

SERMON BASED CURRICULUM

**Date & Sermon Series:**

March 19/20, 2016; Altars

Speaker:

Pastor Mark Batterson

Scripture Focus: Genesis 28:10-22

Note To Leaders:

This weekend we discussed how everything in our lives comes down to daily decisions for today and for the days to come. These questions provide a framework to prompt or foster discussion in your small group. Don't feel you have to use all or any of these questions and you don't have to make it to the end! Use the questions that best fit your group and let discussion flow.

Icebreaker Suggestions: Have you ever experienced an uncomfortable situation but you knew you had to stick it out because it was for your own good in the long run? Has God ever asked you to continue the race regardless of how difficult? If so, share some examples in your group. How did you overcome the uncomfortable feeling?

Sermon Series Questions:

1. What thoughts are still resonating with you from the sermon?
2. What was most encouraging or challenging about this weekend's message?
3. In what ways did Jacob's dream and the altar he built speak to you?

Specific Questions:

1. Pastor Mark talked about a mother eagle's nature. In the same way the mother eagle stirs the nest to make it uncomfortable, God stirs the nest so we can learn to fly. Are there areas in your life that God is stirring up the nest right now? If so, how might he be teaching you to fly in a new way?

2. We all tend to gravitate more towards comfort. We like comfortable beds, comfortable conversations, and normal circumstances. When you pray, do you tend to pray for God to change your circumstances in order to make things comfortable? Or do you find yourself praying more for God to challenge you through uncomfortable circumstances?

3. “If God”... Altar moments can be made in the next stirring seasons of our lives like how we saw in the vow found in Genesis 28:20-22. Does that change your view of your current circumstances? If so, how?

4. Pastor Mark says, “You can't be a blessing if there is a deficit. Whether it's a deficit of joy, hope, wisdom, etc. you can't give what you don't have. We are blessed to bless.” We all have areas of deficit. What are some of the areas you need God to pour more into? If our area of deficit stems from a need of approval, our approval comes from God, most often in the secret place when we hear his voice the loudest. When was the last time you went to God for approval?

5. What are the daily decisions you need to make to get where you want to go? What defining decisions do you need to make to be who you want to be?

6. Decision in Latin means, “To cut”. Sometimes you have to cut something. It isn't always making a “good” versus a “bad” decision. Sometimes it is cutting a “good” decision in order to make the “best” decision. What decisions do you need to make and what decisions do you need to cut so your ladder is on the right wall?

7. Pastor Mark says that indecision is a decision and delayed obedience is disobedience based on what we read in James 4:17. Which part is the most convicting for you? Are you the type of person who tends to be indecisive or do you push off the decisions you know you need to make for another time?

Challenge:

Have you been baptized yet? If you're considering being baptized and want to move forward with making the decision, email baptism@theaterchurch.com. It's never too late.

Pastor Mark talked about the importance of vows. A vow is a pre decision- it's a decision you make in advance. Are there areas in your life where God is nudging you to make a firm decision in advance? Is there an area in your life where he's asking you to place your “yes” on the altar? Spend some time this week thinking through what decisions you want to shape your life and your core values. What decisions can you make ahead of time so that down the road, it becomes a natural decision?

Read:

One faithful decision that you can make daily is to pick up a One-Year Bible. Roughly, 11 minutes a day is all it takes to read the Bible in one year.

Act:

What is your dream? Do you have the courage to make the decision to accomplish that dream? Reread some of your notes from previous weeks about the altars that were made.

Reread Genesis 28:10-22 about the altar of decision and choose to build an altar of decision today.