

beautiful

LIVES THAT SHOW THE GOSPEL

Message Topic: Mahalia Jackson and the Beauty of Encouragement

Message Date: October 4, 2020

Focus: The beauty of using one's gifts to build others up

Primary biblical texts: 2 Corinthians 1:3–7, Psalm 96:1, Thessalonians 5:9–18

Introduction

Our goal is to engage in conversations about the beautiful life that Jesus has called us to live. Each week, we will be unpacking an element of this life. Each topic is paired with a historical figure who will show us one way to embody each week's topic.

Purpose of Community Groups

To engage with the ideas and scripture presented in the messages, to build connections with each other, and apply what we have learned to our lives.

Gathering

(To help people get to know each other.)

Mixer Question: Share your name and one boring fact about yourself.
(ie, "I don't like Mayo," "I've never been to Disneyland," or "I like musicals")

Quick Chat Q & A: (Use the chat feature to pick out a few common answers.)
What's your "go to" cliché, inspirational quote, meme, or phrase? Or what do you see a lot online?

Message Content

Review Message: Christian shared this week about Mahalia Jackson and the way she used her gifts of singing and encouragement. She spoke God's words into people's lives in a way that moved them to be better disciples. If it wasn't for Mahalia, we might not have heard Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

Discussion Questions:

1. Think of a person who has encouraged you. What did they do, how did it make you feel, or what did you do differently because of their encouragement?
2. What are some things that prevent you from encouraging others?

Scripture Study

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:9–18

1. What is the foundation of Paul's command to encourage each other in verses 9–11? How might this motivate us to encourage others?
2. As you read Paul's list of instructions on how to encourage (pause and make a list), which stands out to you? Where do you see yourself in this list?

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Personal Reflection

1. What is discouraging you today? Why?
2. Where does your heart need encouragement the most?
3. What specifically would it look like for you to receive encouragement today? (i.e., a note, prayer, help, music, Bible verse?)

Challenge

1. Think of a person who needs encouragement.
2. What is one thing you can do to encourage him or her this week? (Share God's encouragement, use God's gifts, take God's view, have God's goal, trust God's plan)
3. Write it down and follow through on doing one of these things this week to encourage this person.

Prayer (from the message)

God, thank you that you care about the things that make us discouraged. Whatever we are facing, you know all about it. Even though it's confusing to us, it is clear to you. No matter how isolated we feel, it can't shut us out from your love. If the road's too rough and uneven, in time, you will make it level and straight. Sometimes we don't have the strength to go on fighting, Thank you that you fight for us. If the ground beneath our feet is sinking, God, you will set us upon a rock. Sometimes it seems like we are in the dark, but we will wait for you, Jesus. We will wait for your light to come. Jesus, we trust that your coming is as certain as the dawn. Help us take heart and believe you are for us and with us. You are trustworthy. And we are you beloved! You will deliver us in your timing. Help us hang in there and not give up. Thank you for loving us like you do. Amen.