

Determined Faith

A Conversation with Friends

World Outreach Church
Sermon Discussion Guide
Sunday Sermon: **March 05, 2023**



Our church is in the midst of season where we are preparing for what we imagine “next” to look like. Now, there is a bit of a pattern to this—we have come to these junctures through our history as a congregation where the opportunities before us required us to respond in some ways rather than just being dutiful in showing up. Out of those seasons, we have consistently been willing to step together as a congregation and make the choices necessary to write a different future for the next chapter. We are at another one of those junctures. Our decisions over these next few days will have a tremendous impact on what we look like in the next few years. So, we are invited to come together and stand together to seek and serve the Lord ...

I. HERE WE GROW AGAIN

A. Unity Of Purpose

Acts 4:21–32 ²¹After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. ²²For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

²³On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. ²⁴When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: “ ‘Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

²⁶The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.’

²⁷Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.

²⁹Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

³¹After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. ³²**All the believers were one in heart and mind.** No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had.

Acts 5:40–42 ⁴⁰His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. ⁴²Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, **they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.**

- **What benefits have you seen as a result of God’s people—the Church—standing together? How does it make you feel to know that God can use even the most unlikely person to make a difference in His Kingdom?**

B. Face Our Fears & Respond With Faith

1 Kings 17:8–16 ⁸Then the word of the Lord came to him: ⁹“Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food.” ¹⁰So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, “Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?” ¹¹As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.”

¹²“As surely as the Lord your God lives,” she replied, “I don’t have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die.”

¹³Elijah said to her, “**Don’t be afraid.** Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord gives rain on the land.’”

¹⁵She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family.

¹⁶For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord spoken by Elijah.

1. God sent Elijah to the widow
2. God could have provided for Elijah in many other ways
3. Elijah’s invitation was for the widow’s benefit
4. Without Elijah she would not have known how to give expression to her faith

5. Fear was the obstacle to obedience
6. THERE WAS FOOD EVERYDAY
7. "Keeping the word of the Lord"

- **How does the world measure success? In what ways can we shift our focus from worldly success to striving for significance in the Kingdom of God?**

C. Take the Time To Process Your Involvement

Mark 12:41–44 ⁴¹ *Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴² But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. ⁴³ Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴ They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."*

Luke 6:38 *Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."*

- **When was a time you have sacrificed in order to cooperate with the Lord? What impact did that have on you?**
- **Have you participated in a campaign with World Outreach Church before? How did that affect you?**

II. WHAT WE ARE PLANNING . . .

We can serve thousands more people (children & adults) on our campus!

- ❖ Better quality of experience for outdoor gatherings
- ❖ Tools for innovative ways to present the gospel and help others understand a Biblical worldview

- **How do you see the new campus expansion enhancing the church's ability to minister to and serve those in our community and beyond?**
- **Pray together as a group for this week of sanctification leading up to our commitment services as well as for discernment in what each individuals' involvement in *The Sanctuary of Scripture: The Walk Way* may look like. Plan to attend the 24-hour Prayer Watch together beginning this Friday, March 10.**

III. WHAT IS NEXT? ... LESSONS IN FAITHFULNESS

Joshua 5:13–15 ¹³ *Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"*

¹⁴ *"Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?" ¹⁵ The commander of the Lord's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.*

Week Of Sanctification

- ❖ Night of prayer, Friday, March 10

Commitment Week — March 11/12 & 15

Announcement Week — March 25/26 & 29

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your great love for us and for what You are doing in the earth. Thank You that You are calling a people unto Yourself and purifying Your Church. We pray that we would choose You with our entire heart, mind, soul, and body as never before. Deliver us from the trappings of religion, and set us free to know the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. Give us a revelation of Yourself that is more real than anything we know in time. May a love for You and a desire to serve You grow within each of us. We thank You for Your faithfulness and great provision for us. We ask that we might be faithful. In Jesus' name, amen.