



to define again, reformulate; to reexamine or reevaluate especially with a view to change

(re) de·fin'e

# Sermon Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Series</b>	<b>Key Event</b>	<b>Scripture</b>
1/17/2010	Re-define	The Sower	Luke 8:5-8
1/24/2010	Re-define	3 Lost Things	Luke 15
1/31/2010	Re-define	The Wheat & Weeds	Matthew 13:24-30
9/6/2009	Re-define	Pharisee & Tax Collector	Luke 18:9-14

# Re-define

## Week 1: You Can Trust God (Righteousness)

### Psalms

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

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God is faithful to those who are righteous. How does that sentence strike you? Many would immediately cry "foul" and start speaking of words like grace, mercy, love and compassion. It is true that God does have all of those things, it's the only reason that you and I are saved! But are those words really in conflict with the first sentence, that God blesses those whose hearts and lives are righteous? As we seek to redefine the term, our goal is to have a better understanding of who God is and what He wants from you and I. Including righteousness!

#### **CONNECTING AS A GROUP:**

As a group, come up with a good definition for the word "righteousness". Don't stop at defining it, come up with a picture of what it looks like. What does it look like for God? And, what does it look like for you and I? You can even talk about what it doesn't look like.

#### **STUDYING GOD'S WORD:**

We are going to look at Psalms 111 & 112

Read Psalm 111 as a group and answer the following discussion questions:

- 1) Whose righteousness is being discussed?
- 2) How does God prove His righteousness?
- 3) How do you personally connect with God's righteousness in these ways?

Read Psalm 112 as a group and answer the following discussion questions:

- 1) Whose righteousness is being discussed?
- 2) How do we show righteousness in our lives?
- 3) How do you personally live out the things described in the text?

#### **MAKING APPLICATION:**

How do we respond to God's righteousness? Discuss the following thoughts:

- 1) We trust God in Faith - because God is righteous we can trust Him to meet our needs and bring us through anything we might face.
- 2) We praise God in Worship - the more we know and understand God's righteousness, the more it should bring us to worship!
- 3) We honor God with our lives - what action steps can we take to live our lives for God?

Final Thought: Read Romans 3:23-26 and discuss what this passage says about God's and our righteousness!

#### **PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER:**

Take time to praise God in prayer for His righteousness!

Then take time to ask God for help on your journey to be more like Christ, more righteous!

#### **MEMORIZE THIS VERSE:**

*Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with the mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never with, and they prosper in all they do. Psalms 1:1-3*



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# Re-define

## Week 2: David Purchasing the Field (Sacrifice)

### 2 Samuel 24:18-24

### *DISCUSSION GUIDE*

It's easy to give away that which we have extra or that which is left-over. But God does not want our extra or left-overs. He wants our best, our whole lives, no matter the cost. He knows and desires our hearts and longs for our loving sacrifice, and not merely a cheap gift.

#### **CONNECTING AS A GROUP:**

There is a story of a doctor who was working in a remote area of Minnesota when a Native American family begged him to come and help their elderly and gravely ill grandmother. He went to treat her and shortly after her recovery the entire family made the journey to his office. They ceremoniously presented him with a 150 year-old pair of moccasins made by a great-great-grandfather. When the doctor protested because the gift was cherished and valuable, the head of the clan replied, "We do not express great appreciation with a cheap gift."

- What is the most costly sacrifice or gift you have ever made or given? What was your motivation and how did you feel about it?
- Has anyone ever done anything for or given anything to you that you knew cost them dearly? How did you respond?
- How much thought and effort do you put into gifts and in showing friends and family what they mean to you?

#### **STUDYING GOD'S WORD:**

**Read Psalm 51.** Verses 16-17 say that God does not want a burnt offering, but that He desires a broken spirit. Some translations say that God will not despise a broken and *contrite* heart. *Contrite* is defined as "feeling regret and sorrow for one's sins and offenses."

- What does it mean to you to have a "broken" spirit? Why do you think God desires this of you?
- Do you always feel true regret and sorrow when you've sinned? Do you always express this to God when asking forgiveness?
- Why do you think our heart is more important to God than a sacrifice of a thing, such as a "burnt offering"?

**Read Mark 10:17-31** This parable about a rich young man who has kept all of the commandments but cannot bring himself to sell all of his possessions is an example of how obedience alone does not impress God. Jesus asks the man to sell everything he has and give to the poor. What an incredible and costly sacrifice that would have been for the rich man. Following the commandments since he was a boy was something this man could do, however the cost of the sacrifice Jesus requested was too high.

- Verse 21 says that Jesus loved this man. How do you think Jesus felt when the man walked away? How do you think the man felt?
- Compared to the sacrifice Jesus was willing to make for us, how extreme was the sacrifice He asked the rich man to make? Do you think the knowledge of Jesus' sacrificial death would have changed the rich man's mind?

#### **MAKING APPLICATION:**

**Read 2 Samuel 2** Living for and following Christ is costly. An easy sacrifice of extra and/or leftover does not mean much to God. He wants our whole heart and all that we have. In exchange, we get forgiveness of our sins, a relationship with Him now, and eternal life with Him...all because of the loving and costly sacrifice made by Jesus Christ, God's only Son.

- Besides financial, what other areas of your life can you sacrifice in for God?
- Are there areas in your life in which you are "obeying" by following commandments but have not done or given the costly sacrifice that God may be asking of you?
- What would be the ultimate sacrifice you could give God out of sheer love, joy, and appreciation for all He's done and given you?

#### **PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER:**

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." **Galatians 2:20**

- Praise God for the sacrifice of His Son, who gave Himself for you.
- Ask God to open your eyes to areas in your life He would ask you to sacrifice, no matter how costly, according to His will.

#### **MEMORIZE THIS VERSE:**

*"You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God." Psalm 51:16-17*



# Re-define

## Week 3: Elijah and the Widow/Son (Generosity)

### 1 Kings 17

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

We are extremely blessed. It has been said that if we have a set of clothes, a roof over our head, and ate at least 1 meal today, we are richer than the majority of the rest of the world. If you truly take stock in what you have, instead of focusing on what you don't have, it doesn't take long to realize how fortunate we are in our lives. We certainly can give praise to God for faithfully meeting our needs. It should be easy for us to obey God's principles for stewardship based on the blessings we have received from Him.

But what about the times we find ourselves wanting. Are there times when you wish you had something or want something else that you place that desire above your obedience to God? When you are struggling to see the ends meet or trust where your needs will be met, are you are joyful about releasing the resources you do have to invest in God's Kingdom?

#### **CONNECTING AS A GROUP:**

It is helpful and health for our hearts to take inventory as to how God has faithfully provided our needs and blessed us beyond what we deserve.

- What are the blessings of God you've experienced in your life personally? In your family?
- When have you experienced a unexpected provision from God?
- What helps you keep perspective about how faithful God has been in providing your needs? Why does His faithfulness provide confidence to trust Him as you obey His principles for stewardship?

#### **STUDYING GOD'S WORD:**

The Bible is filled with examples of God's faithfulness in providing for the needs of His people AND those who have been obedient to His instructions for stewardship. **Read 1 Kings 17.**

- What impresses you about the obedience of both Elijah and the widow?
- What amazes you about the provision God provides for both Elijah and the widow?
- Why did God ask the widow to give out of her need? Why did God allow her son to become deathly ill and die?

God has promised to provide our needs as He has faithfully throughout history. Our response is to obey His principles of stewardship as a expression of our trust in Him. **Read Leviticus 27:30, 2 Chronicles 31:5-8 and Malachi 3:10-12.** God gave specific instructions for His people to tithe as an expression of their trust in and obedience to Him. A tithe is clearly defined as "first-fruits" "ten percent of income" "voluntary gift celebrating God's provisions".

- Why does God command a tithe? Why is specific in priority and percentage?
- Is tithing optional? What are the blessings associated with obedience to tithing?
- How could our disobedience to the instruction to tithe reflect our ungratefulness and/or lack of trusting God?
- Why is generosity such an important quality of God and of those who truly love Him?

#### **MAKING APPLICATION:**

The faith and trust exhibited by both Elijah and the widow in Zarepheth should encourage and challenge us as we continue to live out the Biblical instructions God has given us. Relying on God to provide our needs and remaining obedient to His commands to be generous should become our constant desire and consistent action.

- How are you confidently trusting God to be the source of your daily provisions? How are you consistently giving Him thanks for the ways He provides and blesses you and your family?
- Are you currently practicing the principle of tithing? Why/Why not? If so, what have been the benefits of remaining faithful to this command of Scripture? If not, what is holding you back presently from making this a consistent expression of your trust and obedience to God?
- How have you benefited from the generosity of God's people? How does that motivate you to be generous to others?

#### **PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER:**

**Read Ephesians 4:13-19.** Replace the "you" in this passage with the specific name of each member of your small group.

#### **MEMORIZE THIS VERSE:**

*Light shines in the darkness for the godly. They are generous, compassionate, and righteous. Good comes to those who lend money generously and conduct their business fairly. Psalm 112:4-5*



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## Week 4: The Healing of Naaman (Surrender)

### 2 Kings 5:1-14

### DISCUSSION GUIDE

Have you ever attempted to construct or use something without reading the directions (ie a toy for a child, a piece of furniture, a new cell phone)? Our tendency as humans is to pride ourselves in the ability to figure things out on our own or to reject help or assistance without first attempting to independently succeed. Often, this approach is more than just frustrating, it can be harmful to ourselves and others (especially when it involves bare electrical wires, power tools, or an audience). After multiple attempts, we will even throw in the towel before seeking the direction from a source outside ourselves. We should be glad that the cameras aren't rolling!

God, in His divine wisdom and sovereignty, must find our futile attempts to figure things out either pure entertainment or utter discouragement. He, as the creator, knows how life works. He designed His creation to need Him and rely on His direction to find health, fulfillment, and hope. He longs to not only provide, but to protect and direct His creation to experience life abundantly.

#### **CONNECTING AS A GROUP:**

Recreate the setting of many helpful recovery/support communities making a simple introduction and declaration of your personal journey with frustrating and futile attempts to understand, master, or conquer:

- When have you attempted something on your own without seeking the help of someone or something?
- What was the outcome? What emotions did you experience? What were some simple mistakes that preventing you from completing the project successfully, mastering the skill, or benefiting from the new device?
- If you could rewind time and start over, what would you do differently?
- Was any of your experience caught on video?

#### **STUDYING GOD'S WORD:**

The faith of a young servant girl provided some much needed direction for a powerful warrior who was struggling physically. Only God could provide healing for Naaman, and the servant girl's assistance created a life-saving experience that allowed God's power to miraculously work. **Read 2 Kings 5:1-14.**

- What strikes you most about Naaman? How did his physical struggle cause frustration despite his military success?
- How does the faith and the advice of the servant girl make such a difference?
- Why would Elisha's instructions seem so offensive to Naaman to the point he'd rather suffer than obey?
- What seems to be the root of Naaman's resistance?

#### **MAKING APPLICATION:**

Often after we have attempted to figure things out on our own, we seek the help of others, but still have a resistance in our spirit to their assistance. We can often approach God in the same mindset. "God, I need your help!" is our cry of desperation. But as He reveals to us a direction or answer, we often resist with pride and distrust which leads to more struggle and pain.

- When has God revealed to you a solution to a problem from which you found help, healing, and/or peace?
- Why do we often second guess God? Is our lack of faith and obedience sin?
- How does our resistance to His plan cause more frustration or pain?
- What struggle are you currently facing in which you feel you have been given an answer or direction from God?
- What struggle are you currently facing in which you still need an answer or direction from God?

#### **PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER:**

We must come to the realization we are dependent people. Without surrender, solution is out of our reach, especially to things that are eternal. We can't overcome our sinfulness, nor can we survive our helplessness without total dependence and trust in God. We need the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives to strengthen and deliver us.

- Pray a prayer of confession for the resistance and pride we often allow to keep us from His leading in our lives.
- Pray a prayer of humble dependence on God for wisdom and direction in each day.

#### **MEMORIZE THIS VERSE:**

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3:5-6*





For more information and resources visit  
<http://www.wrcc.org/connect/smallgroups/index.php>