

“Minor League”

Week 3 Devotional

I would be willing to bet that everyone reading this remembers May 11, 2023, with great joy. However, I would also be willing to bet that not one person reading this could tell me what happened on that day. You see, May 11, 2023, was the day that the United States declared that the public health emergency, from COVID-19, was over. And while everyone would remember that date with great joy, I don't think you could say that about the previous four years that preceded that date.

Because of vacations, mine and Andrews, it's been a couple of weeks since I wrote a devotional so, we find ourselves in the middle of our message series titled “Minor League.” And to be honest, I'm kind of disappointed that I didn't get to write devotions the previous weeks, because I love baseball. Major League, Minor League, Pee-Wee League, it doesn't matter, I just love baseball.

So, tell me, where are you going with this? What do COVID-19 and “Minor League” have to do with each other? Like I said earlier, you would probably have to think long and hard to think of something good that came out of those four years of COVID-19, but there was one thing. It's what we know now as the “extra innings runner on second rule” that Major League Baseball implemented during COVID. Basically, the rule puts a runner at second at the beginning of each extra inning in hopes that it would make it easier to score. At the time the rule was implemented, it was hoped it would limit the player's potential exposure time to COVID. But what it did was shorten the game. For even the staunchest of baseball fans something that has, almost universally, been accepted as a “good thing.”

Sometimes we just need to look to find the good in things. The disciple Nathaniel showed that he did when he asked in John 1:46 (ESV), “*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*” Hopefully, the answer is obvious, I think “Jesus of Nazareth” was pretty good. And luckily for Nathaniel, he had the disciple Andrew to step up and answer, “Come and see.” But I think if we are all honest, at one time or another we have all had our Nathaniel moment. We have all asked ourselves, “can anything good come out of (your name)?” And when those times come, I pray that you will have an “Andrew”, to say to you, “come and see.” Sometimes we just need someone to help us find the good in us.

So, what if we do all that looking and still come to the conclusion, that Kingdom speaking, nothing good has come out of us? It is a possibility. But, if that is the case for you, then fall back on one of the points of last week's message. That is (paraphrasing), “*if you ain't dead, God's ain't done.*” In God's Kingdom, it's never too late. The Parable of the workers in the vineyard illustrates this beautifully. In summary, a vineyard owner goes out to hire workers

for his vineyard and agrees to pay a denarius for the day. During the day, the owner hires three different groups of workers, one morning, one midday and one afternoon, yet he pays them all one denarius. I think there are two main points. The first is, it's the owners (God's) money, whether it makes sense to us, He can spend it as He wants. But more importantly, it doesn't matter when we come to the fields, we all receive the same gifts from God. Or in other words, it's never too late. The most important thing is that we eventually get there. That is my prayer for you and for me.