

**Sermon Notes of
Guest Speaker Ron Morgan's Sermon on December 2, 2018:**

"What If?"

[In today's sermon, guest speaker Ron Morgan shows that God gives us a purpose and that it's to go out into the world and talk about God's redemption and restoration to others.]

Notes

Introduction:

- Before Ron started his message, he told this joke because he has a reputation for telling jokes.
- Joke:
 - Three pastors are sitting together having coffee and discussing the different situations of their congregations.
 - First pastor says, "I have a problem in my church because my basement is infested with rats. And I've tried everything to get rid of them – traps, poison, exterminators, but nothing seems to work, because they always come back."
 - The second pastor says, "That's interesting, because I have the same problem in my church. After various treatments, they disappear but then they come back."
 - And the third pastor said, "Yes. I had that problem in my church, but let me give you guys a clue. What you are doing is excluding the rats. In our congregation, we've included the rats."
 - "What we did was gather all the rats up and baptized them and made them a part of the congregation."
 - The first pastor said, "Well, that's different. How did it work out for you?"
 - The third pastor replied, "Once we baptized them and made them regular members of the church, we haven't seen them since."
- Before giving his message, Ron then offered a prayer to ask God to bless his words that they may be helpful to those listening so they might be able to carry away something of value and inspiration to them.

What If?

- What if – what if John 3:16 is true?

John 3:16, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

- What if John 3:17 is true?

17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

- What if, Ron asked us – "Saved for what?"

- Is it eternal life? For worshipping God for eternity? Is it strolling the golden streets of Jerusalem? Playing a harp while floating on a cloud all day – forever?
- While all of those things might be a part of the benefit, but how does that work in the overall picture?
- What if: God has a concrete plan and purpose for us?
- What if: our human experience is a definite part of that plan?
- What if: that breathe of life that God breathed into Adam contained a little more than just air to jump start his lungs. What if it contained a little bit of God's DNA?
- What if: we truly are made in the image of God? What does that consist of?
- What if: we explore some possibilities, remembering all the time remembering that Ron is prefacing everything he is saying with "what if?"
- He is not preaching a new doctrine, but just asking "What if?"
- When Ron studies the Bible and lives out his daily life, two points always stick out concerning his relationship with God.
- And those two points are – redemption and restoration.
- It seems like that is what it's all about.

Redemption and restoration:

- The definition of redemption from Webster's Dictionary: "the act, process, or instance of redeeming."
- Last week, pastor Craig told us we can use the same word when trying to define the word.
- So, the second definition is: "serving to offset or compensate for a defect."
- This definition seems to perfectly fit with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- Now, redemption is something that happens immediately, it's not a long drawn out process.
- Redemption, in this life, is when you see that item you want to redeem, you make a deal, you pay for it and it's yours – you have redeemed that item.
- It's a done deal – whatever you do with it, it's up to you because it's yours.
- Now restoration, on the other hand, seems to be a process.
- The definition of restoration: "an act of restoring or the condition of being restored."
- The second definition is: "a bringing back to a former position or condition."
- As a reference word, it used the term, "reinstatement."
- The definition of reinstatement; "to place again, as in possession or in a former position; to restore to a previous effective state."
- So, restoration is a process!

A living example of physical redemption and restoration:

- Right here in our congregation we have this living example of physical redemption and restoration, in Larry Helscher.
- Larry has the hobby of and the love for restoring cars.

- He's a Ford and Mustang man.
- Now before he can restore a car, he first has to redeem it.
- Now the circumstances of redemption vary – he could find the car in a junk yard, or an old widow has it sitting in her garage.
- To redeem the car, he has to first compensate the person who owns the car.
- So, first he has to pay the price – now the higher the price, the more valuable the car.
- If Larry pays a high price, that means he sees a high potential for that car.
- Now we know that Christ paid a pretty high price for us.
- On the human level, Jesus paid the ultimate price – He paid with His life!
- So, Ron asks the question, "If Christ was willing to pay the ultimate price for us, what did He see in us?"
- It's obvious that He saw value, because He redeemed us, even though He had checked us out.
- Now there are many people in the world, who don't think they have any value, especially any redemptive value.
- In fact, they don't think that they can be restored – but that's not true.
- And then, on the other hand, there are people who are content with themselves and don't think they need to be redeemed, nor restored.
- That's maybe where we come into the picture.
- Now, Larry, when he is working on these cars, it's hard work, but he loves it, otherwise, why would he do it?
- Now we've talked about God breathing a little DNA into us at our spiritual, believing birth, so why would Larry love the act of restoration and God not love the act of restoration?
- So, for Larry, this is not a work of necessity, it's a work of love.
- And that applies to our Lord and Master, as well.
- Now what's so interesting is that the more work Larry puts into that car, the more he loves that final product.
- Just as Larry gets a joy out of seeing that transformation take place, God gets a joy out of seeing His transformation take place in us.

Our identity:

- Now, when our children are born, we have hopes and dreams for them.
- And we give them an identity, as a rule, such as if your child is a great singer, you tell him/her that they are going to be the greatest singer of all time.
- If you're in a business, you hope your child will follow in the family business.
- You also hope your children will follow in the footsteps that you've laid down and hoping that they will follow in the traditions that the family has established.
- Now God gives us an identity at our spiritual birth, as well – He tells us that we are salt and light.

Matthew 5:13-16, You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

- What if, once we have been given that identity we are then put through an educational process called life.
- This educational process is all in the hope that one day we will be qualified to participate fully in the family business.
- God seems to be in the business of redemption and restoration.
- God calls us to be a part of His family – so the family business seems to be redemption and restoration.

Our purpose in life:

- God redeemed us for a purpose – and that purpose is to go out into the world.
- But we need to get out of our circle of comfort.
- How do we approach another person and talk about redemption and restoration? It's not easy to do.
- Now some Christians will come up to and ask, "Have you been saved?"
- And most people try to get out of this conversation as fast as they can.
- But, what if you were asked a fairly typical question by someone, "What do you do for a living?"
- What if you answered, "I earn my spending money as an architect or a doctor or a mechanic, etc., but my field of study which I hope to earn my degree in is the family business of redemption and restoration."
- That should begin an interesting conversation.
- Ron believes that God has some magnificent plans in store for us.
- But, he's not sure how God will use each one of us, but he does know that it will be something great.
- And it will be something beyond our wildest dreams.
- And the reason is because of what 1 Corinthians 2:9 says:

1 Corinthians 2:9 (NKJV), Eye has not seen, nor ear heard. Nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.

Concluding comments:

- All of us can rest in the fact that our future is guaranteed, not because of Ron's goodness or greatness nor anyone else's, but because of the goodness of God.
- And when you leave here today, Ron wants us to think about redemption and redeemed.
- Redeemed seems to indicate that there was a previous connection before.
- For example, if you redeemed something from the pawn shop, it was yours at one time.

- And to restore something means that the object's past condition was different than its condition today.
- So, if we are to be restored to our previous position, what was that position?
- What condition was humanity in before the fall?
- But, that's for another time to go into.
- You know, we have some work to do.
- God didn't simply redeem us at such a high cost and put us on the wall as a sinless piece of art.
- God has in mind a job for us to do.
- Ron wants to leave us with a fact that we are something special and that God sent His Son into the world to save the world, not just you or me or Grace Communion, but the world, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
- So we have a job in being the salt and the light and in the process of learning the family business of restoration, because the redemption part is pretty much done.
- Now, what if you were this vehicle Larry was restoring and he's been working on you for a while and you are now all painted up and reupholstered, would you point your finger at a clunker that he just brings into your view?
- That's why God tells us not to judge because we are all in different stages of restoration.
- So we can't judge those who are beneath us or above us, because we are all on the same journey.
- So, that redemption purchase that God made for us, was the greatest purchase ever made.
- And now at this time, we are going to go ahead and commemorate that purchase.
- It is time for communion.

Communion:

- During communion, we celebrate and commemorate the greatest act, the greatest gift of love given us.
- Prayer
- Wafer and grape juice were passed out to everyone so that everyone will take of the elements together.

1 Corinthians 11:24, (NKJV), And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

25) In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant In My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Closing prayer