 years, 5.4 decades, .54 centuries Ultimately and ONE Life to live. Last time I checked the death rate in this life is the same for Christians and non-Christians. At 79 what do you want the affection of your heart to be? What will have marked your life? What was the meaning? What was the point of it all? How did you use those 473,040 hours? Your one life to live?

In James 4:14 we see a warning, "yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a MIST that appears for a little time and then VANISHES." This life is going to

fly by. INVEST YOUR LIFE WELL. INTO THINGS OF ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE. Live a life that matters. You will not waste your life if you live for the glory of God.

So, WHAT IF GOD IS WHO HE SAYS HE IS? Knowing who God is what changes how we live for Him. Pastor and author Craig Grosechel writes, “The Christian Atheist: When You Believe in God But Live as if He Doesn’t Exist.” There many Christian atheist in the world today. In Isaiah 42 God reminds us who He really is. Remember who God is. Isaiah describes Him this way.

Isaiah 42:5 “Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it:

Then we get a song from God, about God. Wow, I don’t know how this rap might go. But it is the best. Right here God it is as if God is saying do you know who I am? I mean do you really know, because if you did it would change everything for you. When God says “I AM” its game time. Its “Hey you, listen up there. I made you, and You have forgotten who you’re dealing with. It’s me, the Great I AM! I deserve Glory and Honor and Praise. I don’t know what picture comes to your mind, when you think of God. Maybe the mountains, the stars, Jesus face, how about this Lion. My beautiful wife Laura took this photo of that majestic lion in South Africa two years ago. God refers to himself as the Lion of Judah. A Lion fears no one. Why should he?

⁶“I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness;

I will take you by the hand and keep you;

I will give you as a covenant for the people,

a light for the nations,

⁷ to open the eyes that are blind,

to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.

**⁸ I AM THE LORD; THAT IS MY NAME;
MY GLORY I GIVE TO NO OTHER,
NOR MY PRAISE TO CARVED IDOLS.**

⁹ Behold, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
I tell you of them.”

Remembering who God is allows us to remember His mercies, His grace, His power. As you look to 2019 remember who God is. **So how do we not waste our lives and come alive again? WE GLORIFY GOD WITH EVERYTHING WE HAVE.** God created the world that he might be glorified by us. Don't treat the word “glorify” like the word “beautify.” When you take a plain room and beautify it, you make it a beautiful room. You don't do that for God. Nobody beautifies God. He is infinitely beautiful. When lets us glorify him, we're not making him glorious. **He is glorious.** It means you are called upon to display his glory. Make much of him like he's the most valuable, glorious thing in the universe because he is. We are reflectors. We are images. We are calling attention to God. That's why we live. God is the reason for our living. Whatever you do, whether you eat, or drink, do all to the glory of God. Point to the glory. **“Don't improve on the glory. Point to the glory. Enjoy the glory because God is most glorified in you, and you're most satisfied in him, but that's another sermon.” – Piper**

Sing to the Lord a New Song, I am talking about our lives glofy God as a beautiful song to Him. Sing a new song to the Lord. Three Psalms start with precisely these words — Psalms

96, 98, and 149 — “sing to the Lord a new song.” As does **our passage today** Isaiah 42:10 And Psalm 144:9 adds its voice to the chorus, “I will sing a new song to you, O God.” Why is this the case? Psalm 40 gives us a clue. The psalmist has “waited patiently for the Lord” for some deliverance. God hears him, and rescues him, and one of the things he does for him in the deliverance is “he put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God”. **THAT IS WHAT JESUS HAS DONE FOR US.** He has delivered us! We sing new songs, because of His love through Jesus! The joy we experience through Salvation! Some of you desperately need to sing a new song. 2018 was lonely, heartbreaking; **REMEMBER** Jesus will not put out a spark and He want to comfort you.

**Isaiah 42:10 “Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise from the end of the earth,
you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it,
the coastlands and their inhabitants.”**

Let your life be song to the Lord. My new friend and brother in Christ Kim Blaschke. Church Kim has surrender his life to Jesus. You can hear it when you talk to him, you can see it in his joy, you can hear how grateful he is to have salvation in Jesus. **Kim surrendered to Jesus, he surrendered a life full of addiction to sing a new song with His life.** He has put his Hope in Jesus alone. What Kim doesn't realize is how much him surrendering to God has impacted those around him. See 18 months ago I came off some mission's experience that made me want to quite ministry. Before that I had witnessed a church split, I was fed up. I had grown up in the church as a pastor's kid. I was even a seminary student. **BUT** I was disgusted with the wickedness of man. God carried Laura to land at this church and **IT IS TESTIMONIES OF TRANSFORMED LIVES** like Kim that give me a new song to sing for Jesus. My new song is

also a song of surrender. WHEN WE SING A NEW SONG FOR GOD NOT ONLY DO OTHER SEE, BUT OTHERS CAN JOIN IN!

OUR NEW SONG IS A SONG OF SURRENDER! Joyful exuberant surrender. Give God glory with your life. Trading in our desires for God's. Declaring the glory of God. The hardest part of In fact, Isaiah then ends chapter 42 with a warning of Gods judgment to come against those who trust in idols, material things. Take Heart CHURCH, Take Courage in Jesus name. We must SURRENDER 2019 to Him. Putting aside earthly things and living with an eternal perspective. Obeying Jesus not only takes courage, but it takes love. The Hope in the glory of God. Surrender Putting aside earthly things and living with an eternal perspective.

1. Are you like George Bailey from "It's a Wonderful Life," WANT TO LIVE AGAIN? Don't waste your life, live for the glory of God.
2. WHAT IF YOU COME ALIVE AGAIN? Jesus deserves your worship and my worship. What if you live again this year? What would look different? How would your family, job, etc. Look different? What if you live for god's glory and not your own??
3. WHAT IF GOD IS WHO HE SAYS HE IS? Would answer that question this morning, believe who God is. How will you live differently?
4. SING A NEW SONG OF SURRENDER TO GOD. May our lives be declarations of your praise forever. Our new Song is a song of surrender! Joyful exuberant surrender. Trading in our desires for God's. Declaring the glory of God. PSALM 96:1-4 ESV
 - 1 "Oh sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth!
 - 2 Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
 - 3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples!
 - 4 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be feared above all gods.

PRAYER:

*As Ezequiel plays the notes to the Old Hymn ALL to JESUS I SURRENDER.
Right now, would you ask God to put a new song in your heart?
Full of faith, breaking the chains of depression and discouragement. Would
Remember that God is faithful to His promises. He really is who He says He is.*