

THE ARTISAN SOUL

CREATING YOUR LIFE INTO A WORK OF ART

Session 3: Interpretation – Translation of life

February 23 - 29, 2020

"A significant part of the artistic challenge is to go beyond interpreting human experience to be an interpreter of human possibility. It is so much easier to create an authentic work of art informed by despair, so much more difficult to create a true masterpiece informed by optimism and hope."

~Erwin McManus, The Artisan Soul

Hang Out (30 Minutes)

Ice Breakers: Remember, everyone has the right to pass on any question.

1. Play two truths and a lie. Each person shares three unique things about him or herself, two truths and a lie. The group attempts to discover which of the three is a lie.
2. Is it easier for you to be pessimistic or to be optimistic?

Watch the Video (24 Minutes)

Watch the video if necessary. If everyone viewed the sermon before the meeting, add this time to your discussion.

Discuss (30 Minutes)

It's okay if you don't get to every question. Leaders, guide the group to the questions you think will be most helpful.

1. Examine the picture. If you didn't know the story behind the picture, based on what you see, how would you interpret the scene? What's going on? If you are familiar with this picture, what do you notice that you've never seen before?



2. Consider how Eric Peters, the photographer who took this picture "Do This in Remembrance", interpreted the scene depicted in the photograph:

None of you suspected the evening would devolve into the final farewell it did—what with the tears of disbelief and suspicious glances. Judging by the table full of dinnerware, the twelve of you assumed you would be partaking in a celebration. The mood was light until Jesus, noticeably serene and distracted, cast a pall over the evening with all this morose talk of broken flesh and spilled blood.

For three years you heard him allude to a kingdom. You witnessed mirrors of moisture swelling in his eyes as he healed one sick person after another. But never before had there appeared such despair or anxiety. At the mention of betrayal amid the serving of bread and wine, something like guilt congealed and swept over you leaving you bereft of comfort. Casting his sad, gentle gaze about the room, you knew the gig was up, so you averted your eyes and feigned a cough.

From that moment on, death seemed your best and only option. So that is what you go and do: die everyday for the rest of your life. If only you had learned this lesson sooner.

In Eric Peters' reflection of the scene, who do you interpret is speaking? To whom is the speaker speaking?

3. Any life event can be interpreted through a pessimistic or optimistic point of view. There is also a third option, through the point of view of faith. Describe an event in your life, past or present, pessimistically and then optimistically. How would it sound if you described the event through the point of view of faith, convinced that God is at work in your life and intends only good for you?
4. Jesus' unique "voice", that made his life a work of art, is taking what is ordinary and often forgotten and giving it meaning and purpose. Where in the Gospels do you see this displayed? In what way has Jesus done this in your life?
5. Read Philippians 1:9-11. In what areas of your life do you yearn for more knowledge, depth of insight, and discernment? How can the people in your group best support you in this area?

Bonus material

Watch Erwin McManus discuss *The Artisan Soul - Beauty and the Cross*. Leaders – the link to these bonus videos were emailed to you.

Possible Next Steps:

Commit to one of the following to be your next step this week:

- Write down every good and beautiful thing that has ever happened to you.
- Take time to record everything you have learned and gained from your failures and hardships.
- Begin a practice of identifying every good and beautiful act or experience that comes your way.
- Train yourself to see life as a miracle by thanking God continuously for your life.
- See the world through God's eyes by always finding the hope and joy in every circumstance.

~From *The Artisan Soul* by Erwin McManus

Pray (5 Minutes)

On the index card provided, write down an area of your life you need more knowledge, insight, and discernment. Give it to someone in the group to be prayed over this week.