

**Sunday 1/7 - Saturday 1/13**

# Serenity

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.

## **Serenity - Skit Guys - Serenity Prayer**

by: Deacon Dennis J. Lawson Sr, PhD

### **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. Share a time when your circumstances seemed out of control?
3. When you think of 'wisdom' what specifically do you think of?
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. Prayer for those who are experiencing difficult situations.
4. Pray that we are a church where the community around St John's is happy that we are there.

### **Study Questions (35 min)**

#### **About the Sermon**

God grant me the serenity

To accept the things I cannot change;

Courage to change the things I can;

And wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;  
Enjoying one moment at a time;  
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;  
Taking, as He did, this sinful world  
As it is, not as I would have it;  
Trusting that He will make all things right  
If I surrender to His Will;  
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life  
And supremely happy with Him  
Forever and ever in the next.  
Amen.

-----  
Serenity

1. When life seems out of control, do you tend to try to control everything or through up your hands and give up?
2. Read Philippians 4:7: What does Scripture counsel us to do in order to find peace?
3. Read Psalms 46:10: What does Scripture say about the abilities of our God?
4. Which are difficult for you to connect with?

Life often feels out of control, there are usually two directions we take. We either exhaust ourselves trying to control the situations and people around us, or we tend to throw in the towel and give up on the situations or people involved. Either way when we reject God's peace and serenity we are pushed further and further from God and His will for our lives.

The only path to the peace and serenity of God is to accept and submit to His direction and plan for our life. There have been and will be many situations where we have no control and we may not always be clear on God's plan. However, if we let go and not try to dictate and control the situations and people allowing God to work in and through us. God's promise is that a peace that even the angels do not comprehend will help us to take our difficult situations and life challenges to Him, He will get us through.

**A Deeper Look**

Courage

1. Where does courage come from, where do we receive the ability to face the challenges of this world?
2. Read Deuteronomy 31:6: Who does Scripture say is with us at all times?
3. Read 2 Timothy 1:7: Scripture tells us that God's Holy Spirit resides in us, does this knowledge empower you? How?
4. Read Proverbs 3:5-6: In difficult situations on what or whom do you tend to rely on, how does it tend to end?

As followers of Jesus, we understand that we have the power of the Holy Spirit living within us. This Spirit of God and from God is where we draw the courage to face this world and the challenges it presents us. Being in Scripture coupled with the power we draw from the Holy Spirit equips us the ability to follow and act on God's

plan and will for our lives. We do not have to limp through life avoiding difficult choices but can call upon God to grant us the courage to move toward life's challenges and live out the plans He intends for us.

## **Life Application**

### Wisdom

1. Read James 1:5: Where does wisdom come from and how can we get it?
2. Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17: Why is scripture useful and why should we read and study it?

From 2 Chronicles and 1 Kings, we know that God was pleased when Solomon was given a choice to ask for anything he wanted and ask for wisdom. We also know from scripture that wisdom is a gift that God has promised to give to anyone who ask for it. We have the power and ability to grow in wisdom every day. We will make wiser choices by spending time reading and studying God's Word and spending time in daily communion through prayer with God. God will reveal through his Written Word and answer us in prayer. All we need do is to accept the things out of our control and to use His courage to change them when He has equipped us to do so. Amen!

## ***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](/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](/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 \(/songs\)](http://SJDenver.org/Songs (/songs))
  - a. *Advent/Christmas songs can be found at [SJDenver.org/ChristmasSongs \(/christmassongs\)](http://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>)