

Sunday 2/4 - Saturday 2/10



Serenity - Wisdom to Know the Difference

by: Pastor Michael Eckelkamp

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 "a storm" you have been through in your life.
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 Pastor Andrew Farhat as their family moves to Denver.
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 Matthew 7:24-27

EVERYONE IS BUILDING ON SOME KIND OF FOUNDATION

Everyone is building their life on some kind of foundation. There are only two choices: you either build on a solid and deep foundation or you build on a shallow and weak foundation.

TIMES OF TESTING REVEAL THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH WE HAVE BUILT

This parable gives every indication that before the storms came these two houses looked identical. They may have both been attractive, spacious, and comfortable. On the surface you couldn't really tell which house was built on the sand and which was anchored deep to the rock. It was only when the storms hit that you could see the difference in the homes.

So it will be with those around us. It is impossible for us to tell who is genuine in their faith and who is not until the time of trial comes. You and I both know that this is true. Everybody sounds like a believer when times are good. When God is giving us what we want, we are all cheering for Him. True faith comes when we are called to trust Him in the dark. When a person faces loss, or disappointment, or things simply don't go as expected, we get to see what their faith is really made of.

The person who has a deep foundation,
Trusts God's wisdom when life is confusing
Relies on God's strength when they are weak
Looks beyond the present heartache to God's purpose and eternal glory
Relies on grace in times of personal failure
Runs TO God rather than away from Him

Sometime in our lives we are all going to face these kinds of storms. It is true that there are only two kinds of people in the world: those who are going through a crisis and those who are about to go through a crisis.

God ultimately provides wisdom to see us through these storms.

1. Describe how are you different when you are alone and when you are in public?
2. Who does God say I am?
3. How do I integrate who God says I am with the different version of me?
4. Could Jesus have changed the scenario?

A Deeper Look

Read James 1:5; Proverbs 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:30

1. How would God's wisdom help us to develop into the person God says I am?
2. How does God's Word help us to develop into the person God says I am?
3. How does the life, death and resurrection of Jesus transform our lives
4. How does this transformation help to develop us onto the person God says I am?

Please discuss the following. What would you add or change?

Wisdom is the fitting application of knowledge. Knowledge understands the light has turned red; wisdom applies the brakes. Knowledge sees the quicksand; wisdom walks around it. Knowledge memorizes the Ten

Commandments; wisdom obeys them. Knowledge learns of God; wisdom loves Him

Life Application

Read Proverbs 28:7; 1 Corinthians 6:12; Proverbs 12:15; James 3:13; Proverbs 14:16; Hebrews 11:7

1. Discuss 2 or 3 of these verses.
2. How do these verses affect how we see ourselves?
3. How do these verse describe how God sees us?
4. How do these verses counsel me on how I should be transformed?

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://toddengstrom.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>)