





LCMS Servant Events | 800-248-1930, Ext. 1155 | youth.ministry@lcms.org

Day 1: Stand and See the Salvation of the Lord! — Ex. 14:1-14

Key Scripture 🔫

"And Moses said to the people, 'Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent" (Ex. 14:13-14 ESV).

Talk Among Yourselves 🤛

Sometimes you can see a disaster coming. Sometimes there's not much you can do to stop it. Such was the case as I drove down a two-lane blacktop road one afternoon in rural Kansas. I knew there were thunderstorms in the area. I had driven through some rain, but I didn't expect to see the funnel cloud dip from the sky and head my way. On either side of the road was a steep drop off. No side roads were visible. I barely had time to think but I know a, "Lord, help me," escaped my lips. I remembered hearing how you were not supposed to stay in a vehicle if a tornado was headed toward you so I stopped the car and turned off the ignition. I was in the process of abandoning the car (which felt safe) and diving into the ditch along the road (which felt horribly exposed) when I saw the funnel switch direction and head across a nearby farm. It picked up a heavy piece of farm equipment (an auger) along the way and disappeared from sight. I remember putting my head against the steering wheel and thanking God for deliverance.

- **1.** Talk about a time when have you seen disaster, heartache or a big problem coming your way? How did you handle it?
- **2.** If you had to choose quickly between two scary options how would you decide? Why might making a decision based on your feelings be a bad idea?

Read the Story for Yourselves

Read the story of the Israelites preparing to cross the Red Sea in Ex. 14:1-14. (If you have time you can read the whole chapter). You can take turns reading two verses each or guys can read the odd verses and girls can read the even verses. Then spend a few minutes talking about the story using the following questions and observations:

- **3.** As you read the story, what details did you notice? What jumped out at you?
- **4.** How does verse four explain what strategy God is using? Why do you think God cares about glory?
- 5. What picture of Pharaoh's heart is revealed in 14:5-9?

- **6.** When they saw Pharaoh in pursuit, how did the people of Israel react (14:10-12)?
- **7.** During the Revolutionary War, Patrick Henry gave a famous speech:

Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death! (Source: William Wirt, Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry, Webster, Philadelphia, 1816, docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/wirt/menu.html.)

LCMS Servant Event Daily Bible Study

Compare Patrick Henry's response to an enemy attack to that of the Israelites. Why do you think the response of Israel to Pharaoh's pursuit was exactly the opposite from Patrick Henry's?

8. Moses has a different response from his people. How does he stay so calm in the face of certain disaster and chaos? How do verses 13-14 answer the question about glory in question four?

Closing 虔

As a closing prayer, reflect on these words: "The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent" (Ex. 14:14 ESV).

11. Share some place in your life where you need the Lord to fight for you. After everyone who wants to share has shared, take a moment to compose your thoughts into a single sentence prayer for the person on your right, asking God to fight for him or her and to help him or her stand firm based on what he or she shared.

Apply the Bible Story to Yourselves

9. Reflect on what it means to be caught between two scary options like the author in the introductory story or like the people of Israel in Ex. 14. One option "feels" safer or more attractive but it might be the wrong decision. The other option is more risky, but it is the one that is more informed and guided by God. Some might advise you to "follow your heart" (feelings). Share what it might it look like to "stand firm," to act against what you "feel"? Aren't we supposed to trust our feelings? Has something like this ever happened to you?

10. Read the key Scripture one more time together. Share one meaningful insight you gained from today's study. Tell how it connects to your participation in this servant event.

Beginning with the person to the right of the facilitator in your group, take turns praying for one another. When the prayer gets back to the facilitator and he or she has said a prayer, close by saying, "In Jesus name, Amen."

Optional Closing Song:

Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me (AGPS 171, LSB 722) Christ Be My Leader (AGPS 81, LSB 861) On Eagles' Wings (LSB 727) Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus (LSB 660)

Day 2: When God Calls – 1 Sam. 3

Key Scripture -----

"And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant hears" (1 Sam. 3:10 ESV).

Talk Among Yourselves 🧲

Many teachers experience the annual dilemma of a new class full of eager young faces all of who assume you'll know their names but you don't. The obvious solution is to create prominent name tags for each desk or each student. It helps the teacher learn names but it also helps students learn one another's names too. Names are important. If someone takes the time to learn to know your name, to know who you are, it is a sign that you matter. It feels good. It's also embarrassing when you should know a name and don't. It's day two. Have you learned everyone's names yet? Let's just check that out.

Koosh ball game, juggling ball game: Everyone gets in a circle after names have been given. The leader starts: "I'm Andrea and I'm throwing the ball to Sally." Sally then throws it to someone else, mentioning them by name, and so on until everyone has had the ball. If the ball drops, start over. Play a couple of rounds (people must throw to different partners each time) until everyone is well and tired. Then, for the last round, begin and then once it's going, introduce three more balls into the mix. The game starts moving very quickly; chaos and hilarity ensue. (Source: faculty.virginia.edu/schoolhouse/WP/icebreakers.html.)

Have you taken the time to learn the names of the people you are serving?

Read the Story for Yourselves

Read the story of Samuel's call in 1 Sam. 3. You can take turns reading two verses each or guys can read the odds and girls can read the even verses. Then spend a few minutes talking about the story using the following questions and observations.

- 1. What do the words of 3:1 ("And the word of the LORD *was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.*") tell you about what was going on in the nation of Israel at this time? Who was at fault?
- **2.** We read in 3:7 that "Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The Word of the Lord had not been revealed to him." Samuel was serving in the temple, but he had not yet had a personal revelation from God's Word. He was living with the high priest of Israel. Why do you think he doesn't yet know God's Word? How does this relate to 3:1?

3. Why did Samuel not recognize God's voice? Discuss why it took Eli three times to figure out it was God even though he was the high priest.

4. Read verse 10. God is making Himself and His message very obvious here. Discuss how we hear God's Word today. Where or when have you seen that?

5. God outlines for Samuel why He is angry at Eli and what is going to happen (3:11-14). This would not be news to Eli. God had already told him what would happen (1 Sam. 2:27-34).

Why do you think God still comes to Samuel directly to give him the same prophecy with instructions to pass it on to Eli?

6. Verse 19 gives us more information about how Samuel matured after that night when he answered God's call. He followed God's Word. It says, "*And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.*" The Lord was with him and what Samuel said happened. His prophecies came true.

What do you think Scripture is pointing out here about how Samuel handled God's Word? How is that different from the culture he lived in (3:1) and even from his mentor Eli? See note above. Apply the Bible Story to Yourselves ᆂ

7. Once Eli realized it was God calling Samuel (verses 8-9), he gave him some great advice to follow: "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant hears." So Samuel went and lay down in his place."

If Eli knew about how God's Word works and should be used, why didn't he follow it in his life? Why didn't he teach his own children or Samuel to follow God's Word?

8. Based on the previous question, how can you use God's Word to discern His will?

9. Read the key Scripture one more time together. Share one meaningful insight you gained from today's study. Tell how it connects to your participation in this servant event.

Closing 虔

As a closing prayer, reflect on these words: "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears." Ask the person on your right what they think God might be saying to him or her through His Word today. Offer a prayer for him or her asking the Holy Spirit to open his/her heart toward God and His will for his or her life.

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Optional Closing Songs

Hark, The Voice of Jesus Calling (LSB 827) Here I Am Lord (SS 13) Take My Life, O Lord Renew (AGPS 223) Take My Life and Let It Be (LSB 783) "Come, Follow Me," the Savior Spake (LSB 688) Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus (LSB 685)

Day 3: Serve like Jesus served — John 12:9-28 The Plot to Kill Lazarus and Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem

Key Scripture -

"If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him" (John12:26 ESV).



Have you heard the term "guilty by association?" It means that while you may not personally have done something wrong, you are judged because of the people around you. Its twin is, "Birds of a feather flock together." But it is dangerous logic and may unfairly label someone. Interestingly, today's Bible story begins with an episode that shows you can hang out with the best of people and still have problems with "guilt by association."

- Share a time when you think you were labeled or judged "guilty by association" in a negative way because of how you were dressed, who you were friends with or an activity in which you were involved.
- **2.** How do you think you may have been guilty of labeling others for the same reasons? Have you even struggled with this on this servant event? How do you fight that in yourself when you see it?

Read the Story for Yourselves

Read about the plot to kill Lazarus and Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem in John 12:9-28. Take turns reading two or three verses each.

3. If things suddenly turned hostile toward Christians in the United States, would they be able to convict you as guilty by association? Would they have evidence?

- **4.** Jesus rides into Jerusalem with a crowd. From where do all the people come (verses 17-19)?
- **5.** What does verse 16 reveal about what people understood at the time? How does hindsight help them understand things differently much later?
- 6. The Pharisees exclaim "the whole world has gone after him" (verse 19). To them this probably means other Jews, but the text does note that Greeks also came to speak with Jesus. Their request, "We want to see Jesus." He is fulfilling the prophecy of Is. 60:3 ("Nations shall come to your light"). How do Christians today get to "see Jesus?"

Apply the Bible Story to Yourselves ዾ

7. Jesus predicts His death here. Noting that unless He dies (like the kernel of wheat, verses 24-25), He could not bear the fruit of His mission. He had to die for there to be a spiritual harvest (us). Next, Jesus says:

Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him (John 12:25-26 ESV).

Discuss what it means to "hate your life" in this world? What if you like your life?



9. Share with your group something you learned or where you found joy in serving others today?

Close by joining hands and praying in a circle. Allow each person to offer a prayer related to what he or she learned about servanthood in today's study.

Optional Closing Songs:

My Faith Looks Trustingly (AGPS 175) *My Faith Looks Up to Thee* (LSB 702) *Make Me a Servant* (AGPS 174)

- 8. "You shall have no other gods." It has been said that if we could only keep the first commandment we would have no problem with the others. But people and things in this world become more important to us than our relationship with Jesus. We see just how challenging it might be to love Him more than life in this world. We are going to blow it, yet there is good news! Consider what comfort these verses might give:
 - a. John 3:16-17
 - b. Rom. 6:3,5
 - c. Gal. 3:27
 - d. 1 Peter 3:21
 - e. Titus 3:5
 - f. Rom. 8:37-39

Day 4: Follow the Pattern – 2 Tim. 1:1-15

"Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you" (2 Tim. 1:13-14 ESV).

Talk Among Yourselves 🤛

When I was a little girl, on a fall crisp day, my dad would start a fire in the field across the road from our house to burn wood and brush. One of my brothers had the job of "fanning the flame" as part of the process. Using a piece of cardboard, he would make air flow toward the fire to help make the flames more intense. Soon the fire would be roaring. I didn't know the purpose of the fire but I did know that later in the day I was going to get to roast hotdogs and marshmallows!

1. Share a good memory of being with others around a fire.

Read the Story for Yourselves

Read 2 Tim. 1:1-15 together in any way you choose.

2. Who has "fanned into flame" the gift of God within you much like Lois and Eunice fanned it in Timothy (verse 6)? In whose life might you "fan the flame"? Does age matter? Can a younger person "fan the flame" of someone who is older?

3. In verse seven, Paul encourages his spiritual son Timothy with a reminder that, "God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."

Perhaps Timothy felt timid at times. Share what makes you feel fearful about serving others, about faith, about your church. If you could put away fear and have a spirit of love and self-control, how would it change your life?

- **4.** Paul reminds Timothy of the Gospel (1:9-10) right after he tells him to "not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord" (the Gospel)." Two things might make Timothy (any Christian) ashamed:
 - a. Fear of a world hostile to Christ or
 - b. Failure to see Christ as one's priceless treasure (verse 3) (Source: Armin W. Schuetze, Peoples Bible Commentary, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Concordia Publishing House.)

Which of those reasons is the biggest obstacle for individual Christians (you) to share the Gospel today?

5. Read Eph. 2:8-10. Many Christians, especially Lutherans, are familiar with verses eight and nine, which refer to the gift of God within us that Paul mentions in 2 Tim. 1:6. But it is Eph. 8:10 that explains WHY we were given the gift of faith. How could someone know what good works God has prepared for him or her to do?





Apply the Bible Story to Yourselves 🚣

As we near the end of this servant event, it is our hope that this is not a "one and done" kind of experience in your life. We hope that this experience — the work, the friendships, the study, the fun — has lit the spark or fanned the flame of the gift of God that is already in you and that this experience will be the beginning of a pattern in your life. Our theme today is REPEAT. That's how patterns are made. A single event or design happens again and again. See 1:13-14. Paul tells Timothy to:

Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

6. What's the pattern?

Closing 🖍

As a closing use the key Scripture verse. Pair up. Partners should take turns saying the following to one another (using one another's names):

Partner No. 1: <u>Name</u>, follow the pattern of sound words you have heard from God's Word in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within you, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

Partner 2: I will, with the help of God.

Optional Closing Songs

Amazing Grace (AGPS 63) Thy Strong Word (AGPS 246) My Faith Looks Up to Thee (LSB 702)

- **7.** What have you learned or experienced this week that could become a pattern in your life?
- **8.** What one thing or next step can you plan on doing when you get home that will help you repeat that pattern?

Day 5: Jesus Stands — Acts 7:54-60 The Stoning of Stephen

Key Scripture ------

"But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55-56 ESV).

Talk Among Yourselves 🗲

It seems a little depressing at first glance to end our studies together with the stoning of Stephen. But this little section of Scripture has a remarkable image of Jesus within it that we will highlight. The end is not the end. Stephen's story continues as he arrives to his home in heaven.

- 1. What experience from this week has been most memorable for you?
- 2. What do you look forward to the most as you go home? Who are you excited to tell about this experience?

Read the Story for Yourselves

this section of Scripture?

3. Read Acts 7:54-60 together in any way your group

chooses. What stands out for you as you read or hear

- 4. Take a moment and read Luke 22:66-70. This is Jesus' appearance before the council before He is sentenced to be crucified. Note: Jesus says, "The Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God." Compare this to the clear vision God gives Stephen just as he is about to be stoned (Acts 7:55-56). What's the difference?
- 5. Stephen receives powerful visible assurance of God's saving presence. Why is Jesus standing? We don't know for sure but a quick check of a commentary yields several suggested reasons:
 - a. To welcome His faithful witness
 - b. To sustain him in his hour of trial
 - c. To judge his adversaries
 - d. Or probably all of these

Why do you think Jesus is standing?

(Source: Richard D. Balge, Peoples Bible Commentary, Acts, Concordia Publishing House, 1993.)

6. The "Son of Man" is a term reserved for the Messiah in the Old Testament (Dan. 7:13, 14). In the minds of the Sanhedrin, Stephen, like Jesus, before him had just committed blasphemy. Note what happens in Acts 7:57-58. At whose feet do members of the crowd place their coats? Why is this detail recorded as well as those provided in Acts 8:1-3? How is God working even during these horrific events to make good come from evil? (Peek ahead to Acts 9.)

7. As a result of such horrible persecution, what happens to the Church?

Apply the Bible Story to Yourselves 💭

- 8. Stephen prays as he dies, asking God for two things:
 - a. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit" and
 - b. "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

Could you pray such a prayer for a person or group that had hurt you so badly?

9. Stephen bore his death with dignity and was welcomed by Jesus into heaven. Saul, the persecutor, becomes Paul, the apostle, and would later write In Phil. 3:8:

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

Share how you have seen Jesus at work this week?

Closing 🖍

In the parable of the talents, Jesus says to the servant who has used the gifts given him wisely:

His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master' (Matt. 25:21 ESV).

Stephen entered that joy. Not because of his efforts or his stewardship but because of the gift of life and salvation he received by grace through faith.

Take time to say these words to each other as you end your week of service.

"Well done good and faithful servants!"

Closing Song Options

Soon and Very Soon (AGPS 218) You are My Own (AGPS 270) Oh, that the Lord Would Guild My Ways (LSB 707)