

Jan 7, 2018

Focus: HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE
Topic: HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE
Text: Phil. 2:12-18, 1 Thes. 5:21, 2 Tim. 1:13
Song: Alpha, Omega, you are worthy...

Introduction

The Holy Spirit has been consistent in leading us year after year and naturally building on each previous year's theme. To live as those who must give account, Christians must be holding forth the word of life. Calling attention to the word of life, Jesus in John 6:63 simply says "... ***the words that I have spoken to you are spirit, and are life.***" Those who are holding the word of life are inseparably tied to the Lord Jesus, who is Himself the Word of God. Peter reiterated this when he said in John 6:68 that "***only you have the word of eternal life***" while responding to Jesus' inquest from the disciples whether they would also leave him as others have done.

Holding forth the word indicates the core or basis of the Christian faith which cannot be trifled with. The word of salvation has been sent to Abraham's stock and those who fear God (Acts 13:26). Passed down from the foundation of the world therefore, the process of holding forth the word of life connects us to Jesus through salvation and requires obedience to the instructions given to disciples by him in Matthew 10:27 saying "What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops". Paul also directed in 2 Timothy 1:13 that a believer must "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." The world in which we live affords us the opportunity of holding forth the word of life but also provides alternatives. These alternatives come with the devil's subtle methods and allurements to the flesh which denies us our crown (Rev. 3:11).

Lesson Aim: To understand the principles of holding forth the word of life.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the relationship between living as those who must give account and holding forth the word of life. (Phil. 1:27, Rev. 3:11, 2 Tim. 1:13-14)
2. Discuss the principles of holding forth the word of life reflected in the following phrases of the passage:
 - a. As beloved
 - b. Always obeyed
 - c. Not only as in my presence but now much more in my absence
 - d. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling
 - e. God is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure
 - f. Do all things without grumbling or questioning
 - g. That you may be blameless and innocent
 - h. In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation
3. Are you living by the principles for holding forth the word of life?

Memory Scripture:

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. (1 Peter 1:23 KJV)

Jan 14, 2018

Focus: HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE
Topic: Christ, the Word of Life (I)
Text: John 1:1-18, Rev. 19:13
Song: Lord I want to be like Jesus...

Introduction

The word had been in existence before the beginning of all things, same as God Himself. The word has life and the life is equal to God. Being same with and inseparable from God is part of the mystery of the word of life. So, the truth in John 1:1 that ***In the beginning was the word*** puts His existence in perspective. In John 1:4, we see the representation of the word having life which connects also to the life in every human being. The life in the word became manifest, more real and active at creation as confirmed by Genesis 1:26 and 2:7 when God breathed the breath of life into man who had been made in His own image. Life was and still is part and parcel of the word and so it is apt to describe Him as the word of life. Though the word had been before creation, the process of bringing all things into existence helps to understand that there is life in the word.

Since Colossians 2:9 also says ***For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily***, the image of Christ was represented in the man who has the breath of life breathed into his nostrils. Jesus is the word of God, the word with life, the word made flesh, physical representation and image of God, the word that dwelt among men, God with us. He gives life to all things. To interact with the word of God is to fellowship with Christ. To have abundant life is to have Christ in fullness.

Lesson Aim: To know Christ as the word of life

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the truth about the word of life? (John 1:1-3, Rev. 19:13)
2. How does the word of life serve as the light of men? (John 1:4)
3. What is the purpose of believing the word of life? (John 1:11-13)

Memory Scripture:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14 KJV)

Jan 21, 2018

Focus: HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE
Topic: Christ, the Word of Life (II)
Text: 1 John 1-10, Acts 13:26
Song: RH 114

Introduction

The description of the influence of the word of life on mankind is given in 1 John 1 by those who had direct touch with Him. The experience is shared as a testimony indicating that the whole business of the word of life is not abstract. The ways in which the word of life was made manifest are captured vividly and the interests of the word are made clear. It may not be far-fetched to infer that the word of life went through the process of producing the likes of himself thereby raising children for God. In pursuit of the desire and purpose of God right from creation, the word of life addressed the barriers between God and human beings; sin and darkness. The life in the word through the blood and light were also introduced to bridge the existing barriers. The truth about solution to the human greatest problems is thus revealed in this brief passage. The road to everlasting joy and God's pleasure has been made so plain by the word of life and his purpose.

The truth of a matter is established with evidence. There is reason for each believer to check for evidence that the word of life operates in their life. Believers of old are followers only because they trust and live in consonance with what the word passes to them as they fellowship together. This scripture calls attention to the importance of fellowship with the Father. No true follower can do without this and thus there is need for each one to make a response and not just read this passage or study it for the sake of knowledge. The knowledge of the word of life is by experience so that each one will have a testimony similar to what is written in the passage being studied today. What is your testimony about the word of life?

Lesson Aim: To study and make a response to the word of life

Discussion Questions:

1. In what forms is the word of life manifest? (1John 1:1-5)
2. Describe the action or treatment the word of life gives to sin. (1John 1:8-10)
3. What are the evidences we have fellowship with the word of life? (1John 1:6-7)

Memory Scripture:

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1:6-7 KJV)

Jan 28, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: The Word of Life
Text: John 6:63-68, Proverbs 4:20-22
Song: RH 448

Introduction

Jesus wanted the disciples to know the dangers of living for the flesh as he assured them that no one who engages in that will have a reward. While assuring them that the flesh is unprofitable, Jesus brought to the awareness of the disciples that the spirit quickens. Since the spirit gives life, those who emphasise and base their choices on the flesh sooner than later find out they made a costly mistake. Jesus was thus encouraging his disciples to base their entire life on the word of life since spirit and life are in it. Since only Jesus Christ possesses the Word of life, it will be futility to assume that the life can be gotten from other sources.

The lack of faith in the word of life as observed by Jesus, is the bane of gathering with believers. Drawing back as a result of having difficulty with surrendering to the word of life like some followers departed from Jesus is still happening in our days. Jesus revealed that no one can come to him except by the work of the Father (John 6:44-45, 65). To this, some of the disciples felt otherwise. To be drawn by the Father requires responding to the admonition in Proverb 4:20-22. By this, a person stands to profit by the word of life.

Lesson Aim: To understand and take steps to make the word of life our delight.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the qualities of the word of life. (John 6:63-66, Pr. 4:20-22)
2. Discuss Peter's response to the question posed by the Lord Jesus? (John 6:67-69)
3. How can the word of life become our delight? (Pr. 4:20-22)

Memory Scripture:

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. (John 6:63 KJV)

February 4, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: TRUSTING IN THE WORD OF LIFE
Text: PROV. 3:1-8, 30: 5-6, HEB. 2:13
Song: RH 261

Introduction

The Word of God is the container for the Life of God. God's Word, like God Himself, is unique. God is eternal and His Word stands forever (Isaiah 40:8). God does not change and His Word does not change. Because it comes from God (2 Peter 1:20-21), who Himself is the Truth, the Word of God is true. If we can trust the God of the Word to be true, we can trust the Word of God to be true as well. There is no part of His word that is useless or powerless. Everything that we will ever need in life is provided for in His Word. It is ignorance that makes a man to seek for answers and help outside His word. Trusting in the Word of God often looks foolish to the carnal eye but in the eyes of them that know their God, it is the great wisdom for living.

As we submit our lives to Christ in repentance and faith for salvation, we also submit to the authority of God's Word. We show our trust in God and His Word as we acknowledge that it is from Him and allow God to transform our lives by it. God's Word is not only trustworthy, it is also profitable. God's Word shows us what is right, it has the capacity to correct our goals and motives, healing our wounds and making us whole. It is not just part of the Word of God that is profitable, but rather all of it. We may focus only on the parts of Scripture that are familiar and/or comfortable to us. It is needful for us to study the whole of God's Word, knowing that God will use it to accomplish His purposes in our lives. Ultimately, we know that God is working by the power of His Spirit, through His Word, to further conform us to the image of His Son.

Lesson Aim: To learn to depend absolutely on the Word of life.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why should we trust God's Word to be true? (1 John 1:1, Heb. 4:12, Psalm 119:89, Psalm 33:4, John 6:63)
2. How can we trust in God's Word? (2 Tim. 3:16-17, Prov. 3:5-8 Luke 5:1-5)
3. Are you living your life completely dependent on the Word of God?

Memory Scripture:

And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. (Hebrews 2:13 KJV)

February 11, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: LIVING BY THE WORD OF LIFE
Text: LUKE 4:1-4, MATTHEW 7:24-25
Song: RH 410

Introduction

The Word of God is essential for the survival of every believer. The Bible is not simply an object to be studied but the principal means by which the Lord engages his people and administers His covenant. God's Word generates life, creates faith, produces change, causes miracles, heals hurts, builds character, transforms circumstances, imparts joy, overcomes adversity, defeats temptation, infuses hope, releases power, cleanses, brings things into being, and guarantees our future forever. We cannot live without the Word of God. It is essential to our lives as food is. Job said, "I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread" (Job 23:12). God's Word is the spiritual nourishment you must have to fulfil His purpose in life. Jesus said that man must not live by bread alone but by every Word of God (Luke 4:4).

The word is not only spiritual milk to us; it is also our spiritual bread. We can never graduate from needing to feed on the word every day, just as we can never graduate from needing to eat our physical meals each day. Even the Lord Jesus, living as a man on this earth, took God's Word as His bread. The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to make us like the Son of God. To become like Jesus, we must fill our lives with his Word. The Bible says, "Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us" (2 Timothy 3:17). The Word of Life is an indispensable component of our daily living. We must therefore accord it the needed attention and treasure its content above every other thing in this world.

Lesson Aim: To see the need for the Word of life and live by it

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the right disposition required from every believer to the Word? (James 1:22, Matthew 7:24, 1 Peter 2:2, John 8:31-32, Psalm 119:93)
2. Examine the dangers of not living by the Word. (Matthew 7:26-27, James 1:23-25, Matthew 7:21-23)
3. Is the Word of God the basis of your living?

Memory Scripture:

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: (Matthew 7:24 KJV)

February 18, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: EFFICACY OF THE WORD OF GOD
Text: LUKE 5:1-11
Song: RH 378

Introduction

The Word of God has the capacity to produce the desired result (Isaiah 55:11). The Holy Spirit, through whom alone men are converted operates only by the Word. This Word must possess the power of producing in man all those effects which God desires to see when He spoke the Word into existence. Hence, the Word of God has an active and truly divine force or power of producing supernatural effects; of converting, regenerating, and renewing the minds of men. The Word of God is a "living reality," not simply a set of teachings that defines reality. The Word of God is dynamic, not static. It is active, not dormant. It is ever at work, not impotent and weak. It is efficacious and operative, not ineffectual and latent. His word reaches as far as to the most intimate and accurate knowledge of man's most hidden parts, feelings, and thoughts, distinguishing what is spiritual from what is carnal, thus the Word of God divides the closely joined parts of man's immaterial being, soul and spirit, and penetrates to the innermost parts of his being, everything is laid bare and naked before God (Heb. 4:13; Prov. 20:27), even the hidden thoughts and intentions of the heart which the individual himself is completely unaware (1 Cor. 4:3-4)

The ultimate goal for the believer is to comprehend the power and all-sufficiency of God's Word. Since the Word is living and powerful, we must receive it with the faith that it will work in and for us. As we consciously and diligently meditate on His Word until it becomes part of our lives, it will work life in us. It will work in us a faith that is able to stand in the midst of turmoil, tribulation, temptation and suffering. May God help us to build our faith and confidence in the power inherent in the Word of God.

Lesson Aim: To learn and know by experience that the Word of God is infallible.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can we connect with and benefit from the power in the Word of God? (1 Thess. 2:13, John 15:4-7, Prov. 4:20-22, Ezra 7:10)
2. What is the role of faith in accessing the power in God's Word? (John 6:30-32, Acts 14:8-10, Titus 1:1-3)
3. Do you have any doubt or fear as to the efficacy of the Word of God in any area of your life?

Memory Scripture:

And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. (Luke 5:5 KJV)

February 25, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: **THE PREVAILING NATURE OF THE WORD OF GOD**
Text: Acts 6:7, 12:24, 19:11-20, 2Thess. 3:1
Song: RH 393

Introduction

As born again believers, we can learn how to prevail with God's Word as a resource for success in our lives. To prevail means to prove superior in power and influence. It means to dominate in prevailing power. A foundational key is to realize that we need God's help, His power and strength in life. This is what allows us to prevail, to prove superior over situations and circumstances. God is able to make us ready for anything and equal to anything by infusing inner strength into us through His word. It is however our attitude to the Word of God that can unlock this grace for performance and fulfilment in life. This is an attitude which is the complete opposite of the "victim mentality" that is promoted in our society today. God's Word teaches anyone who depends on it how to develop this prevailing attitude in life through an understanding of His Word. It starts with a desire to grow, a desire to learn.

Growth begins by the process of feeding our minds with the Word of God. When we feed our minds with the word of God, we develop a Godly perspective. As we feed on the precious promises of God's Word, we gain strength to approach our challenges with God as our partner. We develop an "I can do" attitude (Phil. 4:13). We learn to prove God's Word as God's will for our lives. We prove God's Word by feeding our minds with the truth. God's Word is a living and powerful force. God's Word contains the ability or power to do what He says. The Word of God has power to produce faith and prevailing faith (Romans 10:17). You can never get faith by merely praying. Faith is the effect of a certain cause, and that cause is the Word of God. The only way to have a faith that prevails in prayer is to study your Bible, know the promises and present them to God. If we are to have faith, we must feed steadily, largely and daily on the Word of God and totally depend on His word.

Lesson Aim: To understand the prevailing nature of God's Word

Discussion Questions:

1. What makes the Word of God prevail? Mark 13:31, Isaiah 55:11, Acts 19:18-20
2. What does it take to activate God's Word? 1Peter 1:4, 2:2, Rom. 12:2, 2 Cor. 4:13-15, Phil. 4:13
3. Are you experiencing the prevailing force of God's Word in your daily life?

Memory Scripture:

So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed. (Acts 19:20 KJV)

March 4, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: THE WORD OF HIS GRACE
Text: ACTS 20:17-32, Hebrews 13:9
Song: RH 325

Introduction

Many beautiful descriptors are used in the New Testament to illustrate the powers of the Word of God. For example, the Lord Jesus is called “the Word of life” in 1 John 1:1, and Paul, speaking of the Scriptures, reminded the Philippian Christians that they should be “holding forth the word of life” (Philippians 2:16). Jesus called the Scriptures, which were to be spread through the world like seed sown in a field, “the word of the kingdom” (Matthew 13:19), which the apostle Paul called “the word of faith, which we preach” (Romans 10:8). Quoting a particular Scripture, he spoke of it as “the word of promise” (Romans 9:9). As His witnesses and ambassadors, it is to us that He “hath committed . . . the word of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19), wherewith we are to beseech men to be reconciled to God. Paul also said that “the word of truth” was nothing less than “the gospel of your salvation” (Ephesians 1:13). One of the beautiful and meaningful of such metaphors of God’s Word is the one found in our text and also in Acts 14:3, that is, “the word of his grace.”

The grace of God brings salvation to men (Titus 2:11-12) and it is God’s power that sets men free from sin (Romans 5:20-21). It is through the grace of God that the life of Jesus is lived through us. Grace of God that makes a believer to live like Jesus. The Christian life is made possible through grace. When Apostle Paul had thorn in his flesh, the Lord told him that His grace was sufficient for him (2Corinthians 12:9). There is grace to do everything God wants believers to do and totally become for His. It is this grace that Paul said is given through the word of God, thereby, committing the elders of the church to the word of His grace. The word of God is the word of His grace because grace comes through the word of God. Therefore, the more of the word of God we receive into our lives through faith and practical obedience, the more of the grace of God we experience. To neglect the word of God is to neglect the grace of God that Jesus Christ Himself personified.

Lesson Aim: To have insight into and live by the word of God’s grace.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the word of grace that Paul was referring to as he addressed the church leaders? Acts 20:31-32
2. Discuss the works of the word of grace in the life of a believer. Acts 20:32, Hebrews 13:9.
3. Is the word of grace given priority in your life and in your local assembly?

Memory Scripture:

Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. (Hebrews 13:9 KJV)

March 11, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: THE WORD OF FAITH
Text: Rom. 10:17, Mark 4:24-25
Song: RH 377

Introduction

Every one of us has faith in the natural realm. We believe chairs will hold us up, planes will take us where we need to go, and the food we're served is safe to eat. But that's not the kind of faith to which Paul refers when he says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). This is Biblical faith, and it occurs in the supernatural realm. You cannot generate that kind of faith. You cannot clench your fist, grit your teeth, and say you are going to believe. No one can believe in God unless God enables him to believe. And the only way you can believe in God is to hear from His Word. Without a word from God, you have no basis for faith. Faith is not a leap in the dark. Instead, faith is a step into the light.

When we understand how faith comes, acting on our faith and receiving from God becomes simple. God made faith easy to understand; the answers are all in the Word! But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Hebrews 11:6). Notice particularly the first part of that verse, "***But without faith it is impossible to please him. . .***" If God demands that we have faith when it is impossible for us to have faith, then we have a right to challenge His justice. But if He places within our hands the means whereby faith can be produced, then the responsibility rests on us as to whether or not we have faith. God has told us that without faith, it is impossible to please Him, but He has also told us how to obtain faith. He has told us how faith comes. We can live a life full of faith by being filled with the word of God; the source of God-kind of faith.

Lesson Aim: To learn how to walk and grow in faith through the word of God

Discussion Questions:

1. What do believers need to do to walk and grow in faith? (Romans 10:17, Col. 3:16)
2. Discuss the connection between obedience and growing in faith. (Mark 4:24-25)
3. Do you now understand how easy it is to walk in faith?

Memory Scripture:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Colossians 3:16 KJV)

March 18, 2018

Focus: HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE
Topic: DANGERS OF NOT HOLDING FORTH (I)
Text: Matthew 7:26-27, 1Samuel 2:27-36
Song: Eru Olorun ba mi...

Introduction

Jesus Christ is the Word of life. The Christian life is founded upon the life of Jesus. In Him we move, we live and have our being (Acts 17:28). The believer lives the life of Christ through the word of God. The saints of the Lord must hold tightly to the word of God. To hold tightly to the word of life would imply that the Christian loves the word, obeys the word, lives by the word and dies living by the word. Believers must hold forth this word of life till the end of their lives or the return of the Lord. It is not sufficient to hold on to the word of life for some time then backslide. Jesus warned that, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved (Matthew 24:13). It is only those who hold on till the end that shall receive the crown from the Lord.

God's promise to the house of Eli was that they would walk before Him in the priesthood but when Eli despised God, the promise was revoked. Eli could not continue to hold fast to the word of life and his lineage was cut-off from the office. Many terrible things happened in his family. Also, Jesus warned that anyone who does not hold forth the word of life by obeying it would experience a great fall and regret at the end of life. It should be noted that obedience that the Lord demands is not in the energy of the flesh but in the life of God and the grace freely made available to walk in obedience. Considering this provision and the consequence of not holding on to Jesus till the end, it is imperative to hold on till the end in order to be saved from the destruction that comes to anyone who does not hold on till the end.

Lesson Aim: To understand the need to hold fast to Jesus till the end and put it to practice.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the consequences of not holding fast to the word of life according to the words of Jesus. (Matthew 7:26-27)
2. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Romans 11:29) Examine this verse in the light of the revocation of the promise to God to the house of Eli.
3. Are you holding fast to the word of life or are you backsliding?

Memory Scripture:

Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. (1 Samuel 2:30 KJV)

March 25, 2018

Focus: **HOLDING FORTH THE WORD OF LIFE**
Topic: DANGERS OF NOT HOLDING FORTH II
Text: Jeremiah 8:8-13, Hebrews 2:1-4, 10:19-31
Song: Mo ti mo ona iye yin a...

Introduction

The scripture is littered with warnings about forsaking the Lord, particularly, for those who have professed once Him as their Lord and Saviour. Believers are encouraged to hold fast to the confession of their faith with the hope of running the race to the end. When the children of Israel forsook the Lord, the consequence was devastating. They have not recovered completely from the consequences of their backsliding and disobedience till today. It looks logical and acceptable while contemplating and embarking on an act of disobedience. We receive encouragement probably by some around us whose behaviours are also contrary to God's pattern. Even the flesh inside of us continues to enjoy the "benefits" of this act. The consequences look remote and the devil tends to convince us that nothing will happen.

The dangers of not holding forth the word of life are too grave for anyone to contemplate. The worst of it all is eternal condemnation. The doctrine that once someone is saved, the person is eternally saved even if the person wilfully continues to sin is not supported by the word of God. Anyone who wilfully continues to sin is daring the wrath of God. Believers therefore must be sober and vigilant to hold on to the word of life till the end. The warnings in the word of God are for our comfort and guide. God is gracious to warn us so that we do not derail. It is beautiful to live by the word of life. Any other alternative satan may be presenting before the children of God is emptiness and vanity.

Lesson Aim: To help see the need to fight the good fight to the end

Discussion Questions:

1. Identify the dangers of forsaking the word of life from the following text Jeremiah 8:8-13, Hebrews 2:1-4, 10:19-31, 6:4-6.
2. How can a believer avoid willfully denying the Lord? (1Peter 5:9, 1John 1:3, 1Corinthians 1:18-19, John 6:66-69, Hebrews 6:4-6, 10:19-31)
3. Are you holding tightly to the word of life?

Memory Scripture:

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. (Hebrews 2:1 KJV)

April 1, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD IS GOD
Text: John. 1:1-18; Psalms 138: 2; Rev. 19:13
Song: Thou art worthy...

Introduction

John stresses the inseparable nature between the Word and God the Father (John 1:1). The union, association, companionship, mutual glorification and oneness has been since eternity. The Word existed before the beginning and was in fact responsible for all that was made in the beginning. If we say that God created the Heaven and the earth, we are also saying that the word created because of the declaration that the word was God. The gospel of John begins by speaking of someone referred to as the Word or logos which is eternal [John. 1:1, 14]. It is clear that the person John was referring to is Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ is the embodiment of the entire message of God to mankind; the way God communicated Himself and the central idea that holds the universe together. John 1:2 started by referring to the word as human using the word 'He was... with God'.

Genesis 1:1 also asserts that the Word was already there when the world we live in was created and John is saying that the Word has existed from eternity with the same status and pursuing the same goal as God. The Word was uniquely involved in the origin of the earth and the heaven. They do not exist by themselves and are not the result of impersonal forces. Throughout his gospel, John strongly affirms Jesus' deity; he refers to Him as God. He also speaks of having seen and touched the subject of his message with all his senses, which implies a person. He emphasized that he was one of those taught by Jesus himself; hence, he would rejoice if those who hear and read the Word believe it and join him in fellowship.

Lesson Aim: To learn and believe that the Word is God

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the oneness of God and the word. (John. 1:1-4, 14; 1 John. 5: 7, 20, Genesis 1:1-3, Psalm 138:2, Isaiah 9:6)
2. Why is it difficult to accept the equating of God and the word? (Matthew 21:25-27, John 5:46-47, 9:39)
3. Have you received the Word into your life?

Memory Scripture:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1 KJV)

April 8, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD IS POWERFUL
Text: Heb. 4: 12-13; Rev. 19: 15; Math. 4: 3-11
Song: Jesus conquered the world and gave us victory...

Introduction

God created all things and cares for His creation through the Word. The Word of God is truly reliable and active to produce desired effect. When God speaks, His Word is far more than mere human words. It always produces results and it is authoritative. Like God, the Word is living and has power to penetrate and expose inner thoughts. The Word is potent and enables us to see our true nature. None of us will be able to stand God's scrutiny, but if we truly walk with Him, we will not try to cover up our sins and unbelief. Instead we will humbly acknowledge them and run to Christ to cover our nakedness. We cannot hope to cover up our disobedience or our lack of faith so that God will not see it. The Word is sharp enough to separate our thoughts and motives, even if they are as closely linked as soul and spirit; joints and marrows. The Word uncovers the hidden secret of human heart.

Temptations, challenges and trials are facts of life that we cannot but face sometimes. But we must follow Jesus' example and stand up in using the most effective weapon against temptation, which is the Word (Matthew. 4:4), as the sole authority for what we believe and how we act, governing how we live and the way we respond to the events around us. The 176 verses in Psalm 119 holds high the Word of God and convinces us to treasure it more than anything else in life (Ps. 119: 11,105-107).

Lesson Aim: To recognize the efficacy of the Word of God

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the potency/efficacy of the Word of God? (Heb. 4:12; Ps. 33:6)
2. What are the characteristics of the Word of God? (2 Sam. 7:28; Prov. 30:5; Is. 40:8)
3. What should be our response to the Word of God?

Memory Scripture:

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12 KJV)

April 15, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD IS GOD'S MESSENGER
Text: Isaiah 55: 11; Matthew 8: 5-13
Song: Oro re loun gbanila...

Introduction

God sends His Word to humanity from time to time. The Word represents God's messenger, through which great good news of deliverance from bondage, fullness of life, and fruitfulness were sent. This Word represents the gospel, a message God personally communicated to Abraham and through His prophets to Israel. Jesus Himself called the people to repent and believe the message that He had come to bring life (John. 10: 10). The Apostles preached the Word wherever they went, preaching the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and how men could find joy and salvation through faith in Him. God's Word is fruitful, and it does not go forth without producing powerful results. His Word is reliable and true which has been written down as Scripture, God's inspired Word. The message in the Word is God's good news of salvation for hearers to turn from sin and experience the freedom of God's acceptance and love.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the Anointed One, whom God sent as messenger to function as prophet when He speaks God's Word, as priest when he sacrifices himself and as King when He rules. The responsibility to preach the good news now belongs to all Christ's followers, and not just to those ordained to the ministry of the Word. All believers can testify to the truth about the Word, and more than that, to His power to change lives. This is the message that all believers carry to all nations and make disciples of all nations. God accomplishes His purpose by sending His Word just the way a man would send his servants. Once we have His Word, we have His sufficiency. The word is at work in each messenger of God carrying the needed message to each generation. A true messenger of God is the word in human form.

Lesson Aim: To see the Word as God's messenger

Discussion Questions:

1. How does God send the word as His messenger? (Isaiah 55:11, Psalm 107:20, Matthew 8:8)
2. Discus how true messenger of God represents His word? (Matthew 8:5-13)
3. Do you live as God's messenger?

Memory Scripture:

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. (Isaiah 55:11 KJV)

April 22, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD OF GOD IS INSTRUCTIVE
Text: Proverbs 4:10-13, 6:23, 2Timothy 3:16-17
Song: RH 356

Introduction

Any instruction given by God is an order from Him, but because God is loving and wise, always wanting the best for His people, His instructions are never hard nor to keep us from what is good. The instructions are seen as representing the ways of the just Judge, who is interested in the welfare of His creatures. The word of God is very important for our instruction and leading in life's journey (Ps. 119:105). The Word of God is instructive, taking us step by step in the journey through life as God intends. The Word of God; His teaching and instruction are guidelines for our lives (Proverbs 1:8). God has given us instructions through His word, we need to respond like the psalmist in Psalm 119:7 repeatedly expressed his determination to learn from what God has given as instructions.

The Word of God is a thorough equipping tool, providing doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction, so that everyone may be equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). If we are to truly benefit from God's instructions that will guide our lives and be a light on our path, we need to ask God to teach us. The desire to understand and obey the instructive Word of God must go together. God's instruction describes His way; the path we are to follow and we must pray not to stray away from it. His instruction is of truth and a sure way of life (Psalm. 119: 10, 37).

Lesson Aim: To see God's Word as instruction from Him

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the benefits of yielding to the instructive Word of God? (2Timothy 3:16-17)
2. How should the believer hold fast to instruction? (Proverbs 4:10-13)
3. Do you pay attention to the instructions found in the Word of God?

Memory Scripture:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Timothy 3:16 KJV)

April 29, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD OF GOD IS LIGHT
Text: Psalm 119:105,130, Jeremiah 23:29, John 1 4-5
Song: Give me oil in my lamp keep me burning...

Introduction

The gospel of John does not only present Jesus as the “Word”, but also as a source of life and as light. He provides life and illuminates the way for those who acknowledge Him. God, who is light, lives in light as the Father of lights. The first creative act of God was to dispel darkness with light (Gen. 1: 3). His Son Jesus is the Light of the world. It is only through Jesus Christ that people can recognize that they are lost in darkness and can find their way home. In other words, God’s first recreative act is to make light shine in darkness, so that believers may enter the kingdom of light. Those who are saved from sin and death are enlightened, or are children of the light.

Believers confess in a personal way, “The Lord is my light” (Ps. 27: 1), and desire to live a life that reflects light. Darkness stands for error and sin, while light stands for purity. Just as light illuminates a path or exposes thing hidden by darkness, so God illuminates the hearts of men, exposing all that is contrary to His nature. Jesus is the primary light; all other lights are secondary and shine only as they reflect His light. The coming into the world of the true light (Jesus) brought light for all to see and the right of belonging to Him. His arms are open to all those who want to receive His message. He gives power to them to become the children of God. The right to belong to Jesus is not based on race or on anything a person has done, but it is a gift from God, creating a new nature in those who receive Christ. They are born into the family of light which is God.

Lesson Aim: To recognize that the Word of God is light

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss God’s Word as the primary light? Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 6:23; 1 John 1:5
2. How do we live a life that reflects the light of God?
3. Have you received the light of God into your life?

Memory Scripture:

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. (Psalms 119:130 KJV)

May 6, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD OF GOD IS TESTED
Text: Psalm 12:6 Luke 5:1-7, Isaiah 55:11
Song: My God is a miracle God...

Introduction

The word of God is absolutely dependable and trustworthy as God himself. It has never failed and it will never fail. Once it is spoken it has a legal backing for performance (Genesis 1:3). Every situation a believer encounters is an opportunity to choose to trust God rather than trust in their own inclination or strength. God's word is true and He always acts in accordance with it. Believers must know that the word of God has been proven to be true, learn to trust in the lord with all our heart always and not to lean on our understanding (Proverbs 3:5). From the passage we read in Luke, we can see a frustrated fisherman who depended on his professionalism, but failed. His toiling throughout the night could not fetch him anything and he had given-up. But when he depended on tested and proven word of God, he was dazed at the instant miracle, to the extent that he acknowledged being a sinner.

At creation, God just spoke and it came to pass. All the prophecies and promises of God are sure and certain. God said in (Isaiah 55:11) "***so shall My word that goes forth from my mouth, it shall not return to me void***". God's word of promise can never be barren. The power of His word will always fulfill the promise of His word. All that a Christian needs to do is to receive and believe the proven word wholeheartedly and humbly and wait for its performance. An aircraft is carefully put together and tested severally to be deemed fit to fly. The pilots are well trained and no stone is left unturned to ensure it flies safely. However, despite all these rigorous testing and care, it is not completely dependable. It could come down any moment. However, the word of God is not like that. It is 100% certain that it is dependable and will never crash.

Lesson Aim: To understand the dependability of the Word of God and depend on it.

Discussion Questions:

1. How reliable is the Word of God. Give reasons (Psalm 12:6)
2. What should be our attitude towards the word of God? (Proverbs 3:5-8)
3. Do you receive the word of God with humility?

Memory Scripture:

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (Proverbs 3:5 KJV)

May 13, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD IS A SEED
Text: Luke 8:11-15, 1Peter 1:23
Song: Oro re, iye ni...

Introduction

The word of God is an incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever. The word has a regenerating power to bring life to a dead nature. Just as the plants owe their natural existence to the creator's spoken word which gives them breath and life, so do believers owe their New Birth to the power of God's word. The seed which is the word of God from the passage we read has the capacity to produce new life in us. It has begotten us again by the power of the Holy Spirit and made us members of God's new creation (2Cor. 5:17). The regenerating power of the word as a seed brings spiritual life to all who open to its truth. The word of God as incorruptible seed might not yield the desired fruit if it falls on unfertile land of a believer's heart. It is worthy of note that the same seed on a fertile heart of a believer is capable of producing hundred fold, sixty and thirty fold, depending on the fertility of the heart (Matt 13:23).

As a sprouted seed brings beauty to its environment, so also the word as a seed is supposed to bring inner purity and beauty which are manifested in love to fellow believers. Therefore as Christians, the fruitfulness of the word of God in our lives is determined by our receptivity and being teachable. Because the Word of God operates as a seed, we may not get immediate result just as a seed does not produce fruits immediately. However, eventually, the seed will produce tree of righteousness and goodness of God in any life that allows it to grow. Also, when we preach, evangelize, teach or minister the word of God, we must have at the back of our mind that we are simply sowing seed. In due course, God will cause the seed to produce.

Lesson Aim: To know why the Word of God operates as a seed

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the reasons why some believers do not prosper even after the word has been sown in their heart (Matthew 13:19-22:13).
2. How should we receive the word of God so that it can prosper our lives? (Luke 8:15, Mark 4:20 Matthew 13:23)
3. How do you hear and receive the word of God?

Memory Scripture:

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. (Luke 8:11 KJV)

May 20, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD OF GOD IS THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT
Text: Hebrew 4:12, Rev 1:16, Ephesians 6:17
Song: We conquer satan...

Introduction

There is a clearly defined structure in the invisible realm: that is a “battle- stance” against the unseen satanic forces. It is clear that our warfare is not physical (flesh and blood), but against invisible powers who have clearly defined levels of authority (Ephesians 6:12). In order to stand against the enemy of our soul, we need the whole armor of God. The sword of the spirit is one of the whole armor of God as described in Ephesians 6:13-18. It should be noted that believers are basically to stand against principalities and powers. This reason for this is because Jesus has already won the victory over them. The believer is not to fight to win against the devil but to enforce the victory that Jesus has won on the cross. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit not the sword of man. When the believer releases the word of God by faith, the Holy Spirit ensures it accomplishes its right purpose.

This sword of the spirit is described as living, active and powerful. It is also very sharp and even sharper than two-edged sword. The operation of the sword of the spirit is so deep to the extent that it is a discerner of the thought and intent of the heart of man. Even though it can be used as a protective device, it is also an instrument of judgment of the intent of the heart. In Rev 19:15, it is described as a sharp sword with which the lord will strike nations and rule them with a ‘rod of iron’. Therefore, as Christians, we ought to see the word of God as the spiritual activator for an acceptable service unto God. The Word of God may seem abstract because it is spirit (invisible) but it is the greatest reality of all.

Lesson Aim: To understand the Word of God as the sword of the spirit

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss how the word of God is described in Hebrews 4:12 and Ephesians 6:17
2. Explain why Christians need the sword of the spirit. (Ephesians 6:11-13)
3. How often do you feed your spirit with the word of God?

Memory Scripture:

The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live. (Psalms 119:144 KJV)

May 27, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD IS SPIRIT AND LIFE
Text: Psalm 19:7-10, 119:93 John 1:1- 4, 6:63
Song: He's alive amen...

Introduction

The two components of the word being examined in this study are inseparable. Both spirit and life belong to God and He has offered them in His word to human beings as gift. It takes submission to the Holy Spirit to access, appropriate, and prospers by the gift of God. The Bible in 1Corinthians 2:14 states categorically that "the unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God". Natural senses are too dull and ill equipped but when the Spirit is in charge such a life is regenerated and transformed. God is spirit; His word is spirit and carries the very life of God. Therefore, the words of Jesus are spirit and life.

To live in the Spirit is to be led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14) and whoever is led by the Spirit has the life of God in him and he is a son of God. The help of the Holy Spirit cannot be over-emphasized in making believers to be alive and be strengthened spiritually. The word of God contains depths, and truth and following it carefully will keep on producing life at every stage. Therefore, believing and acting on the life free us from the power of sin that leads to death (Rm8.2). If we let the Spirit control our mind, it will leads to life and peace. It is very crucial to understand that the word of God is spirit and that it carries the life of God.

Lesson Aim: To learn to relate with the Word as spirit and life

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain the expression "The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life "(John 6.63b).
2. Discuss the ways by which the word of God is spirit and life for the believers?
3. Is the word of God alive in you?

Memory Scripture:

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. (John 6:63 KJV)

June 3, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD OF GOD
Topic: THE WORD OF GOD IS SURE WORD OF PROPHECY
Text: 2Peter 1:16-21, 1Cor 14:3, Matthew 17:1-9
Song: He has promised He will never change...

Introduction

Peter, James and John were with Jesus on a mountain; now often refer to as the mount of transfiguration. It was on this mountain that the glory that Jesus possesses from the beginning was revealed. Jesus had always possessed this glory but He laid it down and took the form of man in order to save mankind. Moses and Elijah appeared in the glory of Jesus and God the Father spoke audibly to the hearing of the disciples about Jesus. It was such a glorious and wonderful experience. The first instructive thing about this manifestation was that Jesus told these three disciples not to tell anyone and they kept mute on the matter until Jesus was glorified. From a natural point of view, one would have thought that Jesus would be happy for such experience to be on broadcast everywhere but Jesus never did anything to glorify Himself but the Father in Heaven. The disciples who heard God's voice did not go about telling everyone the story or intimidating anyone that they heard God's voice. In fact, when Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, he never mentioned the experience; rather, he quoted from the Scripture that everyone could verify.

Speaking in 1Peter 1:16-21, Peter relating the experience to the church said that if the church would not believe the voice they heard, they have the word of God that is sure thus elevating the written Word of God above the voice they heard even though it was a genuine voice of God. He was essentially saying that human beings can err in hearing God but that the written word is the surest way to know the mind of God. The scripture therefore elevates the word of God far above any voice that can be heard. Many have gone into error in the body of Christ because they were seeking a voice or have elevated a voice above the word of God; true prophecy is the word of God. Peter said that the word of God is the word of prophecy. True prophecy agrees the word of God. Dream, vision, voice etc., even when they are truly from God must be subject to the word of God. Jesus was able to defeat the devil with the written word of God breathed upon by the Holy Spirit. Believers should follow His example and place their faith in the word of God.

Lesson Aim: To understand the supremacy of the word of God

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Peter refer to the word of God as "a more sure word of prophecy"? (2Peter 1:19)
2. How does the word of prophecy keep the believers from error and heresy?
3. Identify some of the erroneous teachings today that arise from not taking heed to the more sure word of prophecy.

Memory Scripture:

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: (2 Peter 1:19 KJV)

June 10, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD IS DEPENDABLE FOR ALL THINGS
Text: Psalm 119:89, 11:3, Josh 1:8, John 1:1, 6:63
Song: Forever O Lord, thy Word is settled...

Introduction

God will not do anything without His Word, everything he has done, He is doing and will ever do must be preceded by His Word. When God was going to create everything that exists today, He spoke His Word (Gen 1). When God speaks, things must happen, because every Word He speaks is for a purpose and can never return to Him void (Isaiah 55:11). His Words are divine messengers that must carry out the assignments that God sends them. God depends totally on His word. It is the Word that has brought us salvation (Romans 10:10) and the Word has something for every area and issue of our lives; be it healing, encouragement, bereavement, joy, peace etc.

Believers must live their lives by the dictate and power of the Word of God. The Word of God is compass, guide and manual for life. It is the only path to being truly successful. When God commissioned Joshua after the death of Moses, the formula for success that He gave Him was the Book of the law. His mandate was that the Word of God must not depart from his mouth, but he must continually meditate on it day and night. If we also allow the Word to have his way in every area of our lives, we will discover that the Word is not only true but indeed dependable in and for all situations and circumstances of our lives. The power in God's word has granted believers all things pertaining to life and Godliness (2Peter 1:3), and so there is reason for confidence and trust.

Lesson Aim: To delight in and totally depend on God's word in all our circumstances.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the dependability of God's word with scripture references and examples from real life situations. (Psalm 119:89, Isaiah 55:11)
2. Why do people find it difficult to depend on God's word and how can we avoid such pitfalls? (Matthew 13:58, Romans 11:20 Hebrews 3:12.19)
3. Are you depending on God's word in your life?

Memory Scripture:

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. (Psalms 119:89 KJV)

June 17, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD IS HEALTH
Text: Proverbs 4:20-27, 3:1-8, Psalm 107:20, Matt 8:8; 17, 1 Peter 2:24
Song: Lifted I am...

Introduction

It is God's desire that we are not only healed but that we live continually in good health and He has made provision for this. It was never part of God's plan that man be sick. When He created Adam and put in the Garden of Eden, he never experienced sickness. As a result of sin through disobedience sickness came to man. But Glory to God! In His mercy, God also had a plan of redeeming man from sin and all its consequences. This is part of why Jesus Christ came into the world. The package of redemption also involves the redemption from all types of sickness and diseases. When a man becomes born again (a new creation) he inherits the nature of God, the seed of God is imparted into his recreated spirit. That nature of God cannot be sick; therefore the recreated can live sickness free. Although because we still carry this *tent* of flesh, sickness may still attach itself to our bodies but the ultimate for every believer is to be healed and live free of infirmities.

That is why it is important to abide in the Word of God. Proverbs 4:22 says that God's Word is life to those who find it and health to all their flesh. Are you living by the Word? When we as believers fall sick, is our first reaction to quickly seek medication and medical help or we apply the Word first? God is not against medication, but He wants us to trust His Word above all else for our health. The Word of God functions in two ways against sickness and diseases. It is both preventive and curative. As the believer takes in the Holy Spirit inspired Word of God every day, his spirit, soul and body are fortified against sickness and diseases. Also, if a believer is sick, he should depend on the promises of God for healing.

Lesson Aim: To establish that God's Word heals and trust in the word for healing.

Discussion Questions:

1. Highlight and discuss the provisions that God has made for our health and how to enjoy them. (Isaiah 53:5, Exodus 15:26, Deu. 7:15, James 5:14-15, Proverbs 4:20-27, 3:1-8)
2. Why do Christians still fall sick despite all the provisions God has made? (Exodus 15:26, 2Timothy 4:20, Philippians 2:26-27, 1Cor. 11:29-30)
3. Are you walking in divine health?

Memory Scripture:

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses. (Matthew 8:17 KJV)

June 24, 2018

Focus: THE NATURE OF THE WORD
Topic: THE WORD OF GOD NEVER FAILS
Text: Matthew 24:35, Joshua 21:45, Isaiah 55:10 – 11
Song: RH 459

Introduction

God holds His Word in so much esteem that the scripture says He has magnified it above all His name (Psalm 138:2). The Word of the Lord is powerful, infallible, and perfect, just, true, tested, and is spirit and life. The Word of man may fail; because he is limited and circumstances may be beyond his control but God and His Word cannot be limited by situations and circumstances. The only dependable thing on earth with 100% guarantee is the Word of God. That's why Jesus said that heaven and earth will pass away but not one of His word will go unfulfilled (Matthew 24:35). The Word of God does not go to sleep neither can it be caught napping. Anyone who is committed to living by every word from the Lord can never fail in life. Even when he faces challenges and setbacks, he is guaranteed of success because he lives by the Word of God; which in essence is God Himself.

Even the little we know of God's creation makes it an awesome doing. Almost beyond human comprehension except with the help of the Holy Spirit. All that we see today and the ones we can't even see came to be because God sent His Word to work (Heb 11:3). God said that as the rain comes down from heaven and does not return there, but accomplishes its purpose, so is His word that He has spoken, it shall not return to Him void but shall accomplish what He has sent it to do (Isa 55:11). The entire scripture is full of instances and situations that God sent His word to accomplish specific purposes and they were done. God and His Word are one and because He cannot fail, His word can never ever fail. Therefore, we can hang our hope and our entire lives upon the Word of God that can never fail but abides forever.

Lesson Aim: To be encouraged by the fact that the Word never fails and fully trust God for His promise to be fulfilled.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss why is it impossible for the Word of God to fail with instances from scripture and real life situations. (Psalm 107:20, 1Sam. 30:8, Luke 5:5-6)
2. Why does it look as if God's Word did not come to pass in some situations and what should be our response in such times? (Matthew 22:29, James 4:3, Hebrews 3:19, 2Kings 5:11)
3. Are you experiencing the fulfillment of God's Word in your life?

Memory Scripture:

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Matthew 24:35 KJV)

July 1, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: IN CHRIST
Text: Ephesians 1
Song: RH 378

Introduction

The gospel of life is the gospel of Christ and His kingdom. The early churches were correctly taught the gospel by the Apostles. They set forth the mind of God clearly before the brethren. The gathering of the saints then was basically about the gospel and the Apostles simply taught the people the gospel of Christ. They understood that the gospel was not about money, religion, denomination, showmanship etc. In the writings of the Apostles, they convey the message they preached to the churches in writing. It is important to carefully and systematically follow their writings and trust the Lord to grant revelation to His people to receive a clear understanding of the gospel of Christ and His Kingdom. The epistle of Paul to the Ephesians was written to the saints at Ephesus. The believer is not waiting to be made a saint in eternity but is called saint even now. Unfortunately, a lot of believers today don't want to be referred to as saint when in reality that is what the believers are called to be. It is sad that some even find being called a saint derogatory.

A careful examination of chapter one of the book of Ephesians reveals that believers are secured in Christ Jesus. The provision of God for salvation and life is located only in Christ Jesus. All the blessings of God for the believers have already been given in Christ Jesus. The Christian is not someone seeking an identity but a person whose identity is only in Christ Jesus. God made all these provisions for the glory of His name alone, hence no man should be glorified. The need for revelation to know who a believer is and what he possesses in Christ was reinforced by the prayer of Paul for the brethren to receive the spirit of wisdom and revelation. As you go through these studies, please take note of the phrase; IN HIM, IN WHOM, IN CHRIST.

Lesson Aim: To understand the Gospel of Christ and His Kingdom and live in Him

Discussion Questions:

1. Identify and discuss all the blessings the believers are blessed with IN CHRIST from the Ephesians 1.
2. Discuss the critical components and importance of the prayer of Paul for the church. (Ephesians 1:15-23)
3. What is the intent of God in saving and blessing the believers in Christ? (Ephesians 1:10, 12)

Memory Scripture:

That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. (Ephesians 1:12 KJV)

July 8, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: SAVED BY GRACE
Text: EPHESIANS 2
Song: RH 325

Introduction

Having established that all believers are blessed in Christ, chapter two focuses on what God accomplished on behalf of the believers in Christ and how the believers are brought into the salvation that God himself made available in Christ. When Adam sinned, man died or became separated from God. The dead spirit of man could not fellowship with God or have communion with Him as He intended in the beginning. When Jesus died, God put the entire human race (dead, born and unborn) in Christ to die with Him. When Jesus resurrected, the human spirit came alive and was ready to fellowship with God. However, each person still needs to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ who accomplished this great salvation in order to be saved. As soon as a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, the finished work of Christ is activated and the life of Christ is deposited into the person. So, the work of salvation was finished when Jesus died and rose again but man is saved when He believes in that which Jesus has done. This is what it means to be saved by grace through faith.

Before anyone would believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, such a person was dead in trespass and sin. No one can please God outside of Christ. Man, outside of Christ, is essentially of the sinful nature; such that even the good he knows how to do is evil in the eyes of the Lord. The gospel is not man's attempt to please God. Rather, it is God's attempt to make man acceptable to Him in Christ Jesus. It is only when man is birthed in Christ that such a person can walk in the work that God has prepared for such a life. The purpose of God for every man is now located in Christ Jesus. No one can do the good works of God unless such is created in Christ Jesus. Every child of God now has access to Him and is being built up into a house for God. Hallelujah!

Lesson Aim: To capture that the gospel of life has produced the fruit of receiving God's salvation by grace in us.

Discussion Questions:

1. State and explain when and how the believer is saved. (Ephesians 2:2,5,8)
2. What are the things that Christ accomplished for us and their implications?
3. What are the objectives of the God in all He accomplished for believers in Christ Jesus and how these can be appropriated personally? (Ephesians 2:7, 10, 16, 22)

Memory Scripture:

In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:22 KJV)

July 15, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST
Text: EPHESIANS 3
Song: RH 589

Introduction

Paul understood the gospel that he was called to preach. Preaching for him was not a means to be famous or make money. He was not preaching an idea, some rules or religion but Christ Himself. He revealed that he was not chasing shadows but that He had received a clear revelation of the mystery of Christ, which he preached. He was preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. This is not an assignment any man can take upon himself. God must call and equip such a person for the work. Apostleship is not a title but a life devoted to Jesus Christ and the preaching of Christ. God used him mightily along with other apostles but his message remained Christ. He did not use the grace of God to build an empire for himself. His message did not change from Christ to miracles or healing. The beginning, middle and end of his ministry were the preaching of Christ. The goal of his ministry was also that the saints in Christ would comprehend Christ.

Paul did not only preach Christ, he prayed Christ. The substance of his prayer was that the believers would know the love of Christ and be filled with the fullness of God. This was a minister who was not contented with having crowd or miracles following his ministry. He labored in the place of prayer for the believers to receive the revelation of Christ and be filled with the fullness of God. He understood that the matter was a spiritual one such that no one can know Christ except God reveals Him to such a person. Believers and preachers alike today must have the same focus, goal and purpose as demonstrated by Apostle Paul.

Lesson Aim: To understand the Gospel of Christ and surrender to be stewards of this mystery.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the mystery hidden in God but revealed through Christ Jesus and its implications for believers? (Ephesians 3:9-11)
2. What was Paul (and by implication any minister) called to preach? (Ephesians 3:1-10)
3. Examine the prayer of Paul in chapter three and its importance to the believers and ministers alike. (Ephesians 3:14:21)

Memory Scripture:

How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, (Ephesians 3:3 KJV)

July 22, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: WALKING WORTHY OF THE LORD
Text: EPHESIANS 4
Song: RH 548

Introduction

Paul in earlier chapters of Ephesians had explained what God had accomplished on behalf of the believers and how everything is in Christ and about Christ. He explained clearly that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. According to his writings, anyone who comes to Christ is saved, washed clean and located in Christ. All of these were accomplished by God in Christ. As the life of Christ is deposited in the believer, it becomes possible to live the new life. This has nothing to do with effort or works but it is the free gift of God. Believers only gain access into the finished works of Christ through faith in Him. As exciting as all of these seems, it is just the beginning of the plan of God. Many have run into error by only preaching what God accomplished in Christ without teaching the implications of such great work on the way the believers should live henceforth. Paul explains that believers should walk worthy of Christ, not by self-effort but through the life of Christ in them. This implies giving room for Christ to be manifest through them.

Many would have interpreted Paul's admonition to mean that man must strive by his effort to live for God. On the contrary, Paul was simply saying that since believers have been delivered from the old life and a new life of Christ is now planted in them, they should allow that life to be lived through them. Ministers of God are also raised and gifted to pursue this same purpose of Christ manifesting through the believers. They are not to make name for themselves or have a new doctrine but are called to preach Jesus until every child of God is fully matured in Christlikeness. The old life must be put off because that life is dead and the new life given by Christ must be put on. It is when there is a failure in allowing the life of Christ to flow through the believers that division shows up in the body.

Lesson Aim: To understand how to allow Christ to be manifest in our lives all the time.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss how the believer should break from the old life. (Ephesians 4:17-22, 25-32)
2. What is the purpose of the fivefold ministry in the body of Christ? (Ephesians 4:11-16)
3. How do the believers manifest the new life? (Ephesians 4:22-32)

Memory Scripture:

*And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.
(Ephesians 4:24 KJV)*

July 29, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: OPERATION OF THE NEW LIFE
Text: EPHESIANS 5
Song: RH 412

Introduction

The believers must walk in love as Christ has also walked in love. The manifestations of the old life must be done away with. Without the foundation in chapter one to four, it is easy to think of the admonition of Paul as legalism. The believer is a new creation in Christ, possessing the life of Christ and the grace of God to walk worthy of the Lord. Paul explains that those having the new life have turned away from unrighteousness as a result of what God had accomplished in Christ Jesus for them. The new life is lived in the Spirit and it has been made known to the church how to constantly be filled with the Holy Spirit. It should be noted that Christian life is not a life lived in the flesh but in the Spirit. Those who attempt to live the life of God in the flesh, find the Christian life hard, difficult and frustrating. However, when the gospel is clearly understood by revelation, the believer understands that his old life had been put to death on the cross and he now has the active life of Christ in him through faith.

The life that the believers now possess can operate in different relationships, situations and environments. Paul commenced this line of thought by showing how this life will operate in marriage. The man and the woman in Christ carry the same life. When they are married, the life will operate as love and submission. Men who are not in Christ cannot walk in this light; likewise, women who do not possess the life of Christ cannot live in submission as expected of the carrier of the nature of God. It should be clear that the instruction to love and submit was written to men and women who have put off the old man and are now carrying the new life of Christ. Also, among believers, the new life walks in humility and submission. It is neither assuming nor arrogant. So, God could demand love and submission from His children because He has placed His life within them.

Lesson Aim: To understand and surrender to the operation of the new life in Christ Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

1. Highlight and discuss some of the behaviours that should never be mentioned among believers. (Ephesians 5:3-4, 11)
2. How is the life of Christ supposed to operate in marriage? (Ephesians 5:22-33)
3. How should the believer walk in the new life? (Ephesians 5:14-21)

Memory Scripture:

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; (Ephesians 5:1 KJV)

August 5, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: STANDING AGAINST THE WILES OF SATAN
Text: EPHESIANS 6
Song: RH 444

Introduction

The discourse of Paul continued in chapter six as the Apostle gave other examples of how the new life of Christ birthed into every one that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ functions in other areas of life. Either in the relationship between parents and children or masters and servants, the life of Christ should be revealed. The principle of life that Paul was getting across to the Church is that believers should live as Christ in every situation. Whatever profession or situation a child of God finds himself, he must allow the life of Jesus inside of him to manifest. Therefore, a Christian is not someone who is saved by faith but goes ahead with his sinful and worldly lifestyle. Rather he is someone who through faith is saved and saved completely from the sinful nature and has put on Jesus; who is now being lived out by mortal men.

Also, because of what God had accomplished through Jesus Christ, the believer is to have a different attitude towards satan and his kingdom. He is neither to panic nor be afraid of the devil. The battle the believer faces is never against flesh and blood. The battle is against principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness in high places. These are the operators of the kingdom of darkness that cannot be seen with the naked eyes. However, the believer is seated in Christ far above principalities and powers. Therefore, all that a believer has to do is to stand against the devil. The believer is not engaged in warfare with the devil but simply standing against the devil based on the finished work of Christ. The way to stand is by putting the armour of God. This armour was purchased with the blood of Jesus. This is the gospel for which Paul requested prayer so that he could open his mouth and declare boldly the mystery of the gospel.

Lesson Aim: To understand spiritual warfare and engage correctly.

Discussion Questions:

1. What should be the posture of the believer to the kingdom of darkness? (Ephesians 6:10-13)
2. Consider the components of the armor and how they should influence the believers' posture to the kingdom of darkness. (Ephesians 6:14-20)
3. Is the life of Christ finding expression through you?

Memory Scripture:

And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, (Ephesians 6:19 KJV)

August 12, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: KINGDOM OF JESUS
Text: COLOSSIANS 1
Song: Our Father, our father who art in Heaven...

Introduction

In his consistent manner, Paul in writing to the church in Colosse expressed his joy on hearing of their faith in Christ Jesus and their love for one another. His discussion centred on Christ rather than physical structure or organization of the church. He was moved to pray and encouraged them to have their faith in Christ and love for one another. The ultimate goal of his prayer was that they might walk worthy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. It is evidently clear that Christ is the message, the gospel, the life and the mystery that the apostles preached; He was their goal, their beginning, their end and their aim. The focus of Paul was Christ and what God has accomplished through Him; Him being the very life of the believers. He added that the believers had been delivered from the power of darkness and had been translated into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Believers must understand that they are not waiting to enter the Kingdom of God but are already in it. Therefore, the way of the Kingdom must be manifest in the lives of the believers. Those in the Kingdom of God cannot be afraid of the works of satan because they have been delivered (past tense) from the power of darkness.

The Lord Jesus Christ Jesus was further described as the manifestation of the invisible God. Everything Jesus did is everything that God did and would do. Everything that Jesus said are the very things God would have said. He is in essence God. Without Jesus Christ nothing could have been made in the world. Everything that was created in Heaven and on earth was all made through Jesus Christ and for Him. These include things seen and unseen. Before the Heaven and the earth were, He was. He is the head of the church and the first born from the dead. It pleased the Father that all the fullness of things should dwell in Christ. The believers are indeed complete in Christ but are warned to continue in faith and be grounded in this gospel of hope.

Lesson Aim: To see the imperative of living in the Kingdom of Christ

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the implications of the believers' deliverance from the power of darkness and translation to the Kingdom of Christ. (Colossians 1:13)
2. What were the goals of the ministry of Paul and their implications for believers? (Colossians 1: 9-12, 28-29)
3. Discuss the various things God accomplished in Christ for believers and how to appropriate them. (Colossians 1:12-14, 21-22, 26-27)

Memory Scripture:

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: (Colossians 1:13 KJV)

August 19, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: CHRIST THE MYSTERY OF GOD
Text: COLOSSIANS 2
Song: Messiah is the King of kings...

Introduction

In chapter two of his letter to the church in Colosse, Paul reaffirmed the essence of the mystery of the gospel which is the knowledge of Christ. He did not want them to have any doubt with regards to the completeness of Jesus Christ in whom is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He gave serious emphasis to the completeness of Christ so that they do not seek any salvation elsewhere. The only antidote to deceit is the knowledge of Christ. Therefore, believers need to be assured that everything is in Christ and that they should not listen to any high sounding nonsense. The believer must walk in Christ; depend on Him, live for Him, live by Him, please Him, be rooted in Him, built up in Him and be taught in Him (Colossians 2:7). He warned the church against religion and legalism that may have an appearance of holiness but is nothing.

Any gospel that is not about Jesus Christ is not a true gospel. Church must not be centred on doctrines or social needs but the person of Jesus Christ. Every church meeting must be about Him. Believers are not to be deceived through human philosophy, traditions and rudiments of the world are those who are rooted in the knowledge of Christ. This Christ, in Him dwells all the fullness of God. He is not a half measure God. He is the fullness of God and the full expression of God the Father and the Spirit dwell in Him in all fullness - Hallelujah! This mystery is still a source of confusion to unbelievers but it should not confuse His children. The believer is complete in Christ who is the head of principalities and powers. Consequently, the believer has authority over principalities and powers.

Lesson Aim: To see Christ as the fullness of God and acknowledge Him as such.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the things Paul warned the church against? (Colossians 2:8, 16-18)
2. Highlight and discuss some of the blessings in Christ for the believer. (Colossians 2:3, 9-15)
3. What is the implication of being dead with Christ? (Colossians 2:20-23)

Memory Scripture:

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Colossians 2:20 KJV)

August 26, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: THE OLD AND THE NEW MAN
Text: COLOSSIANS 3
Song: I'm a new creation...

Introduction

The gospel is not man's attempt to be good or to please God. Neither is it man doing everything possible to keep the commandments of the Lord. The gospel has to do with dying with Christ, and living His life. It takes the eye of faith to understand this truth. The mystery of the gospel is that when Jesus Christ died, God included mankind in the death of Jesus Christ. So as Jesus was dying on the cross, the sinful nature that has made it impossible for man neither to know God nor to worship Him in spirit and in truth was also crucified (Romans 6). This is not a lofty idea or postulation but the reality of the event that took place on that day in the spirit realm. When a person therefore believes in Christ Jesus, the same also experiences the resurrection of Christ; making the very life of Jesus available in that person. This is the reason the believers are regarded as a new creation in Christ. The believer is a new creation because he has joined the specie on earth that is dead but alive. The only specie carrying the very life and nature of God.

The result of this transaction is that the believer is enabled to simply put off the old life (the nature of sin inherited from Adam) and put on Jesus Christ. So, on one hand, Jesus Christ did everything for the believer when He died and rose again. On the other hand, He wants the believer to put off the old life because that life is already dead in Christ. He equally expects the believer to put on Christ that has been freely given to Him. When the believer puts on Jesus Christ he is able to function in every situation and produce good works. The life of Christ will make the woman to be submissive, the man to love, the children obedient, the servants obedient, and the master considerate. Whatever the profession and vocation of the believer, he expresses Christ. The new life is not an unnecessary demand on the believer but a demand to allow the Christ in him to be expressed.

Lesson Aim: To see the need to put off the old man and put on the new man

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the attributes of the old man? (Colossians 3:5-9)
2. What are the attributes of the new man (Colossians 3:10-15, 18-22)
3. How can the believer put on the new man? (Colossians 3:2-3, 16-17, 23)

Memory Scripture:

*And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:
(Colossians 3:10 KJV)*

September 2, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: THE SERVANTS OF CHRIST
Text: COLOSSIANS 4
Song: I'll live for Jesus day after day ...

Introduction

In his concluding chapter in the letter (epistle) to the church in Colosse, Paul again requested the church to pray for him. His prayer request was as before that God would open unto him a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ (Col. 4:3-4). The mystery of Christ was all that he preached. His concluding remark was that they should walk in wisdom and make every time allotted to them by God to count. He also charged them that they should always speak with grace. He was such an honest and purposeful preacher who preached only Jesus Christ and also made his life available for the church to know how he was doing. Though he was in chain as at the time of writing this letter, he still cared so much about the church that he sent Tychicus to them to know how they were doing and bring them word of comfort.

The friendship and fellowship together of fellow servants in the Lord is great refreshment under the sufferings and difficulties in the way. It adds much to the beauty and strength of the Gospel ministry when Christ's servants are loving and forbearing one another. Let the people of God pray particularly for those over them in the Lord, that God may enable them to speak as they ought to speak and that doors of utterance may be opened. It is not easy to walk in wisdom towards those that are without. But God will teach us how to buy up opportunities and crowd each of them with good service, and make our talk sparkle like salt and purify as it does. In the close of this epistle, the apostle does several of his friends the honour to leave their names on record, with some testimony of his respect, which will be spoken of wherever the gospel is preached till the end of the world. Paul bound his fellow-workers to himself by the high value he placed on them. Probably we would have taken some of these men to be very ordinary, but the Apostle described them with in hues from his own heart. Onesimus, a runaway slave recently converted, is described as a faithful and beloved brother!

Lesson Aim: To learn to honour co-labourers in Christ

Discussion Questions:

1. Why was Paul always requesting for prayer to speak the mystery of God? (Colossians 4:3-4)
2. What are the lessons from the way Paul honoured all those who served with him? (Colossians 4:7-17)
3. Discuss the instruction in verse 17

Memory Scripture:

And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. (Colossians 4:17 KJV)

September 9, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: SUFFERING FOR CHRIST'S SAKE
Text: PHILIPPIANS 1
Song: I have decided to follow Jesus...

Introduction

Paul began the letter to the church in Philippi with the usual greeting and the information on how and why he has been praying for them. His prayer points for the various churches are basically the same. It is to help them increase in the knowledge of Christ, grow in love and be filled with the fullness of God. The main proof of a living church is Christlikeness and love for one another. This is a recurring theme throughout the writings of Apostle Paul. He prayed for the church to abound in love and be filled with the fruits of righteousness. A fruit is a product of a plant. There has to be a planting before fruit can be harvested. Thus, Paul was once again, informing the church that since Christ, who is their righteousness, has been planted in them, they should only produce the fruits of righteousness. This is different from human effort at being good or doing well. It is the out flow of a life that is on the inside. It is not enough to accept being saved by faith and believe all that God has made available in Christ; it is also necessary for believers to produce fruits of righteousness in their lives as a proof of the life in them.

Paul kept the coming of Christ in focus for the church. For him death was not a problem or something to be scared of but simply a route to meet with Jesus Christ. He charged them in verse 27 that their lives must be consistent with the gospel of Christ. There should not be a conflict between what the gospel stands for and what each life stands for. He revealed that the believer is not only to believe in Jesus Christ but to also be ready to suffer for His sake. In other words, it is a great blessing and honour to be able to suffer for the sake of Christ. Therefore, suffering, conflicts are not alien to the life of a believer. The Apostle's confidence that whatever God begins will have its perfect end as underscored in Philippians 1:6 is very reassuring.

Lesson Aim: To be ready to suffer to Christ's sake

Discussion Questions:

1. "It is given in the behalf of Christ also to suffer for His sake" Discuss (Philippians 1:29)
2. Examine the content of the prayer of Paul for the Church (Philippians 1:3-11)
3. Are you living your life for Christ alone?

Memory Scripture:

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (Philippians 1:21 KJV)

September 16, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: THE MIND OF CHRIST
Text: PHILIPPIANS 2
Song: Lord I want to be like Jesus in my heart...

Introduction

Paul's writings were never about making money, personal glory or doctrine. In verses 12 and 13, he further explained how the gospel is not about man using self-energy to please God. God is the one that works in the believers; consequently, the believer is able to work out his salvation with fear and trembling. If God is not working on the inside and man is working on the outside, man simply becomes a religious sinner. Paul explained how the life of Christ should work out in a very practical sense, especially its manifestation in love for one another. The believer is called to have the mind of Christ so that he can live the life Christ. No man can by himself become Christlike. However, because of the life of Christ in the believer, he can receive the mind of Christ and walk as Jesus walked. This was not a message for some super Christians but for everyone who comes to believe in Jesus Christ.

The great gospel precept passed to us is to love one another. This is the law of Christ's Kingdom, the lesson of his school, the livery of his family. This he represents in Philippians 2:2 by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. We are of a like mind when we have the same love. Christians should be one in affection. This is always in their power, and always their duty, and is the likeliest way to bring them nearer in judgment. The believer should be lowly minded and in conformity to the example of the Lord Jesus, the great pattern of humility and love in service to man. He humbled Himself in suffering and death for man, not only to satisfy God's justice, but to set us an example that we might follow His steps; bearing a resemblance to His life, since we have profited by His death.

Lesson Aim: To have the mind of Christ

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the hallmark of a genuine Christian life as shown in Philippians 2:2-15.
2. Why did Paul say he had no man likeminded and what is the implication of that for the church today? (Philippians 2: 19-21)
3. What are the lessons we can glean from the story of Epaphroditus? (Philippians 2: 25-30)

Memory Scripture:

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. (Philippians 2:4 KJV)

September 23, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: CHRIST IS ALL IN ALL
Text: PHILIPPIANS 3
Song: Hymn 582

Introduction

The tendency to draw back from a life in the Spirit to a life in the flesh is very high for those who are not well taught the true gospel of Christ. Legalism, externalism, and religion tend to have a strong hold on the hearts of men. Christianity is the opposite of everything man has known as it demands on man to cease from his works and simply rest on the work of God in Christ Jesus. A good grasp of this revelation is the beginning of a glorious Christian walk. Paul revealed that he had everything to be religious or legalistic and he listed some of them. Some may even pass as attributes of a 'Christian'. He however said those things were nothing compared to who he was in Christ. This must be the attitude of every believer. Our only reputation, strength, pride etc., must be Christ. Self-righteousness must be done away with in Christ Jesus. True righteousness is produced by faith in Christ Jesus. This is the righteousness that is powered by the life of Christ rather than the self-effort of man, which is nothing before God.

True Christianity is to know Jesus Christ, the power of His resurrection which makes all things new and alive and the fellowship of His suffering by dying to self. Suffering for the sake of Christ is an evidence of a life in fellowship with Him. These were the things Paul was seeking and he charged every member of the Church to also grow in that direction. Regrettably, some are living as the enemies of Christ. Those who are called to show forth Christ should not live as His enemies. Paul warned that the end of such (even though they are in the church) is destruction. The believer carries a heavenly life and should so walk. This warning is not an empty threat. After all that God has freely accomplished in Christ for the believer, He will be justified when He brings destruction upon those who live as enemies of Christ. Let us all take heed to this warning.

Lesson Aim: To understand and live by the righteousness that is of Christ

Discussion Questions:

1. How can a believer live as the enemy of Christ and what are the dangers? (Philippians 3:17-19)
2. What is the difference between a religious life and walking in Christ? (Philippians 3:2-16)
3. Are you pressing towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? (Philippians 3:14)

Memory Scripture:

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: (Philippians 3:20 KJV)

September 30, 2018

Focus: THE GOSPEL OF LIFE
Topic: THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST
Text: PHILIPPIANS 4
Song: RH 394

Introduction

The believer's hope and prospect through our Lord Jesus Christ, should engage him to be steady, even and constant in his Christian course, rejoicing always in Him through whom he has the peace of God, the very presence of the God of peace, and promises that should remove all anxious care. He will give strength for all things, and supply every need of the trusting soul. The believing hope and prospect of eternal life should make us steady and constant in our Christian course. Brethren are endowed with difference of gifts and graces, yet, being renewed by the same Spirit to stand fast in the Lord through the strength supplied by his grace. A word must be said to beginners, who are perhaps doubtful whether they have any hold at all on the eternal life. Persevere, and your new nature will grow, and with growth its appetite will increase.

The Apostle was not unmindful of the earthly needs of the church, reassuring their hearts that the Lord would supply all their need according to His riches in Christ Jesus. Knowing that in Christ Jesus dwells the fullness of God, it is safe to conclude that God is limitless in meeting the needs of His children. The matter of giving was the last thing he discussed with the church in his epistle. He did not make a doctrine out of it neither did he centre his writings on giving of material things to God's servant in order to be blessed. It was a matter that came up after the substantive matter of Christ had been carefully and prayerfully presented. The believers are the citizens of a heavenly country, whom the trials and temptations of the world should not be able to draw into forgetfulness of their true home. Therefore they should be in readiness for His coming because they are expecting the Saviour

Lesson Aim: To depend on the sufficiency of Christ in all things

Discussion Questions:

1. How can believers do all things in the context of lack and abundance? (Philippians 4:12-13)
2. Is it possible to be careful for nothing? How? (Philippians 4:5-7)
3. Discuss the things that should occupy the mind of the believer and how to imbibe them. (Philippians 4:8-9)

Memory Scripture:

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19 KJV)

October 7, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: THE COMMENCEMENT OF JESUS MINISTRY
Text: Mark 1:14-20, 35-39, Acts 1:1
Song: Mo fe dabi Jesu...

Introduction

Even though He had the power to do as He wished, Jesus didn't see Himself as the all-in-all but showed us the need for co-labouring in order to establish the purpose of the Kingdom. In Mark 1:14, Jesus started out by proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom. He did this personally, and then began to call men to whom He would teach to carry on with Him. This teaches us that there is a place for us as individuals to first personalize the assignment of the great commission. We must personally understand the importance of the preaching of the gospel even as we team up with others to advance the gospel. We have individual responsibilities as well as communal responsibilities towards the preaching of the gospel, but a lot of believers fall short of this. Are you faithfully playing your part in the Great Commission?

Jesus called out to four fishermen who immediately followed Him. Jesus helped them to see the importance of also fishing for souls and not living their entire lives fishing for daily income only. Whatever your job fetches you as a person should not be all that your life is about; that will amount to living less than God intends for you as a believer. In verse 38, Jesus replied "Let us go somewhere else-to the nearby villages- so I can preach there also. That is why I have come", Jesus emphasized His purpose (the preaching of the gospel) even when people were looking for Him probably for miracles. As individuals, we probably have what the world is looking for could be our expertise, products, knowledge, intellect or services. We should not allow ourselves to get carried away by such. We, as believers, must understand the primary purpose that God sent us into the World is to proclaim the Gospel! Jesus also taught us the need for personal times of prayer in verse 35. He did not allow His busy schedule to crowd His devotion. He started His day with prayer! If Jesus would make time to pray and commune with the Father in Heaven, how much more should we also do likewise?

Lesson Aim: To learn and practice Jesus' approach to life issues.

Discussion Questions:

1. Highlight Jesus' approach to life and issues from the scriptures.
2. In what practical and specific ways should we pattern our lives after Christ?
3. Are you a faithful follower of Christ?

Memory Scripture:

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, (Acts 1:1 KJV)

October 14, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: MAN WITH UNCLEAN SPIRIT
Text: Mark 1:21-28
Song: Anywhere He went ...

Introduction

In the course of His Ministry, Jesus was confronted with various kinds of issues which He handled with all wisdom and authority. His method was quite different from those that had been before Him such that people marvelled! Even demonic spirits recognized He was with authority! That is the life we are called to live as believers having the Holy Spirit; we are to approach the issues of life differently. The authority of Christ has been delegated to us at the Cross. We should therefore exercise this authority in the wisdom of God. Many believers however do not know their full identity in Christ and so are not able to exercise their authority. They live in subjection to life's treatment rather than in dominion as God ordained in the Garden of Eden.

The Word of God in Philippians 2:15 calls this generation a perverted one where sinful practices and the activities of demonic spirits are in high proportion. It is our duty as believers to sanitize the world. While we may not be able to change the ways of this world, we have the ability to control our domain. Lawlessness and iniquity should not have a place where we have the influence and can exercise authority. As believers, we cannot afford to tolerate demonic forces or sinful practices ruling where we live or work (Jesus did not); we should exercise dominion first in the Spirit realm and also by the words we speak! In our text today, we realized that the spiritual world recognized Jesus and His authority! They were afraid at His presence. Does your presence challenge and check the sinful attitudes in the lives of sinners around you? Does your presence convict sinners of their sins?

Lesson Aim: To understand and utilize the authority we have in Christ

Discussion Questions:

1. Highlight the uniqueness of Jesus' approach to issues in life and Ministry. (Mark 1:21-22, 25-27)
2. As believers, how are we to approach the issues that we are confronted with? (Mark 1:27, 10:24, 32)
3. Do you understand your true identity in Christ?

Memory Scripture:

And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. (Mark 1:25 KJV)

October 21, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: THE RICH YOUNG MAN
Text: Mark 10:17-31, Luke 12:15
Song: I deny myself...

Introduction

The rich, young man in our text today was a religious man. Right from his youthful years, he had been obeying the laws but this never really touched his heart. He still has his allegiance to the things of the world. He had a strong attachment to riches which he was not ready to part with. Riches may not necessarily be physical goods but in various other achievements! He was not ready to deny himself, though he wanted to follow Jesus. True followership involves denial! Sadly, many followers of Jesus today do so peripherally! They follow but still cling to a lot of worldly ideas, passions, desires and system. They want to follow but still see their riches (what they are endowed with) as things that cannot be left behind in order to go with Jesus.

The life of a man cannot be measured by the things he possesses but by the fullness of God in him. Jesus told him to give all he had and he was sad; not willing to part with them. True followership involves parting with our riches as possessing true riches involve giving. Like the rich young man, a lot of people in the Church have great zeal! They want Jesus but do not want to leave the world! Note however, that prosperity in this World's goods is not synonymous with being worldly. Strong attachment to them to the point of idolizing them and not willing to let go of these things makes a person to become worldly. Jesus wants those who would follow Him whole-heartedly.

Lesson Aim: To understand and accept Jesus' teaching about true riches

Discussion Questions:

1. Highlight God's expectation of Christ's followers from our text today. (Mark 10:21-23, 26-27)
2. What can we learn from Jesus not compromising His demands? (Mark 10:27)
3. Have you and are you willing to leave all for the sake of Christ?

Memory Scripture:

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. (Luke 12:15 KJV)

October 28, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: HEALING OF THE LEPER
Text: Mark 1: 40-45, Mathew 7:7-8, James 1:6, 4:2-3
Song: Your name is higher...

Introduction

Jesus was approached differently at various times by those who sought healing and divine intervention and at those different times, He responded differently though with the same result of healing. It is worthy of note that He never refused anyone who asked Him for healing; as many as asked, received. The problem a lot of believers have today is 'not asking'. Many times, we worry rather than trust; fret rather than ask, or ask wrongly (James 4:2-3). We need to personally learn to ask Jesus for whatever we need, including healing.

In the passage today, the leper asked passionately; he knelt before Jesus with faith believing and Jesus was moved with compassion. He was willing and is still willing today, if only we will come to Him. When we ask, Jesus will always respond. Jesus asked the healed leprous man to go back to do the ceremonial cleansing according to laws which governed such types of disease at that time. We may need to abstain from certain indulgences, habits and deficiencies that resulted in infirmities. We may need to observe certain habits, lifestyles that are required for healthy living. Much more importantly, we learn to bring our health requests and challenges to the Lord. He is willing and available to heal.

Lesson Aim: To understand and adopt Jesus' teaching about Healing.

Discussion Questions:

1. Highlight Jesus response and approach to the leprous man. (Mark 1:41-44)
2. What could be responsible for believers not seeking Jesus for healing? (Mark 1:40, Mark 7:7-8)
3. Have you learnt to seek Jesus for all things including your healing?

Memory Scripture:

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. (James 4:2 KJV)

November 4, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT
Text: Mark 12:28 – 34, Matthew 22:34 – 40, Luke 10:25 – 28, Deuteronomy 6:5
Song: O how I love Jesus...

Introduction

In the New Testament, the Lord Jesus gave the greatest commandment that we must love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. These components made up man, the heart, the soul and the strength. The heart, which the Bible uses interchangeable with the spirit of man is the part of man that connects with the spirit realm; the unseen realm. It is the part of man that can commune and relate with God. The soul comprises the mind, the will and emotion; it is the part of man that must be made to consciously love God. It is the realm where we connect with intellectual matters, that is why Romans 12:2 says we should renew our mind with the word of God continually. While the heart is changed immediately at the point of being born again, the mind which is part of the soul needs to be renewed continually. Our strength is the entirely physical part of man and to love God with our strength means we must pursue the love of God with action. God works in our heart, which transmits the information to our mind where we process it, then that information through our strength must be carried out as good works. We must not only desire to love God, we must not only think of it, we must DO IT. For faith without works is dead (James 2:17).

The Lord Jesus beautifully simplifies the whole purpose of living and how to live a fulfilled life. He is simply telling us what life is all about; life is for loving says Jesus. We are here on earth to love God and others. We are here to enjoy God and each other and that can only be possible when we put things in the right order. In the atmosphere of God's love you can breathe deeply and fully all the way down. Love is the atmosphere for which we were created; when we breathe in God's love and give it out, we are then functioning in the way we were designed. In the Old Testament God said the same thing in Deuteronomy 6:5. For us to enjoy our relationship with God and by extension man we must love God with the totality of our being. This love must consume our whole being, fill our whole being and must be deeply rooted in our hearts. Whatever fills a man's heart dictates what he does and the direction he takes. God is demanding that He fills the whole of our heart and He wants our total obedience and commitment.

Lesson Aim: To make love of God and neighbours the purpose for living

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss how to love the Lord with the whole of our heart, soul and strength always? John 15:1-9, 1 John 4:7-9
2. Why did the Lord Jesus join the second commandment immediately to the first? Luke 10:27-37, John 15:12-13, 1John 4:19-21
3. Do you love the Lord the way He has demanded we love Him?

Memory Scripture:

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. (Luke 10:28 KJV)

November 11, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT
Text: Mark 3:22-30, Matthew 12:22-32
Song: RH 113

Introduction

To blaspheme means to speak against God or religious doctrine. It also means to speak of or address with irreverence something divine or sacred. The term blasphemy may generally be defined as defiant irreverence. The term can be applied to such sins as cursing God or willfully degrading things that pertain to God. It is also attributing some evil to God or denying Him some good that should be accounted to Him. It is the state of willful, determined opposition to the power of the Holy Spirit. To continually resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit and willfully remain unrepentant is to blaspheme the Holy Spirit. For this there is no pardon either in this age or in the age to come.

In the reference passages, our Lord Jesus Christ was ministering in the power of the Holy Spirit with accompanying signs and wonders but He was reviled by the Pharisees. Rather than acknowledge His great works and put their trust in Him, they decided to revile Him and rubbish His great works by attributing them to Beelzebub, the prince of demons. If there is anyone who should have acknowledged the Lord Jesus, it was the Pharisees yet they chose to defy Him. They purposely attributed the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil, even though they knew the truth and had the proof. The Lord warned them that such act of willful blindness is an unpardonable sin. To deliberately attribute the works of the Holy Spirit to satan when the person knows with certainty that the works were not by satan is the unpardonable sin.

Lesson Aim: To understand what it means to blaspheme the Holy Spirit

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the unpardonable sin?
2. Can a born again Christian blaspheme the Holy Spirit? Mark 3:22 -30, (Matthew 12:22-32, 1John 3:9)
3. Differentiate between blaspheming the Holy Spirit and grieving Him. Ephesians (4:29-31, 1The 5:19)

Memory Scripture:

But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: (Mark 3:29 KJV)

November 18, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: THE FAMILY OF JESUS
Text: MARK 3:31-35
Song: We are heirs of the Father...

Introduction

Jesus was teaching in the midst of a multitude of people when His Mother and other members of His family came and requested to see Him. Surprisingly, rather than excuse himself to attend to them, He turned to the multitude and said "***for whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister and mother***" (Mark 3:35). The statement must have taken the multitude by surprise as it was strange and a complete contrast to the Jewish religion and tradition which required that family members should be respected and given priority attention over others. However, it should be noted that Jesus did not disown His close relatives but redefined relationship the Kingdom way. Loaded in this single verse 35 is the exceeding intimate love of Jesus for believers that no human affection can equal in depth and intensity. For Jesus to refer to believers as brothers and sisters and not be ashamed to call them "brethren" (Hebrews 2:11) is just glorious and inexplicable love.

One important lesson in this scripture is that when a believer in Christ is severed from earthly ties and closest links of earthly relations and affection in times of trial, bereavement, loneliness, friendlessness, widowed hood etc., Jesus' presence and fellowship is ever available. This compensates for all forms of challenges and denials for He is on the throne and His love and care are unlimited. Ponder on this scripture and ask whether the statement does not make every believer in Christ a spiritual Jew? Note, the above benefit belongs only to those who do the will of God, who reflect the mind of Jesus, led by the Spirit and who allow the word of God to control their lives. Thank God for this new relationship redefined in Christ.

Lesson Aim: To seek to remain a member of Jesus family by doing the will of God.

Discussion Questions:

1. Practically discuss how our relationship with brethren in Christ should take priority over our natural relations?
2. Does this teaching permit Christians to neglect their family/relations? (1Timothy 5:8)
3. Personally, what challenges has this study brought to your heart in the matter of relationship between the natural relations and the brethren?

Memory Scripture:

For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother. (Mark 3:35 KJV)

November 25, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST

Topic: CALMING THE STORM

Text: MARK 4:35-41

Song: RH 427

Introduction

After a day of teaching the multitude by the sea, the disciples took Jesus with them in the ship to go over to the other side as He had requested. Tired from His labour, the Saviour slept. This is proof of the humanity of our Lord. Suddenly, a fierce storm hit the ship and it threw the disciples into confusion. The disciples fearfully woke Jesus up crying "Master carest thou not that we perish?" Oh! Why had the disciples no faith? If only they had known that it was not out of carelessness that Jesus slept in the midst of the storm. They forgot that the Lord of peace and Creator was in control over the storm that came upon the ship. However, Jesus confidently commanded the storm "peace be still". The psalmist in Psalm 89:9 wrote, "***Thou rulest the raging of the sea, when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them***". For the disciples, the miracle was a wonder to them, and they asked "what manner of man is this that even the wind and sea obey Him?" What they did not realize was that they were with God manifested in the flesh. Thus no one who knows Jesus as the Creator of the universe should be surprised at His Lordship over His creations.

Will your anchor hold in Christ in the face of trials and storms of life? The disciples had Jesus with them physically in the midst of storm, yet they failed when a storm challenged their faith. Are you mindful of the fact that presently Jesus is available only by faith? We are quick to say Jesus is with us and easily forget that He is with us in our trials and storms. If we truly know this, then we will appreciate that whatever storm we are going through, Jesus is with us (Mark 4:36). May the Lord help us to conform to Christ in every situation. We may have spoken and trusted in the safety of Jesus when life is good and the situation is calm, but when the going gets tough and really troublesome,, may grace abound to us to firmly hold to the truth that He cannot fail. Let us therefore resolve in our hearts that "***I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day***" (1Tim1:12).

Lesson Aim: To learn how to respond to the storms of life

Discussion Questions:

1. "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith? (Mark 4:40). Why did Jesus make this statement?
2. How should Christians respond to the storms of life? Matt 7:25
3. How do you handle challenges of life? (Hebrews 6:18-19)

Memory Scripture:

And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? (Mark 4:40 KJV)

December 2, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: TEACHING ON DEFILEMENT
Text: Mark 7:1-23
Song: Know ye not, know ye not...

Introduction

Defilement is a kind of pollution or contamination. If it is used in the context of a person, it could mean a contamination of one's body, soul or spirit. As Christians, we are enjoined not to allow ourselves to be defiled, knowing that we are the temple of God (2Corinthians 6:16). It is now customary for some believers to legislate on dos and don'ts under the guise of being holy forgetting that what is needful is the state of our heart. The Bible states that out of the abundance or overflowing of the heart, the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34). It is from the heart that thoughts (evil or good) are processed. It is what you feed the heart with that comes out and define you. Therefore when the heart is fed with the word of truth, all manner of defilements are exposed for repentance and cleansing.

The Pharisees laid great stress on ritual. They followed endless rules, both intricate and troublesome, as to ablutions and outward ceremonials. So long as their devotees were careful in the minor observances, they were permitted a wide license so far as the weightier matters of the Law were concerned. This is a natural tendency of the human heart. It is worshipping God in vain to rest in the outside religious exercises when the heart is not right with God. Our first care should be the washing of the heart from wickedness which makes us odious to God, rather than engage in ceremonial washing. Christ never puts anyone away from Him who falls at His feet in humble faith, and gives himself up to be ruled by Him.

Lesson Aim: To understand what actually defiles man and keep away

Discussion Questions:

1. Identify and discuss the dos and don'ts that have become prevalent in the Christian community as a way of life but which is not true holiness.
2. Discuss how and what defiles a man from Mark 7:15-22.
3. Examine the condition of your heart and see if you are positioned for eternal life.

Memory Scripture:

And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. (Mark 7:20 KJV)

December 9, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: TEACHING ON GREATNESS
Text: Mark 9:33-37
Song: It is good to serve the Lord...

Introduction

It is desirable to want to be the first and be on top and it is the wish of God for His people to be the first and not the last. But the way to the top and remaining at the top is to be and remain a servant to all at all times. This is the instruction of the Master in Matthew. 20:25-28, 23:11. This was also the counsel of the elders to King Rehoboam in 1Kg. 12:3-7, but he jettisoned it and met his Waterloo. The world goes after and celebrates titles and accolades. Unfortunately some so called believers tow the same line. This is destroying and contaminating the body. It took a 'disciple' (Judas) to identify the Lord Jesus before He could be arrested by His accusers. The same cannot be said of many Christian leaders today. They are known and identified by their titles, apparels, body guards, cathedrals, sleek vehicles/aircrafts etc. Is this what it means to be great as a Christian? Since God has from the open heavens owned Jesus Christ as His beloved Son, we should give ourselves to be ruled by His Word, to be yielded to the mighty working of His power in us and through us and to resemble Him in the spirit of humble service to men.

The disciples had been disputing on who should be the greatest, and the Lord wanted to show them that this was contrary to the way things went in His kingdom. He took a child and set him before them to show the nature of the Kingdom. He told them they could not enter into the Kingdom except by becoming like little children—by humbling themselves, for the idea of ruling was excluded where childlikeness was the one essential quality. It is not who should rule, but who should serve; not who should look down on his fellows from the conquered heights of authority—even of sacred authority—but who should look up, honouring humanity and ministering unto it, so that humanity itself might be persuaded of its own honour as a temple of the living God.

Lesson Aim: To see that the need to have a heart to serve always

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be last of all and servant of all? (Mark 9:35)
2. Discuss the relevance of receiving a child in the context of Jesus' teaching? (Mark 9:36-37)
3. Why do we have leadership tussle among Christians and how can we avoid it?

Memory Scripture:

Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me. (Mark 9:37 KJV)

December 16, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: TEACHING ON DIVORCE
Text: Mark 10:1-12
Song: God give us Christian homes...

Introduction

It is an understatement to say that divorce is on the increase in the society. It is now a daily occurrence and believers are not left out. In fact, some suitors now prepare themselves towards it before getting married. This is very disturbing. No matter the reasoning, rationale or colouration that is given to justify it, the standard of God remains the same on this subject. "I hate divorce, says the Lord God" (Mal. 2:16). "Are you married? Do not seek a divorce" (1Cor. 7:27). If believers are careful to know, study and follow the purpose of God for marriage and proper counselling is sought, given and taken before and in marriage and the disciplines of scripture are observed by all, the spate of divorce will reduce and the Church will be a standard for the world to follow in nation building. Unfortunately, doctrinal differences and divisions in the church have not made this expectation realisable. We need to start from our homes and local assembly to educate one another of the need not to embrace what God hates. This epidemic must cease in our midst.

Jesus was explaining to his disciples that God made the couple one in the beginning, therefore, the issue of divorce does not even arise. For us to understand divorce, we need to first understand marriage. Marriage is not a paper contract signed by a judge or Pastor. Marriage is a covenant, a mysterious union of the man and his wife by God. Only God can tie this knot. Therefore, signing a paper is not divorce. They may sign a paper and go their separate ways but that does not undo the union already made by God. Only God can dissolve marriage and since He hates divorce, we know that He will not dissolve it. It is fundamental to understand what exactly constitute marriage as that we help to put to rest the matter of divorce.

Lesson Aim: To understand that God hates divorce

Discussion Questions:

1. Analyze the response of Jesus to the question of the Pharisee on divorce. (Mark 10:3-12)
2. Why do you think some believers still divorce despite the clear teaching of the Lord? (Mark 10:5)
3. Are you involving yourself in a matter that God hates? (Malachi 2:16)

Memory Scripture:

What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (Mark 10:9 KJV)

December 23, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: LESSON FROM THE FIG TREE
Text: Mark 11:12-26
Song: I want to be ready...

Introduction

The encounter of the Lord Jesus Christ with the fig tree in Mark 11:12-26 teaches us among other things about the need to bear fruit, have faith, pray effectively and forgive. In John 15:2, the Master said He will cut down every branch in Him that does not bear fruit and those that bear, He will prune to bear more fruit. Fruit bearing should be for all seasons for a believer unlike the fig tree that is seasonal. Our faith in God and attitude to prayer should always be anchored on our firm belief. If this is resolved within us, then we must ensure that for such prayers to be answered, we do not hold a grudge against anyone. These teachings are some of the bedrocks of the Christian faith and it is desirable that we adhere to them strictly if we will want to make our calling sure and secured.

With irresistible might the Lord drove forth the buyers and sellers from the temple. According to the ancient prediction, He sat as a refiner and purifier of silver, to purify the sons of Levi Malachi 3:3). And whenever He enters the heart, He performs a similar work. He drives out bestial forms of sin, and mere traffic, so that the whole nature-spirit, soul, and body-may be surrendered to God. What our Lord said of the temple should be true of each church of the living God. It should be His residence, where men of all nationalities should come to a unity, as they worship. Certainly God's house must not be a place of merchandise and traffic.

Lesson Aim: To see the importance of fruitful life to Jesus

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did the Lord curse the fig tree when it was not time for it to fruit? (Mark 11:12-14, 20-21)
2. How should believers respond to merchandizing of God's people in the church today? (Mark 11:15-19)
3. What are the lessons on prayer in the story?

Memory Scripture:

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. (Mark 11:22 KJV)

December 30, 2018

Focus: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST
Topic: HOLDING FAST TO JESUS TILL THE END
Text: Mark 13:32-37, Rev 2:25, 3:11
Song: RH 444

Introduction

The Lord Jesus said "All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved" (Matthew 10:22). We have an assurance of victory when we hold on to our faith and the word of truth (Romans 8:35-39). Christians are endangered species in this world and because the world is driving itself fast to an end, we should not expect to be treated with kid gloves. We are lambs sent amongst wolves, but because He who is in us is greater than he that is in the world, we have an assurance that if we remain steadfast and hold on to Him, we will overcome the world. Therefore we should let the word of God dwell richly in us first in love, then in prayer and evangelism and worship.

Jesus Christ Himself the Word of Life. He is the very person we are holding on to. This holding on must continue till the end when we shall see Jesus and be physically united to Him. Some began this race but have fallen away. It is not sufficient to begin with Jesus; we must also end the race with Him. We must continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. There will be many things on the way that will be competing for our hands but we must hold fast to Christ the Word of Life. Nothing must shift our focus from Jesus. He must remain all in all to us all the time. The crown of life will only be given to those who hold on to the very end. May our hearts be lost in Jesus Christ now and forever. Amen

Lesson Aim: To be reminded to hold fast to Jesus, the Word of Life, to the end

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important to hold on till the end? (Rev 2:25, 3:11)
2. How is the believer supposed to take heed, watch and pray in preparation for the coming of Jesus? (Mark 13:33)
3. Are you ready to meet Jesus if He comes now?

Memory Scripture:

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. (Revelation 3:11 KJV)