

Men's Newsletter

Summer 2023

"Fear of the LORD is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline." —Job 34:14-15



Men's Community Groups

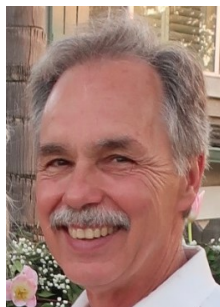
The groups below are open to all men looking for devotion, prayer, and fellowship. To register, visit laurelridgechurch.org/community-groups, click the **Sign Up** button and fill in the form, or contact the group leaders directly.

Tuesday Evenings

Time: 6:00 PM

Place: Room 301 at church or online via Zoom

Host: Dennis Ouka
(925) 584-6618
denouka@sbcglobal.net



Thursday Mornings

Time: 6:30 AM

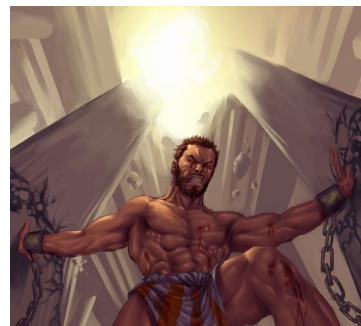
Place: Room 301 at church or online via YouVersion app

Host: Dan Mathisen
(209) 612-5028
mathisen.dan@gmail.com

Learn to Learn

by Keith Cook

Who among us doesn't enjoy the story in Judges 13 and 14 of Samson, the strong man who slew a thousand Philistines with a donkey's jaw? Who ripped a lion's mouth apart with his bare hands? Who tore from their hinges the massive gates of Gaza, put them on his shoulders and carried them all the way to the top of the hill across from Hebron, 60 miles away?



Samson had a problem, though, with impulse control. When he wanted something, he seldom worried about the possible consequences. It caused problems for him, his parents and others. Samson refused to learn from his mistakes, which ultimately led to his capture, blinding and death.

Like Samson, each of us has to some degree that same, stubborn tendency—even the Apostle Paul, who wrote in Romans 7:15, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." We might not face the consequences Samson faced, but that doesn't mean we won't suffer in other ways. Habitual tardiness can cost you your job. We all want the desires of our flesh—our

—cont'd on page 3

Men's Breakfast wrap-up



Our pre-Father's Day men's breakfast provided food for the soul as well as the body. Pastor Dan opened us in prayer, Jimmy Livaudais led us in song, and David Gehrer spoke on the Serenity Prayer.

Our thanks to the kitchen crew for the food and cleanup. ✝



How many men were in King David's elite fighting force known as The Thirty? You can find the answer in 2Sam 23:39.

Reading on YouVersion

Staying in the Word in our sometimes hectic lives is important. One way to do that is to study the Bible with others. The YouVersion app lets us study individually and discuss together.

To join the current study via YouVersion, click this link: <https://tinyurl.com/y55zyras>

The link opens the YouVersion Invitation page for the current study and shows who is participating in the study.

Click the **Accept Invitation** button, then sign in or, if you don't have an account, sign up and then sign in. Give it a try! ✝

Prayer Partners Needs You



The new Prayer Partners ministry is looking for a few good men and women to pray with people for a few minutes after each service.

Scheduled volunteers serve one Sunday a month at the end of the service they regularly attend. Substitute volunteers serve when a scheduled volunteer can't serve.

Our desire is for at least two people to be available to pray after each service. The 8:40 and 9:50 teams each need three more scheduled workers and one more substitute before we can launch. The 11 a.m. team is operational now but we need one more person to serve on the fourth Sunday of each month.

If you feel called to serve or would like more information, contact Keith Cook at krc@sonic.net or (925) 768-2333. ✝

Learn to Learn —*cont'd from page 1*

worldly self. Such desires conflict with God's desires for our life. You might not have a sex addiction or drug addiction, a hot temper or a tendency to lie or steal, but are you putting God and others first in your life? Jesus said to love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourself. What does that look like in your life?

The Fourth Commandment says, "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." Do you spend Sundays attending church, studying the word, worshiping and resting? Or is that the day you do your weekly shopping and chores? Are you involved in some type of ministry to others, using the spiritual gifts God has given you (Ephesians 4:11–13). Do you pray continually (1Th 5:17)?

What happens when we don't obey one or more of the above commands probably won't result in someone gouging out your eyes, but there are other consequences for not learning God's lessons. I've seen in my own life and in the lives of other Christians that refusing to learn a lesson God is trying to teach us results in having to face the same problem over and over. The couple that seldom tithes can never seem to balance their budget. The man who treats the Sabbath as just another day wonders why he's always tired and discouraged. The woman who knows she should serve in the childcare ministry but doesn't keeps feeling guilty. Lessons not learned means you have to keep retaking the course.

One of the reasons we don't learn God's lessons is because we look at our situations through eyes of flesh instead of the eyes of God. We don't tithe because we look at our overstretched budget and think that if we give ten percent to God we will only be that much farther behind. We don't treat the Sabbath as a day to rest and be refreshed in the Lord

because we think that our work is more important than what God wants. We don't serve for all kinds of reasons, none of which are valid. And so the lessons continue.

Learning God's lessons and growing in Christ involves learning to recognize when we are stepping off the path God wants us to walk, deciding in humility to return to that path, and seeking God's help in doing so. By the time Samson finally learned that lesson, he had lost his hair, strength, eyes and life.

We're blessed to have a God who loves us so much that he won't let us remain dormant in our faith, like a tree that isn't dead but won't grow. He wants us to produce fruit for his kingdom, which benefits us as much or more than it benefits others. Don't be a Samson. Learn your lessons, and you will truly know the joy of the Lord. ✝

Laurel Ridge Community Church
2459 Laurel Road
Oakley, CA 94561
925-625-9500
www.laurelridgechurch.org

Newsletter Editor: Keith Cook
925-768-2333
krc@sonic.net