

THE ARTISAN SOUL

CREATING YOUR LIFE INTO A WORK OF ART

Session 7: Masterpiece - A New Humanity

March 22-28, 2020

*"Life is a creative act."
~Erwin McManus, The Artisan Soul*

Hang Out (30 Minutes)

Ice Breakers: Remember, everyone has the right to pass on any question.

- As a child or as an adult, what was or would be a possession that, if broken, would upset you the most? Why?
- If you could break one of your bad habits, what would it be?

Watch The Video (24 Minutes)

Watch the video if necessary. If everyone viewed the sermon before the meeting, add this time to your discussion.

Discuss (30 Minutes)

It's okay if you don't get to every question. Leaders, guide the group to the questions you think will be most helpful.

1. If you've ever participated in giving or receiving a random act of kindness, share about what happened and the impact it had on you.
2. Read 2 Corinthians 4:6-7, "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

Paul reminds us in verse 6 that God said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' (Genesis 1:3). Where do you see God's light shining during these difficult times we're facing today?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed."

Given the present reality we are in, in what ways do you find yourself hard-pressed, perplexed, persecuted, or struck down?

4. How does your faith, like Paul's, prevent you from becoming crushed, despairing, abandoned, or destroyed when facing difficult times like today?

5. In preparation for the next few questions, consider what Erwin McManus said about Jesus' crucifixion, "The cross is the interweaving of tragedy *and* beauty." What do you think he means by this?
6. Read 2 Corinthians 4:10-12, "We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you."

How do these verses (4:10-12) deepen our understanding that, like Paul, followers of Jesus live lives of tragedy and beauty?

7. What difference would it make for us to view our lives and our current crisis as an interweaving of tragedy *and* beauty?
8. Read in unison what God says as recorded by the prophet Isaiah:

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. (Isaiah 43:19)

A note on verse 11 from the NIV Study Bible reads, "Human weakness provides the occasion for the triumph of divine power, and daily "dying" magnifies the wonder of daily resurrection." As followers of Jesus, we live in the way of the cross. Just as Christ entered the darkness of death, we too enter times of difficulty and despair courageously and confidently trusting in the One who brings life out of death, and light in the darkness.

Bonus material

Watch Erwin McManus discuss *The Artisan Soul - Beauty and Violence and Child-Like*

Next step

Choose one of the following as a blessing you bring into the world.

- May the world I touch be more beautiful and better off for my being here.
- May my life be a work of art, and may I always live as an artist at work.
- May my life be a mosaic: a work of art made up of fragmented and broken pieces brought together by the Master Artisan, who creates in me a masterpiece most perfectly reflected when his light strikes through me.
- May the world become as God alone can imagine and create.

~From The Artisan Soul by Erwin McManus

Pray (5 Minutes)

Share with the group the bullet point you chose from the next steps. As a group in unison, pray for each person inserting their name into the following:

"May _____'s life be a work of art, and may _____ live as an artist at work."