

FIELD-TESTED SERMON RESOURCES

SERMON SERIES

TRUSTED | BIBLICAL | FIELD-TESTED

Thank you for downloading this sample PDF from our Sermon Series line of resources.

When you stand up in front of students proclaim the Word of God, you need trusted, creative, Biblically solid content. YM360's Sermon Series is exactly what you're looking for.

Field-tested, from-the-trenches of youth ministry, YM360 Sermon Series are complete sermon outlines and graphic packages designed to help you lead students closer to God through proclaiming His Word.

SERIES OVERVIEW FOR *ELEMENTAL*

Elemental is all about learning that when you want to change the world, passion is not enough. To remain faithful to the mission that God has given us, we must build our lives on key elements:

In this study, students will explore the following four elements of questions in life and faith:

- **SESSION 1:** Ca: Calling: You'll show students that life change should lead to world change.
- **SESSION 2:** Ch: Character: You'll help students see that who you are affects what you do.
- **SESSION 3:** Cr: Creed: To teach students that what you believe fuels what you do.
- **SESSION 4:** Co: Commitment You'll help students understand that it's not what you start, it's what you finish.

When these four elements combine, it creates a reaction that spurs on mission in our lives for the long haul. When we are elemental people, we move beyond mere passion to become people of mission who change the world.

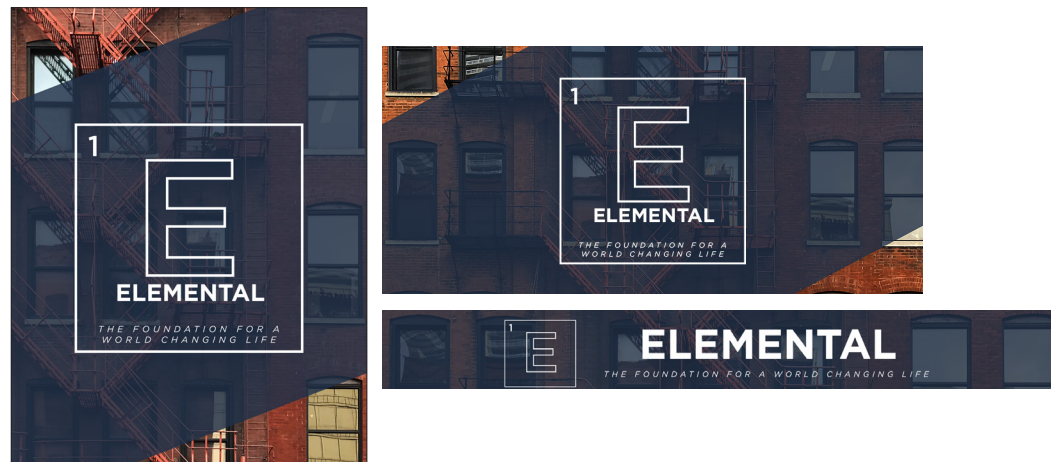
BACKGROUND SLIDES, PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK, AND MORE . . .

Each YM360 Sermon Series comes with title and background slides, promotional art (including Instagram images), and logo treatments. Here is what to expect.

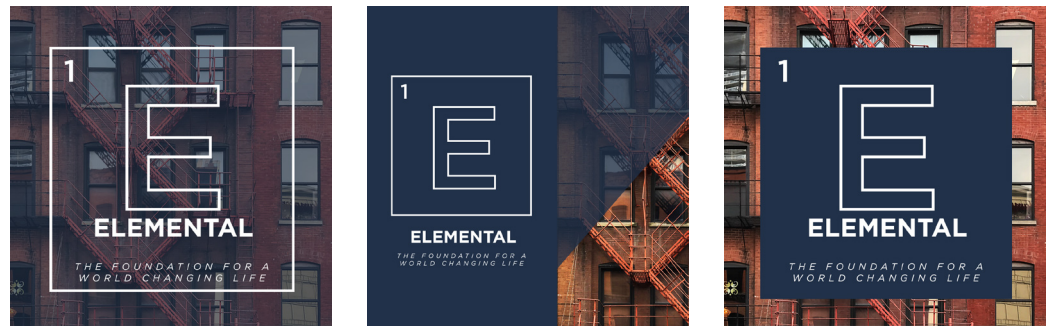
BACKGROUND AND TITLE SLIDES



PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK



INSTAGRAM IMAGES



LOGO TREATMENT



NOTE: Each YM360 Sermon Series also comes with the native files of the logo in case you want to replicate the design for other uses.

Elemental Sermon Series Overview

The Sermon Series Overview is a one-page glimpse of the stuff you need to know to begin preparing to preach.

- **Session 1 Purpose:** To show students that life change should lead to world change.
- **Scripture Passage(s):** Acts 9:1-22
- **Session Snapshot:** Changing the world requires a lot of passion, and that's the easy part. We soon discover that passion is not enough on its own. As God breaks in and changes our lives, He doesn't stop there. He wants the change inside us to have a ripple effect outside of us.
- **What You May Need:** Mentos and Diet Coke, or a video (either created by you or from YouTube) of the chemical reaction that takes place when you mix these two items.

Details on *Elemental* Sermon Series Outlines

Elemental is all about learning that when you want to change the world, passion is not enough. To remain faithful to the mission that God has given us, we must build our lives on key elements:

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How To Use the *Elemental* Sermon Series

This sermon series outline is designed for use by a communicator in a large group setting. It provides various elements such as suggestions on illustrations or images, Scripture passages, background information, and application points that you will need to prepare your lesson. It also includes discussion questions that could be used in a small group following the message, and artwork for promotion or message support.

These sermons are designed to be useful for all types of groups and churches, and you should feel free to make adjustments that benefit your particular circumstance.

I. Optional Intro: Reaction Attraction

Chemistry can seem pretty dull on the surface. We look at the letters on the periodic table and try to figure out how chemical formulas work, and it seems like the worst kind of schoolwork. But when chemistry starts to happen in real life, the reactions we see can be incredible. And if you don't believe it, I'll prove it to you.

Years ago, this little experiment was all the rage. Maybe you saw it.

[*Tip: Here, either show students the Mentos and Diet Coke experiment live or show a video option here.*]

The combination of Mentos and Diet Coke shows us that when you put the right elements together, you get an incredible and unforgettable reaction. But did you know that putting the correct elements together can help you change the world?

That's what we're going to be talking about in this Elemental series. We're going to look at how God gives us a mission that calls us to change the world, and we're going to break down four elements that will help us do so.

Usually, when we think about starting a mission with God, we jump into things with a huge passion. But we'll discover during this series that when you want to change the world, passion is not enough. Passion will wane, and difficulties will come, but we need to stay committed to our calling through the ups and downs.

Because passion is not enough, this series isn't about four elements that will enable you to change the world in four easy steps. Instead, it's about four essential elements that, when they're reacting together correctly, will help you change the world in four long, tough, exhausting, and difficult steps. Changing the world isn't simple, but it can be elemental if you're committed to putting these elements together with God's help.

A huge reaction is possible for our lives, and we really can change the world. So let's begin breaking down the first element to changing the world. The symbol for this element is Ca, and it stands for calling.

II. Background

In this *Elemental* series, we're going to look at the one person who changed the world more than any other person in the early church. That person is the apostle Paul. Paul, formerly known as Saul, was a Jewish leader who was also a Roman citizen. We first meet him in Scripture in Acts 7:56, as he held the coats for the religious leaders who were stoning a Christian named Stephen.

Paul went on to become one of the Jewish leaders of his day, and as he did, he persecuted those he saw as straying away from the Jewish faith to become followers of Jesus. (Acts 8:3) As a result, Christians in Jerusalem scattered away from Jerusalem, and the Christian faith began to spread. Still,

Paul continued "breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples." (v. 1) That's where today's passage begins.

III. Explanation

[Read Acts 9:1-22]

Every good hero — and every person who pictures him or herself as a hero — has an archenemy. Your archenemy is the person who persecutes, battles, and bothers the hero at every opportunity. They want something opposed to what the hero wants.

IV. Optional Illustration: Archenemies

[Tip: You might want to gather images of famous heroes and their archenemies and use presentation software to show them on a screen. Ideas may include: Superman/Lex Luthor, Rey/Kylo Ren, Peter Pan/Captain Hook, Harry Potter/Lord Voldemort, Optimus Prime/Megatron.]

The picture of archenemies helps us picture the relationship between Paul and Christians like Ananias as this passage begins. But in an unforgettable interruption, God changed Paul's life and called this archenemy of Christianity to begin to change the world.

Paul (then known as Saul) was on the warpath against Christians. Wherever he could find them, he had them arrested, tried, and even executed for their beliefs. There was no greater enemy of Christians in his day. But in a moment, Paul's life was turned upside down. As Paul met Jesus and realized that his view of things was utterly backward, his life changed. No longer would Paul persecute Christians. Instead, now he shared the truth about Jesus with the whole world.

We learn more about Paul's calling in the next part of the passage, as God called a man named Ananias to help Paul. After Ananias protested based on Paul's reputation and history, God told Ananias. "Go! This man (Paul) is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel." (v. 15) Paul's calling was basically to be Christianity's first missionary and to focus his efforts on letting non-Jewish people know about Christ.

We see in verses 19-22 how Paul began to live out this calling. He went to the synagogue in Damascus and preached about how Jesus is the Son of God. This was a shocking turn of events, both because of the message itself and because of the messenger. The man who had once been Christianity's archenemy was now out to change the world as Jesus had called him to do. And as Paul leaned into his calling, he "grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah." (v. 22)

This is an excellent picture of how calling is the first element when you want to change the world, because it shows us that life change should lead to world change. Now, let's see how this kind of change in our lives calls us to be people who change the world.

V. Application

Any mission that we undertake needs to be founded in the ways God has changed our lives. Otherwise, our mission will have a short-term burst of passion but not a long-term foundation. As we've already said, passion is not enough. So life change should lead to world change.

As God breaks in and changes our lives, He will give us a calling to change the world. And this calling will take a couple of forms. First, there is the calling that every Christian has. Jesus summed up this calling when He talked about the greatest commandment – to love God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are all called to go into the whole world and preach the gospel. No matter who we are or what our calling might be, all of us who have chosen to follow Christ need to embrace these callings.

But as we live out this general calling, we will discover that God chooses different ones of us to do this in different ways. For Paul, this meant preaching primarily to the Gentiles, while others like Peter preached primarily to the Jews. For Mother Teresa, it meant ministering to the poorest of the poor in Calcutta, India. For Dietrich Bonhoeffer, it meant facing down the Nazis and ultimately giving his life. These examples and many more show us that, while our specific calling should match up with our general calling, it can take many different forms.

To discover our calling, we need to examine ourselves. What spiritual gifts has God given us? What natural talents and abilities do we have? What unique opportunities are before us now, or might be before us in the future? As we begin to look at all of these things, we will start to uncover what specific calling God has given us.

Sometimes, a specific calling is a lifetime calling that we will have to work on for months or even years. At other times, it may be a prompting from the Holy Spirit that we need to act on in an instant. Whichever is the case, as we learn to listen to God's voice, and as we begin to see ourselves as God sees us, we will discover that God is changing our lives with the hope and the goal that the change inside of us moves outside of us.

God has changed our lives, and we are called to change the world because life change should lead to world change.

VI. Optional Illustration: "Beast Quake"

For those who are unaware, "Beast Quake" refers to a moment in a 2011 playoff game between the New Orleans Saints and the Seattle Seahawks. Seattle Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch broke half a dozen tackles and scored a 67-yard touchdown to ensure that the Seahawks would beat the New Orleans Saints 41-30. As Lynch reeled off this run, the crowd at Qwest Field in Seattle went crazy.

[Tip: Find a clip of the video and arrange to display it.]

The crowd went so nuts that it registered as a minor earthquake on the Richter scale. "People were shaking the stands, the stands were shaking the ground, and it (was) going to the instruments . . . People were losing their minds and screaming and kicking and stomping," the director of the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network said. The result was a 90-second tremor that goes down as the first sporting-event caused quake since a 2006 soccer match in Africa.

The people who were at this Seahawks game didn't just change their situation as they cheered; they literally changed the world by making it shake for 90 seconds or so. While this world change wasn't long-lasting, it's a great picture of what our calling can lead us to do. God wants the transformation He brings to our lives to have a ripple effect that ends up changing the world around us. So let's see what our calling is and how we can embrace it.

VII. Closing

God wants to change our lives, but he doesn't want the change to stop there. Instead, He wants the change inside of us to have a ripple effect outside of us.

“Calling” is the first element that leads us toward this reaction. And for this calling to change the world, life change should lead to world change.

So let us ask God to take the change inside of us and cause it to impact outside of us.

Small Group Discussion Questions

You can use these discussion questions to facilitate small groups after your sermon, or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go. These questions are designed to help students think critically about the sermon and what it means to them.

1. What was Paul doing in this passage?
2. What calling did Paul receive in this passage?
3. How did God want Paul to change the world?
4. How did Paul live out his calling?
5. What calling do all Christians share? Why is it important for us to embrace this general calling?
6. How do we discover our specific calling? Why is it important for us to embrace this specific calling?
7. What do you think your specific calling is?