

**JANUARY 5, 2020**

WHEN GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO US, THERE'S ENOUGH BEAUTY TO CREATE SOMETHING NEW

THE THREE STATEMENTS BELOW, HELP SET TODAY'S SERMON:

1. "CREATIVITY IS ALLOWING YOURSELF TO MAKE MISTAKES. ART IS KNOWING WHICH ONES TO KEEP" – SCOTT ADAMS
2. "YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD TO SET ANOTHER GOAL, OR TO DREAM A NEW DREAM" – C.S. LEWIS
3. "WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL – THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE" – STEP 1: ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

### **OPENING**

EACH YEAR MOST PEOPLE MAKE RESOLUTIONS FOR THEIR LIFE. IN OTHER WORDS, TO DO SOMETHING THAT WILL HOPEFULLY HELP THEM AND/OR SOMEONE ELSE FEEL BETTER OR MORE ACCOMPLISHED IN THEIR LIFE. YET, SADLY, MOST PEOPLE DO NOT OBTAIN THE DESIRED RESULTS BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT NECESSARILY WORKING ON THE RIGHT THINGS FOR THE RIGHT REASONS. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU WERE TO ASK A FRIEND TO SHARE WITH YOU THE REASONS FOR THEIR RESOLUTIONS, YOU WOULD LIKELY LEARN THAT THEY ARE LITERALLY DOING XYZ BECAUSE OF SOMEONE ELSE. NOW THIS IS GOOD BECAUSE THEY CARE ABOUT SOMEONE; BUT THEY/WE MUST NOT FORGET THE IMPORTANCE OF CARING FOR OURSELVES.

- HOW MUCH TIME HAVE YOU DEDICATED TO YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH THIS WEEK?
- WHAT IS YOUR PLAN THIS WEEK AND BEYOND TO BECOME HEALTHIER - PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY? TO BECOME MORE CONNECTED WITH OTHERS SOCIALLY?

IF YOU NOTICE – THESE QUESTIONS ARE CREATED FOR YOUR BENEFIT. WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT FOR YOUR LIFE? WHAT ARE YOU READY AND ABLE TO DO NOW TO MOVE THE NEEDLE IN A BETTER DIRECTION?

IN TODAY'S MESSAGE WE'LL EXAMINE A FEW SCRIPTURES WHICH HELP US SEE THE DIFFERENT STEPS REQUIRED TO TAKE A LEAP FORWARD IN OUR FAITH JOURNEY.

### **INTRO.**

WHAT ARE THE STEPS WE CAN EXPECT TO TAKE OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS/WEEKS/MONTHS?

1. ACCEPT THAT OBSTACLES/CHALLENGES ARE SMALLER PARTS OF YOUR STORY BUT REMIND YOURSELF THAT THERE IS SOMETHING BIGGER AT WORK IN EACH OF US.
2. IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP A HEALTHY REALTIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE WHO WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH OR ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE FACE OF TRIALS OR DIFFICULTY.
3. MOVE OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WEAKNESSES – YOUR OWN AND OTHERS.
4. WRITE DOWN THE LESSONS YOU LEARNED, AND THE NEXT STEP YOU MIGHT NEED TO TAKE IN ORDER TO CONTINUE LEARNING/ GETTING HELP. AND THEN REPEAT THE STEPS ABOVE.

## **BODY**

**STEP 1:** WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES/CHALLENGES YOU ARE FACING IN LIFE? NAME THEM! WHAT, IS IT THAT'S HINDERING YOU FROM BECOMING THE KIND OF PERSON YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN/SHOULD BE? WHEN WE IDENTIFY THE VERY THINGS WHICH AREN'T HELPING US, AND WE BEGIN TO SEE THAT THEY ARE ONLY SMALLER PARTS OF A MUCH BIGGER STORY, THEN WE CAN TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO MOVE FORWARD. LET'S RECLAIM OUR REAL SELF.

### **ROM. 7:18; 8:1-6**

THE APOSTLE PAUL SPEAKS VERY CLEARLY OF HIS OWN FRUSTRATION WITH LIFE AS A HUMAN. YET, HE WENT ON TO WRITE ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF LIVING AS A SLAVE TO CHRIST AND NO LONGER LETTING THE WORLD AND ITS VALUES DICTATE/CONTROL/PREVENT HIM FROM DOING THE VERY THINGS HE WAS MADE FOR, LIKE PREACHING AND TESTIFYING OF GOD'S GOODNESS.

**STEP 2:** TAKE A LOOK AT WHO IS IN YOUR CORNER? OR BETTER YET, WHO SHOULD BE IN YOUR CORNER. IF YOU DO NOT LIKE WHAT YOU SEE THEN MAKE SOME CHANGES. FIND SOMEONE THAT CAN HELP YOU IMPROVE YOU. ARE YOU NOT WORTH INVESTING IN? YOU ARE WORTH IT.

### **2 COR. 13:14**

AGAIN, THE APOSTLE PAUL SHOWS US THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY. WHERE WE HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THE FATHER/ SON/ HOLY SPIRIT. A COMMUNITY WHERE WE DO NOT WALK ALONE, AND ONE THAT IS ABLE TO STRENGTHEN AND REFRESH US CONTINUOUSLY.

### **JOHN 11:1-25**

THE DISCIPLES, AS WELL AS MARY AND MARTHA HELP US TO SEE THAT WE DO NOT ALWAYS UNDERSTAND HOW GOD WILL ACCOMPLISH HIS MISSION. HOWEVER, HE STILL INVITES US TO WALK WITH HIM SO WE CAN EXPERIENCE THE KIND OF LIFE (ETERNAL) ONLY HE PROVIDES.

## **CLOSING**

**STEP 3:** TO LEARN ABOUT OUR WEAKNESSES MIGHT NOT SOUND VERY HELPFUL, BUT IT WILL ALSO EVENTUALLY REVEAL TO US OUR MANY DIFFERENT STRENGTHS. AND FOR SOME OF US, THIS NEXT STEP MIGHT NOT BE AS EASY AS WE'D LIKE; HOWEVER, I WANT YOU TO LOOK AT THE PEOPLE WHO ARE EITHER IN OR AROUND YOUR LIFE THAT ALSO HAVE SOME SERIOUS CHALLENGES. AND I WANT YOU TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS: HOW CLOSE ARE YOU TO THEM? ARE YOU WILLING TO GO TO THEM IN ORDER TO TRY AND HELP? BE HONEST. I BELIEVE, THAT IF WE GET OUT AND WE INTENTIONALLY SEEK TO LISTEN TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS AROUND US, THEN GOD – OUR PROVIDER – WILL BEGIN TO SHOW US AND MAYBE EVEN THEM SOMETHING HELPFUL.

BUT BEFORE WE DO – LET'S LOOK AT ANOTHER STORY IN THE BIBLE WHICH HIGHLIGHTS THIS STEP AND WHAT WE MUST DO IN ORDER FOR IT TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

### **EZEK. 1:1-3; 3:1-10**

## **ACTION**

IN ORDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL, OUR CREATOR TELLS US THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING PRESENT TO HIM AND HIS WORD FIRST. WHEN WE ALLOW GOD'S TRUTH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN US, WE CAN MORE EASILY ACCEPT THE STRUGGLES THAT ARE HAPPENING ALL AROUND US.