



Abide

November 20, 2022

Jeremiah 29:4-7 (MSG)

Connect:

- It's Thanksgiving Sunday! As we prepare for the holiday that features gratitude as its hallmark, share a story of a Thanksgiving tradition or favorite experience of the holiday. Where does it rank on your list of favorite holidays? What are you most grateful for this very day?

Engage

- Read *Jeremiah 29:4-7* as found in the *The Message* translation of scripture. This passage represents a letter sent to the exiles in Babylon – an encouragement to plant their lives where they were – marry and have families; grow gardens, work to benefit their neighbors. It is essentially a “*bloom where you're planted*” kind of message. Don't live today for the next place you'll live or the someday down the road that may never materialize. Enjoy your life and make a difference where you are today. How does this message strike you at this point in your life?
- Henry David Thoreau said, “*Be not simply good; be good for something.*” How does this sentiment overlay the passage from the prophet Jeremiah? Discuss.
- Sunday is a Sabbath – a respite from the toil of life the other six days of the week. What this means, however, is that the majority of your life is lived “*out there.*” The impact of your faith is far more than what happens when we gather on Sunday; it's manifested in our community – your household, your neighborhood, your school or work place. How do you embody your faith the other six days of the week? What more could you do with the unique gifts and passions that you have?
- We live in a culture of the *quick* Savior. We live in, and for, convenience. How would you define the word *abide* and how does it press against the idea of a microwavable Christianity? What about your faith suggests you're in it for the long haul?

Next Steps:

- “*Bloom where you're planted.*” Find a way to be a blessing to your neighbors this week. Take an added interest in your colleagues, demonstrating your care beyond what they offer to your place of employment. Living with grateful contentment for where you are inspires others to be their best selves in this moment of their lives too. Don't just celebrate Thanksgiving, live it.

Pray:

- “*Most gracious and generous God, put us in that abiding zone – one that remains within your Spirit. In doing so, may we exude gratitude wherever we go, a witness and testimony to all of your great love in our lives. Amen.*”