

THE RADICAL US - PART 4

Scripture used: [Joshua 1:9 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to spread, and most households are quarantined, Pastor Hurmon used this Scripture to emphasize that our relationship with God is personal and intimate. We must trust God right now. "The Lord will be with you wherever you go."

KEY POINTS

- 1) Pastor Hurmon used his personal life story to highlight the power of redemption and transformation. He was born in San Francisco to a struggling mother of four, and had a near-death experience at the age of 6 months. He had to be awakened from a near-coma in the hospital, underwent several surgeries, and spent almost a year in a clinical setting. His face, scalp, and eye were deeply scarred. As his family fell apart, he was sent to Coushatta, Louisiana to be cared for by his elderly great-aunt. He was a special-ed student, seen as ugly by most, and turned away by many friends whose company he sought, and sports teams and clubs he wanted to join. He was a troublemaker and was flunking school. When he was 14, his great-aunt told him it was time for him to get to know Jesus *for himself*. It meant entrusting Jesus to handle 14-year-old Pastor Hurmon's issues of shame and distrust; and surrendering his entire life to God's care with the realization that God never leaves you or forsakes you. His great-aunt had been diagnosed with cancer and was planning ahead - she wanted Hurmon to be equipped for a world without her.
- 2) Trusting God leads to a transformational life. First a life of **height**, when God claims us to achieve greater things than we had imagined for ourselves. In [Genesis 16:13](#), we learn that God is a God who sees us - Hagar not as an abandoned woman but as a one with hope and future, Moses not as a murderer but as a leader for God's people, and Rahab not as a "fallen" prostitute but as a part of the lineage of King David.
- 3) Second a life of **width**, where we realize our impact, accomplishments, and precious relationships. After starting a relationship with God at age 14, Pastor Hurmon made three resolutions: he would focus on academic achievement aside from all secondary pursuits; he would go to college and graduate; and the people who raised him would not come to see their investment in him as a waste of time & energy. These resolutions led to a literal metamorphosis as he became a star student, won a study scholarship to Taiwan, and regional and national prizes. He has worked with politicians on community improvement and healthcare reform, lectured at Harvard Divinity School, and led congregations. Pastor Hurmon has heard from parishioners who had money and power, but who have had to search for deep meaning and purpose in this time. **The pandemic exposes the fact that many of us have breadth but less depth.**
- 4) Lastly, a life of **length**, where God empowers us through His spirit to find inner strength, endurance, and lasting power - a life that spreads roots that grow and find nourishment in God's loving soil. ([Ephesians 3:16-17](#)). God's love is multidimensional, His gift is eternity, and He is with us through the proverbial valley of the Shadow of Death - so relevant in our current time of heightened alarm and dread.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What do you think about the difference between knowing about God and knowing God for yourself? Which do you feel like is more true about your current relationship with God?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - God is with us in every season of our lives, in joys and sorrows. Consider your own story. Where have you seen the redemptive power of God at work? What are the times in your life you hold onto that remind you that God loves you and is for you? How are you leaning into your relationship with God in this time with the coronavirus? Is it easy or hard for you to walk with God in this season? One of the huge blessings of being in a life group right now is the ability to encourage each other through this difficult time, because we will all have good days and bad days. Yet, God is with us every day!
- 3) **DO** - Consider how you can prepare your heart for Easter next Sunday, and how the message of Easter prepares you for daily life this week. Commit to trusting God with your life this week. And consider those around you that you can encourage with hope. Easter is next Sunday - be brave and invite those who need to know that God loves them and offers hope in times of trouble!