

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

Sunday May 6, 2018.

***"The Last Arrow: Battle Ready"*.**

From the book *"The Last Arrow"* by Erwin McManus.

A. Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work thru from the message on Sunday. Whether you were able to attend the worship service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still go thru it to help you dig deeper in your own spiritual walk. Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

B. Recap and get you thinking.

This past Sunday was the final Sunday of ***"The Last Arrow"*** series, and Lamar brought it big time. He challenged us to live 'battle ready'. Living a ***"Last Arrow"*** life leaves nothing for the next life. We fashion, craft, design our life...intentionally to live in such a way that we're always ready to fully live into whatever situation we face, and to be willing to give our all for the greater common good.

C. This week's message.

Lamar began with this quote:

"Don't make the mistake of living your life waiting for good things to happen-make good things happen. Be faithful in the small things that do not matter to you as much and treat them with the same level of respect and importance as the big things connected to your hopes and dreams. Remember that Jesus laid our this principle for us: it is the person who is faithful in the small things who will be entrusted with bigger things." - Erwin McManus

The challenge is to be faithful in the small unseen things so you'll be ready in the big, 'seen', things. Reflect back on your past- where and how have you found this to be true in your own life? You were given a small insignificant task, and because of how you handled it, without seeking reward, you were able to move into a more substantial role.

In addition, living a life 'battle ready' means knowing the necessity of 'now'. There are moments we simply don't have the time or luxury to give a lot of thought to how to react, and the only way we can take full advantage of those opportunities is to be 'pre-prepared' BEFORE that moment arrives. Doing *'Pre-hab'* work, or doing intentionally preparational type work ahead of time, so when that time comes you are already ready. It's the real life version of your mom's purse. Didn't she always have that right thing you needed in the moment...a band-aid, safety pin, piece of candy. One of the passages Lamar used was James 4:13-17. Read this passage and reflect on the truth that that we are not promised a tomorrow to get the things done we need to. Or even a tomorrow to finally be ready or prepared to act. The day is today...and the time to act is NOW. What is keeping you from stepping fully into today and making the most of it?!

There were three elements Lamar presented as necessary to be 'battle ready'.

1. Taking inventory.

What do you already possess, what resources do you have, what can you do, that can be used to do a great thing for God and others? List a few of them.

2. Making an investment.

Are you willing to use those things, to give those resources a greater purpose than your own personal gain? How could you put those resources you have to use for a greater good?

3. Ignoring your ego.

Sometimes we want the attention, to be noticed, for the good we do, before we're ready to handle the praise that often accompanies it. We see so many celebrities and well known people whose talent and platform outpaced their character. They weren't ready for the publicity and notoriety they received, and they crashed and burned as quickly as they rose to fame. And we cheered their fall.

So a couple of tough questions.

The good you sometimes feel led to do, is there a part of you that wants to be noticed for doing it? What is that inside of you that wants attention?

What are some things you can practice to help keep your ego in check, and be willing to do because it's the right thing whether anyone notices or not?

D. Wrap up and Challenge.

This has been an incredibly challenging series.

To truly live a "**Last Arrow**" life, we have to be willing to commit ourselves to something greater than our own comfort and security, and to also commit ourselves fully to that life. Now this kind of life doesn't happen instantly. Heroes are rarely made overnight. But heroes do start that journey by making a commitment to want to live that kind of life. A selfless life dedicated to honoring God and making this world...the world around you, a better place. "*The Hero's Journey*". And sometimes the 'want to want to' is the most we can muster.

So, let me challenge you. If you're not living a "**Last Arrow**" kind of life and it sounds intimidating, then you're already on the right track. You're getting what we're throwing down. Smelling what we're cooking. And maybe that first step for you is to decide this is the kind of life you want to live. You may just need to answer this question.

What one or two things am I willing to do to begin this journey? Possibly commit to regular worship attendance, commit to join a small group, sign up to volunteer somewhere in the church, increase how much you give to the church.

Every journey begins with one step, a commitment to the journey. And what you'll discover is that the "**Last Arrow**" life is the greatest and most rewarding journey EVER!! So step out!