

Beyond Sunday – Get Over Your Past

This guide is designed to offer a simple tool for those wanting to take the next step with Sunday's message. You can print this guide to study on your own, or use it in a group and experience transformation together.

Our hope is that the living, breathing words of truth that are revealed to you become a part of your everyday life. In the book of James, we read about a key to living life with God. We are told that if we ask for wisdom by faith then we shall receive it generously from our Father in Heaven. One of the best ways to receive this wisdom is by preparing to receive it. We invite you to pray this prayer prior to the message and the study guide:

“God, thank You for Your truth and wisdom. Help me to see what I need to see, hear what I need to hear, and know what I need to know. Holy Spirit, help me to understand in a way that shows me the Father’s true nature and heart. May this time help me to know You more and become more like Jesus. Amen.”

This special edition of Beyond Sunday is designed to bring you hope and encouragement as 2019 comes to a close and we look forward to the new year to come.

This is a year of the Lord restoring hope and joy in the holiday season. His will for us is to not just survive this holiday season but to thrive and experience the reviving life of Christ in every conversation, party, and family get-together.

THE PAST

“Beauty for Ashes” Isaiah 61:3

For many, the holiday season can be filled with stress, anxiety, or pain leaving us wondering how is this supposed to be “the most wonderful time of the year”? For people in this boat, the idea of change and the new decade to come can bring hopeful thoughts that ultimately turn into a mindset of wanting to just “survive” the holidays. I would like to suggest that the Lord’s heart for us as sons and daughters is to not just “survive” but rather “thrive”. The Lord has come to restore and redeem all that’s been lost and stolen. He really does give beauty for ashes, joy for mourning, and praise for heaviness. We love to sing songs and read books about this verse, but when the rubber meets the road, do we actually believe it? What would life look like if we did? Our past experiences will only define the present and future if we allow it. Who has more influence in deciding our future? Our past experiences **OR** the Creator of the universe who just happens to be our Father as well?

THE FUTURE

“For I know the plans I have for you” Jeremiah 29:11

Think, for a moment, about the reality that we have just stepped into a new decade. What thoughts come to mind? What emotions stir up? Everyone knows the verse, Jeremiah 29:11. It's a great verse that inspires many, but Jeremiah wrote this when the future of his family and people did not look so bright. He prophesied and declared the word of the Lord even in the midst of despair. Whether our holiday seasons have been great or not, God has a future and hope for us and our families. We have the opportunity to declare and believe what He says about our future. However, it's a choice. What if rather than getting lost in thoughts of worry and anxiety and imagining a future without God at work, we began to imagine a future filled with hope, joy, and peace and take God at His word? It's all a matter of who has our trust. Are we placing our trust in what we can do or what He WILL do?

THE NOW

“Behold, I am making ALL things new.” Rev. 21:5

Notice that this verse says, “I am making.” That statement is so powerful in itself because it carries the weight of a present action that the Lord is performing on our behalf. Although He restores our past and will continue to make all things new in the future, this is telling us He's working on our behalf even now! This means that even when we don't see it, he's working. Again, it's a matter of what we put our trust in. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 is possibly one of the best couple of verses that gives us a clear strategy on how to live in the fullness of what God has for us. Check it out! Our thoughts determine our mindsets, our mindsets dictate our actions, and our actions are what create our livelihood.

Below are some action steps that we can take to help us fill our mind with God's thoughts and plans. They are simple but can bring a great shift in our current and future seasons.

ACTION STEPS

1. Family Steps - Set aside time before or after a meal with the family. This is a great way to help get our minds off of us and to start seeing the bigger picture that God has.

- For some families, this may be difficult. Start by asking yourself, “What would be a small victory for my family?” For some families, it may be that having a meal together is a victory.

- For other families, some good steps could be:

- Going around before a meal and having each individual pray.

- After a meal, spend 5 minutes talking about how everyone’s day was.

2. Individual Steps - Set aside time with the Lord in worship, prayer, and the Word. This helps us take our focus off of problems and on the Great Problem Solver, God.

- For some, this may be new. If so, just start by turning on some worship music and quieting your heart before the Lord.

- Open your Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to make the Word come alive to your hearts. If you are unsure of where to start, the Gospel of John is a great place.

3. Scheduled Steps - Setting reminders can be a great way to stay focused on God and His plans.

- Our smartphones can be great tools! Setting reminders and alarms on our phones are great ways to stay in tune with what God is doing.

- We can write down encouraging words or scriptures on sticky notes and place them on mirrors, doors, dashboards, etc.

Let’s join together as a Walking by Faith community to fill our minds with God’s thoughts and plans. Let’s see earth look a little more like Heaven!

Scripture References - *Get Over Your Past*

Philippians 3:13 NKJV

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

Philippians 3:13 CEV

My friends, I don't feel that I have already arrived...

Romans 1:17 NKJV

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Philippians 3:13 NKJV

...but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,

Ruth 1:20-21 NKJV

But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21 I went out full, and the Lord has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the Lord has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?"

Proverbs 6:23-24 NKJV

For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life, 24 To keep you from the evil woman, From the flattering tongue of a seductress.

Proverbs 4:18 NKJV

But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.

John 21:3 NKJV

Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.

Romans 8:28 NKJV

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Mark 11:25 NKJV

"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

Ephesians 6:12 TLB

For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies—the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world.

John 10:10a NKJV

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.

Romans 12:19 NKJV

...“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.