



campus clubs



YOUTH ALIVE
STUDENTS REACHING STUDENTS

SERMON & DEVOTIONAL MATERIALS

**MATERIALS FROM OUR
GEORGIA MINISTERS TO
HELP YOU GET STARTED IN
YOUR CAMPUS MINISTRY!**



YOUTH ALIVE®
STUDENTS REACHING STUDENTS

Dear Campus Missionary,

We have several of our ministers here in Georgia who have contributed to this document. The heart behind the project was to help you develop and prepare messages for your Youth Alive® Clubs. You can preach them as they are or you can feel free to add personal stories and illustrations that you think your friends will relate to.

We want this piece to be a blessing to you to help you have good Biblical content for sharing with your friends. Some sermons will have more content than others. Some are designed so you can use them in a 5-10 minute setting, while others will give you 30 – 45 minutes of material. Every Youth Alive® Club is structured a little different with timing so we wanted to give you multiple options.

We have used 2 formats primarily to help make it a little easier to follow. The first format is as follows:

S.O.A.P.

Scripture * Observation * Application * Prayer

The second format is as follows:

Scripture * Point 1, 2, 3, & 4 * Application * Prayer

I have added a few blank pages in the back to help you develop your own sermons in the weeks to come as you are leading your Youth Alive® Clubs at school. If you have any questions please let me know.

We look forward to hearing your testimonies as you share Jesus with your friends at school. Please post testimonies on our Facebook page: Georgia Youth Alive or email me your testimonies through our website at www.geogiayouthalive.com.

You can also post stories on our campus missionary website at www.campusmissionary.com. If you have not already signed up to be a campus missionary please do so today so we can follow you in your journey and pray for you.

God Bless,

Jessica Riner

Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Sermon Title: Ability or Availability

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Scripture: I Samuel 16:1-13

Point 1 : Man looks at the outward appearance, yet God looks at the heart.

- When Samuel was looking to anoint the next King of Israel, he was looking at the outward appearance and the ones who seemed to have the most ability to lead.
- Eliab – good looking and tall –appeared to be the one that would be chosen.
- 6 other brothers came before Samuel and all were rejected. They were not God's chosen person.

Point 2 : God is not looking for ability but availability.

Let's look at the difference between our ability and availability.

Ability: possession of the means or skill to do something; talent, skill, or proficiency in a particular area. www.bing.com

Availability: suitable or ready for use; readily obtainable; accessible. www.dictionary.com

We may not always feel like we are able to do the things God is asking us to do.

We might think we don't have the ability to do the job.

- When David was chosen to be the next king he was the least likely candidate.
 1. He was the youngest son.
 2. Out herding sheep
 3. Just doing his chores.
 4. Yet he was available to be used by God.
 5. Early on in life David developed an intense desire to know God and to follow God's direction. This is why God chose him to be king after Saul.
- Others may have seemed to have more ability to lead, however God wanted a man in leadership who would put him first.
- When we put God first, he will give us all the ability we need to lead because he will anoint us and put his Spirit within us to teach us his ways.
- The Holy Spirit will give us the wisdom we need to accomplish what God wants us to do.

Point 3 : Are you available?

- Have you made yourself available to be used by God?
- Have you said to the Lord, "Here I am use me for your glory."?
- Are you willing to allow God to use you this year at school?
- David made himself available to God. He was willing to follow God's leading.
- David always gave God the glory for victories and successes in his life.
- David was always quick to give God the credit for things he accomplished.

1 Samuel 17:37

Summary:

How will you make yourself available to God?

David made himself available and God used him to be the next King of Israel.

Each of us have a part in God's great big plan too. How will he use us? How will we let him use us? What story is God beginning to write for us?

Application:

What are your dreams? Begin to pray it out. Keep note of when God speaks to you about your future. Continue to pray about the details. Surrender to God's will.

How can you live this out at school?

Let's be available for God to use us this year at school. We may not have all the answers, but we know the one who does. God will help us reach our friends with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Be available to be used to speak to friends about Jesus as moments come up to talk about God.

Look for opportunities to be available to share Jesus with classmates.

Let's be committed to being young men and young women of God, available for his service. Let's be willing to do what he wants us to do. Let's be quick to give God the glory for the great things he does in us and through us this year at school.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Help us to always be available for your service. Help us to be aware of people around us. We ask you to help us share the love of Jesus with our friends this year at school. We want to be available to be used by you right now and in the future. May our hearts always be open to you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: Connecting with God

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Key Verse: "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." 1 Samuel 3:9b

Observation:

Are we listening today to God's voice?

When so many voices surround us are we listening for the still small voice; the voice that is so easily drowned out if we are not careful.

Samuel thought Eli was calling him.

NOTE:

While Samuel was young, he lived in the Temple under the spiritual guidance of Eli. One night God called Samuel's name, but he thought it was Eli. After this happened 3 times, Eli realized the truth and told Samuel to go back to bed and if he heard the voice again to respond by saying, "Speak Lord, for your servant is listening."

Eli was Samuel's spiritual mentor.

He realized after the 3rd time that the Lord had to be the one calling Samuel.

Samuel was a young boy when he was called by God.

God called and Samuel listened. This began a relationship with God that went on throughout Samuel's life.

Verse 19 tells us that, "The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his (God's) words fall to the ground.

During Samuel's lifetime there was:
a great corruption of the priesthood
a spiritual decline among God's people
sounds like our day in time, much has not changed

God called Samuel to:
proclaim his message
to be an example of faithfulness to God's plan
to call for repentance and spiritual renewal
to serve as a mediator between God and the people

At another point as Samuel was an old man, he addressed Israel: "I have been your leader from my youth until this day. Here I stand." The people agreed that Samuel had let them with integrity and honor all his years, but it began when he was young.

God can use you now.

It all started for Samuel when he made a connection with God at an early age.

Samuel chose to continue to connect with Him daily throughout his life.

As a Christian, you and I have to make a lot of choices about whom we are – and who we are not.

We have to try and follow God in a world that misunderstands Christianity and tolerates its principles less and less all the time.

We have to learn to own our faith. It is not just our parents faith or our youth pastor's faith, but it is our faith, and we know what we believe and stand for in life.

What if, like Samuel you:
made a connection with God – a new and deeper connection with God
declared, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening"
never let any of God's words "fall to the ground" in your own life

Are you ready to connect with God in a new deeper way?

We need to connect to God.

God wants to connect with us.

God wants to know us intimately – (Intimacy means – into me see). God sees inside our hearts.

He wants to speak to our heart.

Are you ready to connect with God?
Do you desire a deeper connection?
Do you desire to know God in a new and fresh way?

James 4:8 Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Application:

Ask God to help you connect with him in a deeper way this week. Listen for him to speak to you as you pray.

Prayer:

Dear God,
We want more of you. Help us to draw near to you. Help us to put away any distractions and just focus on you this week. Your Word says you come near to us as we come near to you. So Lord, here we are coming after you in prayer, for a deeper relationship with you.

Sermon Title: Desperation!

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Scripture: Mark 10:46-52

Observation:

What are you desperate for?

Blind Bartimaeus

- Desperate for a miracle
- Needed a healing in his eyes
- Had heard of Jesus healing others
- Heard Jesus coming by
- Jumps up in desperation and goes to Jesus for a healing

Jesus heals the man.

The scenario goes something like this:

1. Bart goes to Jesus.
2. Jesus asked, "what do you want?"
3. Bart "I want to see!"
4. Jesus "Your faith has healed you."

According to his faith he received.

Matthew 9:27-34 – 2 other blind men and a mute man were healed

People in Israel were amazed because they had never seen anything like this before.

Blind eyes being opened – that was a miracle!

For Bartimaeus – His desperation led to expectancy.

He was so desperate to be healed, he went in faith expecting and received his miracle.

Application:

Jesus is willing to heal you. He is willing to meet your needs.

Jesus is willing to meet you where you are.

What are you desperate for God to do in your life?

What are you expecting God to do?

Bartimaeus needed a healing and he cried out to the Lord for help. God answered his prayer.

We can come to God in prayer too, believing for a miracle.

Prayer:

(You may want to take specific prayer requests and pray over them and you can pray this prayer too.)

Dear Jesus,

We come to you today in prayer. We know you are a God who does miracles every day. We are so thankful you meet our needs. We are grateful for your love and care for your people. Thank you for all that you do for us every day. We ask you to meet these needs (add any requests from your friends.) Thank you for hearing our prayers and answering them. We also pray for more of you in our lives. Like Bartimaeus, we want to be touch by you. We need you. We are desperate for more of you. Thank you for your presence with us this week. In your name we pray, Amen.

Sermon Title: CHOICES

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Scripture: Joel 3:14

Multitudes are in the valley of decision.

Observation:

Many people are standing at a crossroad in life.

We make choices every day.

Choice

- an act of selecting or making a decision when faced with two or more possibilities:
- a course of action, thing, or person that is selected or decided upon:

Our friends are making choices every day.

- Some are making good decisions.
- However, many people are choosing to follow the wrong path:
 - Drugs
 - Alcohol
 - Suicide
 - Premarital sex
 - Following false religions
 - Bisexual relationships
 - Gay/lesbian relationships
 - Following their own ideas
 - Compromising biblical (moral) values

We all have a choice to make.

We are at a crossroad in life and we have decisions to make.

- Will we live for Jesus?
- Will we point our friends to Jesus?

Planting good seeds

Think with me for a moment, what could be possible if an entire generation of students submitted themselves to God's purposes and planted good seeds of God's hope so the next generation would live off of the good fruit produced? - Heath Adamson

There is an entire generation of students in your school and in your community who need to know that even in the dry and barren places, their world is aflame with the divine God. – Heath Adamson

We can't look at the current situations in the world and think that God is not at work. I assure you God is always working for us.

“Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.” Nido Qubien

Your life circumstances might be a little messy right now.

But you start right where you are and live for Jesus and show others the way to Jesus.

We all have to start somewhere. Just start where you are.

Acts 1:8

When the Holy Spirit comes on you, You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

The disciples started with their Jerusalem, their city.

For you, you must start with your Jerusalem, your school, and your city.

God needs us to share with the world around us how to have:

- courage in the face of fear,
- faith in the one true God,
- and hope of eternal life.

How can we help our friends make better choices?

- Encourage right decisions
- Point them to the Bible for answers.
- Have conversations with them about Jesus.
- Encourage them to pray about the choices they are making.
- Live the Christian life before them.

The time is now. We need to start making better decisions. Our friends need to be making better decisions.

We can encourage better choices among our peers.

Our friends need Jesus, let's guide them to the cross.

Application:

It's Your Choice

Let's be honest, you and I have a choice to make today too, not just our friends.

- Do nothing.
- Go forward.

I DARE YOU!

I Dare You to have a conversation about Jesus with a friend this week.

I DARE YOU to be so focused on the mission of God nothing else matters.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus – Help us to reach the multitudes in our school this year. So many are hurting and walking through trying times. Help us to reach them and remind them that you care and you are working in their situations, that in the midst of everything you are there.

Sermon Title: A Spirit of Yes

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Introduction:

Christmas – a time to celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

People need hope...especially at Christmas time.

Psychiatrists say their schedules are over loaded this time of year with people who find the Christmas season almost more than they can bear because of their loneliness and isolation.

Simply put they have no hope.

Christmas is God's reminder that we are not alone. God is with us.

God is here to give us hope, forgive our sins, give us a new song in our hearts, and to heal our spiritual wounds.

Hope began long ago with a spirit of yes.

Scripture: Luke 1: 26 – 38, 2:1-14

Observation:

Mary had a spirit of yes. She was willing to do God's will.

There has to be a spirit of yes on the inside of us. A determination, a desire, to serve the Lord.

When everything seems to be in chaos in our lives we have to be able to continue to say yes to the Lord.

I believe psychiatrists are busy with people who are lonely and find the Christmas season unbearable because they have not found the Hope of salvation. They have not said yes to the Lord.

Yes I will serve you.

Yes I will follow you.

- My **friends** might not be serving God but YES I will serve the Lord.
- My **family**
- My **co-workers**.....
- My **neighbors**.....

Jesus is the one who gives peace to the storm.

When things are not easy, YES I will serve the Lord.

There has to be a driving force in our life that says YES! I will serve the Lord.

Mary submitted herself completely to God's will, his desires, plans, and intentions and trusted his message.

For Mary, it was a place of surrender.

She was willing to allow God to use her even though it would not be easy.

She willingly accepted the honor and criticism that being Jesus' mother would bring. Part of the disrespect came right away because she would become pregnant before marriage.

- I am sure she was probably ridiculed, mocked, and looked down upon.
- She new according to the law that Joseph could choose to have her stoned to death.
- Yet Mary was willing to say, "The Lord's will be done."

We know from the scriptures she was a virgin and the child within her was a miracle from the Holy Spirit.

This was to fulfill what was prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 and told again in Matthew 1:23 "the virgin will be with Child and give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel which means God with us."

Mary was chosen by God.

God's will is not always easy but God will give us the strength to do what he wants us to do if we will surrender ourselves to him.

There has to be a spirit of Yes on the inside of us.

Joshua said, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15

It does not matter what everyone else is doing. You have to decide in your heart that you will follow the Lord in obedience.

Having a spirit of yes on the inside of us makes all the difference.

Mary said, "Yes Lord." Jesus was conceived in her womb. Hope was born. Jesus, Immanuel, God with us changed history.

Because of Jesus:

- We are forgiven.
- We have hope
- The psy clinic should be empty because people recognize the Hope of Christ living on the inside of them.
- Greater is he that is within me than he that is in the world.

On Christmas we celebrate Jesus' birth.

What a wonderful and glorious hope we have because of that first Christmas!

One child changed the world and reigns forever and is worthy to be praised. His name is JESUS!

The angels, shepherds, and wisemen worshipped the Lord.

It started with God's desire to provide a Savior for the world and Mary's willingness to say yes.

Now that we have this truth what will we do to spread His good news?

2 Peter 3:9 "God is not willing that any should perish."

Carl Henry said, "The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time."

A spirit of yes says, "Yes Lord! I will go. Yes Lord! I will help send others. Yes Lord, I will pray! Yes Lord, use me!"

Luke 19:10 "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

When people hear about Jesus, their lives are changed forever.

Application:

What will you do to help spread the good news of Jesus Christ?

It starts with having a spirit of yes.

- Will you be willing to go spread the Gospel?
- Will you be willing to give to help others go?
- Will you pray for others to come to Christ and pray for those going to share the gospel?

We can all do something to promote the good news of Jesus Christ to others.

Be a blessing to someone this Christmas. Give them the HOPE of the World. Give them Jesus!

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

I want to be like Mary. I want to be willing to do whatever you want me to do. I want to be used by you in great ways. Help me to always say, "yes" to your will for my life. Help us to be a blessing to people around us this Christmas season. In your name I pray, Amen.

Sermon Title: Fight For Your Dream

Sermon Author: Rev. Darrin Vaughan, Vaughan Ministries

Scripture: Mark 10:46-52, Proverbs 29:16, Isaiah 46:10, Joel 2:28

On November 16, 1811, an unusual thing happened to the Mississippi River. The name "Mississippi" comes from an Indian word that means "big river." The river flows some 2,300 miles from its source in northwestern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. What happened in 1811 was unprecedented for the river. An earthquake hit the state of Missouri and had a strange effect on the river. For a short period of time the river's direction was interrupted and it flowed backward.

To spiritually dream forward means you dream or think in the direction God is going.

Most people are either content with their life or have learned to live within the current parameters of their experience and never imagine things can be different. Oftentimes God leads us into valley seasons of life to give us perspective. David said in Psalm 23, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil because you are with me..."

Sometimes, God has to interrupt our own dreams and teach us to dream with Him. A lot of people have dreams, goals, desires and even vision for their life, but most of the time they don't include God. How do we invite God into our lives in a way that allows Him to direct the course of our future? We have to ask God to give us vision.

WHAT IS VISION? "Vision is what we see, but it is also the way in which we see. Vision is the lens that interprets the events of our life, the way we view people and our concept of God. If we have a scratch on our glasses, it may seem like everyone around us has scratches too, but the problem actually lies with us because our vision is impaired." (Kris Vallotton)

AW Tozer said, "We need a baptism of clear seeing. We desperately need seers who can see through the mist--Christian leaders with prophetic vision. Unless they come soon it will be too late for this generation."

The problem with the church sometimes, is that we have sight, but no vision. We see what's directly in front of us, but we can't see what God is doing all around us. Our vision comes from faith. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not yet seen.

Mark 10 starts with Jesus on a journey. He was on a mission. He knew where He was headed and nothing would keep Him from fulfilling His ultimate assignment...but faith had a way of getting His attention. He started off in Judea and was headed for Jerusalem.

Mark 10:46-52 ESV

And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

I want to pull some very important truths from this story.

Point 1: Faith has a way of resurrecting your dream.

Have you ever felt like your dream had an expiration date?

- In this story, it appeared that Jesus was done ministering in Jericho and was ready to move on. Even for those who say, "the church isn't sleeping, the church is dead", I have good news for you. Whether they're asleep or dead makes no difference to God, for he who has the ability to awaken the sleeper, has the same ability to raise the dead. When Lazarus died, Jesus said, "our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."

Don't focus on the negative thoughts of others.

Even when you feel like no one else knows where you are, GOD DOES!

Keep your eyes and focus on Jesus.

Point 2: Faith positions us for a miracle.

Bartimaeus saw that Jesus was leaving, but he still sat by the roadside expecting to receive something.

Sometimes God's dream for us seems to get put on hold because we have lost our expectancy.

Point 3: Faith doesn't listen to the negativity of the crowd; it listens for Jesus.

Most people naturally find it easier to be negative than positive. They say things like, "Well I'm just a realist."

But we all enjoy amenities because someone dared to dream big.

- The great car magnate, Henry Ford once said, "If I would have asked people what they wanted, they would have told me faster horses."

Don't allow your dream to be trampled on or diminished by people.

God has the right relationships to connect you to.

It's funny to me that after Jesus calls for Bartimaeus to be brought to Him that the people's negativity changes....it says they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you."

Point 4: Faith doesn't allow the failures of the past to detour the future.

I love that this story ends with this scenario, "And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.

- By throwing off his cloak, he threw off his past.
- Some of us need to spring up, into what God has called us to do.

When was the last time you sprang up and embraced Jesus' purpose for you?

The thing I love about the story of blind Bartimaeus being healed is that he had vision, even though he didn't have sight. He could see better without his eyes than most of the people could see with their eyes.

One famous Proverb says: Where there is no vision, the people perish (are unrestrained), but happy is he who keeps the law - Proverbs 29:18

"A man without a vision is a man without a future. A man without a future will always return to his past." (P.K. Bernard)

Complacency will rob us of our God given vision every time. According to vocabulary.com complacency is an "excessive feeling of self-satisfaction." The vision of where God is taking you to has to be more significant in your mind than what you currently have.

God desires to break into our generation with prophetic vision that will open the door for His purpose on earth. One way He does this is by interrupting the way we have been taught to think. Sometimes

God brings something in our lives to shift us in a different direction. We have to listen for the Holy Spirit to guide us so we will be ready to receive from Him.

Summary:

When God gives us a dream, we have to fight for it!

Just as salmon swim upstream to make it back to the place they were born, sometimes we have to fight against the current to hold onto the things God is birthing in us.

When something creates resistance and shakes things up, don't always see it as a bad thing. God may be shifting things.

Hold onto Him during the unsettling times.

Doubt and sin will pull us under and extinguish our hope.

Faith keeps our hearts focused so we aren't pulled in the wrong direction. It gives us the energy and perspective to keep fighting and keep dreaming.

Faith resurrects the dream, positions us for a miracle, increases expectancy, ignores negativity, and doesn't allow past failures to determine our future.

Application:

If you ask God, He will fill you with vision.

Ask God to make you hungry for more of him this week.

Let's also ask him to fill us with his vision for our school.

How can you live this out at school?

Get together with a few of your friends each day this week and pray together. Ask God to give you a fresh vision for what he wants to do in your school this year.

Prayer:

Lord, help us to dream again. Help us to reach our classmates with your good news. Let there be an outpouring of your Spirit and a revival in our school. In Jesus Name! Amen!!

Sermon Title: Peace in the Storm

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Scripture: Luke 8:22-25

Observation:

It looked to be a typical day to get in a boat on the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus had been ministering to the people.

Crowds of people had come from everywhere to be ministered to by Jesus.

He was tired from all the activity so when they got into the boat, he just lay down and fell asleep.

Jesus was snoozing in the boat. (make sleeping sounds)

All of a sudden a storm comes up. The waters were raging. The boat was rocking. Waves were crashing over the boat and the disciples were terrified.

Now here is what is interesting, 4 of the disciples on the boat were fishermen, so a storm here and there on the sea they were used to seeing.

But this was no regular storm. A squall is a hurricane like force on the water.

They thought they were going to drown in the sea.

The disciples went to Jesus and shook him awake (shake your friend beside you) and woke him up saying "Master, Master, we're going to drown."

Today that might sound like this: Jesus! Quick! Get up! We are all going to drown. Help us, we are all going to die.

Jesus gets up and rebukes the wind and waves and all is calm again.

Smoothing sailing continued across the Sea.

Then Jesus corrects the disciples for their lack of faith. And these guys are too much in amazement of what just happened to be offended.

The disciples asked, "Who is this? Even the wind and waves obey him.

- Jesus had been teaching them daily.
- He had raised the widow's son from death.
- He healed a leper, a paralytic and a servant.

They had seen Jesus do a few miracles and now the wind and waves were obeying him!

Who is this?

They were in shock!

What can we learn from this passage?

Point 1: Don't Panic! God's got this!

In an instant, panic set in for the disciples who for some had fished on the water their whole life.

Storms are going to come in all of our lives.

Maybe not on the ocean but maybe in school, at home, with family, with a friend or classmate.

Bullying, depression, self-harm, sexual harassment and assault are realities of life today.
(reference #1)

Approximately two million cases of self-injury are reported annually in the United States. Ninety percent of people who engage in self harm begin during their **teen or pre-adolescent years**.
(reference #2)

Seventy percent of students report seeing **frequent** bullying online, yet only one in ten victims will inform a parent or trusted adult that they've been the subject of cyberbullying. (reference #3)

This sounds like stormy times to me for some students and sadly many remain silent and never reach out for help.

Silence is never a solution.

We need students willing to speak up.

We need students willing to share the message of hope with their friends.

Kind words, apologies and forgiveness are not just "nice words" found in the Bible that we talk about, they are a necessity for healthy relationships. – *Dare2Share*

In this life we will face hard times, but how we respond determines how we grow.

Let me share with you a biblical perspective on why there is darkness, evil, and pain in the world, it is because of sin.

We live in an imperfect world.

When Jesus died on the cross he overcame sin.

We must remember that God is always with us in every situation.

We are never alone.

Jesus is greater than your storm.

1 John 4:4

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

Always remember that Jesus inside of you is greater than anything you go through, and greater than your enemy.

The light of Jesus can come in and flood those dark places with light.

Point 2: Rest in God's peace.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Jesus had a peace that went beyond man's understanding, as he slept in the boat.

He knew God was in control.

We need to rest in God's peace and trust in his control.

Just know this: Jesus is the source of peace in the chaos of your life.

He still calms storms every day.

And when it seems like he doesn't calm the storm, he will calm our heart and walk with us through our storm.

Having peace, even when our life situations are in chaos, is supernatural and it will grab the attention of everyone around us.

As Jesus was sleeping in the boat during the storm he demonstrated complete trust in God to watch over him and the disciples.

Illustration: Life Preserver

What is this?

We throw this out to people who are drowning in the water.

"Help! I am drowning!" - We throw them a life preserver to help them.

Sometimes in life we feel like we are going to drown in life's problems.

Do you feel as if you are you drowning?

Jesus is your hope.

Do your friends feel as if they are drowning?

I want to encourage you to point your friends to Jesus.

Jesus is our life preserver in the storm.

When we feel like we are sinking, he is reaching out a hand to pull us back up.

Jesus has prepared the way for us through his death on the cross.

He died for us. He laid his life down for us so that we could live our life for him.

All we have to do is put our trust in him.

All our friends have to do is put their trust in Jesus.

Point 3: Jesus is our anchor in the storm.

Hebrews 6:19

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure....

An anchor holds an object in place. It provides a firm foundation.

Jesus does that for us. He holds us through the storms and is a firm foundation for us.

We can cling to Jesus when we are walking through stormy seasons in life and trust that he will never let us go.

(Note: You could give each student an anchor to remind them that Jesus is our anchor/our hope in the midst of the storm.)

Point 4: Where is your trust?

Psalm 20:7

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

Psalm 31:14

But I trust in you, LORD; I say, "You are my God."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Think about it....are you trusting in Jesus in your life?

For some of you in this room today, you are facing real life problems that seem larger than life at times...but God...

But God has the situation under control if you will surrender it to him. Run to him. Trust him. Trust his plan.

Through Youth Alive® we encourage students every week to reach out to other students.

Have conversations with your friends to see if their hope and trust is in Jesus.

Ask them if they understand that Jesus is the only one who can help them.

Do they understand the true peace that Jesus gives?

My Salvation Story: (You share your story) *I didn't know what real peace was until I gave my life to Jesus. The joy that Jesus brought into my life was electrifying. I had never experienced anything like it in my life. It was awesome. Definitely the best decision I ever made.*

Application:

God's peace has a calming effect on us and it strengthens us in our journey of faith.

We can rest in Jesus because we know we are not alone.

There is no one else who can help us like he does.

There is no one in this world who wants to help us more than Jesus.

He is always waiting for us to come to him.

When we trust in Jesus, we find rest, peace, and strength.

This week put your trust in Jesus every time you need peace.

Altar Call:

How many of you would be honest and say that you are going through something and you just need Jesus to help you?

How many of you have a friend who is currently walking through a tough time and they need God's intervention?

Prayer:

Jesus my help comes from you. Holy Spirit you are my helper. Thank you God for your help every day.

Salvation Call:

It is not too late to put your trust in Jesus. Is there anyone who would say, "Today I need to put my trust in Jesus? I need to surrender my life to him."

Salvation Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

I know I need to put my trust in you. I willingly surrender my life to you. I admit that I need you in my life. I am lost without you. Please forgive me of my sins. Come and live inside my heart. Thank you for saving me today. Help me to live my life for you. I love you and I thank you for this new life you have given me. Amen.

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Sermon Title: Give me your excuses, I'll give you a purpose.

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Scripture: Exodus 4:1-20

Observation:

In Chapter 3, just prior to the passage we just read, Moses had the burning bush experience where God spoke to him.

God had called Moses to go back to Egypt.

God said, "I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.

Moses didn't think he could do what God was asking him to do.

He thought the task was too great.

He feared going back to Egypt.

He fled in **fear** several years earlier and now fear was keeping him from returning.

God responded in verse 19 saying, "Moses, those who wanted to kill you are now dead."

His enemies were gone.

God was trying to build up Moses' courage and his faith.

God prepares the way before us. He helps us accomplish the things he wants us to do.

God does not leave us on our own to do what he asks us to do.

God told Moses in Exodus 3:12, "I will be with."

He is with us every step of the way.

Our God is faithful. Amen!! He is FAITHFUL!

I am so thankful I have the Lord with me throughout my journey in life.

We must step up and do whatever God is asking us to do.

What is God asking you to do?

There are 4 points we can look at in this chapter that can help us do what God wants us to do:

Point 1: Use what you have!

- verse 2 "What is in your hand?"
- a staff – a stick

- Use what you have Moses.
- Don't focus on what you do not have.
- It is easy to focus on our limitations instead of our abilities.
- God will give you and me what we need when we need it.
- We look at things through our natural eyes and we tell ourselves every reason why we can't or shouldn't do something.
 - They won't believe me.
 - God, those people back in Egypt want to kill me.
 - Lord, no one will listen to me.
 - I can't speak well. I am slow of speech. I stutter.
- On the other hand, God sees what He can do through us if we will just walk with him by faith and believe.

What do you have?

- Your talents
- Your abilities
- Your voice
- Your life

Even if we feel like we have no special giftings, we all have something God can use.

Our world needs a voice of truth to speak life into it.

We can definitely use our voice to proclaim God's truth to the lost.

Point 2: Do not be afraid!

- vs 3-9
- If we are not careful we will sit back and never do anything because of fear.
- The enemy uses fear to keep us from doing what God wants us to do.
- Fear only hinders us and keeps us from growing in the Lord.
- When we step beyond our fears and realize what we can do through God's power and strength, we will overcome our fears and do great things for God.
- With every fear we overcome, we will be strengthened for the next time to trust God in what he is telling us to do.
- We may not get it all right every time, but at least we are trying and moving in the direction we sense God is leading us.

- And we trust that if we veer off from God's direction, he will let us know and guide us back to his plan.
- We have to trust God's leadership in our life.
- Do try to figure things out on your own. Our understanding is limited. Just be obedient.
- Fear holds us back, Faith moves us forward.

Point 3: Give God your excuses and He will give you a purpose!

- vs. 10
- God is basically saying to Moses:
 - "Stop telling me what you can't do."
 - "Stop telling me what you don't have."
 - Trust me with what you do have."
 - Tell me Moses, "What do you have? What can you do? What is in your hand?"
 - **Watch this Moses, "I will take what you have and I will fill it with my power and through my power and my strength you can do what I am asking you to do."**

God took a stick and put His power into it and used it for his purposes.

God used a stick! God can use you and me!

God will put his power in you and me and use us to accomplish his purposes, to reach his people.

Let God infuse you with his power.

When God infuses his power into you and me, we can do whatever he is asking us to do.

We will accomplish great things for God when we rely on his strength and not our own.

Give God what you do have and he will do great and mighty things through you.

Point 4: If not you, then who?

- vs 13 – Moses, "Please send someone else to do it."
- In other words, "God, please let someone else go."
- If you and I won't do what God is asking us to do, who will?
- Will God have to search for someone else?
- Don't be afraid to do what God asks you to do.

- God has equipped us with everything we need to do everything He will ever ask us to do.
- If not you, then who?

A few other examples from Scripture:

1. Esther – For such a time as this.

Mordecai, “Esther, Go before the king and petition him for the lives of the Jewish people. Who knows but you have been brought into the kingdom for such as time as this.”

Esther responds, “I can’t go before the king unsummoned. I’ll die if he does not receive me!”

Mordecai responds back “Esther, if you don’t speak out, deliverance will come from another person. However, you and your household will perish.”

You can’t remain silent Esther! Speak up! Esther, be a voice!

Esther goes before the king and the lives of her people are spared.

2. Gideon

God wanted to use Gideon in a major battle to defeat the Midianites.

The Midianites had been oppressing the Israelites.

God saw Gideon as a mighty warrior.

Gideon responds saying, “Me?, I’m the weakest in my clan!” “I’m the least in my family.” How can God use me?

But God uses him and with a small number of people he wins a great battle and God receives the glory.

3. Jonah

Jonah ran from God’s call.

God wanted Jonah to go to Ninevah to proclaim his truth to the people living there.

Instead, Jonah got on a boat, running from God’s plan.

He said he knew God was merciful and didn’t want to go because they didn’t deserve His mercy and grace.

God caused a great storm on the sea, Jonah is tossed overboard by his shipmates, a huge whale swallowed him and after a few days he decided going to Ninevah was better than staying in the belly of a whale.

He answered God’s call and salvation was extended to the Ninevites.

Jonah was the voice God wanted to use to proclaim his truth to this people.

It's funny how God wants to use us many times and we allow **our limited understanding** to stand between us and what God is asking us to do.

Again, it about perspective. Whose perspective are we looking at?

In Scripture I have never seen where it was easy when God asked his people to do certain things.

There always seemed to be trials along the way that they had to overcome and their faith was strengthened.

It is not always easy taking a step of faith but it is definitely worth the journey.

In your life, you must answer the question, "what does God want me to do?"

What is he asking you to do?

How can you impact someone else's life?

Give him your excuses and every reason why you think you can't do something and he will give you a plan and purpose.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."

Recap:

Use what you have.

Do not be afraid.

Give God your excuses, he will give you a purpose.

If not you, then who?

Application:

Get rid of the excuses!

Is there anything God is impressing on your heart today that you know you need to do?

Could be anything really, you just need to obey.

Maybe it is to:

- Witness to a friend or neighbor
- Forgive someone who hurt you
- Bless someone you know is in need.

Don't allow fear or pride to keep you from doing whatever the Holy Spirit nudges you to do.

Prayer:

God help us to be sensitive to your voice calling us. Help us to be obedient to you. Help us to do greater things for you than we have ever done before. Please remove any trace of fear from our life. Help us to just take a step of faith towards you. Thank you for being with us in our journey. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: Are You Dreaming Dreams?

Sermon Author: Dr. Randy Valimont, Lead Pastor at First Assembly of God, Griffin, GA

Scripture: Genesis 37:1-11

I. Introduction:

A. People who have made major impacts on others or their society have had one major thing in common.

1. They all had a dream.
2. A dream is not an aspiration.
 - a. An aspiration is a “longing for what is elevated”.
 - b. A dream is “to conceive as possible or probable”.
3. It almost sounds like the definition of Faith.

B. Throughout history man’s dreams have motivated people to do things never done before.

1. Christopher Columbus forged ahead based on a dream.
2. Thomas Jefferson forged our constitution based upon a dream.
3. Martin Luther King Jr. became famous as an orator over his “I Have a Dream” speech.
4. God has frequently made use of dreams in communicating His will to men.
 - a. He did this to Jacob, Laban, Joseph, Gideon, and Solomon.
 - b. In the New Testament God used dreams to talk to Joseph and Paul.
5. Today, I want to look at three important characteristics of Dreams.

Point 1: Dream a Dream

Genesis 37:5,9-11 – 5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. **9** Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, “Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.” **10** So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?” **11** And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

There are 3 Characteristics to dreams from God.

1. The Dream is bigger than you are.

Genesis 37:7 – “There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.”

- a. Joseph was the next to the youngest son.
- b. His dream was an impossibility.
- c. We have been asked to dream an impossibility.
- d. Tell of reaching the World and then Jesus would come.
- e. Friends, God has not called us to be ordinary, average or status quo.
- f. We must dream big, think big, and believe big.
- g. Share Michael Jordan’s story.

2. The Dream will be reinforced.

Genesis 37:9 - Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."

- a. God was letting Joseph know it wouldn’t go away.
- b. Tell of Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk.
- c. Tell of call of God - It won’t go away.
- d. Tell of sports star (inventor/engineer) dreaming

3. The Dream will make people angry and jealous.

Genesis 37:10-11 - So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"¹¹ And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

- a. His own family castigated and hated him.
- b. Jeremiah made people angry with his dreams & so did Micah.
- c. Keep dreaming; keep believing!
- d. Tell of JFK’s dream to put a man on the moon.
- e. Tell of Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook.

Point 2: The Pathways of a Dream

Genesis 37:28 ²⁸ Then Midianite traders passed by; so *the brothers* pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty *shekels* of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt

1. You must go through the school of Egypt.
 - a. Egypt is a place of difficulty and slavery.
 - b. How do you handle things when things go bad in life?
 - c. Talk about divorce and pain.
 - d. Mention family issues.
 - e. Give inspiring example of someone who has overcome terrible circumstances. (Be specific)
 - f. Wounded veteran/amputee competing in sports.

2. You must go through the school of Integrity

Genesis 39:5-9 So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field. 6 Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. 7 And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 "There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

- a. Tell of Joseph's commitment to God.
- b. Tell of everyone's integrity being tested on a way to a dream.
- c. Moses was and he failed, then in the wilderness he passed.
- d. It may be morals – You will be tested – David was.
- e. It may be money - Tell of tithing, giving and be faithful to God.

3. You must go through the School of Disappointment

Genesis 39:19-23 - So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused.²⁰ Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison.²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.²² And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing.²³ The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

- a. Joseph was demoted – lost his cushy job.
- b. He could have quit, could have given up on God, but kept going.
- c. People will be your biggest disappointment.
- d. Tell of Winston Churchill being voted out of office after World War II.

4. Tell of Joseph telling the butler and baker their dreams and fulfillment's and not getting rewarded.

Point 3: Live the Dream

Genesis 41:15-16 – 15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it." 16 So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

1. Recognize God's Power.
 - a. Joseph did not say "I'm glad somebody noticed!"
 - b. He gave all the credit and glory to God.
 - c. God can bless people like that.

2. Recognize God's Purpose.

Genesis 45:3-8 - Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.⁴ And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.⁵ "But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.⁶ "For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.⁷ "And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.⁸ "So now it was not you who sent

me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

- a. Joseph saw the reason for everything.
 - b. Joseph saw the purposes of God.
 - c. It didn't just come to him.
 - d. He understood through the process that God was up to something.
3. Recognize God's Provision.
- a. He Provides the Position.
 - b. He Provides the Wealth.
 - c. He Provides the Grace – To forgive.
4. It took slavery and a dungeon to break the rich boy's mindset so he could be trusted with rulership.

Summary:

God wants us to Dream A Dream!

1. The World wants our dreams to fail.
2. Jesus wants us to dream big dreams.
3. Some of us have gotten away from the Dreams.

Application:

What personal dream does God want to place within you?

What could we dream about doing together as a team this year to impact our school in a powerful way?

How can you live this out at school?

Let's dream about doing something significant for God in our lives and in our school.

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

Thank you for implanting your dreams inside of us. Help us to never let go of those things you have placed in our hearts. Be with us as we go out to live our dreams. Encourage our hearts and help us to keep our focus on the plans you have for us, in Jesus' Name, amen.

Sermon Title: Empty Me of Me

Sermon Author: Jeremiah Hosford

Lead Pastor of Abundant Life Revival Center in Locust Grove, GA

Scripture: James 4 and Isaiah 40:8

Today we will discuss 3 ways God empties us of ourselves. But understand that God will not force you to empty yourself of yourself. We have to make the choice to empty ourselves so that we can become more like Christ.

We should pray like this, "Holy Spirit, help me to empty me of me. Allow me the privilege of teaming up with You and seeing the perfect will of the Father being done in and through my life."

Point 1: God empties us through Correction- to change our hearts

- a. Ezekiel 18:20-32 (a new heart and a new spirit)
- b. Proverbs 21:1 (love instruction)
- c. Psalm 51: 10 (a clean heart)
- d. Psalm 51:16-17 (change the hardened heart to a repentant one)

Point 2: God empties us through affliction – to change our soul (mind, will, and emotions)

- a. Ezekiel 18:20-32 (a new heart and a new spirit)
- b. Proverbs 21:1 (love instruction)
- c. Psalm 51: 10 (a clean heart)
- d. Psalm 51:16-17 (change the hardened heart to a repentant one)

God uses affliction to change the backslider who has received deception in their mind, will and emotions.

Point 3: God empties us through Revelation – (this changes our perception which in turn changes our behavior)

When you don't receive from His Word, He will bring correction. If you don't receive correction, He will send affliction. If you refuse to respond to affliction, God in His mercy will reach out to you to spare your life from destruction.

- a. Acts. 11:1-15; 16-18 They became silent! Revelation has a way of quieting you.
- b. Acts 13:1-4 The first time the message of the gospel went west!
- c. Luke 7:36-50 She received revelation that changed her perception, which ultimately changed her behavior.

Application:

If and when you know that you are full of yourself and not full of God, pray that He will empty you of you.

When your life seems to be falling apart, don't assume it is the enemy. God may be sending affliction to get your eyes back on Him.

Stay in His Word and pray for revelation to come.

God may be moving people out of your life for a reason.

Don't hold on to toxic relationships that draw you away from God.

Prayer:

Lord, empty us of ourselves. Help us to recognize your correction in our lives. Reveal yourself to us so that we overflow with your light. In Jesus name, AMEN!

Sermon Title: Going to the Next Level

Sermon Author: Rev. Jeremiah Hosford

Lead Pastor at Abundant Life Revival Center, Locust Grove, GA

Scripture: Matthew 17:8

Everything we need to go to the next level is already on the inside of us, but it takes a revelation to unlock it.

Here are 5 things we must do to go to the next level.

Point 1: To go to the next level I must be faithful to walk in the revelation God is giving me now.

It must be a revelation from heaven.

I must be faithful in the small things before God will allow me to oversee and rule much.

Point 2: To go to the next level I must be desperate to get there.

I cannot get stuck in complacency and mediocrity.

What are you desperate for?

Going to the next level is optional.

You can stay where you are or you can decide to go to the next level.

It is our choice to go to the next level God has instore for us.

Point 3: Before I can step into the next level, I must realize that holiness is a requirement in this present level.

God wants us to become more like him.

We have to let go of anything that is hindering us from becoming more like the Lord.

Point 4: To get to the next level I must have a dogmatic commitment to submission to authority.

Submission to authority is important in our walk with God.

God promotes sons and daughters, not rebels.

Point 5: To get to the next level I must allow God to expose me to the spirit realm of what I have yet to see.

Jesus took Peter, James and John up on to the mountain top with Him.

Not everyone can handle the mountain top experience. Only 3 made the cut.

3 things are important for those on the mountain:

- They are willing to leave others behind that are dragging them down.
- They can handle correction on the mountain top.
- They allow Jesus to enlarge and expand their view of God as He really is.

The mountain top experience with God will immediately challenge your mindset, feelings and view of the way you have always seen God. He is so much bigger than we have imagined.

Summary:

The next level is optional!

Only we can make the determination to do the things required for God to move us to the next level.

Always choose to see God bigger than you previously have. There is always more to learn about God.

God is always calling us to climb higher up the mountain with him.

We have a choice to climb the mountain or stay where we are with God.

Application:

We must be willing to leave others behind (Don't let others hold you back from what God wants for you). We must be able to and willing to receive correction. We must allow God to enlarge and expand our view of Him as He really is!

Ask God to reveal more of himself to you this week.

Ask him to expand and enlarge your view of him.

How can you live this out at school?

To go to the next level, it is YOU AND GOD! No one else matters in your relationship with HIM! Minister to those around you by striving to be closer to GOD and move forward in HIM!

Prayer:

Lord, help us to see You bigger than our mind has ever imagined. Help us to realize what is honorable and holy. Help us to hear you calling us higher and don't let us become complacent. Please expand and enlarge our view of You. In Jesus Name, AMEN!

Sermon Title: Integrity. A Chosen Lifestyle.

Sermon Author: Pastor Jason Branson

Assistant Pastor at Abundant Life Revival Center, Locust Grove, GA.

Scripture: I Samuel 17:31-37

Observation:

Integrity

1. The quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high moral principles or professional standards
2. The state of being complete or undivided (*formal*)
3. The state of being sound or undamaged (*formal*)

This lesson of integrity will come from the life of David – Shepherd and Soldier David, not King David.

- David, a cheese delivery boy, has decided if nobody is going to hold the un-covenanted Philistine, Goliath, to God's word, he would. He just had to convince King Saul.

1 Samuel 17:31-37 (New King James Version)

31 Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported them to Saul; and he sent for him. 32 Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

33 And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."

34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, 35 I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." 37 Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"

We all know the story of how David killed Goliath with stones and a sling. All my life, I never got the significance, until I read something in the word of God.

Leviticus 24:10-16 & 23 (New King James Version)

10 Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel; and this Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel fought each other in the camp. 11 And the

Israelite woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD and cursed; and so they brought him to Moses. (His mother's name was Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) 12 Then they put him in custody, that the mind of the LORD might be shown to them.

13 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 14 "Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him.

15 "Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. 16 And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the LORD, he shall be put to death.

23 Then Moses spoke to the children of Israel; and they took outside the camp him who had cursed, and stoned him with stones. So the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

David, a teenager, knew the word of the Lord and decided that just as he defended his father's sheep, he would defend the name of his God against an enemy.

This is a story of bravery in the face of danger, a commitment to your work and performance, and a call to go above and beyond the call of duty.

1 Samuel 16:1-13 (New King James Version)

1 Now the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons."

2 And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me."

But the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' 3 Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you."

4 So Samuel did what the LORD said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, "Do you come peaceably?"

5 And he said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice.

6 So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before Him!"

7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

8 So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." 9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." 10 Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen these." 11 And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep."

And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here." 12 So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" 13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

When the time came to anoint a king over God's chosen people, Israel, everybody present didn't think David was important enough to be invited to supper, much less anointed King. Everybody, including his own father! That sure helps spread light on this scripture.

Psalm 27:10 (New King James Version)

When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the LORD will take care of me.

He was asked to serve King Saul in various capacities. He regularly exceeded his expectations, performing things no one else was either willing or able to do. He gave his all for his King. In exchange for this, Saul attempted to kill David twenty-one times.

- David's reaction
(1 Samuel 24:1-22) David spares King Saul's life
(1 Samuel 26:1-25) David spares King Saul's life, again

Of the 73 psalms of David, he wrote these 9 before he became king.

Psalm 18, 34, 52, 54, 56, 59, 63, & 142

After David became king, the word of God gives us incredible access to his ups and downs. The common theme that runs through this is when David thought of himself a king, he found himself in trouble. However, when he thought of himself as a servant shepherd, he thrived.

Application:

David's life as a shepherd boy was lived with integrity. He took a stand for God when everyone else was afraid of the giant.

As a teenager, don't be afraid to take a stand for God. We can be an example to others of how to live a life of integrity. We can stand up for what we believe in. God is important and He is worth taking a stand for in our school.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus, Help us to live our life with integrity. Help us to always take a stand for the things of the Lord. Help us to point our friends to you every day by the life we live. In your name I pray, Amen.

Sermon Title: Limitless : Reach Higher

Sermon Author: Rev. Johnny Mendoza, Youth Pastor, Evangel Temple, Columbus, GA

Main Idea: With the Limitless power of our God in us we shouldn't reach for the things that we could easily achieve ourselves. It's time to reach Higher.

Scripture: Colossians 3:1-11

We're going to address three things?

1. Where is your focus?
2. Where is your past?
3. Where is your identity?

Point 1: Where is your focus?

What are the things that you're passionate about?

- There are many things to be passionate about in this world.
 - Some of them are perfectly healthy.
- Paul is trying to tell the church that we need to be passionate about the kingdom of God.
- The things that we're passionate about will receive the most of our attention.
- We don't need to dwell on the temporary things.
 - Anxiety, stress, and worry about the things of this world will rob you of the things God wants to do in and through you.

Point 2: Where is your past?

- Our past does not belong in our present!
- Your past does not need to be revived, just REDEEMED.
- When we realize what Jesus has done for us, we should resolve to live like it.
 - Not just in the big things, but in the small things.
 - It's easier to avoid the big things, than to be obedient in the small things.
 - But God has called us to reach higher than our own capabilities.
 - Don't settle for Lazy Christian Living!
 - What good is it if you have God help you reach the things you can grab yourself?
 - That's lazy Christian living that will take you no where.

Point 3: Where is your Identity?

- Your new self has a singular identity and it's not:
 - Young or Old
 - Jock, Nerd, or Hipster
 - Race or Culture
- Your identity is Jesus.

- Co-heir with Christ
- Child of God

Summary:

What are you reaching for?

- Have you limited yourself because you're afraid to fail?
- Do you trust God enough to help you reach what seems unobtainable?
- Will you set your mind and heart on God's kingdom?
 - If so, you'll have all the motivation you need to reach higher!

Application:

The power of God is limitless. We can accomplish anything with God. Let's reach higher this year at school. Our identity is in Jesus Christ, not in our past. Don't let your past hinder you from the amazing future God has for you. Choose to be passionate about God every day of your life.

How can you live this out at school?

Let's reach higher in all things this year: to let go of the past, focus on the future, study harder, to make better grades in class, to be kind to others, to share Jesus with others, and to serve one another.

Have the courage to step out in faith and share Jesus with a friend. Share with a classmate how knowing Jesus has impacted your life and offer to pray for them today.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Help us to reach higher this year at school. Help us to not put limitations on you or on ourselves. Thank you that we are not defined by our past. You have an amazing future planned for us and we are grateful. Help us to keep our eyes on you and understand that our true identity is found in Jesus Christ, not in the things of this world. Help us to make you known to the classmates around us this year. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: Not Today Satan

Sermon Author: Rev. Jeremiah Hosford

Lead Pastor at Abundant Life Revival Center, Locust Grove, GA

Scripture: Luke 4:1-13

Observation:

Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days and was tempted by the devil.

The devil tried to defeat Jesus but he lost that battle.

Today we will talk about 3 ways the devil tries to defeat us:

Point 1: He causes us to question, doubt and rebel against the prophetic word in and over our life.

Satan wants to stop God's plan in our lives.

In this passage of Scripture, he wanted Jesus to disconnect from the power source and he tries to get us to do the same thing.

The Word of God was Jesus' power source.

Jesus spoke the word of God and the devil had to flee.

We must respond to the enemy the same way Jesus did with the word of God.

Learn to speak the word of God over your life and over every situation you encounter.

2 Peter 1:17

When we submit to God, the Devil has to flee!

Point 2: The devil will try to get us to make decisions based on what we see.

The devil wants us to focus on the temporary and not the eternal.

The Word of God tells us that the just shall live by faith and not sight.

The devil tries to get us to worry about our circumstances instead of worshiping the ONE who is the author and finisher of it all.

We are to worship God and God alone!

2 Corinthians 4:18

Point 3: The devil tries to get us to take control of our own life.

If we take control of our lives, we become “god” to ourselves.

We are not God. There is only one God.

We must be watchful and aware of what is going on in our life or little by little we will find ourselves slowly giving away to compromise.

The devil will do everything he can to get you to give into compromise.

Application:

Satan wants to tempt us and destroy our lives. We must respond as Jesus did, WITH THE WORD OF GOD!

We must memorize the Word of God and speak it over our situations we are going through.

We are to worship God and God alone! No one else is worthy to be worshipped.

Prayer:

Lord, help us to focus on YOU, and to worship You! When the enemy comes against us, bring to our remembrance your Word to combat the schemes of the enemy. Help us to live by faith and not be swayed by circumstances. We know that You are the author and the finisher. We declare that we will not listen to the word of the enemy. NOT TODAY SATAN! In Jesus Name, Amen!

Sermon Title: On Your Mark : Run Your Race

Sermon Author: Rev. Johnny Mendoza, Youth Pastor, Evangel Temple, Columbus, GA

Scriptures:

Hebrews 11:39-40

³⁹ These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, ⁴⁰ since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

Hebrews 11 is often referred to as the Hall of Faith

- Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses – these guys were commended for their faith.

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

The writer of Hebrews compares life to a race.

- The enemy has twisted this concept to get us to think that life is a competition.
- We run the race of life for the witnesses not the other racers.
- We run because of the foundation and legacy left for us.
- We also run for the witnesses around us so they will be encouraged and start running themselves.
- We are never called to run against someone but to run FOR someone.

The Goal of the enemy is not to pull you backwards, but to get you to stop.

When you get tangled up in something it can be really frustrating.

If the enemy can't kill you then he'll just get you to quit.

- He does this with both sin and distraction.
 - He'll trap you with habitual sin.
 - Maybe get you into an unhealthy relationship
 - Or maybe he'll get you with insecurity.
 - You're not running as fast as that person...you should quit.
 - There's 2 things you need to remember,

2 things to remember:

Point 1: Everyone has a specific race that has been marked out for them.

Your race is not supposed to look like everyone else's.

- Here is how it should be similar to others.
 - It should include a devotional life.
 - Prayer and the Word is for everyone and is essential to your life.
 - It should look like righteous living.
 - Striving to be more Christ like.
- Everything else is specific to you!
 - Different Spiritual Gifts
 - Different Talents
 - Even different positions

Point 2: Jesus is your rest station.

How do we keep running when we feel like giving up?

- We consider what Jesus did for us
 - How he loves us
 - What he went through for us.
 - This gives us the energy to keep going.

Christians will always be tempted to quit running when they take their eyes off of Jesus.

Summary:

The enemy's goal is to get us to stop. He does not want us serving Jesus or telling our friends about Jesus. The enemy will do everything he can to distract us from doing what God wants us to do.

God has a specific plan for each of our lives. We don't have to try to live someone else's life.

Jesus has a plan for us and we have to stay focused on him and determine in our hearts to never quit serving him.

Application:

Today, we're asking God to remove all the distractions and entanglements from our lives.

Some of us have stopped running for whatever reason and we're going to ask Jesus to shift our focus.

Don't try to run someone else's race. Run YOUR race.

How can you live this out at school?

Encourage your friends to live their lives to the fullest for God as you do the same thing. Encourage your friends to keep following Jesus and to never give up. Encourage your friends to keep their eyes on Jesus.

Prayer:

Lord we thank you for this day. We thank you for your son Jesus and all that he has done for each of us. Thank you for the amazing plan you have for each of our lives. Help us to run the race you have marked out for us. We are not in a competition with one another, we just want to live our best life for you. Help us to not be distracted or trapped by sin. Remove anything that may be distracting us. Let our focus always be on you and your plan. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: Peace Believers

Sermon Author: Rev. Robbie Anderson, Chi Alpha Missionary, GA Tech

Scripture: John 16:25 - 33

Introduction:

Our world is fearful, anxious, uncertain, stressed. Families have lost the joy of silence because of the war that is raging on the inside of mom and dad as they worry about losing a job, or where the next point of income will come from. Bosses look at the bottom line and see red numbers that they know affect more than a bank account, but the team members who show up every day hoping for security in the workplace. Students worry if school will be a safe place today, will my friends accept me, will I be picked on today, will I graduate, etc.

Point 1: There will always be a time coming.

- A. Life is relentless because the Enemy is Relentless.
 - 1. Define Relentless: oppressively constant; incessant.
 - 2. Do not seek out peace. Seek out Jesus.
 - 3. The only way to have peace is to live inside of mission.
- B. Life is unpredictable at Best.
 - 1. Many times, as a self-preservation method we try to insure ourselves in the natural in hopes to lessen the unpredictability that is lurking around the corner.
 - 2. That's not how Jesus lived, and that's not how he modeled for his disciples to live.
 - a) Jesus would rather us have peace inside of the storm instead of calming the storm around you. -Mark Northcutt

Point 2: The Father is Fully Aware of Your Current Situation

- C. This is deep truth found in God's word that requires maturity and revelation from the Holy Spirit to help us grasp.
- D. How Do we reconcile the sovereignty of God over our circumstance?
- E. How Can I have peace in what I'm going through?
 - 1. To answer this question, we must evaluate our world view and what we believe about Christ.
- F. Your view of the sovereignty of God directly affects how you navigate your circumstances
 - 1. The good shepherd fully understands, is fully engaged, because he led you there.
- G. Your view of the Goodness of God directly affects how you navigate your circumstances
 - 1. If you view God as Good, with only your best intentions in his mind towards you, then you can find peace in every situation.
 - 2. If you view God as narcissistic, and a God who pawns his creation for his pleasure, you will never find peace in his presence.
 - 3. If you view God as a deity whose favor can be earned, you will quickly find yourself in the rat race of works instead of resting in his wonderful grace.

H. Your expectations from God are based on your views of God's sovereignty and goodness

1. Why didn't the Jews accept Jesus as King? They expected something different
2. If your expectations of God are that of which you expect only the calm, and never the storm, then you will learn to fear the storm instead of resting in it.
3. If your expectations of God require God to give more to you than he has already done, you will constantly be let down, because there wasn't anything else to be done.
 - a) If only God would do this, or give me that, or answer my prayer...
 - (1) I find that those who are mature enough to be thankful for the hope of Salvation first, are the ones who remain thankful for God's blessing instead of asking for more.

Point 3: Do You Finally Believe?

I. How does peace fit into the question?

1. The Peace Of God is Only Found In The Storm
2. Luke 8: 22 One day Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's cross to the other side of the lake." So they got into a boat and started out. 23 As they sailed across, Jesus settled down for a nap. But soon a fierce storm came down on the lake. The boat was filling with water, and they were in real danger. 24 The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, "Master, Master, we're going to drown!" When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and the raging waves. Suddenly the storm stopped and all was calm. 25 Then he asked them, "Where is your faith?" The disciples were terrified and amazed. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "When he gives a command, even the wind and waves obey him!"

J. The word peace in the NLT Translation is found in the book of John chapters 13-16 (The last supper)

K. Believe in What?

1. Do you believe that Jesus is who he says that he is?
2. Do you believe that you can have peace when sorrows and suffering much more abound?
3. Do you believe that the Throne of God is real and that we will worship at the king's feet engulfed by his Glory one Day?
4. Do you believe that this too shall pass?
5. Do you believe that God's purposes over your life have not ceased?
6. Do you believe that a real tangible living Holy Spirit can empower you to preach the gospel?
7. Do you believe that The Cross brought peace?

L. Jesus knows you can't fully believe until you've gone through that valley.

I have told you these things so that you may have ***peace in me***

1. The sending of the Advocate, Counselor, the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit - John 16:5-7
2. That you will suffer for my name – Acts 9:16
3. You will be hated by this world - John 15:18
4. I love you – John 13:34-35, Jeremiah 31:3

Application:

Faith is not faith until tested by trial and accounted for in action.

There are times we will go through hard situations. When we do and we remain faithful to God, our faith grows and we learn more and more to be at peace because God is in control.

Learn to be at peace when you go through hard times because God will see you through your stormy situation.

If you are struggling today, ask God to give you peace.

Prayer:

Dear God,

I thank you that you give us peace. You walk with us through every day. Through the good moments and bad moments, you are always with us. Thank you for giving us strength to walk through the storm and have peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sermon Title: Pushed, Torn, and Empty—but still in Position

Sermon Author: Chandra Coleman

Scripture: 2 Samuel 13:16-20

Observation:

Tamar was lonely and pushed out.

Tamar's robe was an outward expression of her inward royalty.

- The robe being torn didn't change her position.

Tamar means palm tree.

- Palm trees bend but they don't break.
- Palm trees have strength to withstand the storms of life.

Application:

Every time we are pushed out, we are really being pushed into position.

Every time the enemy gives us a history lesson of our past, we need to give him a victory lesson in our future.

Our robe may be torn, but we still have access to the King.

When we are broken, go to the King / go to God, instead of everyone else.

Our brokenness is a procession for God's glory to come in.

We are strong in God and with him we can withstand the storms of life, just like a palm tree.

Prayer:

Lord, Thank you for the brokenness in our lives. Help us to come to you with thanksgiving, instead of going to others for pity. Help us to realize that when others push us out, you are putting us into position for the call you have on our lives. In Jesus Name, AMEN!

Sermon Title: Royals: Sinner to Saints

Sermon Author: Rev. Robbie Anderson, Chi Alpha Missionary at GA Tech

Introduction:

1. The creation of man
 - a. A perfect creator creates a perfect creation. It is not good for man to be alone (Gen 2, Prov 18:22)
2. The fall of man
 - a. God gave one command, that of which we disobeyed. Gen 2:16
 - b. The result of this transgression (infringement or violation of a law, command, or duty) was two things. Of course (Romans 6:23), but a more calamitous repercussion is separation from the creator. (Isaiah 58-59).
 - c. This separation is where the real issue is because death is understood, but that is a moment that happens, though proactive in our daily life, it's not the struggle. Being separated is the struggle.
3. The Giving of The Law
 - a. The Mosaic law was given to Moses for the Hebrews so they might be set apart from the others people groups as identified by Jehovah. The problem is that that the law only brought more light to our sin reminding us ever more that we need to be redeemed unto restoration, (Romans 5:20)
 - b. But there was a problem... man does not have the capacity to bring restoration. Only a perfect blood sacrifice can do that.
4. The Redemption of Man
 - a. The cross, and shed blood of Jesus, our propitiation for our transgression (sin) is how we overcome the struggle of being separated from God.
 - i. The overarching theme of this life journey has always been restoration.
5. The Commission of Man
 - a. This is our mission now. To carry the good news that we have access to restoration in Jesus so that our struggle will be moderated by the grace and mercy given to us only by the actions of Jesus on the cross.
 - b. Matthew 28:19
6. The Hope of Man
 - a. The Hope of Salvation (Romans 8:24....)
 - b. As we wait for salvation to be completed in our souls, we have this obligation to submit to the pruning of the Holy Spirit so that we can become more like the Father through Jesus every day. This sanctification process is simply our road to restoration where we will be with Jesus every day.

Notice that everything we have discussed has been systematic and methodical with one great centric theme present after the fall.... restoration

1. How Do We Go From Sinner To Saint?
 - a. Through the cross of Jesus
2. This should be the immediate question each one of us must wrestle with after being found at the cross?
 - a. What's After The Cross For Me?
 - b. Romans 5:18 - 6:18

Romans 5

¹⁸ Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. ¹⁹ Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous.

²⁰ God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant. ²¹ So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chapter 6

Sin's Power Is Broken

Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? ² Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? ³ Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? ⁴ For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.

⁵ Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. ⁶ We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. ⁷ For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. ⁸ And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. ⁹ We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. ¹⁰ When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. ¹¹ So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.

¹² Do not let sin control the way you live;* do not give in to sinful desires. ¹³ Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. ¹⁴ Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace.

¹⁵ Well then, since God's grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not! ¹⁶ Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. ¹⁷ Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we

have given you. ¹⁸ Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living.

¹⁹ Because of the weakness of your human nature, I am using the illustration of slavery to help you understand all this. Previously, you let yourselves be slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin. Now you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living so that you will become holy.

3. From Sinners to Saints

- a. We are no longer slaves to sin.
- b. We tend to think of slavery as this barbaric bounding of our physical nature where our task master has his way with us. I would interject that a more accurate picture is one where we were once always under the accusation of death simply because we were born, and that no choice, no thought, no action would ever bring freedom.
- c. Inside of slavery we see the tension of if I do not do right, then I will not necessarily be blessed, or given goodness, but rather if I do right, I won't get in trouble, or be exposed, or found out.
- d. That is a part of our slavery, but a more accurate aspect of our slavery to sin was not that we could fix it, but that it was never going away. No matter what we did, or how we thought, or who we helped, or how we felt, we were never going to gain access to freedom. This way of thinking is called works.
- e. But Jesus!
 - What Jesus did was so profound, so altering to our fabric, so opposed to everything that we knew, that his glory is still being revealed. We don't fully understand it, we can't fully realize it, it will never cease, but we can dive into it so fully that even a glimpse of his Majesty, because the veil has been torn, will break you in such a way that you will be scared by his love like nothing else.

Application:

In Christ, we are no longer slaves to sin.

In Christ, we are forgiven by grace, not by works or we might brag about it.

Ephesians 2:8-9

Through the forgiveness of Jesus Christ, the power of sin is broken off of our lives.

Through Jesus, we are redeemed and set free.

Today, ask God to reveal himself to you in a fresh new way and to help you understand his grace more than you ever have before this moment.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for sending your son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. Thank you that in Christ we are freed from the slavery of sin the moment we pray and ask you into our hearts. Thank you for saving us and giving us a new life.

Sermon Title: Separating yourself from evil

Sermon Author: Rev. Mark O'Quinn

Youth Pastor, Parkway Assembly of God, Macon, GA

Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:4-7

Observation:

The verse portrays Paul writing a letter to Timothy who was one of Paul's partners in ministry. Paul had met Timothy when Timothy was a teenager. Timothy had been Paul's disciple for quite some time and he finally sent him on his way to do ministry by himself.

It had become apparent to Paul that Timothy was being influenced by non-believers and self-proclaimed believers who were distorting the truth of God where he was currently doing ministry. We see from scripture that Timothy was a very wise young man and had a calling on his life. However, Paul was frequently having to write Timothy these letters of encouragement.

We can see from the scriptures that Timothy, although he had a calling from God and was trying to do his best to do God's work, yet he allowed himself to become victim and influenced by the pagans (people who did not know God), and people who were trying to pervert the gospel.

Paul knew these things were going on and it discouraged him a little bit because he knew the potential Timothy had in the Lord. However, he knew that he was easily influenced and had given into compromised. It caused Paul to fret because he had two other disciples that had fell victim to Satan and deserted the ministry not long before this was happening and he didn't want this to happen.

When I look in this room today, I see a lot of Timothys. All of us have the potential to do incredible things for the kingdom of God. We are smart, some are outgoing, some can sing, some are athletic, some have good leadership qualities, we carry ourselves well. We have all the attributes that would qualify us and set us apart to be good leaders, yet there's something deterring us from achieving that. For some, we are also like Timothy in the fact that the enemy is trying to influence us and cause us to compromise on a daily basis. Some of us may be withstanding the enemy but some of us are becoming more vulnerable and vulnerable every day.

As a Christian, we are like a soldier. We have an objective just like an actual infantry soldier. As a soldier we do not concern ourselves and entangle ourselves with the negative thoughts and words of people in our schools and work places who are living in out right sin and rebellion towards God. It is not logical for us to concern ourselves with what they think, the things they do, and the places they go that do not glorify God.

Like a soldier, we are highly esteemed and have an objective that exceeds anything in this world. The soldier with a mission does not concern his or herself with petty things. We are soldiers of Christ and there is absolutely no reason we should concern ourselves with the perceptions and sinful nature of the civilians who are bound by the devil.

So many times, we lose sight of our objective as soldiers of Christ due to what other people think. WE say things like: "I don't want to be made fun of. Sin is fun, it's what's cool. I can't fathom not being accepted in my social circle. All these thoughts keeping us from our duties as a soldier of Christ.

Being attracted to sinful things that will please our flesh in no way honors God.

Who are we trying to please? If we are sitting here and saying, "You know, I'm not conducting myself as a soldier of Christ, I worry about what people think of me too much to live a life that glorifies God, much less tell people about God," then we need to re-evaluate our lives. The reason we get in that boat is because we are not serving the right commanding officer. If we are not glorifying God, we are worshipping and glorifying the other guy.

It's a morbid thing to think about, the idea that you serve Satan instead of God, but the reality is that if you violate God's commandments, live a life that isn't pleasing to him, are dead in sin and you are ultimately serving and worshipping Satan.

You can't serve two commanding officers. You either march to one's drum and abide by one's rules or the other. We can't get excited during worship but we get excited and happy about everything the world has to offer us. It's because we are not serving the right commanding officer, we are marching to the drum of the enemy.

2 Timothy 2:20-21

In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.

We can fall into 1 of 2 categories:

We are destined for greatness and are committed to the calling God has on our life. We are comparable to the articles of gold and silver described in this passage. Reserved for special purposes.

Or...

We are sitting here like the wood and clay articles. Merely for common use, we don't have a chance at making an impact for the kingdom of God because we are not serving him with our lives. We are merely wood and clay. We don't respect ourselves and we don't care if others respect us either. We allow people to take advantage of us and we are ok with it.

The enemy wants us to be like the wood and clay, useless. BUT CHECK THIS OUT.....God views you as a gold and silver article, a jewel, and he wants you to see that in yourself.

Application:

Questions to think about:

Are we like Timothy?

Timothy had a great calling, but he was constantly being influenced by the world and Satan, not trusting the plan his Heavenly Father had for him. However, he eventually held true to God's plan and no longer concerned himself with cares of others. Timothy knew the magnitude of his calling and that it couldn't be compromised by people in this world and their views of him. Timothy finally acknowledged who his commanding officer was.

Does there need to be a change in who you serve?

Some of us may have been serving Satan, instead of God.

Do you need to put your trust back in God today?

Today we have an opportunity to make things right, fall in line with the plan God has on our lives and live for him.

It's time for some in this room to discharge from the army of the enemy and enlist with God.

Stop worrying about what people destined for hell think. There's nothing cool about turning your back on God and spending eternity in hell.

Choose to serve God. Become that precious jewel, that silver and gold article, that Jesus wants you to be. Separate yourself from the wood and clay.

What do you need to separate yourself from today, who do you need to separate yourself from?

Prayer:

Dear God,

Reveal to us anything that has separated us from you. Help us to keep our focus on you. Give us the strength to turn away from anything that is not of you, that has attracted our attention away from you. Forgive us Lord for the times we have allowed the enemy to take first place in our lives. Help us to always be conscious to keep you first. Help us to not be influenced by the world. May we always seek to be influenced by you. In Jesus Name I pray, Amen.

Sermon Title: SET APART: Set Apart Your Time

Sermon Author: Rev. Eric McDonald, Youth Pastor at Evangel Community Church, Snellville, GA

Scripture: Psalm 46:10a; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Observation:

Intro

Have you ever met someone that was considered “weird” and because of that not a lot of people hung out with them? Or maybe they talked about him because they didn’t know what else to do. Usually those people look different or talk different or their opinions are different and they’re not like anyone else. Did you know that as Christians we are called to be different?

Message

As Christians, we’re called to be holy. Being holy means to be set apart. Today, we’re going to be talking about setting apart time with God. This is way easier said than done because of the world that we live in.

A while back there was a commercial for Nintendo DS and the tag line at the end of the commercial was “Do something with your nothing.”

Our society puts such a high standard on being busy. Like that commercial says: if you got nothing going on, make sure to fill it with something. How many of you would say that you would consider yourself to be pretty busy? You have a lot of stuff going on.

Everything’s getting faster these days, the Internet, food, technology, there’s a drive thru for everything! What’s the deal with drive thru’s, anyway? Are we that busy that we need a drive thru for everything (food, drycleaners, coffee, pharmacy, bank, marriages)?

There’s even a drive thru funeral where you can drive up to look at the dead body ... I mean come on! If you don’t believe me, look it up.

Are we really that busy? We think that technology is helping simplify our lives, because things are getting done faster. But all we do is add more stuff to our lives.

Society today tells us that we need to be busy and to make the most of time.

Did you know that there are nations in Europe that take midday breaks from their jobs? How many of you would love that?

After your lunch period, there’s a 50-minute naptime! Wouldn’t that be awesome!?

But that’s not the case here in America. We feel like if we’re bored, or not busy, then we’re not doing enough.

But look at what the Bible says:

Psalms 46:10a – “Be still, and know that I am God!”

It is necessary to find rest in God.

The rest that I’m talking about isn’t watching TV or sleeping!

It’s about putting all those things aside and setting apart time with God. Time to just be still and pray and listen to Him. Time to read your bible and get to know what he’s all about. Just spend time with God.

That’s how we begin to become holy or set apart. We begin to set apart time with God.

Spending time with God is like putting gas in a car. There is no way for the car to keep going on its own. It needs to stop and pull into a gas station to refill so that it can continue to operate the way it was intended to.

We can just keep going with all the stuff we have going on in our lives: School, friends, homework, family, clubs, sports, etc.

We need to stop regularly, refill, and recharge so that we can live the way God intended us to.

Tell about a time when I didn’t spend much time with God and how it affected me in a negative way, and then how I got time with God and it refilled me.

We need to learn to make it a habit to spend time with God on a daily basis: praying, journaling, worshipping, reading Scripture, and just enjoying the life that God’s given you.

So, I want you to think about three things:

- 1. What do you need to have less of in your life to make more time for God?** Maybe for you it’s less TV, or video games, or being on your phone. Or maybe it’s going to bed a little earlier or waking up a little earlier (depending on if you’re a morning person or night person) to spend time with God. Because we should give our best to Him. The reality is, we need to be intentional about making time for God.
- 2. How do you connect with God best?** It’ll be difficult to develop the habit of spending time with God if you start doing things you don’t like doing in general. For example, if you don’t like to read, then maybe listen to the Bible on your phone app. You can also put on worship music.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

I can’t give you one general formula or principle to live by to make you all spend time with God. You need to figure it out for yourself. You need to learn and discover how you best connect with God yourself.

Tell about how I best connect with God...BIBLE app.

Figure what the best way is for you to spend time with God daily.

3. Do it! In order to get better at it we just need to keep doing it. You didn't just start out being able to run. You started out crawling, then stumbling around trying to walk, then waddling, then you could walk well, and eventually you could run.

Application:

Start out crawling ... start out spending time with God just a few minutes a day and work up to more. Eventually, you'll have long, deep, meaningful times with God.

Don't just give up on it because it might be hard or it's not what you thought it would be. It will get there. It just takes time and practice. You aren't best friends with someone overnight. You become best friends because of the time you spend with a person. The same is true with God. So let's start off with being set apart for God by setting apart time with God.

Prayer:

If you want to commit to set apart time with God everyday this year, please raise your hand with me.

Dear God,

Help us to build in time with you. Sometimes we just have so much going on in our lives. Help us to learn to spend time with you every day. Help us all experience your presence in our lives in a greater way. In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.

Sermon Title: SET APART: Set Yourself Apart

Sermon Author: Rev. Eric McDonald, Youth Pastor at Evangel Community Church in Snellville, GA

Scripture: Leviticus 11:44; 2 Timothy 1:9

Intro

Share about a nickname you have had.

Message

A nickname is a name that you are known by either because of an event/circumstance or by your actions.

I wonder if anyone could call you this nickname...a Christian?

Do people know you're a Christian because you live it out or simply because you say you are?

There is a huge danger in saying it and not living it. This is why many in our world view Christians as hypocrites.

We need to be Christians without having to say it.

This man named St. Francis said: "Preach the Gospel at all times; when necessary use words."

Basically, what he's saying is actions speak louder than words...that people should know who God is based on the way we live our lives not based on only what we tell people.

What separates you from everyone else as a Christian? That's what it means to be holy. Set apart.

Leviticus 11:44 – "Be holy because I am holy."

2 Timothy 1:9 – "God...called us to live a holy life."

So how do you show you're a Christian without telling and convincing people that you are. Here are 4 ways to be set apart for God...

Point 1: Don't conform

Romans 12:2 – "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (NIV).

A lot of people are going to be doing things with their lives that are selfish, self-serving, and flat out wrong. But being set apart means not doing what everyone else is doing.

When everyone's talking trash about someone, you choose to be their one and only friend.  When

others are sleeping with their boyfriend or girlfriend, you choose to wait for the person you're going to marry. When people you know are making crude jokes or comments, you choose not to be a part of it. Being set apart for God means living to higher standards.

Here's the next way to live a life set apart...

Point 2: Live with Joy

People want to be around people who are fun and have joy in their life. And being set apart means to have a joy about life that others don't have.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 – “Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

When you live life with joy, it will leave others wondering why you are the way that you are. They'll wonder what's different about you. The third way to live a life set apart, and this is hard for a lot of Christians...

Point 3: Be known for what you're FOR, not what you're AGAINST

It's easy to fall into the trap that says, “Well if you're a Christian you SHOULDN'T do this,” or “DON'T do that!” Christians who live that way automatically fall into the judgment trap where they're constantly judging others based on what THEY think is wrong.

But we need to live in such a way that people see what we stand for, not against. When we make it clear what we're for, people will start to view you as a positive person.

Don't you hear it all the time — people at school complaining about and trashing other people? What if you didn't do that? You would definitely be set apart in a great way, which leads me to my fourth and final point: You will be set apart...

Point 4: By your love

John 13:35 – “Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

Jesus commands this...it's not passive, God loves us first...that should flow into us, through us to others. It's God's love that redeems us, restores us, renews us. We are to be that love to others.

John 15:13 – “There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.”

This is sacrificial, unconditional love. Love without strings attached.

How well do you love others? Does it flow out of you?

Summary:

Don't conform to what everyone else is doing, live your life full of joy, be known by what you're for, and live loving others. If you can get those four things down, you'll be living a life set apart for God. Here's what it all comes down to...Don't just say you're different; be different!

Application:

Choose to be different. Don't be like everyone else. Let people see the joy of the Lord in your life. You don't have to trash-talk everyone at school. Love others like Jesus did.

How can you live this out at school?

Be a leader. Don't conform to the bad habits you may see in others.

Choose to be an encourager to others.

Prayer:

If you want to live your life set apart for God, please raise your hand so I can pray for you.

Dear God,

Help us to be set apart for you. Help us to live our lives different from the world. We want to reflect you in all we do.

Sermon Title: SILENT KILLERS: Anxiety

Sermon Author: Rev. Eric McDonald, Youth Pastor, Evangel Community Church, Snellville, GA

Scripture: Philippians 4:6-8

Observation:

Today, we will be focusing on the silent killer we call anxiety. We will focus on what anxiety is and how to equip ourselves against this silent attack of the devil.

What is anxiety?

The words “worry” and “anxious” are often used interchangeably. While the words are definitely related, psychologists define worry and anxiety differently. The symptoms of worry show in the brain differently than the symptoms of anxiety. Worry is short-lived concerned about a particular situation. Anxiety is a constant feeling of stress, unease, or worry. Worry is momentary, anxiety is often long lasting.

Anxiety can be defined as awareness working against you. It's an intense awareness of what *could* go wrong. Anxiety is never founded in truth or reality; it's a fear that sinks in as you become aware of all the possibilities of what's "wrong". The devil uses anxiety to cloud our minds to believe that everything that could go wrong will...Murphy's Law

Philippians 4:6-8 – “Don't *be anxious* about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.”

In this passage, we see that Paul is encouraging the church to not be anxious; but to bring our anxieties to God. He shows us that when we do this, the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds. He also instructs us to think about things that are true, and right, and pure, and lovely instead of thinking on things that the devil uses to distract us. The battle of anxiety happens in our minds. In order to combat this silent killer, we must use the weapons that God gave us (the Holy Spirit, the Bible, community, etc.) to take our thoughts captive and to focus on His goodness!

The threat of shadows

Psalm 23:1-4 – “The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. Even when I walk through *the valley of the shadow of death*, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.”

In these scriptures, the psalmist is writing a reminder to himself (and to us) that God is with him. He calls God his shepherd, his guide. He also reminds us that God is with us in the valley of the shadow of death, or the low points in our lives. It's interesting how he notes that death is a shadow. Have you ever been afraid of a shadow, only to realize that it was nothing?

The devil uses shadows to make us believe that danger is near and that he can overcome us. Here are some shadows that the devil may be using to threaten you:

The shadow of dependency - We are told so often that we should be able to handle all that life throws at us on our own and that we should be independent. The devil uses the shadow of dependency to try to isolate us from community, and ultimately from Jesus, where there is safety. When actually, dependency on Jesus is the core of our Christian walk, and dependency on community is how we walk strongly through life. When we realize that we are dependent, we are pushed closer to God and to His church.

The shadow of doubt - The devil uses doubt to cause friction in our faith, making it seem like God is not "holding up His end of the bargain." Having doubts may seem like a Christian "no-no", but actually doubt can push us deeper into our faith. When we get real, ask God tough questions and genuinely seek answers, God responds to our doubts with answers and peace. In turn, our convictions deepen and our trust in Him rises.

The shadow of death - The biggest weapon that the enemy uses is making you feel that your death is imminent. He lies and tries to get you to believe that you're going to die. But the truth is that Jesus took away the sting of death, and through Him we have eternal life.

Everything Satan does today is a shadow threat. To be absent from this body is not death for a Christian, it's the step we take into eternal life with Jesus. The devil tries to make us scared of these shadows, but we need to realize that they are only shadows and God is with us in those valleys.

How to make awareness work for you

1 Peter 5:8-9 – "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings." (NIV)

Those two instructions - be alert and be of sober mind- are keys to combating anxiety. To **be alert** means that you understand and are prepared for an attack to come at any moment. But if you're only alert and you don't have a sober mind, you will always be anxious.

To be **of sober mind** means that your mind is only under the influence of God's Spirit. A sober mind puts the situation into context. A sober mind helps you understand that God is greater than whatever attack the devil throws at you. A sober mind helps you understand that the threats of the enemy are only *shadows*, because the enemy has already been defeated!

In this scripture, Peter also encourages the church to stand firm in our faith. What you may not realize is that other people, even those closest to you, may be combating anxiety in their lives as well. What if your heightened awareness for the good things of God also encouraged those around you? By sharing what you are anxious about with trusted friends and family, you can come together with other believers to strengthen and encourage one another; and that means you don't have to fight your battles alone. *Share about a time you may have struggled with anxiety.*

Summary:

Today, we've defined what anxiety is and weapons that we can use to combat anxiety. The daily battle of anxiety is not an easy one, but the Bible does promise that God will restore, strengthen, and support you through your battle! Don't be discouraged! Anxiety is not going to stay with you forever. God will reveal His glory through the strength He gives you in the midst of the trial; He will restore you!

Application:

Any time you are feeling anxious, pray and ask God to give you peace.

Prayer:

If you struggle with anxiety and you would like prayer today, raise your hand.

Dear God,

I thank you that you give us peace in our minds. Your word says in Philippians 4:6 that we do not have to be anxious about anything. Thank you for replacing anxiety in our lives with your peace. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: SILENT KILLERS: Shame

Sermon Author: Rev. Eric McDonald

Youth Pastor at Evangel Community Church in Snellville, GA

Have you ever felt like someone was out to get you? Maybe it was a teacher who always called on you to give the answers. Maybe a coach who regularly used you as an example of what the rest of the team shouldn't be doing. Maybe it seems like your parents are always on your back about everything. Sometimes these things can be in our mind, but did you know there really is someone out to get you?

John 10:10 says that the devil comes "only to steal, kill, and destroy." We can see that this is true just by looking around in our world today. We are surrounded by the threat of war all over the world, areas of the world that have extreme poverty and lack basic human needs, and the violence in our nation today. All of these events and circumstances are evidence that the devil is out to destroy us.

But not only does the devil attack on a global scale; he also attacks all of us on a personal level. Every day we wake up to a new threat to our minds and hearts. The devil is stealthy and his attacks against us are most often sneaky and silent.

The result of those attacks are often anxiety, fear, shame, and depression. The scripture in John also says that Jesus has come to give us a full life. This full life means that we don't have to succumb or be defeated by the devil's attempts. Jesus has given us full authority and power to defeat the devil!

Today, we will be focusing on the silent killer we call shame. We will focus on what shame is and how to equip ourselves against this silent attack of the devil.

Scripture: Read Genesis 3:1-11

Observation:

What is shame?

Shame is the tool that the devil uses to cloud our minds to make us believe that we are less than what we are. In Genesis 3, we see that Adam and Eve were deceived by the devil and were ashamed to meet God. They did not want to see Him because they thought that they were not good enough, and they tried to cover themselves. This was when shame first entered the world. Since then, the devil has been using shame to keep us hidden and covered.

We are all subject to feeling shame. For many of us, shame becomes the lens through which we view ourselves. Thoughts like "I'm not good enough", "I'm not pretty enough", "I'm just not enough" cloud our self-image and ultimately affect our actions.

The lie of shame causes us to hide because we're afraid that what we think of ourselves could be true. The fact of the matter is that everyone feels this way. But as believers we know that Jesus came to redeem us from our shame. He sees our true selves, and He loves us for who we are not what we do.

Ephesians 1:7 – “He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.”

Guilt versus Shame

The words guilt and shame are often associated together and many think that they have the same meaning. However, guilt and shame have different meanings and they affect our souls differently. The feeling of guilt comes when we've acted wrongly or misbehaved, and it convicts us as “I **did** something bad.” The feeling of shame comes when we've misbehaved or when we feel embarrassed, and it attacks with the lie that says, “I **am** something bad.” Guilt focuses on the actions, shame focuses on the person.

Shame causes us to run and hide, just like Adam and Eve did in the Garden. The devil uses shame to attack what we think of ourselves. The lie of shame attacks self-image and self-confidence. The conviction that the Holy Spirit brings causes us to rethink our actions and to change our minds; the devil uses shame to bring condemnation that causes us to doubt and demean ourselves. The Holy Spirit is our ally against the lies of the devil, and He brings grace to us when we make mistakes. His grace reminds us that, because of Jesus, we are free from the lie of shame.

Whose voice are you listening to?

From the beginning, the devil has been a liar. In Genesis, we read that he lied to Eve about what God said to her. Through this lie, sin and shame entered the world. The Bible says that the devil is the father of all lies, and that he cannot do anything but lie.

Every day, the devil tries to get us to believe that what God says about us is not true. He uses shame as a tool to get us to live beneath the story that God is writing for us. If he can shame us through lies about ourselves (how we think about ourselves or what we think other people think about us), he can keep us from stepping into the true identity that God has given us. When we know who God has called us to be, we can walk in the confidence that God gave us to fulfill our story.

In **John 10:27**, Jesus says “my sheep know my voice.” As believers we are His sheep; we are the ones He cares for; we are the ones He has saved and redeemed. As we get to know Jesus, we get to know His voice and what He says about us. With that knowledge, we can deny the lies of the devil and shame cannot keep us from being who we truly are in Christ.

Which voices have you been listening to? Have you been listening to lies from the devil? Or have you been listening to truths from God?

Good Grace

In the Bible, Jesus is often seen sitting at a table enjoying a meal with His followers. At one particular meal, referred to as “The Last Supper”, Jesus breaks bread with His followers for the last time. This meal is often called Holy Communion. The meaning of this holy meal is “good grace”.

When we are battling the lie of shame in our lives, we don't give ourselves any room for grace - the grace to be human and the grace to make mistakes. But Jesus invites us to His table, not to offer us

theology or rules, but to offer His good grace. By dying on the cross for our sins and our shame, Jesus made the exchange for our shortcomings with His grace.

If you are going to overcome the lie of shame in your life, you have to allow yourself to receive the grace that Jesus gives you and to extend some grace for yourself, as well. We are all human, and we all fall short and make mistakes; but we all have the opportunity to receive and live in the good grace that Jesus offers us!

Romans 6:14 – “Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace.”

What are some areas in your life that you need to receive Jesus’ good grace? Ask God to reveal those areas to you and to help you overcome shame by accepting His grace.

Summary:

Today, we’ve defined what shame is and identified ways that the devil uses shame against us.

We’ve learned that the devil uses shame to cover us up and keep us from fulfilling the story that God is writing for us.

The truth is that Jesus died and rose again to redeem us from shame, and to give us His grace to combat shame in our lives.

Application:

Choose to listen to God’s voice about forgiveness and not the enemy’s voice of continual shame.

Reflect on the goodness of God’s saving grace this week.

How can you live this out at school?

Share about God’s saving grace with a friend this week. Share how Jesus removed our shame on the cross. Ask them if they have received God’s forgiveness in their own life.

Prayer:

If you have been filled with shame and you desire to sense God’s grace over your life, please raise your hand. I want to pray for you today.

Dear Jesus,
I thank you that you died on the cross for our sins. I thank you that you paid the price to take all our shame away. Help us to understand your love and forgiveness. Thank you that at the moment we prayed for forgiveness our shame was removed. I pray every person in this room today has experienced your forgiveness. Help us to walk in your freedom every day. Amen.

Sermon Title: Taking Courage to Encourage...talking yourself into it.

Sermon Author: Pastor Jason Branson, Assistant Pastor at Abundant Life Revival Center, Locust Grove, GA.

I love the phrase “taking courage.”

First of all, I love courage. I love a great story of courage. Every story of courage is a heroic one. They are made all the more captivating when the person who is courageous does it against all odds, and sometimes against their own nature.

When I was in Royal Rangers, our Ranger Code stated that a Royal Ranger is Alert, Clean, Honest, Courageous, Loyal, Courteous, Obedient, and Spiritual. Courageous, by far, was my favorite. It went on to explain that Courageous meant “He is brave in spite of danger, criticism, or threats.” I must admit that the “danger” part of this was the most appealing to me.

I think the reason that I love the phrase “taking courage” is because of the inference that you forcibly grasp courage, even if you do it against all odds.

I think that this is the reason that I love those who encourage.

en·cour·age

transitive verb

1. a : to inspire with courage, spirit, or hope : HEARTEN

1. b : to attempt to persuade : URGE

2. to spur on : STIMULATE

3. to give help or patronage to : FOSTER

Scripture: I Samuel 30:1-6 Amplified Bible (AMP)

Observation:

Did you see this last phrase about courage in verse 6?

The King James says it like this...

“but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God”

Let’s look at the situation that David found himself in:

- David was on the run from Saul, his king.
- David found sanctuary with the Philistines, the arch-enemies of his home nation, Israel.
- The Philistine king, Achish, gave David a city to live in. The name of the city was Ziklag, and David would keep it for Israel forever.
- David had accumulated an army of 600, that was made up, largely, of foreigners, misfits, and societal rejects. (However, among them were the 30 most powerful warriors alive.)

- David went out and attacked the enemies of Achish, and accumulated wealth for himself, his army, and Achish.
- In the midst of all of this accumulation, he and his army acquired families.
- While out on one of their missions, a sneaky group of people called the Amelekites attacked a vulnerable Ziklag, set it on fire, and carried off all of their families.
- The people found themselves in one of three categories...
 1. Those overcome with sadness (*verse 4*)
 2. Those overcome with anger (*verse 6*)
 3. Those overcome with exhaustion (*verse 10*)

David found himself in a foreign place...

but...

David encouraged himself in the Lord

...With everything he held dear gone...

David encouraged himself in the Lord

...And all of those who were closest to him were in no position to help...

but he had this...

David encouraged himself in the Lord

Sometimes all you have left is to encourage yourself!!

Sometimes you find yourself in a foreign place.

Sometimes everything you hold dear is gone.

Sometimes those closest to you are in no position to help.

Sometimes you just have to...

Encourage yourself in the Lord

I intend to encourage you today!

However, you're going to have to leave here.

Take Courage...

(...even if you have to talk yourself into it!)

You need to realize that God spoke...speaks...and will keep right on speaking

And every time He speaks, things happen!!

- Genesis 1 says...
God said let there be...and there was...and it was good

- Deuteronomy 8 & Matthew 4 say...
A person does not live on bread alone, but by everything the Lord says
- Job 9 says...
He tells the sun, 'Don't shine,' and it doesn't;
he pulls the blinds on the stars
- Psalm 29 says...
The voice of the Lord echoes above the sea
The voice of the Lord is powerful
The voice of the Lord is majestic
The voice of the Lord splits the mighty cedars
The voice of the Lord strikes with bolts of lightning
The voice of the Lord makes the barren wilderness quake
The voice of the Lord twists mighty oaks
- Psalm 33 says...
The word of the Lord is right and true
By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth
For he spoke, and it came to be, He commanded, and it stood firm
- Psalm 46 says...
God's voice thunders, and the earth melts!
- Psalm 148 says...
The heavens, the heights, His angels, His hosts, sun and moon, stars of light, heavens of heavens, and waters above the heavens

For He commanded and they were created
- Proverbs 8 says...
He set for the sea its boundary, so that the water would not transgress His command
- Jeremiah 51 says...
When He utters His voice—There is a multitude of waters in the heavens
- Matthew 8 says...
Even the winds and the sea obey Him
- 1 Thessalonians says...
The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord

- 2 Thessalonians 2 says...
The Lord Jesus will kill that Man of Evil with the breath that comes from his mouth
- Hebrews 1 says...
The Son is...sustaining all things by his powerful word
- Hebrews 11 says...
The universe was formed at God's command
- 2 Peter 3 says...
By God's word the heavens existed...and...by the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire

Take courage!!

God still is everything you need Him to be

'El (God) used about 250 times; 'Eloah (singular form) used 42 times in the book of Job; 'Elohim (plural form) used over 2000 times in the Old Testament; Yahweh (Lord) His covenant keeping name. Occurs over 7000 times in the Bible (translated as Jehovah in New Testament times); 'El Shaddai (God Almighty); "El Elyon (God Most High); 'El Ro'i ((The God Who Sees Me); 'El Olam (The Eternal God); 'El "elohe Yisra'el (God, the God of Israel); Yahweh-ropheka (The Lord, your [personal] physician); Yahweh-nissi (The Lord, my Banner); Yahweh-Shalom (The Lord is Peace); Yahweh-tsidkenu (The Lord, our Righteousness); Yahweh-shammah (The Lord is There); Yahweh-sabaoth (The Lord of hosts); Yahweh-ro'i (The Lord, our Shepherd)

In the Psalms, alone, He is...

A Shield, a Shepherd, A Refuge, A Dwelling Place, Judge, Righteous, High and Exalted, Upright, Great and Greatly to be Praised, Glorious and Excellent, The God Who Does Wonders, To Be Feared, Good and Upright, Great, Awesome, Father, Lord, The King of Glory, The Supreme Ruler, Merciful, Gracious, Slow to Anger, Plenteous in Mercy, a Sun, The Same, The Most High, Blessed, Good, and His Mercy Endures Forever, The Help of My Countenance, Known, In the Heavens, Holy, My Keeper, With Me, Close to Me, Around Me, For Me, My Helper, My Treader Down of enemies, My Rock, My Fortress, My Deliverer, My Mercy, My Strength, My Buckler, My Light, My Confidence, My Salvation, My High Tower, My God, My Trust, My Avenger, My Hope, My Governor, My Inheritance, My Shepherd, My Hiding Place, My Defence, and My Portion.

Watch this!!!

Philippians 2:9-11 New International Version 1984 (NIV1984)

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus is...

Advocate; Almighty; Alpha and Omega; Amen; Apostle of our Profession;
Atoning Sacrifice for our Sins; Author of Life; Author and Perfecter of our Faith;
Author of Salvation; Beginning and End; Blessed and only Ruler; Bread of God; Bread of Life;
Bridegroom; Capstone; Chief Cornerstone; Chief Shepherd; Christ; Creator; Deliverer; Eternal Life;
Faithful and True; Faithful Witness; Faithful and True Witness;
First and Last; Firstborn From the Dead; Firstborn over all creation; Gate; God;
Good Shepherd; Great Shepherd; Great High Priest; Head of the Church;
Heir of all things; High Priest; Holy and True; Holy One; Hope of Glory;
Horn of Salvation; I Am; Image of God; Immanuel; Judge of the living and the dead;
King Eternal King of Israel; King of the Jews; King of kings; King of the Ages; Lamb;
Lamb of God; Lamb Without Blemish; Last Adam; Life; Light of the World;
Lion of the Tribe of Judah; Living One; Living Stone; Lord; Lord of All; Lord of Glory;
Lord of lords; Man from Heaven; Master; Mediator of the New Covenant; Mighty God;
Morning Star; Offspring of David; Only Begotten Son of God; Our Great God and Savior; Our
Holiness; Our Husband; Our Protection; Our Redemption;
Our Righteousness; Our Sacrificed Passover Lamb; Power of God; Precious Cornerstone;
Prophet; Rabbi; Resurrection and Life; Righteous Branch; Righteous One; Rock;
Root of David; Ruler of God's Creation; Ruler of the Kings of the Earth; Savior;
Son of David; Son of God; Son of Man; Son of the Most High God;
Source of Eternal Salvation for all who obey him; The One Mediator;
The Stone the builders rejected; True Bread;
True Light; True Vine; Truth; Way; Wisdom of God; Word; & Word of God.

Take courage!!

God still does everything we need Him to do.

He forgives all our sins and heals all our diseases.
He redeems us from death, and crowns us with love and tender mercies.
He fills our life with good things.
Our youth is renewed like the eagle's!

The Lord gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly.

The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; He does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. The love of the Lord remains forever with those who fear him. His salvation extends to the children's children of those who are faithful to his covenant, of those who obey his commandments!

Be encouraged in the Lord!!

Talk yourself into it!!!

Application:

Sometimes we have to talk ourselves into having courage to do something. No matter how big or small it may be, we have to have courage to do it.

Today, you may need courage to start doing something new.

It takes courage to encourage ourselves and to encourage other people.

This week, let's take time to look for people who need to be encouraged and then do something nice for them.

If you have been discouraged yourself, take a few moments this week to encourage yourself through God's word.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for always encouraging us through your word. I thank you that you are our hope and our peace. I thank you that you give us everything we need. Help us to not be discouraged by life but to be encouraged by your Word. Help us to encourage our friends as well. Some of them are going through hard times. Help us to be sensitive to their needs this week and be a blessing to someone in need. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: Teamwork / Unity

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

**Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 Main text for message
Psalm 133:1, John 17:23, Romans 15:5, & Colossians 3:14**

Definition of Unity - the state of being made one; to unify.

Unity is strength...when there is teamwork and collaboration wonderful things can be achieved. – Mattie Stepank

Definition of Teamwork - the combined action of a group of people, especially when effective and efficient.

To have good teamwork means we must have good collaboration; working together in a combined effort.

Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean. – Ryunosuke Satoro

Point 1: Everyone has value.

In this Youth Alive® Club, no one should ever feel inferior or superior of others based on the perceived importance of one person over another or one ability over another.

We are all on the same team.

We work together as a team.

We need each other.

We all have to work together to accomplish the goals we have for Youth Alive® in our school.

Let's choose to appreciate people for their strengths and not dwell on their weaknesses.

Everyone adds value to the team and the team wouldn't be the same without each one of us.

Focusing on each other's strengths will help us work together in unity.

If we choose to focus on the weaknesses of each other, we will quickly grow irritated with one another.

An irritation will quickly fester into something that causes disunity on the team.

Point 2: Everyone has a place.

Each person has a place on this team.

Let's learn from one another.

Some of us may be more gifted in certain areas and we can help bring strength to that area.

Each one of us is important for our Youth Alive® Club to function properly.

We each have different gifts or abilities that add value to the team.

When we work together we can accomplish so much more than by ourselves. Just listen at this illustration from a Peanuts Charlie Brown Cartoon.

Illustration:

We are probably more familiar with Charlie Brown but there were other characters in the cartoon like, Lucy, Linus and even the dog Snoopy.

In one of the Peanuts cartoon episodes Lucy demanded that Linus change TV channels, threatening him with her fist if he didn't. "What makes you think you can walk right in here and take over?" asks Linus.

"These five fingers," says Lucy. "Individually they're nothing but when I curl them together like this into a single unit, they form a weapon that is terrible to behold."

"Which channel do you want?" asks Linus. Turning away, he looks at his fingers and says, "Why can't you guys get organized like that?"

Credit for the illustration is given to Charles Schultz.

This illustration helps us with understanding the Body of Christ. By ourselves we can only do so much, but with everyone of us working together we can do powerful things for God. When we work together we become a threat to the enemy. Together we are stronger. Together we are better. Together we can defeat the enemy. Together we can reach more people for Jesus.

Point 3: Everyone needs humility

C. S. Lewis said "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."

Serve one another out of humility.

Don't do things with a prideful attitude wanting to receive personal recognition.

Sincerely desire to be a benefit to the team and serve with a heart that cares for others.

Your strengths and abilities will be a blessing to the whole team when your attitude is right.

Gordon B. Hinckley said, "Being humble means recognizing that we are not on earth to see how important we can become, but to see how much difference we can make in the lives of others."

We are on a journey to make a difference in the lives of people in our school.

We can accomplish so much more working together as a team.

Summary:

As Christians, we are the body of Christ, meaning we are a group of students who love God and serve God together in a combined effort to reach more people.

Each of the scripture verses we read today talked about being united. When we are united for a purpose and we work together as a team, we can accomplish so much good for our school and the lives of the people around us.

In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul talked about being united as one body of believers and seeing the value of each other. We need each other. We can depend on each other. We can learn from one another.

When we are united in our efforts to reach our school this year with the good news of Jesus Christ, we will see many of our friends lives changed by the truth and power of God's Word.

Application:

In Youth Alive® Club we are all on the same team serving together in our school.

We are better together. There is strength in numbers.

Teamwork makes the dream work.

Let's dream big for our school this year, pray hard, and work together to make the dream come true.

How can you live this out at school?

Let's work together as a team to reach our friends.

A few ways we can do this is by going out during break and talking to our friends about Jesus, inviting them to come to our Youth Alive® Club, and inviting them to our youth ministry services each week.

(Maybe plan a specific thing for your group to do in a united effort to reach your friends at school.)

Prayer:

God we thank you that we have the opportunity to serve you this year in our school. Help us to walk in unity within our Youth Alive® Club. Help us to have great teamwork among ourselves so we can reach more people with the love of Jesus. We thank you for the value you have placed on each of our lives. Each person is important on this team. We are so thankful for everyone here today. We ask you to help our group to grow this year. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: The path God has set for you

Sermon Author: Rev. Mark O'Quinn

Youth Pastor, Parkway Assembly of God, Macon, GA

Scripture: Acts 8:26-38

Observation:

Phillip, an apostle of Christ was witnessing to people in Jerusalem, when suddenly God told him to go to Gaza. God told him to take the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. Phillip did not question God when he told him to take this journey, to take this path to Gaza. Despite being pre-occupied with a task doing God's work in Jerusalem, he immediately dropped what he was doing and went to Gaza.

As Phillip is walking down the road to Gaza he runs into what they called a Eunuch. This Eunuch was the head treasurer of the Ethiopian queen. He was in charge of all the finances of the Ethiopian government.

The Eunuch had traveled to Jerusalem to worship and he was on his way home. The Eunuch was sitting in his chariot reading scripture. It's an odd scene to envision but this man was laid back relaxed in his chariot reading scripture.

We see in scripture that the Holy Spirit spoke to Phillip in this moment and told him to approach the Eunuch. Phillip obeyed the Holy Spirit and walked up to this man and asked him do you understand this? To which the man replied no, how can I if no one explains it to me? Phillip proceeds to explain this scripture to the man. He explains this verse from Isaiah to the Eunuch telling him the passage is talking about Jesus; explains to him who Jesus is and then baptizes him.

Phillip's obedience led to this encounter with the Eunuch. Phillip followed a path that God had laid out for him without question, without dispute, without wavering, he just listened to God and as a result was able to lead this man to Christ.

There comes a point in our life where God will lead us down a road or down a certain path abruptly just like he did to Phillip. Initially you might question it. You might not be so sure it's the right route. You may be content and happy with where you are currently at. You may say God I'm not really feeling that direction. I know you have put this on my heart but I'm just not ready for that yet, I am comfortable where I am. Things are going good here.

What we must remind ourselves is that Gods plan for our life is greater than any plan we can manufacture ourselves. We must know that God has our best interests at heart and that he is going to use us in the most effective way possible to expand his kingdom and bring glory to his name.

You might be in a situation in your life where you don't understand why the things are happening like they are but ultimately God has you in the circumstance for a reason. Maybe you are in a class, or block at school and you don't have a lot of your friends in there with you but God is going to put someone in your path that needs to hear the gospel. They need the hope of Jesus and you're going to be the one to deliver it to them.

God has a path set for you, he's waiting for you to go down it, and many people will be helped in the process. Don't waver, just answer the call.

God placed the Eunuch in Phillip's path. It was a distinct encounter. It was no accident. If Phillip had ignored the tug of God to go down the path to Gaza that man could've pack up his things, moved along in his chariot and never knew the answer, never deciphered Old testament scripture and known that the prophet Isaiah was talking about Jesus. His salvation, his soul would have hung in the balance. But Phillip answered the call of God and walked down the path to a divine appointment.

You may be on a certain path tonight, one you don't understand, but it's the one God has made for you and he's going to use you for something great. You may be feeling led to be involved with something greater than yourself. God may be calling you to go down a certain path, but you have been wavering, you have been reluctant to go down, it is because you are comfortable with where you currently are.

Application:

I urge you to be like Phillip. Heed the call of God on your life. Follow the path of righteousness - the one that God has laid out.

Know that God has a specific reason for the path he has laid out for you. As we see from scripture God put Phillip on the particular path he did because the Eunuch was waiting for him, needed him. It was an uncommon occurrence for people of his stature to take a break in the middle of the road, plop down and start reading scripture but he did and the reason he did was because Phillip was coming along bearing the great news of Jesus Christ that was going to change that man's life forever.

We must know that we don't only better ourselves when we follow God's plan but we possess something vital for others along the way that we will encounter. There's a Eunuch in your path. Someone depending on you to depend on God and follow his plan because God has a divine appointment for you. God will never lead you down a path that doesn't have a purpose.

Some of us need to commit to following that path. We need to forgo our plans and follow Gods plans, because it will better our life and there is someone out there that needs us.

Let's commit to following God's leading in our school.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Help us to follow your plan for our lives. Help us to follow your voice as you urge us in a direction. Help us to have faith to follow you, even when we don't understand the path we are walking. Help us to be ready to be used by you to impact the lives of friends at school. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sermon Title: The Power of Prayer

Sermon Author: Rev. Jessica Riner, Georgia Youth Alive® Missionary

Scripture: 1 Kings 18: 41 – 45

Observation:

Elijah was a man who had faith that his prayers would accomplish much.

He believed that a prayer prayed by someone in a right relationship with God would change circumstances and situations.

Elijah believed in the power of prayer.

We must be careful to guard against teachings that undermine the power of prayer.

One popular belief would be that “it’s just fate”

Fate is the notion or belief that everything we do and everything that happens to us is already determined long before it occurs and it can’t be changed.

Truth be told – that is a Pagan belief.

Fate causes us to disbelieve that sincere, faithful, prayers will make a difference.

However, our FAITH in Jesus causes us to cry out to God because we know it does make a difference and prayer does change our circumstance and situations.

But be honest with yourself for a moment.....how often have we not prayed about certain things because we thought it did not matter.

Pagan teachings, ungodly teachings, unbiblical teachings and belief systems fill our society every day.

We must know the truth and not give into a false belief system of worldly ways.

There is power in prayer!

(This portion on 13 reasons to pray was taken from another source.)

When we are in a right relationship with God our prayers will:

1 - bring us closer to God and ensure us of our salvation

Hebrews 7:25 Therefore he (Jesus) is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

2 – open the way to a Spirit-filled life

Luke 11:13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

3 – bring us power for ministry

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

4 – build us up spiritually

Jude 1:20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.

5 – give us insight into Christ’s provision for us, wisdom, revelation, and knowledge of Christ

Ephesians 1: 16 – 19 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit^[a] of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength.

6 – help us overcome Satan

Ephesians 6:12-13, 18 ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.

7 – clarify God’s purposes for us

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

8 – draw us closer to Jesus

John 7:37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.

9 – bring us peace

Phil 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

10 – bring us healing

James 5:15a And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well.

11 – bring us refuge from trouble

Psalm 34:4-8 I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.

⁵ Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.

⁶ This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.

⁷ The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him,
and he delivers them.

⁸ Taste and see that the LORD is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

12 – honor God with praise and thanksgiving

Psalm 100:4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

13 – make Jesus's presence more real to us

Rev 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

Application:

Pray always.

We are told in scripture in 1 Thess 5: 17 to pray continually.

We must always keep on praying and believing God to move in our life and in the lives of our friends.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

I thank you that when we come to you in prayer, you hear us. I am thankful that our prayers draw us closer to you. I am thankful there is power in prayer. When we believe, we see miracles take place. When we pray to you, your presence is made more real to us. Help us to always remember to pray and seek your face every day. Amen.

Sermon Title: Now What?

Sermon Author: Rev. Jeremiah Hosford
Lead Pastor of Abundant Life Revival Center, Locust Grove, GA

Scripture: I Samuel 16 Saul and David

Faithfulness is Rewarded.

God sees in you what man cannot see.

Our faithfulness today, will be rewarded tomorrow.

As a shepherd boy, David was faithful to God. He cared for the sheep and did what he was told to do. Later in life, he was honored and chosen to be the next king of Israel. God saw he was faithful in the small things and made a ruler over his nation.

When the prophet came to anoint the next king he looked at all the outward signs for a good leader.

- Eliab was strong.
- Benidab was wise.
- Shammar had talent.
- David was just a kid.

But David had humility. He was the youngest brother and his dependence was on the Lord his God.

David was anointed by the Prophet Samuel to be the next King.

Now What?

Think about your life, God has begun to put his passion in some of us, Now What??

Are we going to walk out the plan God has for our life or just sit back and let it die?

God saw David's humility and wanted to do a new thing.

This year, Let God do a new thing in you.

Point 1: We have an anointing to walk in, not sit in.

Just because you haven't been appointed, doesn't mean you're not anointed.

Saul wanted the position, but David wanted the anointing.

Saul wanted to be seen and honored, David wanted to honor God.

Point 2: We have unclean spirits to get out rather than minister with.

Don't allow the enemy to hinder what God is wanting to do in your life.

Distressing spirits have got to go and be driven out of our lives NOW!

We must begin to serve eviction notices on some spirits: Complacency and apathy, confusion and distress, quarreling, all opposition and hindrances, deceptions, lies, perversion, etc.

Point 3: We are called to KILL GIANTS!

David killed the lion and the bear because God had anointed him to kill giants.

Goliath was an enemy to the children of God.

Everyone else was afraid of this giant, but not David. David knew God would deliver him from his enemy.

Summary:

God sees in you what man can't.

Our faithfulness in the now will be rewarded in our tomorrow.

God rewarded David for his faithfulness.

Application:

Don't let your fire die!

Ask God to renew his fire in your life.

Ask God to help you be faithful to him starting right now.

We are never too young to be used by God.

How can you live this out at school?

Speak over yourself and your ministry, that you will influence and enlarge your territory now in Jesus' name.

GOD has anointed you to spread the gospel in your school! Find someone to share Jesus with today.

Prayer:

Lord, help us to see ourselves as you see us! Help us to see the vision you have given us come to pass. Help us to apply the revelation you have given us for our life! Don't let our fire die out. Let us be more excited about Jesus every day. Let our light shine bright for you. In Jesus Name, AMEN.

Sermon Title: Your Moment

Sermon Author: Rev. Mark O'Quinn
Youth Pastor, Parkway Assembly of God, Macon, GA

Scripture: 2 Kings 11

Observation:

Thousands of years ago there were two major kingdoms of Hebrew people. There came a point where the 12 tribes of Israel divided into two kingdoms. It was the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah.

Today we are going to talk about a story that came out of the kingdom of Judah. At one point in Judah there was a queen named Athaliah and she did not have good intentions. Athaliah was an evil person and did not reverence the true God. She was controlled by her selfish desires and using her power for manipulation and destruction.

For those of you who are not familiar with royal dynasties and how transition of power works...it's one blood line that determines who the king of a nation is. So Athaliah had a son named Ahaziah and Ahaziah was under the same mind set of his mother as a ruler. Ahaziah didn't have the interest of the people but rather himself. He was evil just like his mother Athaliah. One day Ahaziah died and this grieved Athaliah and put her into a state of worry and fret because she didn't think that any of her other sons or her grandsons who would be in line to rule would share her heart for evil things and selfish desires.

Athaliah proceeded to kill everyone who was left in the royal family, so she would be able to rule and have sole control of the kingdom.

Athaliah had power as a result of this action and didn't have to worry about anyone getting in her way.

But what Athaliah didn't know was that one of her grandsons, Joash, had been snuck away during her killing spree by one of his sisters and placed in a temple where he had been nursed and raised. The temple priest, Jehoida, had assisted in raising Joash, and when Joash turned 6 Jehoida decided that it was time to reveal Joash to the kingdom and crown him the rightful king and ruler of Judah.

Jehoida, the high priest constructed a plan. His plan was to gather up all the guards of the temple, guards of the palace, and make them swear an oath and protect Joash as he was appointed king.

To give you an image, he had all of these guards armed with swords and spears to surround this child and appoint him king of Judah – A six year old boy!

When Athaliah heard about this she was outraged. She knew her reign was over and she couldn't stand it. The scripture says she came out and ripped her robe and shouted treason at the top of her lungs.

2 Kings 11:16

We see that Athaliah was struck down. The false idols that were erected as a result of her disdain for God in the temple were destroyed and Joash was appointed King.

God had an incredible plan for Joash's life. Joash would be crowned king at 6 years old. Most of us in here were learning to tie our shoes at 6, learning to spell our name, read efficiently, a lot of things but not how to rule a nation.

You hear this and you think no way that could be real no way that kid was ready for that responsibility. You're right he wasn't personally, but God was ready for him to take over. God was ready for him to become the ruler.

1. The first thing I want you to know tonight is that God has a plan and a great purpose for your life just like he did for Joash in that moment.

Not only that but the plan he has, the purpose he has, the mission he has will seem very difficult initially. You might feel inadequate and not ready to take on this plan God has for you. This mission Jesus has set out for you.

We have a big calling to set up a Youth Alive® club, to start a bible study on our campus. But we might be feeling like little Joash and not ready for the responsibility. Not prepared to follow through with this mission. We tend to tell ourselves things like: I can't talk to people, not a good communicator, I don't have confidence in myself, there won't be a good response.

Satan will put these thoughts in our mind to hinder us and try to stop us.

2. Next thing we need to know is that Satan will put insecurities in our mind.

He does this so we won't want to follow through with what God has destined for us and put on our heart to do.

There is going to be thousands of reasons why you think you shouldn't pursue the calling God has put on your heart. Whether its things you conjure up in your own mind, things your peers say, or satanic attacks, but there is one reason why you should pursue it and that is because God has put it in your heart and he will not fail you.

We must know that just like the guards protected Joash from the Queen and her evil subjects during his crowing, and appointment as King, God will protect you from anything that comes against you.

There will be adversity, but God is not going to let that adversity overcome you if you trust in him and follow through with what he has put on your heart to do.

There may be stumbling blocks and discouraging moments, but Jesus will shield you from opposition.

3. We must also know that God will assist us.

We must know that God will give us wisdom. King Joash was brought up as king at a young age but he didn't have to do things by himself. God placed wise men such as Jehoida the high priest and other advisers to assist him in decision making and guide him through situations.

God will not let you go through it alone. He will put people in your path to partner with you, assist you and give you council.

4. Lastly, we must know that God will grant us victory.

Amazing things will happen as a result of our obedience to God's will and calling on our life.

The enemy and opposition will be defeated.

We see in 2 Kings that Athaliah was struck down, along with all of the idols that stood in the temple. God extracted the kingdom from evil and pagan worship and implemented a culture that honored him.

Application:

Let's Step out in boldness in our school and see the culture change.

The evil and Godless behavior will dwindle if we cling to God and point other people to him.

Joash eventually implemented a financial plan to restore the infrastructure of the temple. He built it back up to prominence as it had been worn out and was beginning to deteriorate over the years. Yet another accomplishment of the king.

We have temples, in a sense, that are ready to be rebuilt.

We have schools, family members, friends, teammates that are going to be impacted by us clinging to the moment God has set out for us.

I want us to think of a moment in our life. What has been an amazing moment? Someone noticing you, a goal you scored, a grade you made.

We have all had cool moments in our life most likely.

But all the moments we have had on this earth will not compare to the moment that we are going to have when we commit to the purpose God has for us and say yes to the plan he has for our lives. There is no greater moment than submitting to the plan that God has for us.

Let's cling to God. Let's commit to submit to his will for our lives.

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

We choose to cling to you with all our hearts. We want to know you more and we want to make you known in our schools. Thank you for protecting us as we go about your mission to reach the lost in our school and in our community. Help us to always be ready to take a stand for you. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Student Worksheet #1

Sermon Title:

Scripture:

Observation:

Application:

Prayer:

Student Worksheet #2

Sermon Title:

Scripture:

Point 1:

Point 2:

Point 3:

Point 4:

Application:

How can you live this out at school?

Prayer: