



SANDALS CHURCH MEN

ADVANCE **SEASON 6**

ALIENS.

PORN AND

PETER PANS

SEASON OVERVIEW

What a year.

Pandemic, virus, tension, protest, loss, gain and everything in between seems to have played out within the last year. Our homes became our offices, our job sites, our schools, our places of rest, and our places of worship.

Politics and conspiracy theories were graffitied on every channel. Social media became a network of sewers leading to the same, ultimate, cesspool. Opinions were shot like bullets through the street, ricocheting and turning everyone and everything into swisscheese.

What a year.

Through this last year or so of madness, what has been your foundation? What has been your rock in the shifting sands of culture?

For the next six weeks, we are going to see where we fit in this mess of a society as men who follow Jesus. We'll provide you with a weekly reading plan to go through on your own and videos and discussion questions to go through with a group of guys each week.

We encourage you to really commit to the next six weeks. Take a good hard look at the world around you. Take a good hard look at the inside of yourself. The world needs men, and we need each other to work through the challenges and temptations we face in this society.

Dig deep, stay faithful, and advance as men together.

The world needs men. Men who follow Jesus.

WEEK 1 • VIRUS/VACCINE

“FREEDOM IS THE MOST CONTAGIOUS VIRUS KNOWN TO MAN.”

Day 1: The Parable of the Foolish Builders

READ: Matthew 7:24-27

EXPLORE THE THEME: Jesus Christ is speaking with his apostles about what a person who follows him looks like. He often uses simple stories like these (called parables) to explain difficult concepts. So, when Jesus is talking about two different builders, he isn't actually talking about two different builders. Instead, he is talking about two different types of men.

Likewise, when Jesus talks about rain coming down, he isn't actually talking about rain coming down. Instead he is talking about the difficulties we face in life.

WRITE IT OUT: What does your “foundation” look like? What has the “rain” in your life looked like this past year? Write down your answers for both these questions. We will return to these answers later on in the next six weeks.

LIVE IT OUT: In the last year, have you had any other men in your life that you have been able to weather the storms of life with? What does your community look like, specifically with men? Think about how you can change the things in this area that you need to, or encourage the community you are currently a part of. Ask God to put men on your heart that need a community that currently don't have one.

WEEK 1 • VIRUS/VACCINE

“FREEDOM IS THE MOST CONTAGIOUS VIRUS KNOWN TO MAN.”

Day 2: Blessed Are...

READ: Luke 6:20-23

EXPLORE THE THEME: In this famous teaching session from Jesus, sometimes referred to as the “sermon on the plain,” he teaches a counter-cultural concept of those who are truly blessed. We see right here, and many other spots in the gospel, that Jesus doesn’t conform to the standards of society.

WRITE IT OUT: What are some attributes of Jesus that you see here? What does this show about his heart and the things that he cares about? Do they line up with the things and people you care about? Spend some time writing out your answers.

LIVE IT OUT: Jesus mentions “those who weep” in this passage. In this year of loss and hardship, who are the people in your life that have experienced loss? Have you experienced loss of your own? Spend some time in prayer today, praying for those that come to mind and the losses that you have experienced. Share your emotions with God and think of it as talking to someone who wants to hear how you feel.

WEEK 1 • VIRUS/VACCINE

“FREEDOM IS THE MOST CONTAGIOUS VIRUS KNOWN TO MAN.”

Day 3: Whoa...

READ: Luke 6:24-26

EXPLORE THE THEME: Kind of like the inverse of yesterday’s reading, Jesus continues on and describes those who need to take a hard look at their lives. Jesus isn’t condemning these people here, just like he isn’t saying the people mentioned prior to this are going straight to heaven. We all have choices and second chances and the ability to change our lives. Again, the people mentioned here would be considered successful in society’s opinion today.

WRITE IT OUT: Jesus mentions false prophets at the end of the reading. False prophets, today, come in many different forms. Political leaders, podcasts, news anchors, YouTube conspiracy theorists, certain preachers, and any other person that has an influential voice can fall in that group. Whose/what voices have influence in your life? Spend some time writing out those that come to mind and circle the ones that you feel are unhealthy.

LIVE IT OUT: As you go throughout your day today, take note of all the different opinions and voices you come into contact with. Pray for God to make you aware of those things and for the courage to be real with yourself when it comes to discerning if those opinions/voices are healthy for you and your relationship with Christ.

WEEK 1 • VIRUS/VACCINE

“FREEDOM IS THE MOST CONTAGIOUS VIRUS KNOWN TO MAN.”

Day 4: We are all in this together

READ: Luke 6:27-36

EXPLORE THE THEME: Jesus, continuing in his preaching, crosses over into one of the most controversial subjects given our current climate: how to deal with those who we disagree with. This would have been just as counter-cultural then as it is today. Notice and really take into consideration what Jesus says to do with those people we disagree with, or even are all out enemies with. They might not have had democrats or republicans when Jesus was alive, but they definitely had opposing political parties. They definitely had racial tension. They definitely had all the same divisive things we have today.

WRITE IT OUT: Who are your enemies? Spend some time writing down in honest detail who the people are in your life that you would consider an enemy. How do you treat them? Does it align with what Jesus calls us to do in the passage you just read? Write out how you have treated those people in your life.

LIVE IT OUT: Spend time in prayer today for the people you wrote down. Ask God to give you a soft heart for them and to forgive you for any way you have sinned against them. Try to stay in prayer throughout the day, asking God to give you grace for your own sins and grace to give to those who are your enemies.

WEEK 1 • VIRUS/VACCINE

“FREEDOM IS THE MOST CONTAGIOUS VIRUS KNOWN TO MAN.”

Day 5: What kind of builder are you?

READ: Luke 6 (read the whole chapter again and focus on the final verses 46-49)

EXPLORE THE THEME: Jesus wraps up his teaching with the story we read on day one, challenging us as followers to not build on the sand of society. Take everything that Jesus has taught and really think about this last year and think of the areas you have failed and the areas you have done well at. Realize, as well, that all of this is impossible without the help of other Christian men and Jesus himself.

WRITE IT OUT: Go back to your answers from this week and look at the things you have written down. What is your foundation like? Is it a mix of rock and sand? Spend some time journaling the things that you have seen in this reflection that need to change. Write down the areas where you need to look different as a man who follows Christ, instead of as a man in this current society.

LIVE IT OUT: Seek out a community of guys that you can go through this content with over the next six weeks. If you already have one, seek out other guys who don't and invite them to the group. We, as men, need to live this out in community.

QUESTIONS FOR THE GROUP AFTER THE VIDEO

- 1.** What are the podcasts/tv shows/radio shows you regularly listen to? Where is the majority of your news/inspiration/information/influence coming from?
- 2.** Why is there so much pointless arguing among men today? Why does the church look no different in this area?
- 3.** Why is it so important to be intentional about the things we let influence us? How did Jesus model this for us? Are you like Jesus in this area?
- 4.** Why is community so important? How do we attain it here at Sandals Church?
- 5.** Why is it important to fight against societal norms while staying loving toward the world?
- 6.** Make a commitment to meet over the next six weeks while staying active in the provided reading plan. God has something big for the men at Sandals Church and the first step is being willing to commit to it for the next 6 weeks.