

Sunday 1/28 - Saturday 2/3



Serenity -Courage to Change the Things We Can

by: Elder Jake Woods

Warm-Ups (15 min)

If your group has more than 7 people, you're encouraged to split into men's and women's groups for "Warm Ups". Also, it often works better to go around the circle three times instead of each person having to answer all three questions at once.

1. Share your high moment and low moment of the week.
2. What is something that you could change but hesitate to?
3. What is your favorite Olympic sport and why?
4. What is God teaching you in your life right now?

Large Group Prayer (10 min)

Take turns praying (1) Thanksgivings, (2) for each other's needs, and (3) for our community. **Click here** (</index.php/component/content/?id=181&Itemid=1627>) for creative ideas on how to pray as a group.

1. Pray for a heart that knows when to fight and when to surrender.
2. Pray for St. John's as we call our St. John's Worship Leader.
3. Pray for those who struggle with having the courage to step out and make necessary changes.
4. Pray that we are a church that displays the courage of a people who live by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Study Questions (35 min)

About the Sermon

Read Isaiah 58:1-12

1. How did Sunday's message on the "courage to change the things I can" portion of the Serenity Prayer impact you?
2. Share about a person you know who embodies courage?

3. What do you think is the driving force that makes this person courageous?
4. Describe a time in life when you were especially courageous.

Are we seeking Jesus daily? That is what gives us courage, knowing that it is by, with and through the power we receive from Jesus through the Holy Spirit. It is when we give up control and lean into Jesus and rely on His Word and Power that we have the courage to change the world just as the Disciples did. Not just by word but by deed.

St. Francis of Assisi said it best when he said,

“It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching.”

“...As for me, I desire this privilege from the Lord, that never may I have any privilege from man, except to do reverence to all, and to convert the world by obedience to the Holy Rule rather by example than by word.” Always Preach the Gospel, and when necessary use words!

A Deeper Look

Read Matthew 25:14-29

1. What characteristics made the first two servants faithful with the talents they were entrusted?
2. What is a specific gift (ability, talent, skill, resource, or character trait) God has entrusted to you?
 - a. How are you currently using that gift?
 - b. How could you put that gift to even greater use for the kingdom?
3. How does the Parable of the Talents connect with the call to “change the things we can” from the Serenity Prayer?

The goal of life is not to arrive safely at death. Likewise the goal of our Christian faith is not to simply play it safe on the sidelines. We are called to get in the game and impact the world for good.

Life Application

Read Hebrews 11 together as a group.

The people described in Hebrews 11 were far from perfect, yet God used them in powerful ways to change the course of history.

1. What was the common thread among these people that made them so effective?
2. Walking in faith and living courageously are closely intertwined. How would you describe the relationship between faith and courage?
3. If faith is an act of obedience does that have any implications for the call to live courageously? Why?
4. How can you live more courageously this week knowing God gives us a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline?

Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was the ultimate act of courage. His same spirit lives in us. “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline” – 2 Timothy 1:7.

Discipleship Trios (25 min)

The goal is to have intentional time to share your journey with others. **Break into same-gender groups of three and move to separate spaces.** If numbers necessitate flexibility, form groups of 2 instead.

- *Review the listener commitments* (/images/LIFEGroup_Documents/Study%20Support%20Downloads/listener_commitments.pdf) if you haven't done so in a while.
- *The goal is not to pressure others into sharing more than they want to, or to give unsolicited advice, but to ask others how God is stretching them, be challenged by God's Word together, ask what others are planning to do about their growth areas, and ask how you can support them!*

Share Your Journey: What have you heard from God through your Life Journal / Bible readings this week?

What's an area of your life in which you know you need to repent and/or grow?

- *If you need additional accountability questions, try pulling from this list* (/images/LIFEGroup_Documents/Study%20Support%20Downloads/20170521_Accountability_Qs.pdf) or the accountability questions in this doc (<http://tod dengstrom.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/LTG-Overview-Formatted.pdf>) in order to spark reflection and discussion.
- *When you hear a confession, you're encouraged to speak God's forgiveness!*
- *If you feel one of your group members is blind to something, (1) think about whether or not you're the right person to bring it up, (2) ask permission to share something, (3) phrase it as a question.*

Discipleship Trio Prayer Time

- Share: Tell us what connections you're building and spiritual conversations you're having with non-believing friends.
- Pray for people who need God's grace in their lives. Pray for yourself to be a person who can share His grace.
- Pray for non-believers in your lives by name: _____.
- Pray for each other.

Optional Worship Song (+5 min)

1. If you'd like, you can sing a worship song as a group. Don't have a musician? Sing along to a lyric video: SJDenver.org/Songs (/songs)
 - a. *Advent/Christmas songs can be found at SJDenver.org/ChristmasSongs (/christmassongs)*

Serve Our City

1. Has your group planned an opportunity to serve our city for this semester? Click Here for a list of Service Ideas! (</images/Serve.pdf>)

Feedback

1. Was there a glitch in today's material? Want to request a song? Do you have a suggestion? Click Here! (<http://goo.gl/forms/FQVVxQgpAQ>)