

- ◆ What would it look like for you to authentically reflect God's attitude of grace to someone currently in your life?
- ◆ How might we all be able to exercise reflecting God's non-condemning attitude in our current political climate? How might shining this light change the world?
- ◆ How will you start preparing today to BE READY when God asks you to help someone through a storm you have already navigated?
- ◆ How have you experienced the truth of: "God will never waste a hurt?"

pray

Thank God for hardships we have endured that have helped us grow and later enabled and empowered us to authentically help others

- ◆ Ask God for help in becoming less judgmental and more Christ-like
- ◆ Pray together, "God, help me accept hardships as the pathway to peace, taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it." Amen

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

*"He helps us in our troubles, so that we are able to help others."
2 Corinthians 1:4a (GNB)*

daily Bible verses

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 | 5. Romans 5:1-5 |
| 2. Romans 8:31-39 | 6. Ephesians 6:10-17 |
| 3. Ephesians 4:1-6 | 7. James 4:13-17 |
| 4. 1 Peter 5:6-11 | |

With permission and in partnership, St. Thomas Lutheran Church has adapted this study guide from Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church's (Clarkston, MI) series: 40 days of Courageous Prayer. It was inspired by Trevor Hudson's book, [The Serenity Prayer](#); [A simple Prayer to Enrich Your Life](#), Rick Warren's 40DAYS campaigns, and Rich Milheim's [FAITHS](#)



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*real people.
real life.
real faith.*

SERENITY
PRAYER OF HOPE

be Calm
be Bold
be Present
be Ready

WEEK 4: be Ready

be Ready | accepting hardships as the pathway to peace, taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it

share | part 1

Last week

BE PRESENT | Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time

- ◆ What were some of your experiences last week while focused on LIVING ONE DAY A TIME?
- ◆ How difficult was it for you to stay in the present moment? What helped?

read | part 1

This week

BE READY | Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it

Read Matthew 8:23-27 from your study Bible

- ◆ Through this text, what do we know about “the storm”? (it came without warning, it was ‘furious’ or ‘fierce’, it terrified the disciples, it obeyed Jesus...)
- ◆ After Jesus rebuked the storm what followed?

talk | part 1

- ◆ How does the story of Jesus Calming the Storm relate to a storm that has come into your own life—furiously, without warning, terrifying you?
- ◆ Do you remember “waking Jesus up” — like the disciples did—in the midst of your storm? Looking for Him but not sensing him in the boat with you? Or undeniably sensing He was right there with you in the midst of chaos?

Trevor Hudson writes in *The Serenity Prayer; A Simple Prayer to Enrich Your Life*;

“I know, from the witness of many courageous people around me, that we can experience God’s presence in moments of deep pain. When we do, we are able to take small steps toward acceptance. Each step is like a candle burning in the dark. It does not take the darkness away, but it guides us through and along the pathway of peace.”

- ◆ Consider that “a candle burning in the dark” only illuminates one small area at a time. Unlike a flood light that is able to reveal what is ahead or behind us (the future or the past), a candle can only meet our immediate need (the present). Why might it be God-pleasing to actually choose ‘a candle over a

floodlight’ when it comes to dealing with our hardships and riding out our storms?

- ◆ What would it look like for you to BE READY to face hardships and storms as they come, with less fear or anxiety?

share | part 2

BE READY | Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; **taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it**

- ◆ Consider the people in a courtroom—the judge, the jury, the attorneys, the witnesses . . . Jesus asks us to be like only one of them—a witness, telling of our personal experiences with Him—and encourages us not get hooked into becoming a judge or a prosecutor or of others, or even a defender of God.
- ◆ Which roles have you taken on either wittingly or unwittingly? Others around you? Has this ever led to peace?

read | part 2

BE READY | Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; **taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it**

- ◆ How did Jesus take—or accept—this sinful world? Let’s consider these familiar words from John 3:16-17;

“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

talk | part 2

The condition of the world must break God’s heart, yet he did not send his Son to condemn it 2000 years ago and he does not send his Son to condemn it today. Jesus’ purpose is to save the world and make it right with God again. As followers of Christ, our purpose needs to be about reflecting and sharing God’s love and non-condemning attitude to the world.

- ◆ How is being non-condemning different from not having principles or opinions? How can we still seek to make the world a better place and not be passive?