

Sermon Note: Hit the Snooze Button?

Third Sunday in Lent

Introduction

Social media gives us a lot of options when people become too much—unfollowing, unfriending, even blocking. But sometimes, we just need a break, so we hit the Snooze for 30 Days button. It gives people (including us) time to cool down, reflect, or maybe even change.

As we continue our #JesusTrending series, we explore a story where a fig tree is about to be cut down. But instead of removing it completely, the gardener asks for more time—one last chance to see if it will bear fruit. God's grace gives us time to grow, time to change, time to live differently. The question is, how will we use the time we've been given?

Illustration Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ep56duRaayg>

In *The Replacements* (2000), Coach Jimmy McGinty offers Shane Falco a second chance. The question is—will he take it?

Why This Video?

In *The Replacements* (2000), Shane Falco (Keanu Reeves) is a former college football star whose career was derailed after a humiliating loss. Now, years later, he's scraping barnacles off boats—isolated, avoiding the past, and seemingly content in obscurity. But Coach Jimmy McGinty (Gene Hackman) tracks him down with an offer: a second chance to step up, lead, and reclaim the potential everyone once saw in him.

This scene illustrates what it means to be given an opportunity for growth and transformation. Falco could stay where he is, letting past failures define him, or he could take hold of the chance in front of him. It raises a question we all face: What do we do when we're given time to change? Do we take the opportunity, or do we let it pass us by?

Video Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Shane Falco initially rejects McGinty's offer? What might be holding him back?
2. McGinty reminds Falco of his past failures but also offers him a new opportunity. Have you ever been in a situation where your past mistakes made it hard to accept a second chance?
3. McGinty tells Falco, "You could be part of something." How does this challenge Falco's isolation? In what ways do second chances involve other people, and why might that matter?
4. How does fear of failure shape Falco's initial response? Have you ever hesitated to step into something new because of past experiences?
5. McGinty doesn't force Falco to take the opportunity—he simply invites him. What's the difference between being pressured into change and being given space to grow?
6. What do you think ultimately makes Falco reconsider the offer? How do we decide when it's time to take a chance on something new?

7. This scene shows someone being given time to grow—but that time isn't unlimited. How does this tension between grace and urgency play out in real life?
8. Have you ever given someone a second chance when they didn't deserve it? How did that experience turn out?
9. If you were in Falco's shoes, what would you do? Would you take the second chance or stay where you are?

Luke 13:1-9 (CEB)

¹Some who were present on that occasion told Jesus about the Galileans whom Pilate had killed while they were offering sacrifices. ²He replied, "Do you think the suffering of these Galileans proves that they were more sinful than all the other Galileans? ³No, I tell you, but unless you change your hearts and lives, you will die just as they did. ⁴What about those eighteen people who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them? Do you think that they were more guilty of wrongdoing than everyone else who lives in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you, but unless you change your hearts and lives, you will die just as they did."

⁶Jesus told this parable: "A man owned a fig tree planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷He said to his gardener, 'Look, I've come looking for fruit on this fig tree for the past three years, and I've never found any. Cut it down! Why should it continue depleting the soil's nutrients?' ⁸The gardener responded, 'Lord, give it one more year, and I will dig around it and give it fertilizer. ⁹Maybe it will produce fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down.'"

Scripture Study Questions

Before considering these questions, read Luke 13:1-9 (above) and Psalm 63:1-8 (<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2063%3A1-8&version=CEB>).

1. Bearing fruit is an important theme in Jesus' teaching ministry (Matthew 3:10, Luke 5: 43-44, John 15:5-8). Why do you think "bearing fruit" is important for Jesus' followers and what does it look like?
2. How is staying in love with God (Psalm 63) vital to bearing fruit?
3. The Psalm also says, "I will meditate on you in the watches of the night." What does it mean to meditate on God?
4. Rather than speculate on who the "worse sinner or worse offender" is in the two incidents mentioned in Luke 13:1-5, Jesus turns the focus back on the questioners, warning them to repent. How is Jesus' sharp retort a helpful word to us?
5. In the parable, the man working in the vineyard recommends practicing patience with the barren fig tree. What people or situations is God inviting you to practice patience with this coming week? What would "digging around it and putting manure on it" look like?

Additionally, listen to "Light of Home" by U2 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ly4ktepK7A>).

To what do you cling? Psalm 63 invites us to reflect on where we find security and sustenance when we are desperate, disillusioned, or in danger. Yes, we need food, water, and shelter. Yes, we need community that protects us when we feel threatened and alone. Yet underneath these basic needs is something even more necessary: God. As you listen to U2's "Light of Home," consider: "When you are surrounded by chaos and turmoil, how do you find security, confidence, and home in God?"

Additional (Optional) Questions

Like the previous section of questions, please be sure to read Psalm 63:1-8 and listen to “Light of Home” by U2.

1. What verbs does the psalmist use to describe how the author wants to connect with or feel God in Psalm 63:1-8?
2. What key words or phrases in “Light of Home” by U2 stand out? What do they communicate about hope and searching?
3. Psalm 63 begins with the words, “O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you.” What does it mean to “thirst” for God? Can you think of any New Testament phrases that have to do with “spiritual thirst” or “living water?”
4. In “Light of Home,” the lyrics talk about being lost and then seeing the light. Have you had any “seeing the light” moments where, all of a sudden, something made sense to you in a new way? Or when something clicked and made you feel at home?
5. In Psalm 63, the writer finds joy and confidence in God even in a desert-like situation. How does this compare to the themes of struggle and searching in “Light of Home”?
6. What role do music and worship play in seeking God? How does the song’s imagery of light and home reflect the psalmist’s experience of God’s presence? Do you think songs from popular music can be used in worship? Or do you think staying with conventional hymns or Christian music is more appropriate?
7. Do you think faith is about always feeling close to God, or is it about trusting God even when God feels distant? What from Psalm 63 and “Light of Home” influence your answer?

Weekly Action

This week, pay attention to where you may be hitting “snooze” on something important—whether it’s a personal habit, a difficult conversation, or a spiritual practice. Each day, take a moment to ask yourself: Where is God inviting me to grow? What is one small step I can take to tend to that growth? Write it down, pray over it, and—if you feel led—share your commitment with a trusted friend or spiritual partner.

Prayer

O God, you are our God, help us to seek you with every fiber of our being, to praise you with every breath, to cling to you as if our lives depended upon it. Because they do. Reach down and hold us up, God. Hold us up. Amen.