



## **GROW. PRAY. STUDY.**

The Church of the Resurrection – Weekly Guide

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### **The Gospel in Film “Game ON!”**

#### **SUNDAY 7.8.18**

I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.’ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, ‘Pass through the camp, and command the people: “Prepare your provisions; for in three days you are to cross over the Jordan, to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God gives you to possess.”’ Joshua 1.9-18 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, NRSV.

### **Dr. Bravestone: “We can help each other.”**

#### **MONDAY 7.9.18 1 Peter 4:8-11**

In *Jumanji*, Dr. Bravestone (school nerd Spencer’s game character) said, “This is a video game, which means we all have special skills. We can help each other.” Too often, we have a “one size fits all” idea of what it means to serve. In fact, there are as many unique forms of service as there are people. The apostle Peter’s letter called Christians to “use whatever gift you have received to serve others.” The call is to be yourself, as long as “being yourself” includes being a servant to God and others.

- ✚ In [Romans 12:1-6](#), the apostle Paul noted that we all have gifts—abilities to do various things particularly well in ways that bring us deep inner joy. What gifts are you currently using? How do you see God blessing others through your gifts? (If you don’t know what your spiritual gifts are, Resurrection offers a class to help. The next one starts tonight, July 9. [Click here](#) to register, or [www.cor.org/spiritualgifts](http://www.cor.org/spiritualgifts) for information about future classes.)
- ✚ In [1 Corinthians 13:1-3](#), Paul said that using our gifts without love renders them useless to God. In today’s reading, Peter, in a shorter, less-poetic form, made the same point. What makes love so vital as the environment in which we use our widely varying gifts? Who do you know who is finding joy by using his or her gifts in love?

**Prayer:** Lord, you’ve equipped me to serve your kingdom and other people in ways that are unique to me. Help me discover and use my gifts to your glory. Amen.

## No one “got all the good stuff”

### TUESDAY 7.10.18 1 Corinthians 12:14-18

In *Jumanji*, high-school football star “Fridge” found himself transformed into the diminutive zoologist “Moose Finbar.” As the players were discovering their strengths, Moose grumbled, “I hate this game. Everybody else got the good stuff!” The apostle Paul, a bit playfully, showed in today’s reading that the church needs and welcomes all types of “players,” all types of members for the “body of Christ.” Nobody got “all the good stuff.” In truth, all the strengths are “good stuff.”

- ✚ Paul’s image of jealous, moping body parts (verses 15-18) becomes funny if you try to picture such a thing really happening with your hands or feet. But he was serious, because it WAS really happening among the Christians in Corinth. It’s been happening ever since. What has helped you value and use your own gifts, rather than trying to be a poor imitation of someone else with different gifts?
- ✚ Paul also addressed our human tendency to think, “Everyone else should be like me.” So he asked, “If the whole body were an eye, what would happen to the hearing? And if the whole body were an ear, what would happen to the sense of smell?” (verse 17) How hard or easy do you find it to value people whose gifts fall in different areas from yours?

**Prayer:** Lord God, sometimes I struggle to believe that you love and value my unique mix of strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes I struggle to believe you value people who are different from me. Grow me beyond both tendencies. Amen.

## Dr. Bravestone: “We need each other, whether we like it or not”

### WEDNESDAY 7.11.18 Romans 14:4-7, 13-17

Now it gets hard. In *Jumanji*, Dr. Bravestone said, “We need each other, whether we like it or not.” Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome saw many issues differently (e.g. observing holy days, eating “unclean” meat). Each side felt like shunning those who disagreed. Scholar Leslie Allen summed up Paul’s message to both sides: “It is nothing less than usurping Christ’s sovereign authority over a fellow-Christian to criticize him over a difference of opinion: for the less scrupulous to look down on the more scrupulous, or for the more scrupulous to judge the less scrupulous. Christian fellowship does not imply a right to run other people’s lives for them: only Christ can—and will—discharge such a right.” \*

- ✚ We usually don’t argue heatedly about which kinds of meat it’s okay to eat, so it may seem easy to agree with verse 17: “God’s kingdom isn’t about eating food and drinking but about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” We DO, though, differ about politics, social issues like gender identity or immigration, what “the Bible is inspired” means, even church music! How can you apply verse 17’s principle in relating to other Christians with whom you disagree on some issues?
- ✚ In verse 13, Paul said part of Christian community is to “never put a stumbling block or obstacle in the way of your brother or sister.” That can be tough! Have you ever seen a Christian, sure they were right, avoid something in order not to put a stumbling block in the way of other Christians? What principles can guide you in deciding when preserving Christian connections is more valuable than winning your specific point?

**Prayer:** Compassionate God, help me to major in majors and minor in minors—and leave the judging to you. Fill me with your “righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Amen.

\* Leslie C. Allen comments on Romans 14:1-12 in *New International Bible Commentary*, F. F. Bruce, gen. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979, p. 1342.

## Choosing how to live the one life we get

### THURSDAY 7.12.18 Psalm 27:1-5

Early in *Jumanji*, Principal Bently told the students sent to detention, “You get one life... You get to decide how you’re going to spend it.” In verse 4 the writer of Psalm 27 expressed the central thing to which he devoted his one life. On this earth, the confident promises in Psalm 27 do not always come true. But Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, at the funeral of four girls killed in a church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, “Like the ever-changing cycle of the seasons, life has the soothing warmth of the summers and the piercing chill of its winters. But through it all, God walks with us. Never forget that God is able to lift you from the fatigue of despair to the buoyancy of hope.” \*

- ✚ Verse 4 said, “I have asked one thing from the Lord...to live in the Lord’s house all the days of my life, seeing the Lord’s beauty.” In his classic book *Practicing the Presence of God*, Brother Lawrence wrote to God, “Thou knowest well that it is not thy gifts that I desire...but Thyself.” What draws you to adore and yearn for God with anything like that kind of intensity?
- ✚ Israelites who prayed and sang this psalm saw Babylon destroy Jerusalem, saw Rome overpower their land—yet they still trusted. Christians saw Jesus crucified, the apostles Paul and Peter martyred by Rome, prayed the psalm in dim Roman catacombs—yet they still trusted. What difficulties test your trust, and trigger fear in you? How can you trust that in the end God will always keep the promise to set you up high, safe on a rock?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, you came into our dark world of pain and suffering as a vulnerable baby. You know firsthand the joys and the sorrows that are part of the deal of being human. Teach me how to look to you as my light even at the most frightening times. Amen.

\*“Eulogy for the Martyred Children,” in James M. Washington, ed. *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.* San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1986, p. 222.

## Faith in the real world

### FRIDAY 7.13.18 James 2:14-17

Good, inspiring words are not enough if they do not align with generous actions. James asked in this passage, “What is the use of pious preaching if it produces no action?” It is not enough to tell our brothers and sisters in need that God cares about them. We must act out God’s love with works of compassion and healing. Faith becomes action when we take it into the world outside the church. Our faith cannot help but move from pronouncements to actions when we step outside the comfortable walls of the church.

- ✚ In *Jumanji*, Dr. Bravestone and Ruby Roundhouse agree to maintain their relationship outside the game, in the “real world.” They recognize that soon, outside of their video game adventure, their relationship may be more difficult. Do you find it easier to believe, pray or worship while in the walls of a church? How can you channel these feelings in “the real world” when God doesn’t seem as clear or present?
- ✚ What is one way you can move your faith from words to actions this week? Is there something or someone you have been promising to pray for but just haven’t gotten around to? Start praying. Is there a person you need to forgive? Reach out to them today. Are you ready to stop merely saying that God cares for the poor and instead start committing to serving vulnerable populations? [Click here](http://cor.org/leawood/faithwork) (cor.org/leawood/faithwork) to register for tomorrow’s FaithWork.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, we know that you call us to carry your goodness out of your church and into the world. Be with us and bless our efforts to transform our words into actions. Amen.

## **“Powerful, loving, and self-controlled,” not timid**

### **SATURDAY 7.14.18 2 Timothy 1:6-8**

Confronting danger near the end of the game in *Jumanji*, Dr. Bravestone said, “It’s a lot easier to be brave when you’ve got lives to spare. It’s a lot harder when you only have one life.” To which Moose Finbar replied, “We always only have one life, man. That’s how it is.” (And then added, in astonishment, “Did I just quote the principal?”) A younger man named Timothy, who the apostle Paul met (cf. [Acts 16:1-4](#)) on his second missionary journey, became one of Paul’s most trusted associates. Paul trusted him to lead some of the churches he planted, and to continue leading them after Paul was gone. Such a large responsibility must have frightened Timothy at times, especially in the light of his youth (cf. [1 Timothy 4:12](#)). But Paul told him that God’s spirit would make him lovingly powerful, rather than timid.

✚ Paul knew his faith came from his ancestors, and called his friend Timothy to live out his own legacy of faith from his mother and grandmother (cf. [2 Timothy 1:3-5](#)). But he knew the ultimate source of courage and power was God, not just family tradition. What examples of either spiritual courage or timidity are parts of your family’s spiritual legacy? Are there ways that parents, grandparents and other important people have given you confidence to fearlessly value and use your God-given strengths? If so, how has their legacy affected you? If not, in what ways has God empowered you to be the person God made you to be? How can you mentor and encourage someone who is younger than you?

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, thank you for this life. Give me the courage to lead my one life in ways that bear eternal fruit in your kingdom. Help me to make my life really count. Amen.

**Family Activity:** Every character is important in *Jumanji*, just as every gift and ability is important in the Christian life. As a family, talk about how each person can use his or her God-given gifts and abilities. Discuss how you can use those gifts to serve people within and outside of the home. How can you combine those same gifts with those of other family members to work and serve? Using construction paper, draw pictures of your home, your neighborhood and the world. On the pictures, write or draw the gifts of each person to show where they might work best. Also, write or draw about how each person can use their gifts to serve others. Pray together, asking God to help guide you to use your ideas and gifts. Thank God for giving them to you. Display your family’s pictures as reminder to serve and work for those who are in your home, neighborhood and world.