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Focus



*for
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*Sunday
School
Services*

Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Miguel Garcia Jr.

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Who is the Holy Ghost?” – January 5, 2014

Lesson – “Comforter”

Scriptures – John 14:14-18

Introduction to lesson

Have you ever needed a friend to comfort you in a special time of need? You may be going through a difficult time in your life and need someone to lend you a shoulder to cry on or a listening ear. Maybe you need someone who can give you some much needed advice. In today’s lesson, we will see that Jesus did not leave us alone without a comforter and friend to talk to and provide help. He said, “I will not leave you as orphans” (v. 18). He promised he would never leave us alone in our times of trouble “even unto the end of time” (Matthew 28:20).

Key Verse: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever” (John 14:16).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ What did Jesus say to ask of him? (v. 14)
- ✚ What commandments did Jesus say to keep? (v. 15)
- ✚ To whom did Jesus pray? (v. 16)
- ✚ Who will send another comforter to us? (v. 16; see also John 15:26)
- ✚ How long is the comforter going to be with us? (v. 16)
- ✚ Why can’t the world receive this Spirit of Truth? (v. 17)
- ✚ Where does the Spirit of Truth live? (v. 17)
- ✚ How much does Jesus care for us? (v. 18)

Think about it:

Jesus had been with the disciples for three and half years, but now he was about to leave and knew that his disciples were going to be filled with sorrow. They needed to be consoled and comforted; so he sent the Holy Spirit to give them comfort, strength, and hope. Jesus said, “I will not leave you comfortless” (v. 18). If we will love Jesus and keep his commandments (v. 15), then we can receive this comforter whom he promised. Jesus told us to ask (v. 14). No matter what we face in our lives, we can pray asking God for his help, and the Holy Spirit who lives in us will provide peace, joy, and comfort.

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Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Who is the Holy Spirit” – January 12, 2014

Lesson – “Teacher”

Scriptures – John 14:25-26

Introduction to lesson

From the moment we start Kindergarten and finish our education in college/university, we are met with new teachers each school year. Think of all the teachers you have now. Likely, you will have some completely different teachers next year. However, we have one teacher who has been exactly the same, year after year. He is the Holy Spirit. He is not only our comforter, but he is also our teacher and guide in this life, the teacher of all the things Jesus spoke (v. 25). He is the one who will bring all the things that Jesus said to our remembrance (v. 26). He will guide us into all truth if we will only listen and obey (John 16:13).

Key Verse: “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Which things did Jesus speak about? (v. 25)
- + Who is the comforter? (v. 26)
- + Who is our teacher? (v. 26)
- + How many subjects will he teach us? (v. 26)
- + What happens if you forget some of the things Jesus said? (v. 26)

Think about it: When you begin a new school year, more than likely, you will be in a new classroom, meet new people, and will have new teachers. When you come on the first day, you really don't know what to expect. You may feel nervous and shy. But isn't it exciting that we always know who will be our spiritual teacher each and every year? We have the Holy Ghost who guides us and teaches us all of the things which Jesus taught. He helps us to understand all that God expects of us. He is not a mean person, but rather he is gentle and kind. If you forget something, he won't send you to detention, but he will simply remind you of it. He will bring the words of Jesus back into your memory. What a relief to know that we have a teacher we can always count on.

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Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Who is the Holy Spirit” – January 19, 2014

Lesson – “Intercessor”

Scriptures – Ephesians 6:18; Romans 8:26

Introduction to lesson

“Men should always pray and not give up” (Luke 18:1). Prayer is the lifeline of our Christian life. A Christian life without prayer is like the blood draining from your physical body, leaving you lifeless. But sometimes we don’t know how to pray. We run out of words or don’t know what words to use to speak to God. This is when the Holy Spirit comes in and prays for us unto God (Romans 8:26). The Spirit prays in the perfect will of God. Therefore, his praying is far more efficient and effective than our own prayers. Today, we will discover how and why the Spirit intercedes for us.

Key Verse: “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ep. 6:18).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ According to Ephesians 6:18, when should we pray? (v. 18)
- ✚ What is supplication? And why should we pray in supplication? (v. 18)
- ✚ What can we pray for? (v. 18)
- ✚ Should we pray for everyone? (v. 18)
- ✚ What does the Holy Spirit do for us? (Romans 8:26)
- ✚ When you don’t know what to pray for, what do you do?
- ✚ Do you know what God’s will is for your life when you pray?
- ✚ Do you allow the Holy Ghost to intercede on your behalf?

Think about it: God has given us the Holy Ghost to be many things for us. He is our comforter, teacher, and intercessor. Sometimes our prayers and what we ask for do not meet God’s will and expectations. For this reason, the Holy Ghost is so important. He doesn’t just pray on our behalf, but he actually prays according to the perfect will of God. Although we might not understand his groaning, God knows the mind of the Spirit. He understands the utterances of the Spirit and knows exactly what we are praying when we groan, weep, and speak in tongues. For these reasons, we see how important the Spirit is in our prayer life. We need the Spirit to make intercession for us “according to the will of God” (Ro. 8:27)

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Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Who is the Holy Spirit” – January 26, 2014

Lesson – “Witness”

Scriptures – Romans 8:16

Introduction to lesson

Think of a court case for a moment. If a person is trying to prove his innocence, then there has to be a witness to confirm his story, in order for the jury to believe him. When we tell others about Jesus, we are not speaking on our own. We have a convincing witness to confirm our story. In today’s lesson, we will see the importance of the Holy Ghost as our witness. The Spirit testifies of Jesus and what he has done for us. “For he shall not speak of himself” (John 16:13), but he will give testimony to believers and to the world that God’s Word is truth! Since the Holy Ghost is the life and power of our witness, we should be filled with the Holy Ghost so that we can speak the words of God with authority (Acts 1:8). When you don’t know what to say or don’t have the words to speak, Jesus said, “When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say” (Lu. 12:11-12).

Key Verse: “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Romans 8:16).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Who testifies that we are God’s children? (Ro. 8:16)
- ✚ How do we become better witnesses of Christ? (Acts 1:8)
- ✚ How will the Spirit help us when we are witnessing? (Luke 12:11-12)
- ✚ As God’s children, what is our responsibility in witnessing? (Acts 5:32)
- ✚ Should we be afraid when witnessing to our friends at school?
- ✚ Have you witnessed to someone recently? What was that experience like for you?

Think about it: Remember that the Holy Ghost has been given to us as a comforter, teacher, intercessor and a witness. Don’t forget that you have the power to be a witness of Christ to the world with the help of the Holy Ghost.

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Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Misty Wilcox

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – February 2, 2014

Lesson – “Edification of the Body”

Scriptures – 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; 14:1, 12

Introduction to lesson

The members of the church should edify one another. What does edify mean? It means we should work to encourage and build up one another. When encouraging edification in the church, the Bible uses terms like comfort, support, and be patient (1 Th. 5:11, 14). We are to consider each other in order to encourage love and good works (He. 10:24). Do you remember your parents saying, “If you can’t say something nice, don’t say anything at all?” There is a Biblical backing to that statement (see Ep. 4:29). We should always seek to build up and not tear down. To help us edify and build up each other in the Lord, God has given us a variety of spiritual gifts in the church.

Key Verse: “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify another” (Ro. 14:19).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Why did the apostle Paul write about spiritual gifts? (1 Co. 12:1)
- ✚ What was Paul saying about the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit? Who does the Holy Spirit magnify and glorify? (v. 3; Jn. 15:26; 16:14)
- ✚ Where do the spiritual gifts come from? (vv. 4-6)
- ✚ When the Holy Spirit works through individual members, who does this profit and benefit? (v. 7)
- ✚ In the coming weeks, we will study the gifts of the Spirit. List all nine of the spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. (vv. 8-10)
- ✚ Who determines how the gifts are given and when they are operated? (v. 11)
- ✚ Should we desire spiritual gifts? (1 Co. 14:1)
- ✚ In our desire for spiritual gifts, for what should we seek? (v. 12)

Think about it: The spiritual gifts are given for the good of the whole church. They should operate within the church to build up and unite, but never tear down and divide. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Paul went on to explain that the key to edification in the working of spiritual gifts is love. When the spiritual gifts work in the church being prompted by God’s love, the gifts will work to edify and build up the body of Christ.

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Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Kris Newberry

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – February 9, 2014

Lesson – “Wisdom and Knowledge”

Scriptures – Proverbs 1:5, 7, 22; 2:6; 4:7; 15:14

Introduction to lesson

We are living in a time when wisdom and knowledge are increasing in great measure. Specifically, we observe this rapid increase in the advances of medicine and technology. As Christians, we know that God has given wisdom and knowledge to mankind, without which we would be helpless. Throughout the Scriptures, wisdom and knowledge are taught. We understand that both are attainable through God, who “giveth to all men liberally” (James 1:15), and “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). In today’s lesson, we will see that God has given spiritual gifts of both wisdom and knowledge in order to help us serve Christ and build up his church (1 Corinthians 12:8).

Key Verse: “For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6)

Questions to Discuss:

- ✦ How are wisdom and knowledge similar? What are the differences between wisdom and knowledge?
- ✦ What are the differences between human knowledge/wisdom relating to this world and spiritual knowledge/wisdom relating to the eternal?
- ✦ How are the church and its members affected by wisdom and knowledge?

Think about it: In the world, knowledge and the implementing of knowledge (wisdom) have increased, but with what eternal value does it come? And upon what are we building? Knowledge should build upon wisdom from God (Proverbs 2:6; 4:7). Why? His wisdom is the foundation of all spiritual knowledge and understanding. A truly wise man seeks the knowledge of God, but a fool refuses his knowledge and instruction (Proverbs 1:5, 7, 22; 15:14). In the apostle Paul’s explanation of the spiritual gifts, he referred to “the word” of wisdom and knowledge, demonstrating that God’s Spirit supplies both wisdom and knowledge, and this being consistent with the Holy Scriptures (1 Corinthians 12:8). The church needs wisdom and knowledge to fulfill its mission, but this means we must be yielded to God as instruments of his Holy Spirit (Romans 6:13). God desires to speak through us words of wisdom and knowledge to give help and guidance, but we must be spiritually prepared to be used of the Spirit for the glory of God and the edification of his church (2 Timothy 2:21).

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Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Pam Jones

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

Spiritual Gifts – February 16, 2014

Lesson – Faith: Impossible Made Possible

Scriptures – Matthew 17:20; 21:17-22; James 2:17-26

Introduction to lesson

What was once impossible has been made possible by faith! Acceptance with God, serving the Lord, and following Him are only possible through faith, for we must believe in Jesus to have everlasting life (John 3:16). In this lesson, we will see how the Mission Impossible becomes Mission Possible. First, the impossible becomes possible by the ability to believe, embrace, trust, obey and serve the LORD – *The Measure of Faith*. We also will learn how the impossible becomes possible through the force of faith – *The Power of Faith*. Finally, we will look at a divine enablement exercised by the Spirit to help the individual personally and the church reach its fullest potential – *The Spiritual Gift of Faith*.

Key Verse: “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).

Questions to Discuss:

- + What size of faith must one have to move a mountain? (Matthew 17:20)
- + How big is a mustard seed compared to other seeds? (v.20)
- + Why was it important for the fig tree to have fruit on it? (Matthew 21:18)
- + What happened to the fig tree and why? (v. 19)
- + What was the reaction from the disciples when they saw the withered fig tree? (v. 20)
- + What was Jesus’ response to the disciples? (v. 21)
- + What are the action words Jesus spoke in this verse? (v. 22)
- + If we put faith into action, asking and believing, what will the result be? (v. 22)
- + Can faith stand by itself? (James 2:17)
- + How can one show others their faith? (v. 18)
- + Abraham & Rahab were justified by works—how? (vv. 21,25)
- + Fill in the blank – “. . . by works was faith made ____.” What do you think is perfect faith? (v. 22)

Think about it: Mission impossible is made possible by FAITH. To each one is given a measure of faith to move mountains. Through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, we establish our faith in Christ and grow in the power of faith, so that we can ask in prayer and receive from God what is needed in our lives. Then as we see the working of the spiritual gift of faith within the church, the whole church will continue believing and asking for even greater works. Always remember our mission must be to please God; and to complete that mission we must have faith!

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Writer: Zachary Snyder

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – February 23, 2014

Lesson – “Healings and Miracles”

Scriptures – Mt. 8:13-17; 1 Co. 12:9-10; Ep. 3:20

Make no mistake about it, gifts of healing and the working of miracles were common occurrences in the life and ministry of Christ and on throughout the New Testament (Mt. 8:13-17; Mk. 1:40-45; Lu. 7:22). During Jesus’ earthly ministry, he healed many with different kinds of sicknesses and diseases (Mt. 9:35). We should remember that our need for healing is sometimes more than physical, for Satan doesn’t attack our bodies only. He also seeks to poison our minds with carnal thoughts and fear (1 Co. 10:5-6; 2 Ti. 1:7) and to corrupt our spirits with the evidence of the works of the flesh (Ga. 5:19-21). Therefore, the Lord has provided healing for the whole person: soul, mind, body, and spirit. Before Jesus ascended back to the Father in heaven, he promised to send the Holy Spirit to us. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, the Lord has placed gifts of healing and the working of miracles in the church in order to empower its ministry, convict sinners, build up the body of Christ, and to prove to the world that he is still at work through his church (1 Co. 12:9-10). Zion Assembly must continue to realize our need for God’s divine favor; we must be in a condition spiritually where the Spirit will use us for the honor and glory of God (Ep. 3:20).

Key Verse: “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Ep. 3:20).

- ✦ What would be some of the reasons for not seeing miracles and healings? What would hinder the Holy Spirit from working in our lives?
- ✦ Since God desires to do the miraculous in and through his church, do you individually make sure that you are spiritually conditioned for him to use? How can you spiritually prepare yourself to be used by the Holy Spirit?

Think about it: Zion Assembly has an important role to fulfill in this world in being God’s church. As his church, we must honor God through obedience to his Word. We must also live close to God by being filled with the Holy Spirit. How will Zion Assembly shine brightly to the world around us? Not only will the church be the light of the world by proclaiming the whole truth of God’s Word, but Zion will also be seen by the working of the Spirit within her through signs and wonders, healings, and the working of miracles. However, in order to be used of the Spirit, we individually must be spiritually conditioned. The power of God working through us individually is conditional.

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Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Trevor Graves

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – March 2, 2014

Lesson – “Prophecy and Discernment”

Scriptures – Acts 15:5-29

Introduction to lesson

Do you want to know more about God's plan for your life? God certainly desires to help you understand His plan more clearly and just how you fit into it. The gift of prophecy and the gift of discernment are two gifts of the Spirit that work in the church to help us know the will of God. The gift of prophecy occurs when the Holy Ghost uses an individual to speak God's word with power and authority. The gift of discernment happens when the Holy Ghost helps believers to judge whether or not the prophecy is truly from God. In this lesson, we will see how God uses both the gift of prophecy and the gift of discernment to give direction for the church.

Key Verse: “For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things” (Acts 15:28).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Who began to speak to the assembly? (v. 13)
- ✚ From whom did God take out a people for His name? (v. 14)
- ✚ What did James refer to when confirming Simeon's (or Simon Peter's) message? (v. 15)
- ✚ What did James conclude after proclaiming the Scriptures? (vv. 19-20)
- ✚ When James was finished speaking, were there any disagreements among them? (v. 22)
- ✚ Who approved of James's conclusion? (v. 28)
- ✚ Do you think James was speaking by his own power? (v. 28)
- ✚ How did the church know that the Holy Ghost was pleased with their decision? (v. 28)

Think about it: The gift of prophecy and the gift discernment working together revealed God's plan to the early church and helped them to avoid division. God's will was communicated to them by someone who spoke with the power of the Holy Ghost working through him. By the same Spirit, they were able to judge the message they were hearing as seeming good to the Holy Ghost. These gifts will do the same for us today. When the gifts of prophecy and discernment are in action, our mission in the church is made clearer, and we are kept from being misled by false teachers. Together, these gifts of the Spirit will reveal the mind of God to us, so that we can grow and become all that God wants us to be.

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Writer: Trevor Graves

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – March 9, 2014

Lesson – “Tongues and Interpretation”

Scriptures – Acts 2:1-8

Introduction to lesson

Have you ever tried to talk to someone who does not speak your language? It's a difficult task if you don't have an interpreter to translate what you are trying to say. Sometimes in the church, there may be people gathered together who do not speak the same language. Despite language barriers, God can still communicate what He desires to reveal to everyone present and use the church to do so. He can use Spirit-baptized individuals in the church to speak and interpret any language. The Holy Ghost may use the gift of diverse tongues to speak Spanish through someone who only knows how to speak English or French. Sometimes, God may use someone to speak a message in tongues in order to help the church and then use someone to interpret the message so that all may understand. The gifts of diverse tongues and interpretation of tongues are both supernatural gifts of the Spirit given to build up the body of Christ. In this lesson, we will see that the church is not hindered by language barriers when its members are empowered by the Holy Ghost.

Key Verse: “To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another diverse kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues” (1 Corinthians 12:10).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Were the disciples who were gathered thinking about different things? (Acts 2:1)
- + What was the sound from heaven like? (v. 2)
- + What did the tongues that were like fire do? (v. 3)
- + How were they able to speak with other languages? (v. 4)
- + The Jews who were dwelling at Jerusalem at this time had returned there from where? (v. 5)
- + Why was the crowd of people so confused? (v. 6)
- + Why was the crowd of people so amazed? (vv. 7-8)

Think about it: What an amazing work God performed through His church on the day of Pentecost! Jews from many different nations heard the wonderful works of God in their own language. They were all astonished because the people speaking were Galileans who ordinarily could not speak their languages. They were able to speak other languages because the Spirit gave them utterance. You see, God can speak and interpret all languages. The Holy Ghost still works in the same way today. He still speaks to and through the church to ensure that the message He wants to reveal is clear to everyone who may be gathered together. The gifts of diverse tongues and interpretation of tongues are wonderful gifts that will strengthen and build up the body of Christ as we proclaim the gospel into all the world.

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Writer: Trevor Graves

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – March 16, 2014

Lesson – “Signs Following Believers”

Scriptures – Mark 16:15-20; Matthew 24:24;
Revelation 13:11-15

Introduction to lesson

When taking a road trip to a new place, road signs can be useful tools that help you to know the right direction. In the same way, when we set out to do God's will, miracles can be like signs helping to assure us that we are going the right way. Jesus taught that in His name believers would cast out demons, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, be protected if they drink something deadly, and lay hands on the sick and heal them. These are signs that will follow them who believe. The purpose of these signs is to confirm the Word of God and direct our faith toward Jesus Christ. Do you think that we as Christians should follow signs? In this lesson, we will see what God says about signs, so that we can know the answer to this question.

Key Verse: “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following” (Mark 16:20).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✦ Are believers going to follow signs, or are signs going to follow believers? (Mk. 16:17)
- ✦ Why did God use signs when He worked with the early church? (Mk. 16:20)
- ✦ What do you think Jesus meant by “false Christs” and “false prophets?” (Mt. 24:24)
- ✦ What will the “false Christs” and “false prophets” be able to do? (Mt. 24:24)
- ✦ What will happen as a result of their signs? (Mt. 24:24)
- ✦ Who will the false prophet cause people to worship? (Re.13:12)
- ✦ What will the false prophet use to deceive those that dwell on the earth? (Re. 13:13-14)

Think about it: As you can see from the Scripture, signs can be deceiving. Jesus warned about false prophets who would show great signs and wonders. The signs performed by false prophets are like road signs with the wrong information. These lying signs will lead people away from the Truth and direct their faith toward someone or something other than Jesus Christ. For this reason, Christians should not follow after signs, but rather follow the Word of God. As we focus on God's Word, we will be able to appreciate the true signs that will confirm His Word. The true signs will strengthen our faith in the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Jesus Christ.

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Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – March 23, 2014

Lesson – “The Greatest Gift”

Scriptures – 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

Introduction to lesson

How much would you pay for a Big Mac without the burgers? You probably wouldn't pay a dime, because the bread, the toppings, and the sauce all lose their value without the main thing. Similarly, the gifts of the Spirit also become meaningless if the most important gift is not working in the church. According to the Apostle Paul, the greatest gift is love. He was not referring to a “romantic” kind of love or a “friendship” kind of love. These examples are types of love that all humans are capable of having. Paul was referring to the kind of love that we experience when God's Spirit works in and through us. This kind of love can only come from God. In this lesson, we will learn what the love of God is like, so that we can understand why it's the greatest gift.

Key Verse: “And now abideth faith, hope, charity [love], these three; but the greatest of these is charity [love]” (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Questions to Discuss:

- + What is a person like who speaks the languages of men and angels but doesn't have God's love? (v. 1)
- + What is a person who understands mysteries and all knowledge but lacks God's love? (v. 2)
- + What does a person gain by doing good things for others if they do not have God's love? (v. 3)
- + What characteristics should people have if God's love is within them? (v. 4)
- + Would God's love cause a person to demand his/her own way? [Explain your answer.] (v. 5)
- + Would God's love cause a person to be happy when others fall into temptation? Why or why not? (v. 6)
- + Would the love of God cause us to give up on our brother or sister when he/she does us wrong? [Give an example of your answer.] (v. 7)

Think about it: The goodness of God's love goes far beyond our human ability to love. The human kind of love can become impure and self-centered, due to the influence of the sin nature, but the love of God is always pure and selfless. The love of God was demonstrated when God gave His only begotten Son to die for us when we were yet sinners. It is this self-sacrificing love that is the most important gift to help us build God's church. The gifts of the Spirit such as tongues and interpretations, prophecy and discernment are all helpful, but without the love of God working through us, they become meaningless. As we seek to build up the church, we need to remember the main thing is God's love.

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Writer: Trevor Graves

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

“Spiritual Gifts” – March 30, 2014

Lesson – “Prophesy”

Scriptures – 1 Corinthians 14:1-12

Introduction to lesson

When people try to get in shape, they usually work out all of their muscle groups. It doesn't make good sense to strengthen one muscle group when it takes your entire body to do daily activities. Likewise, God does not want some members of the body of Christ to be strong and others to be weak. God desires the whole body of Christ to be built up and every member able to do his/her work effectively. He wants us all to be in our best shape spiritually, so that together we can fulfill the great commission. In order for all of us to become strong, we must have the word of God. We need to be corrected, encouraged, comforted, and instructed with a clear message. For this reason, Paul emphasized prophesying over speaking in tongues, when there is no interpretation. Prophesying occurs when the Holy Ghost uses an individual believer to speak God's word with power and authority. In this lesson, we will see how prophesying provides more of a “full body workout” than speaking in tongues when we are gathered together.

Key Verse: “Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy” (1 Corinthians 14:1).

Questions to Discuss:

- + When someone speaks in an unknown tongue, to whom is he/she speaking? (v. 2)
- + Can anyone understand a person who speaks in an unknown tongue? (v. 2)
- + Who is spoken to when a person prophesies? (v. 3)
- + What are the benefits of prophesying? (v. 3)
- + Who benefits from an unknown tongue? Who benefits from prophecy? (v. 4)
- + Why is the person who prophesies greater than the person who speaks in tongues when there is no interpretation? (v. 5)
- + What should we seek for in our pursuit of spiritual gifts? (v. 12)

Think about it: God wants every one of us to be strong in Him so that we will affect the world rather than the world affecting us. Therefore, edifying the church should be our focus when we are gathered together. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul was not trying to stop the church from speaking in tongues, but he wanted them to see that prophesying (anointed preaching) helps to build up the whole church, while speaking in an unknown tongue only strengthens the individual. Everyone can benefit from prophecy, because the message is understandable. In contrast, speaking in unknown tongues blesses the individual who speaks, but there is no understanding given to the church. With this in mind, we should not forbid speaking in tongues, but we should seek to prophesy so that all may be strengthened in the will of God.

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Healings

“Healings, Part One” – April 6, 2014

Lesson – “Job’s Recovery”

Scriptures – Job 1:1-22

Introduction to lesson

Perhaps no other narrative in the Bible inspires faith like the life of Job. To summarize his life’s story, he had it all, he lost it all, but in the end, he gained everything. His experience from start to finish is a remarkable story of unwavering faith in God, especially in the face of suffering. The incredible trials of his faith and his ultimate victory inspire us with hope when facing the greatest of challenges. As you study about the life of Job, you may ask yourself, “How would I handle it if I had to face Job’s trials?” Job gives us a great example of what to do.

Key Verse: “In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly” (Job:1:22).

Questions to Discuss:

- Did Job live his life pleasing to God? (v. 1)
- If so, why did these things happen to him? (v. 12)
- Today, Job probably would have been a millionaire. What did Satan tell God would happen if He removed Job’s hedge of protection and prosperity? (v. 11)
- Job pretty much lost everything. His children, cattle, farm land, and yet what did Job say about the Lord? (vv. 20, 21)
- Re-read the key verse now. (v. 22)
- Job’s tests were not only physical, mental and emotional, but they were also spiritual. Instead of blaming God, Job worshipped him and remained faithful.
- How did Job recover? (Job 42:10-17)

Think about it:

Job was a man of sincere faith. Although his world seemed to be crashing down around him, through it all, he remained faithful to the Lord. Was it easy? Of course not! But through all of his questions, frustrations, and insecurities, he believed God, and by faith he fully recovered. Like Job, we must hold on to our faith in God, even when our circumstances appear hopeless, because our hope is never in our physical circumstances, but our hope is in the Lord our healer (Ex. 15:26; Ps. 103:3).

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Healings

“Healings, Part One” – April 13, 2014

Lesson – “Hannah’s Cry”

Scriptures – 1 Samuel 1:1-20

Introduction to lesson

Sometimes having the faith to believe and trust in God may not seem to be easy in our circumstances. It is in those times when we should remember that the Lord will never leave us or forsake us. He hears our prayer. And he knows the very desires of our hearts. Hannah was a woman of God that had a condition that made the very thing she desired most, virtually impossible. But we know that what is impossible with man is possible with God. Hannah’s faith led the way for God to bless her tremendously, and at the same time, to bless His people.

Key Verse: “And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore” (1 Samuel 1:10).

Questions to Discuss:

- Elkanah gave Peninnah and her children their portions. Then he gave Hannah a worthy (double) portion. Why? (v. 5)
- Hannah not only had to deal with her physical condition, but what conflict did she have to face at home? (vv. 6, 7)
- Did Peninnah’s actions cause Hannah to not trust in the Lord?
- Hannah made a vow (promise) to God. What was it? (v. 11)
- As Hannah prayed, what did Eli accuse her of; why did he think this? (v. 14)
- Hannah cried out to God in such a way that the Lord heard her prayer. What did the Lord say to her? (v. 17)
- How did this make Hannah feel? (v. 18)
- How did the Lord answer her prayer? (v. 20)

Think about it:

The story of Hannah inspires every believer to face adversity with courage and faith, knowing that God is our healer. Hannah could have become a miserable, bitter woman without faith and hope. But instead, she cried out to God with all of her heart. Amazingly, the prayer of one woman changed the course of Israel. God took her need and did something remarkable through Hannah. Out of her deep despair, she prayed, and God healed her body. Through her healing, she then became the mother of one of the most influential spiritual leaders in the history of the church.

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Healings

“Healings, Part One” – April 20, 2014

Lesson – “Naaman the Leper”

Scriptures – 2 Kings 5:1-14

Introduction to lesson

Having faith and exercising obedience are two primary things that our healing is dependent on. It is one thing to say we have faith that God can do this or that; but when we actually put our faith into action then God can see our true desire to seek him. The Bible says that obedience is better than sacrifice. Today, our lesson looks at Naaman, a mighty man that had authority, and honor. He was a mighty warrior in the Syrian army. But with all of his power and position, he faced a very difficult problem – leprosy. Like us, Naaman had to lay aside his plan for healing and be obedient to God’s plan.

Key Verse: “Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean” (2 Kings 5:14).

Questions to Discuss:

- Naaman was a leper. This was an incurable skin disease. Did this prohibit him from serving his king? (v. 1)
- How did Naaman know of the Prophet in Israel? (vv. 2, 3)
- When Naaman travelled to Israel to be healed, he took with him many valuable things (approximately \$3.75 million in today’s U.S. currency). Why do you think he did this?
- Naaman first went to the king of Israel. What was the king’s reaction? (v. 7)
- Did Elisha meet Naaman with a big welcome? (v. 10)
- Did Elisha meet Naaman at all? What was Naaman’s reaction? (v. 11)
- How did Naaman react to Elisha’s instructions? (vv. 11, 12)
- When Naaman finally obeyed, what happened?

Think about it:

Naaman’s story gives us an excellent picture of a man with power and authority needing to depend on God for his healing. Likewise we must be dependent on God to meet our every need and to heal our bodies. But God requires that our faith meet action. That takes place when we are obedient to God’s instructions. God heals only on his terms, not ours. Naaman was made completely clean of his leprosy when he followed through with God’s word. If God healed Naaman, He can also heal you. Have you ever felt a healing touch from God? You can!

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Healings

“Healings, Part One” – April 27, 2014

Lesson – “Hezekiah’s Healing”

Scriptures – 2 Kings 20:1-11

Introduction to lesson

Many times we are faced with situations that we truly do not understand or know why. Is this normal? Yes. But the most important thing to know is who to turn to during those times. God hears our prayers and knows our very need before we even ask him. Yet he desires to know the petitions of our hearts and wants us to ask him for the solution to our problem. Hezekiah had a dire need. He was told, “For you shall die, and not live” (v. 1). How would you handle such serious news? Today, our lesson will look at how Hezekiah handled it and what God did for him.

Key Verse: “I beseech you, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before You in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Your sight. And Hezekiah wept sore” (2 Kings 20:3)

Questions to Discuss:

- History records that Hezekiah was about 39 years old when he was sick. Who came to give him the serious news? (v. 1)
- What was Hezekiah’s reaction to what he was told? (v. 2)
- Why did Hezekiah remind the Lord of his faithfulness? Was it ok for him to do this?
- What does the phrase “wept sore” mean to you? (v. 3)
- What two things did God instruct Hezekiah to do? (vv. 5, 7)
- What did God promise to do for Hezekiah upon his obedience? (v. 6)
- Why did Hezekiah ask for a sign? (v. 8)
- What was the sign given? (vv. 9-11)
- Would this sign be an easy thing to do? (v.10)

Think about it:

Hezekiah was a faithful king and follower of the Lord. He began his reign at age 25 and immediately began restoring Judah to the ways of Jehovah God. At age 39, when he was faced with the news of his impending death, he immediately ran to the Lord for mercy. He knew that the Lord would hear his prayer. I’m sure at his young age this news came with much shock and despair. But he trusted the Lord. Like Hezekiah, we must completely trust the Lord for our wellbeing. And when we are faced with horrible news, we must be assured that God knows our needs. When we cry out to God in faith and humility, we can be sure that he will answer according to his divine will for our lives.

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Healings

“Healings, Part Two” – May 4, 2014

Lesson – “Serpent of Brass”

Scriptures – “Numbers 21:4-9; Hebrews 3:7-19; John 3:14-17

Introduction to lesson: As young people, we tend to disbelieve a lot of things because of our inexperience. We feel we have not seen or experienced enough in order for us to fully trust God. In today’s lesson, we will see how the Israelites were punished for their unbelief and constant murmuring of the leader that God had placed over them (Moses). We will see how unbelief brings illness both physically and spiritually to our being, how it affects people around us, and how we can find our healing and forgiveness by looking to and trusting in Christ.

Key Verse: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up” (John 3:14).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Why was the people’s soul discouraged? (Nu. 21:4)
- + Who did Israel complain against? (v. 5)
- + What was Israel’s complaint against God and Moses? (v. 5)
- + What did God use to punish the people of Israel? (v. 6)
- + Why did God punish Israel with fiery serpents?
- + What lesson should we learn from Israel’s dilemma?
- + When the people finally realized their fault, what did they do? (v. 7)
- + What did God instruct Moses to make? (v. 8)
- + What would happen if the people looked upon the pole Moses made? (v. 8)
- + Whom does the fiery serpent on the pole represent?
- + In whom can we find our spiritual and physical healing?

Think about it: Our unbelief will get us into trouble; it will cause our hearts to be hardened and discouraged (Hebrews 3:7-19). This was the case with Israel. Their unbelief prevented them from bringing glory to God. Although the people of God sinned, the Lord graciously provided a way out. He told Moses to make a fiery serpent and place it upon a pole. All who looked upon it would be saved. In the same way, if we have been sick with unbelief and murmuring, and need healing, all we have to do is look unto Christ; for he was lifted upon the cross, and all who look to him in faith will be saved (John 3:14-17).

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Healings

“Healings, Part Two” – May 11, 2014

Lesson – “The Centurion’s Servant”

Scriptures – Matthew 8:5-10; John 1:1-3

Introduction to lesson: How does your faith stack up? Do you have enough to say to Jesus, “But say the word, and my servant will be healed” (Mt. 8:8)? Do we have enough faith that when we are sick or troubled we can say to God, “Lord, just say the word and my illness or trouble will disappear?” In today’s lesson, we will see how a Gentile (non-Jew) centurion came to Jesus with such great faith that both Matthew and Luke’s gospel record Jesus as saying, “I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel” (Mt. 8:10). When you are sick you can call on the name above all names (“Jesus”) for your healing, for only he has the authority to heal by just speaking the word (John 1:1-3). Jesus has ALL power and authority (Mt. 28:18), and he is the creator and sustainer of ALL things (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Key Verse: “When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel” (Matthew 8:10).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Who came to Jesus asking for help? (v. 5)
- ✚ What was the centurion asking for Jesus to do? (v. 6)
- ✚ What was Jesus’ response to his request? (v. 7)
- ✚ Why did the centurion not want Jesus to come to his house? What does this mean to you? (v. 8)
- ✚ The centurion was a man with authority. Did he have the authority to demand that Jesus heal his servant? (v. 9)
- ✚ What do you think the centurion meant when he spoke about his authority? (v. 9)
- ✚ When Jesus saw the centurion’s faith, what was his reaction? (v. 10)
- ✚ Why did Jesus react this way? (v. 10)

Think about it: Although the centurion had authority over 100 soldiers, he found himself powerless and without authority when it came to facing the illness of his servant. This is why he came to Jesus. He recognized that Jesus alone had the power to heal the servant by only speaking the word. We must recognize that we serve an all-powerful God that can heal us through faith in the authority of the Word and his great compassion.

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“Healings, Part Two” – May 18, 2014

Lesson – “The Faith of Friends”

Scriptures – Mark 2:1-12; Galatians 6:1-2

Introduction to lesson: Who do you consider to be your best friend (BFF)? The Bible says, “A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity” (Pr. 17:17). A true friend will laugh and cry with you, stand by your side, and not leave you in difficult times. In today’s lesson, we will see how the faith of friends moved them to action and helped transform a man’s life, physically and spiritually. We will also see how God is looking for faithful people who will spiritually help carry the load of others and encourage the weak (Gal. 6:1-2). Our faith must be strong enough to motivate us to pray for the salvation and healing of our family members and friends.

Key Verse: “When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, Son, your sins are forgiven.” (Mark 2:5)

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ What do we find Jesus doing on this occasion? (v. 2)
- ✚ How many people came to see and hear Jesus? (v. 2)
- ✚ How many men came in carrying the paralytic? (v. 3)
- ✚ They were determined to get to Jesus. When they saw they couldn’t get in through the door, what did they do? (v. 4)
- ✚ How did the four men get their sick friend to see Jesus? (v. 4)
- ✚ What special characteristic did Jesus see about these four men? (v. 5)
- ✚ What was Jesus’ response to the action they took? (v. 5)
- ✚ What can we learn about the faith of these four men?
- ✚ How can our faith help some of our unconverted friends and family members?

Think about it: Paralyzed people cannot move for themselves. They need help from machines, friends and family to move them along. The same happens with friends and family members that are sick spiritually and physically. They may need our help to move around. They may need our help to find a cure to their illness or a solution to their problem. For sure, they need us to help carry their load through our faith, prayer, and actions. A true friend will do all he can to bring them to the only one who can give them salvation and healing. Jesus is the only one who can say, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

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Healings

“Healings, Part Two” – May 25, 2014

Lesson – “Gratitude”

Scriptures – Luke 17:11-19

Introduction to lesson: Gratitude is an attitude of appreciation and thankfulness for what one has received from another. During special occasions when gifts are freely given, like Christmas and birthdays, our gratitude is often expressed by simply saying, “Thank you.” There are times, however, when we think we deserve a gift, and we forget or neglect to be grateful. In today’s lesson, we will look at a great gift that was given to a person who didn’t think he deserved it: the gift of healing. He didn’t take his healing for granted, but he came back and thanked the one who provided the gift. How many times have we forgotten to show gratitude towards the Giver?

Key Verse: “One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice” (Luke 17:15).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Where was Jesus travelling to? (v. 11)
- + How many men came up to him? (v. 12)
- + What was wrong with these men? (v. 12)
- + What did they want from Jesus? (v. 13)
- + What did Jesus show to these men? (v. 13)
- + What did Jesus instruct them to do, and what happened to them as they went? (v. 14)
- + As they went they were healed. How many came back to thank Jesus? (v. 15)
- + What was this man’s background (nationality)? (v. 16)
- + What can we learn from this man’s actions?
- + What cured this man’s leprosy? (v. 19)

Think about it: Let us not forget that in all our circumstances we should praise God for his goodness: “His mercy endures forever.” We need to recognize from whom all blessings flow. So when we receive a blessing, we should not forget to praise him just like the Samaritan in Luke 17. He was a man who knew he didn’t deserve it, but with all sincerity he came back, worshipped, and thanked Jesus for what he had done in his life. Recognizing that we live in a society that is constantly becoming more and more ungrateful, we should be genuinely thankful for all that God is doing in our lives.

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Healings

“Healings, Part Three” – June 1, 2014

Lesson – “By Prayer and Fasting”

Scriptures – Mark 9:17-29; Matthew 17:14-21

Introduction to lesson

Some products on the market boast of a special ingredient and claim it can do just about anything. Other products promise some type of formula that will give you instant success. If you do steps 1-2-3, you will see remarkable results. But most of the time, such claims are too good to be true. They simply do not work as well as they say. The old saying goes, “If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.” When it comes to healing, there is no magic formula. The Lord did not give us a 3-Step plan of healing. If healing was based on a full proof method, the whole world would be completely healed. Instead, we receive healing on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ (Mk. 9:23). In this lesson, we will see how prayer and fasting can help to build up our faith in God.

Key Verse: “And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting” (Mk. 9:29).

Questions to Discuss:

- + What was wrong with the son? (Mk. 9:17, 25)
- + How did this spirit affect him? (vv. 18, 20, 22)
- + Why couldn't the disciples cast out this spirit? (v. 19; see also Mt. 17:17)
- + What must we do to receive healing? (v. 23)
- + Did the father have faith? (v. 24)
- + When the disciples asked, “Why could not we cast him out,” what did Jesus say that they lacked or needed to do? (vv. 28-29; see also Mt. 17:20-21)
- + How much faith is needed to receive healing (Mt. 17:20)
- + When believing is difficult, what should we do to build up our faith? (Mt. 17:21)

Think about it: The disciples lacked the necessary faith to cast out the demon and heal the son. Often, the son was uncontrollable – wallowing on the ground, foaming and gnashing. No doubt, his actions were intimidating to those around him. Such cases will leave you feeling helpless. When the father brought his son to Jesus, he also struggled in his faith to believe for his son's healing. Jesus explained that it only takes “faith as a grain of mustard seed,” a tiny amount of faith, to move mountains that stand in our way. But sometimes, we do struggle to have faith, especially when the need is very great. Some problems are so big in our eyes that the need challenges our faith. In such times, Jesus says we should pray, but we should also fast. Some needs, like casting out devils, will require us to pray and fast in order to have the necessary faith.

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Healings

“Healings, Part Three” – June 8, 2014

Lesson – “Cry Out to Jesus”

Scriptures – Mark 10:46-52

Introduction to lesson

The Gospels are filled with story after story about the wonderful works of Christ. He reached out to the multitudes and healed many people bound by sickness, disease, and sin. Certainly, Jesus Christ has the ability to transform people’s lives today. But where does change begin? Today’s lesson is the healing of blind Bartimaeus. This story explains a miraculous change – the transformation of a blind beggar into a born again believer. In Mark 10:46-52, we will see how one man’s healing began with a desperate cry.

Key Verse: “And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me” (Mk. 10:48).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Who was Bartimaeus? What was he doing? (v. 46)
- + When Jesus passed by, how did his cry change? (v. 47)
- + Why do you think he cried out to Jesus? (v. 47)
- + When the crowd tried to quieten Baritmaeus, what did he do? (v. 48)
- + How then would you describe Bartimaeus? (v. 48)
- + When Jesus called for Bartimaeus, how do you think it made him feel? (v. 49)
- + What is the significance of verse 50? When Bartimaeus came, did he expect Jesus to heal him? (v. 51)
- + How was he healed? (v. 52)
- + What did Bartimaeus do when he was healed? (v. 52)
- + What was the changing point in Bartimaeus’ life?

Think about it: Bartimaeus was a blind beggar. He sat by the road begging for help. He had become known by his pitiful condition: blind Bartimaeus. Day after day, he cried, “Alms for the poor; alms for the blind.” But when Jesus passed by, his cry suddenly changed. He stopped asking for money, and he began to cry out to Jesus, asking for mercy. He knew Jesus could help him. Even when the crowd tried to stop him from crying out, he cried out all the more, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me” (vv. 47-48). When Jesus called for him, Baritmaeus cast away his beggar’s garment, and he came to Jesus expecting to be healed. By faith, Bartimaeus was healed and began to follow Jesus Christ. Everything changed when he cried out to Jesus.

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Healings

“Healings, Part Three” – June 15, 2014

Lesson – “Touching Jesus”

Scriptures – Luke 8:43-48

Introduction to lesson

Human touch is a meaningful and powerful influence. For example, a simple touch can bring a great amount of comfort to someone who is filled with sorrow. Touch can communicate that you are important to me and I understand what you’re going through. On the other hand, a simple touch can be an extremely offensive and unwelcomed gesture. But either way, physical touch is powerful. In today’s lesson, we will consider a different kind of touch – a divine touch – when a woman touched Jesus in a special way and the results were miraculous and powerful.

Key Verse: “And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me” (Luke 8:46).

Questions to Discuss:

- + How would you describe her illness? (v. 43)
- + What did she touch? (v. 44)
- + What happened when she touched his garment? (v. 44)
- + When she touched his clothes, who was she really touching? (vv. 45-46)
- + What actually happened when she touched Jesus? (v. 46)
- + The crowd was all around Jesus, and no doubt, many were touching him, but how was her touch different?
- + How did she respond when she was healed? (v. 47)
- + How was she made whole? (v. 48)

Think about it: This woman had suffered a long time with an incurable illness. No doctor could help her. She had spent all she had to get better, but only grew worse (Mk. 5:25-26). When she came behind him, Jesus did not see her touch his clothes, but he felt her touch spiritually, because he felt the power of God flow out of him. Jesus knew that someone was healed. The woman with the issue of blood touched Jesus by faith, and because of her faith, Jesus also touched her in a miraculous way. The results were powerful. She received a divine touch from the Lord. To be healed, we must also reach out and touch Jesus in faith and confidence for our healing.

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Healings

“Healings, Part Three” – June 22, 2014

Lesson – “For the Glory of God”

Scriptures – John 9:1-11

Introduction to lesson

When we look around, it does not take long to figure out that we live in a world filled with suffering. People suffer physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Suffering is our human condition. We live in a sin-cursed, fallen world since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, not to mention that we have a spiritual archenemy, Satan, who is out to destroy us (Ge. 3:15-19; 1 Pe. 5:7-11). In today’s lesson, we want to look at suffering people in the same way that Jesus looked at them. He was compassionate and looked for the opportunity to heal and restore them for the glory of God.

Key Verse: “Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be manifest in him” (Jn. 9:3).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Who did Jesus see when he passed by? What was his condition? (v. 1)
- ✚ When they saw the blind man, what mistake did the disciples make? (v. 2)
- ✚ What are the problems with this kind of thinking? (Hint: Consider the story of Lazarus in Luke 16:19-25.)
- ✚ How did Jesus correct them, and how did he say they should look at the blind man’s condition? (v. 3)
- ✚ Why did Jesus come into this world? (vv. 4-5)
- ✚ How did Jesus heal this man? (vv. 6-7)
- ✚ What did Jesus require the blind man to do in order to be healed? (v. 7)
- ✚ To whom did the blind man give credit for opening his eyes? (vv. 10-11)

Think about it: The disciples were so wrong in their thinking about this blind man. His condition was in no way the direct result of his own sin or his parents’ sin. No doubt, we can bring some things on ourselves through riotous, wicked living, but Jesus wanted the disciples to understand suffering in a completely different way. Instead of looking for blame when people go through hardships, look at their condition as an opportunity for God to do something great. People truly need the Lord’s help. If we will help them come to Jesus by faith, then we will see him do a great work in their lives for the glory of God.

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Healings

“Healings, Part Three” – June 29, 2014

Lesson – “Look on Us”

Scriptures – Acts 3:1-16

Introduction to lesson

If Jesus came into your community, what kind of ministry would he have? Surely, he would do the same kind of ministry he did in Galilee – “teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Mt. 9:35). Jesus ministered in homes, in the temple, in synagogues, on the hillside, and in the streets. He took advantage of every opportunity and walked through every open door. But Jesus is not physically walking the streets of our cities today. Instead, we are the ones he has called to finish his mission in the world. Lost and hurting people are looking to us.

Key Verse: “And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us” (Ac. 3:4).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Where were Peter and John going and why? (Ac. 3:1)
- + Who did they see at the Beautiful gate and what was he doing? (v. 2)
- + What did the man ask of Peter and John? (v. 3)
- + How did Peter respond to him? (v. 4)
- + Did Peter give him what he expected? Explain. (vv. 5-6)
- + What did Peter give him instead? (vv. 6-7)
- + What happened when the man was healed? (v. 8)
- + How did the people in the temple react to this? (vv. 9-11)
- + What great opportunity did this miraculous healing give Peter and John? (vv. 12-16)

Think about it: This man was lame since birth. The only life he knew was the beggar’s life. Every day, they laid him at the Beautiful gate of the temple where he asked for money. When he saw Peter and John, he did like always – he asked for a little money. But when Peter said, “Look on us,” the Lord was ready to give the lame man much more than he expected. He only wanted money, but what he really needed was healing and hope in Jesus. God is able to do wonders, but he works through people of faith. The Lord is counting on the church to share the hope of Christ with the lost, sick, and oppressed. Hurting people need the church; and we must be spiritually ready to minister to their needs. Like Peter, let’s say to the world, “Look on us.”

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The Doctrine of Christ

“The Trinity” – July 6, 2014

Lesson – “In the Beginning Was the Trinity”

Scriptures – Genesis 1:1, 26-27;

John 1:1-3, 14, 17; John 17:5; Acts 5:3-4

Introduction to lesson

It's an awesome experience to see the sun rise in the morning or the starry skies on a clear night. Though we don't understand just how God made the sun and the stars, we know by faith that He did. When it comes to knowing who God is, it is also a matter of faith. We cannot completely understand God, but we can know by faith that He is who the Scriptures declare Him to be. In today's lesson, we will discover a truth about God our Creator that is taught over and over again throughout the Bible. God is one God who exists in three persons.

Key Verse: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . .” (Gen. 1:26).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Who created the heavens and the earth? (Gen. 1:1)
- ✚ Who moved upon the face of the waters? (Gen. 1:2)
- ✚ When God said, “Let us make man in our image,” who is **us**? (Gen. 1:26-27)
- ✚ Who was both “with God” and was Himself God in the beginning? (John 1:1-3)
- ✚ Who is the Word? (John:1:14, 17)
- ✚ With whom did Jesus share glory before the world was? (John 17:5)
- ✚ Read Acts 5:3-4. How can you tell from these verses that the Holy Spirit is God?

Think about it: In the book of Genesis, we find that when God created the heavens and the earth, there was more than one person involved in creation. We also find that there was only one God. Jesus Christ who was with God and was God made all things. Jesus prayed to the Father with whom He had glory before the world was. The Holy Spirit who is God moved upon the face of the waters in the Genesis account of creation. Though it is difficult to comprehend one God existing in three persons, nevertheless by faith we must believe He is the Triune God of the Bible.

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The Doctrine of Christ

“The Trinity” – July 13, 2014

Lesson – “Three Distinct Persons”

Scriptures – Mark 1:9-11; John 11:41-42;
John 14:16-17, 26

Introduction to lesson

Last week, we learned that our Creator is one God who exists in three persons. Still some people think God in only one person who plays three roles. This belief does not agree with the evidence we find in the Bible. The Bible does teach us there is only one God, but it also teaches there are three persons in the Godhead. This week we will examine evidence from Scripture that proves the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three distinct persons.

Key Verse: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever” (John 14:16).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Read Mark 1:9-11. What evidence from these verses proves that God cannot be one person playing three roles?
- ✚ Read John 11:41-42. What evidence from this passage proves that Jesus and the Father are not the same person?
- ✚ Read John 14:16-17, 26. What words/phrases can you find to prove the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three distinct persons?

Think about it: Interaction does not take place unless there are two or more people involved. The Scriptures make it clear the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit interacted one with another during Jesus’ earthly ministry. The Father spoke from heaven honoring Jesus; The Spirit sat upon Jesus in the form of a dove; The Son prayed to the Father; Jesus and the Holy Ghost were both sent from the Father. These Scriptures and many more reveal God in three persons: the Holy Trinity.

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The Doctrine of Christ

“The Trinity” – July 20, 2014

Lesson – “The Unity of the Trinity”

Scriptures – 1 John 5:7; John 8:29; John 14:9-10; John 15:26; John 16:13-15

Introduction to lesson

Imagine lighting 3 matches and bringing them together to make one flame. There would be 3 distinct and equal sources of fire, yet there would be only one flame. Of course, this illustration fails to perfectly model the relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but it does demonstrate the idea of three in one. In today’s lesson, we will focus on the unity or oneness of the Trinity. Let’s take another look into the Scriptures to be sure the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are truly one God.

Key Verse: “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one” (1 John 5:7).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ How can three distinct persons be one? (1 John 5:7)
- ✚ When you see Jesus, who else do you see? (John 14:9)
- ✚ When Jesus speaks, who else is speaking? (John 14:10)
- ✚ From whom does the Holy Spirit proceed? About whom will the Holy Spirit testify? (John 15:26)
- ✚ Will the Holy Spirit speak truth that did not come from the Father and the Son? How can you be sure? (John 16:13-15)

Think about it: Today’s Scriptures are only a few, but the message is sure. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one. They never work against each other; they always work together in perfect harmony. Jesus always does what pleases the Father, and the Holy Ghost always glorifies Christ. The words of Christ were from the Father, and the Holy Spirit reveals to us what comes from Christ. There is no division in the Trinity; “the Lord our God is one Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29).

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The Doctrine of Christ

“The Trinity” – July 27, 2014

Lesson – “The Truth about Jesus”

Scriptures – Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:21-23;
Mark 1:1; John 1:1-3, 14; 3:16

Introduction to lesson

How would you feel if people were spreading bad news about you that isn't true? Today, people spread bad news about Jesus that is certainly not true. Some say He was a prophet, but not God. Some claim He is 'a god' but not 'the God.' These claims are not the good news of the gospel! God wants us to believe His testimony concerning the person of Jesus Christ. We have already learned that the Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit are three persons, yet one God. In this lesson, let's get acquainted with more truth about Jesus that will confirm He is indeed God, the Son.

Key Verse: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ How do you know that Jesus is not just “a god?” (Isaiah 9:6)
- ✚ Why did the angel tell Joseph to call the son's name Jesus? (Matthew 1:21)
- ✚ What evidence can you find to prove that Jesus is not just another prophet? (Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-3, 14)
- ✚ Do you think Jesus is the Son of God in the same way that Christians are sons and daughters of God? (Mark 1:1; John 1:14; John 3:16)
- ✚ What do you think “only begotten Son” means?

Think about it: Contrary to many beliefs, Jesus is the second person in the Trinity; He is God, the Son. This Biblical truth separates Him from all other men and all other gods. This truth qualifies Him to be our Savior. God inspired both the Old and New Testaments to assure us that Jesus is the Almighty God who took on flesh and dwelled among us in order to be our Savior. Don't be misled by the critics. Believe what's written in the inspired Word of God and go spread the good news of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

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Doctrine of Christ

“Christ in Scripture” – August 3, 2014

Lesson – “Christ from the Beginning”

Scriptures – John 1:1-3, 14

Introduction to lesson

When did Jesus’ life begin? Every year on December 25, we celebrate the birth of Christ. This is a festive and joyous celebration when we remember and honor the birth of our Lord and Savior. But according to the Scriptures, the Son of God existed long before his natural birth in Bethlehem. In Colossians 1:16, the apostle Paul said, “For by him [*that is, Jesus Christ*] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by him, and for him.**” Jesus Christ existed from the beginning. He is actually the creator of heaven and earth. In today’s lesson, we will see that Jesus, the Son of God, has always been and always will be.

Key Verse: “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Who was in the beginning? (John 1:1)
- + What does “the beginning” mean to you?
- + The Word was with whom? (v. 1)
- + Who was the Word? (v. 1)
- + Has there ever been a time when the Word did not exist? (v. 2)
- + Who made all things? (v. 3; see Colossians 1:16 & Gen. 1:1)
- + Has anything come into being without him? (Jn. 1:3)
- + Where did life come from? (v. 4; see also Gen. 2:7)
- + The Word was with God and was God from the beginning. What happened to the Word in the history of mankind? (v. 14)
- + When the Word (God) became human and lived among men, he was called Jesus Christ. What did people observe when they saw and heard Jesus? (v. 14; hint: 3 things)

Think about it: Jesus Christ, the Word, the Son of God, is eternal God. He was from the beginning with God and created all things. Yet he himself was made flesh. He came into this world, was born of a virgin, lived sinless upon the earth, gave his life on the cross to save us, and then on the third day he rose again in victory. Today, he lives forevermore. In Revelation 1:8, Jesus Christ declared that he is eternal God: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

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Doctrine of Christ

“Christ in Scripture” – August 10, 2014

Lesson – “Christ in Prophecy”

Scriptures – 2 Peter 1:16-19

Introduction to lesson

In Matthew 17:1-9, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up to a high mountain, and he was supernaturally changed. Matthew explained, “And [he] was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light” (v. 2). They saw the glory of God in Christ and heard the voice of the Father, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him” (v. 5). The Bible declares the powerful impact this had on the disciples: “And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid” (v. 6). No doubt, seeing Christ in his glory and hearing the voice from heaven confirmed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God (Mt. 16:15-16). But Peter declared, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy” (2 Pe. 1:19).

Key Verse: “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).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Is the Gospel of Christ a make-believe story, or is it the truth? (2 Pe. 1:16)
- + Since Peter is not telling a made-up story about Christ, where did he get his story? (v. 16)
- + What did Peter see and hear that confirmed who Jesus was? (vv. 17-18; see also Mt. 17:2, 5)
- + If you could see Jesus transfigured right before your eyes, would that convince you that he is the Son of God?
- + If you could hear God’s voice from heaven declaring that Jesus is his only begotten Son, would that convince you that he is the Christ, the Son of God?
- + Can you always believe everything you see? Can you always trust everything you hear?

Think about it: The apostle Peter was an eyewitness of Jesus’ transfiguration. Although he confirmed that he heard God’s testimony from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son,” Peter said, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy.” Peter knew that the Old Testament was full of prophecies and events that declared Christ’s coming. When Jesus came into this world, he fulfilled them. For example, the Old Testament Scriptures declared his birth (Micah 5:2; Mt. 2:4-6; Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:23), his life and ministry (Is. 61:1-2; Lu. 4:16-21), his suffering and death (Isaiah 53; Mt. 26-27), his resurrection (Psalm 16:10; Mt. 28), and so on. Peter witnessed Christ’s transfiguration and it was miraculous, but we can be sure that Jesus is the Christ because he fulfilled all that was written about him in the Scriptures. Jesus said to the unbelieving religious leaders of his day, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (Jn. 5:39).

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Doctrine of Christ

“Christ in Scripture” – August 17, 2014

Lesson – “Christ in the Gospels”

Scriptures – John 12:44-50; 14:6

Introduction to lesson

Today, people have a perception of Christ but no reality of who he is. Many have not purposely sought after whom Christ is and his true purpose for us. Many do not know the voice of the Shepherd and now follow a voice of the world. We must grow deeper in our prayer and study life to understand that Jesus was given divine authority to preach, teach, and heal the blinded world. We need to understand that Jesus has just as much authority as the day he walked this Earth. The issue with many of today's teens is that they have no knowledge of him. We should therefore study Christ, his life and ministry, with a desire and commitment to know him more. Our understanding of Christ will give us the faith to stand against our adversaries and to declare the truth of God to a deceived world.

Key Verse: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

Questions to Discuss:

- + What is Jesus' relationship with God the Father? And do we need to believe in Jesus or believe in God or both? (vv. 44-45)
- + Is Jesus a light in your life? How has Jesus been a light for you? (v. 46) What happens to those who walk in darkness? When was the last time you tried to walk in an unfamiliar, dark room? How much fun did you have?
- + In verse 47, Jesus spoke of hearing his words. Jesus taught the truth of God – so we need to hear and believe his words. Sheep are not smart animals, yet they know their master's voice. When you were a child, did you ever follow a voice that you thought was your mother's or your father's, but it wasn't? What about when you grew up? You learn and know your parents, and this is no different than our knowledge of Christ! We need to learn all about Christ and know the voice of the Lord.
- + How many of you have been rejected by your friends and family for talking about the Bible and its truth? Don't be discouraged for it is better to teach and be rejected than to sit quietly in fear of rejection! (v. 48)
- + Consider the authority of Jesus: was it his own authority or his Father's? Did Jesus teach outside his authority? (vv. 49-50)

Think about it: Jesus came into this world to declare the truth and salvation of God. But this was not an easy task, for he endured great opposition in his earthly ministry. As his disciple, he did not promise that you will be without trials or hard times in your walk. But with the trials of your faith, he promised his power, authority, and presence along the way (Mt. 28:18-20; Act 1:8). Today, we are facing the same obstacles as our forefathers in the faith. Sure, it's not easy, but making a difference in the world begins with someone who will speak the truth in the face of opposition. The world wants to restrict the name of Jesus Christ. But through his name, we have the power and authority to make the difference!

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Doctrine of Christ

“Christ in Scripture” – August 24, 2014

Lesson – “Christ in Revelation”

Scriptures – Revelation 19:11-16

Introduction to lesson

When Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and came to this earth, he came to be the sacrifice for our sins and to bring salvation. But the Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ is coming again to this earth. He is coming in power and with great glory. He will return as a conquering king and rule the earth for 1000 years. In the epistle of Jude, the Bible says, “The Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him” (vv. 14-15). In today’s lesson, we will look at John’s vision, peaking into the future, and see Christ’s return to reign upon the earth.

Key Verse: “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Revelation 11:15).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Who rode upon the white horse? What was he called? (v. 11; see also v. 10)
- + What was he doing? (v. 11)
- + How would you describe him? (v. 12)
- + Why do you think his garment was dipped in blood? (v. 13)
- + What is his name? What is the significance of this name? (v. 13)
- + Who followed him riding upon white horses? (v. 14; see also v. 8)
- + What two things will he do to the nations when he returns to the earth? (v. 15)
- + What do his actions show (reveal)? (v. 15)
- + What is the exalted title given to Jesus Christ? (v. 16; see also Mt. 2:1-2; Jn. 19:18-19; Ph. 2:9-11)

Think about it: One day, this world will witness the return of Jesus Christ to rule and reign upon the earth. But his second coming will be different than his first. In his first coming, he came not to judge and make war, but rather to suffer and give his life that we might have salvation. However, when he returns with the saints of God, he will come with the “fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” The whole world will know that Jesus is “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

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The Doctrine of Christ

“Jesus the Christ” – August 31, 2014

Lesson – “Incarnation”

Scriptures – John 1:1-3; Philippians 2:5-8

Introduction to lesson

Today’s lesson discusses the “Incarnation.” The word “incarnation” means to become flesh, and it refers to the fact that God took on flesh, became a man, and lived among men. Jesus was not simply another prophet, philosopher, teacher or just another good man. He was God who came as a man to fulfill a specific mission. Although Jesus Christ was fully man, he remained fully God. In studying this topic, we will investigate why this is so important to the faith. We should also point out that no other religion boasts of a savior comparable to Jesus – one that has accomplished for mankind what Christ has accomplished for us. God became man through his Son and sent his Son to die for you and me, so that we might have eternal life through him.

Key Verse: “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” (Jn. 1:14).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Who was the “Word” that John was talking about? (Jn. 1:1)
- ✚ Explain the concept of the Word being “with God and the Word was God.”
- ✚ So did Christ exist before He was born of the virgin Mary? (Jn. 1:2)
- ✚ Did the “Word” actively participate in creation? (Jn. 1:3; see also Colossians 1:16-17)
- ✚ What was Christ’s “form” before his incarnation? (Ph. 2:6)
- ✚ Explain why Christ “thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” (Ph. 2:6)
- ✚ “Made himself of no reputation” (Ph. 2:7) means that Christ released his personal right of expressing himself as Deity. Although he was God, he chose to become a man and live upon the earth as a man. Thus, Christ was fully God and fully man. So the things that he did while on the earth were done by the power of God working in him through the Holy Ghost. Therefore, because of his incarnation and by his example, you and I have access to that same power.

Think about it:

Jesus was God in the flesh. There are three main reasons the incarnation is so important. First, God desired to reveal himself more clearly to mankind. The best way to do this was for God to become a man. Second, in becoming a man, we know that he understands and sympathizes with our temptations and frailties. The final and most important reason that God came in the flesh was to give his life for us (Jn. 3:16). Have you given your life to Him?

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The Doctrine of Christ

“Jesus the Christ” – September 7, 2014

Lesson – “Earthly Ministry”

Scriptures – Luke 4:16-21

Introduction to lesson

The few years that Jesus walked on the earth were the most important in human history. Jesus knew he only had a short time so he made sure he used every moment to its fullest. He had to prioritize his time to fulfill all he had to do. From his first recorded words where he spoke of being “about my Father’s business” to his last recorded words in his physical life, “it is finished,” he spent the entirety of his time ministering to all that came to him. Keep in mind that Jesus did not have the conveniences that we have today. Nor did he have the means of communication that we easily share. But what he did in his three-year earthly ministry was more than any of us could do in a lifetime.

Key Verse: “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people” (Mt. 4:23).

Questions to Discuss:

Have the class also read Isaiah 61:1

- ✚ Why do you think it was profound that Jesus picked up the scroll of Isaiah to read from?
- ✚ By reading from this portion of Isaiah’s prophecy, what was Christ revealing to his hearers?
- ✚ Was Christ anointed for service in the same way his people are today?
- ✚ Name the 6 things in Luke 4:18-19 that Christ’s ministry consisted of.
- ✚ Do you believe it is possible for the people of God to fulfill these same things today?
- ✚ What did Christ say that stunned the crowd? (v. 21). What did he mean by this statement?

Think about it:

Jesus evangelized and taught. He worked passionately to reach out to the lost. He taught by his word as well as by living out his teachings. He demonstrated compassion for the hurting, longsuffering for the disobedient, passion for the lost, and service to the Father. He was God’s “visual aid” to help mankind understand what true godliness and holiness look like. He used every moment and opportunity to pour knowledge into his disciples and those he ministered to. He gave himself completely to evangelizing and teaching. He calls us to do the same.

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The Doctrine of Christ

“Jesus the Christ” – September 14, 2014

Lesson – “Death and Resurrection”

Scriptures – 1 Corinthians 1:18; 15:3-4, 20-23

Introduction to lesson

In the last lesson, we discussed Jesus’ earthly ministry, much of which was spent evangelizing, teaching, and training those that followed him. As important as these activities were, they were not the primary reason for Christ’s coming to the earth. Christ lived with a purpose. He didn’t allow himself to get caught up in the latest trends or the gossip of the day. He knew the reason he came. He spent his life diligently pouring himself into others so they would see the magnitude of his purpose. Christ’s most important purpose for coming was his death and resurrection. As God, he knew this must come to pass. As man, he still prayed, “Father, if possible take this cup from me, but not my will but yours be done.” You also have a purpose. Are you fulfilling it?

Key Verse: “Saying, the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day” (Luke 9:22).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ What is the central theme of the Gospel message?
- ✚ What does it mean, and why is the “preaching of the cross” foolish to those that perish? (1 Cor. 1:18)
- ✚ How is the “preaching of the cross” power to those that are saved? (v. 18)
- ✚ Christ died for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3). Read Psalm 22:13-15 to hear what Christ was experiencing at this time.
- ✚ What else did Christ do to give us the opportunity for eternal life? (1 Cor. 15:4)
- ✚ Christ rose from the dead. What do you think it means to “become the firstfruits of them who slept?” (1 Cor. 15:20)
- ✚ If death came by the 1st man (Adam), what came by the 2nd man (Christ)? (1 Cor. 15:21)

Think about it:

Christ’s main purpose for coming to this earth was to redeem mankind. He provided that redemption through the work of his death and resurrection. This is the centerpiece of the Gospel message. All sinners have no hope without it. We would all be headed for judgment and hell if Christ had not followed through with his reason for coming. This is the Gospel we preach, and it is the Gospel which has been preached from the beginning, Jesus Christ and him crucified. Though it was very difficult, he accomplished his purpose. Let me ask you, are you fulfilling your purpose in Christ? If not, you can start today. Just as God had a plan for his son, he has a plan for you too.

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Writer: Rick Ferrell

The Doctrine of Christ

“Jesus the Christ” – September 21, 2014

Lesson – “Present Day Ministry”

Scriptures – Acts 1:9; Hebrews 4:14-16

Introduction to lesson

“Hey, what are you doing?” Have you ever asked or been asked this question. Our answer gives insight to exactly what is occupying your time. Sometimes if we ask ourselves that question, we may learn we’re not doing something very good or constructive for us. On the other hand, we may find ourselves doing something we’re passionate about and pleased with. What you do is a direct reflection of who you are. So it’s not about being busy, but being busy (as we learned last week) with purpose. Christ died and rose again nearly 2,000 years ago. Where has He been since then, and what has occupied his time? Today we are going to look at the present day ministry of Jesus and learn that he is presently working on our behalf.

Key Verse: “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Romans 8:34).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Were there witnesses to Christ’s ascension? (Acts 1:9)
- ✚ Imagine how the disciples must have felt. Do you think they were afraid?
- ✚ The book of Hebrews declares that we have a Great High *what*? (Heb 4:14)
- ✚ What is the benefit we have in Christ being our Priest?
- ✚ Does Christ know what you and I go through? (v. 15)
- ✚ What can we obtain when we go to Christ who is in heaven? (v. 16)
- ✚ Can you explain the significance of Christ being at the “right hand” of God? (Rom. 8:34)
- ✚ What does it mean to “make intercession for us?”

Think about it:

Jesus did not die for us and leave it there. He ascended to the Father’s right hand where he is constantly making intercession for us. He interceded for us when we came to be saved, and he continues to intercede on our behalf. “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (He. 7:25). To the lost, he is expressing his glory and trying to draw them to him. To those that are saved he is our advocate, and we can go to him with every need in expectation that he will hear our prayers. So we find that Christ has not been on the sidelines for 2,000 years; but he has been actively involved in the redemption and victorious living of mankind. He continues to be our all in all.

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The Doctrine of Christ

“Jesus the Christ” – September 28, 2014

Lesson – “The Head of the Church”

Scriptures – Ephesians 5:23-27

Introduction to lesson

The Bible on multiple occasions proclaims that the church is the body of Christ and that Christ is the head of the church. If the church is the body, then in order for the body to function properly, we must be connected to the head. The head tells the body what to do. You and I can't make a move without the signal coming from our brain to the part of the body we want to move. While the church is made up of many members, there is only one head. So Christ is the one who instructs the church on the doctrines that he desires for his people to live under. It is impossible to separate who Christ is from his teachings. Since Christ is the head of the church, and not man, we must accept his teachings on righteousness just as we accept his sacrifice for sins.

Key Verse: “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence” (Co. 1:18).

Questions to Discuss:

- + In addition to being the head of the church, what else is Christ? (v. 23)
- + What does it mean to be “subject” to something? (v. 24)
- + How can the church show that she is subject to Christ?
- + How are husbands to love their wives? (v. 25)
- + Why do you think Christ used this example?
- + Explain what it means that Christ “gave himself for it.”
- + Why is it necessary for the church to be cleansed? (v. 26)
- + How will the cleansing be done? (v. 26)
- + Does each of the members of the church have to be holy in order for the church as a whole to be holy? (v. 27)
- + What does the future state of the church look like? (v. 27)

Think about it:

We all know that a headless body cannot survive. The Bible says that the church is the body and Christ is the head. Therefore all that the church says and does must come through him. We are many members but there is only one head and that is Christ. The responsibility of being his body is tremendous. He loves and cares for the church in many ways. He desires to know and have a personal relationship with each of us. Christ is the head of the church instructing his body and reigning over his body with love. He has exalted his body to sit with him in heavenly places, but he is and always will be the only head – the Savior of the body.

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Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Miguel Garcia Jr.

Church Membership

“Benefits of Membership” – October 5, 2014

Lesson – “Fellowship”

Scriptures – Acts 2:41-47

Introduction to lesson

In the New Testament, the word “fellowship” indicates “spiritual relationship and common identity among believers.” In this lesson we will see how fellowship is a vital part of our spiritual walk and growth. In the book of Acts we see a vibrant picture of fellowship in the New Testament church. People, who were once merely individuals, all became one under the teachings of Christ and the apostles. People left their individual lifestyles and committed themselves to being members of the body of Christ. In short, they came into a solemn promise (covenant) with God and each other, and they rejoiced in it. They met together in the temple; they broke bread and ate together; and they even sold their individual possessions to meet the needs among the members. In the Bible, the marriage relationship describes the fellowship of the church. In marriage, love is the basis for the fellowship, but the relationship is not made concrete until the marriage covenant is made. Just as a man and woman rejoice over their union when they are joined together in marriage, we also rejoice in our spiritual fellowship in the church by being joined together in one body of Christ by a verbal covenant.

Key Verse: “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ What does “fellowship” mean in the New Testament?
- ✚ Why is fellowship in the church important? Acts 2:42
- ✚ To what does the Bible compare the fellowship of Christ and his church? Ep. 5:30-32; Mark 10:6-9
- ✚ What is a benefit of fellowship in the church? Acts 2:46
- ✚ What did all the believers have in common? Acts 2:44
- ✚ What was the people’s behavior in Acts 2:47?

Think about it: Fellowship in the church should not be considered simply a “get together” or a “youth outing,” for fellowship goes far beyond that. Although those things are good, fellowship digs deep down to the core of being committed participants in the body of Christ through a covenant. Therefore, only those who have become a member by covenant have full membership privileges to participate in all aspects of church life. As young people, our focus as the next leaders in the church needs to move from individualism to placing the needs of the church and its members above our own. We need to be committed to Christ and the church. Have you become a member of the church? Consider talking to your Sunday School teacher or to your pastor about being a covenant member of Zion Assembly.

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Church Membership

“Benefits of Membership” – October 12, 2014

Lesson – “Members One of Another”

Scriptures – Ro. 12:4-6, 1 Co. 12:20-26

Introduction to lesson

Have you ever wanted to simply belong? Belong to a group? Or belong to a certain crowd? Or maybe even within your own family? As human beings, our nature requires us to want to belong somewhere that makes us feel special and wanted. One of the great benefits of membership in the church is that a sense of belonging comes with it. When you become a member of the church, you don't just belong to yourself, but you belong to one another (Romans 12:5). The Bible describes membership in the church as members of a body. If I am part of the body, then I depend on the other members to help me when I am hurting, just as the whole body helps the little toe when we smash it against the coffee table at home. Likewise, all the members rejoice with me when I am rejoicing (1 Corinthians 12:26). In Zion Assembly, we hold to this truth that we are “members of one another.” This helps us to understand that in the church every member matters and every member makes a difference.

Key Verse: “So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others” (Romans 12:5).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Describe why Paul compares the church to a human body (Ro. 12:5)
- ✚ According to Romans 12:6, who gives the gifts to each individual member? (See also 1 Corinthians 12:4-6.)
- ✚ As members “one of another” should we laugh and cry with those who laugh and cry? (1 Co. 12:26)
- ✚ How much do we need each other in the church? (1 Co. 12:21)

Think about it: When we truly understand that we are “members one of another,” we come to understand how important our brothers and sisters in the Lord truly are, how important fellowship in the church is, and how dependent we are on other members of the body, both locally and internationally. Young people, as members of Zion Assembly, let us pull together in this fellowship. Let's show the world that the common values and core beliefs we share set us apart uniquely as God's people in the earth.

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Church Membership

“Benefits of Membership” – October 19, 2014

Lesson – “Accountability”

Scriptures – Hebrews 10:24; Genesis 4:9

Introduction to lesson

When we become members of the church, one of the benefits we receive is accountability to each other. The writer of Hebrews tells us to “consider how we may spur (provoke) one another toward love and good deeds” (He. 10:24). We hold ourselves accountable by provoking one another to persevere and keep walking. Accountability means to assume responsibility toward someone. After he killed his brother, God asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” But the Lord already knew what he had done. However, Cain needed to be accountable for his actions against Abel. When we see a brother or sister spiritually down or not attending services, it is our responsibility to look after them, to call or visit, and to encourage them. We are “our brothers’ keeper!” Some may need to be restored, and Matthew 18:15-20 gives us the manual on how to seek restoration. First, have a “heart to heart” talk with the brother. But if he will not listen, then take one or two witnesses to hear the matter. Then if he still doesn’t listen, present it before the church. This is the government and authority of the church.

Key Verse: “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24).

Questions to Discuss:

- + As members one of another what is our responsibility toward our brothers and sisters? (Hold a class discussion.)
- + We should encourage and provoke one another unto _____ and _____. (He. 10:24)
- + Why is church attendance so important? Have class discussion. (He. 10:25)

Think about it: When you have brothers or sisters, your responsibilities are to look after each other, defend each other, and even hold each other accountable before mom and dad, especially when something is done incorrectly or not at all. The same is true in the church where our heavenly Father is expecting us to hold one another accountable. Accountability is spiritually healthy – it’s good for the whole church. However, if accountability is neglected in the church, some will do as they please without fear of consequence, and in turn, some will be lost. As members of Zion Assembly, we definitely need to consider one another. Isn’t it great to know that other members of the church are looking out for you?

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Writer: Miguel Garcia Jr.

Church Membership

“Benefits of Membership” – October 26, 2014

Lesson – “Multitude of Counselors”

Scriptures – Proverbs 11:14; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Introduction to lesson:

Have you ever found yourself needing guidance and direction but didn't know who to turn to? Perhaps, you were facing problems in your relationships, pressure with friends, trouble at work, or problems in your family? We all have been there when we needed someone to listen. The church is a great place where members can share their needs and receive counsel from other members who are spiritually wise and mature. In the church, Christ has placed members of the same faith and practice who provide strength, support, safety and sufficiency for one another. As members of the church, we can have confidence that we are receiving true, biblical counsel. Why do we need this multitude of counselors? – Because it is too easy to make an error without the proper understanding of what to do for a particular situation. But by listening to the advice of the wise, we can avoid “the error of the wicked” (2 Peter 3:17). There is security in the counsel of the members of the church. In a wider scope and in a spiritual sense, we as the church are able to better understand the mind of God through the General Assembly – the pattern is found in Acts chapter 15.

Key Verse: “Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety” (Proverbs 11:14).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ According to Proverbs 11:14, what makes a people fall?
- ✚ And safety is found in what? (v. 14)
- ✚ How can you best describe a “multitude of counsellors?”
- ✚ If you needed advice, to whom would you go?
- ✚ In Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, what is the main theme it is referring to?
- ✚ Why is it important for 2 or 3 to walk together in the same mind? (Ec. 4:12)

Think about it: Ecclesiastes 4:12 says, “A threefold cord is not quickly broken.” When we walk together minding the same things, speaking the same things, and walking the same way, it is difficult to be confused and broken. There is safety in the church. Although people in the world may not see it, the church is a place where we can come together and receive wise biblical counsel for any situation from a “multitude of counselors.” Do not be afraid to come to these wise counselors who will talk to you and pray with you.

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Church Membership

“Qualifications of Membership” – November 2, 2014

Lesson – “Baptized Believers”

Scriptures – Jn. 3:3-7; Mk. 16:16; 1 Pe. 3:21

Introduction to lesson

Jesus said, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven . . . Ye must be born again” (John 3:3-7). Church members should bear the fruit of repentance, a regenerated heart, and faith in Christ. The born again experience takes place within the heart of the individual. Water baptism is the outward symbol (sign) that the person is a new creature and has left his old sinful life, taking on a new life in Christ. Baptism then is an outward recognition of our on-going salvation and sole dedication to Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Believing (faith) is our primary response to Christ, but baptism should soon follow our faith as an act of obedience to Christ. Peter described baptism as “the answer of a good conscience toward God” (I Peter 3:21). Baptism cannot bring about or replace a salvation experience. However, when a person repents, confessing his sins, and places his faith in Christ, his life will produce the fruit of a born again believer (Mk. 1:15). It is only after this experience that he is eligible for water baptism. If possible, a person should be baptized before becoming a member of the church.

Key Verse: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Why is baptism so important?
- ✚ Why was it so important for Jesus to be baptized? (Matthew 3:13-15)
- ✚ What did Jesus say about baptism? (Mark 16:16)
- ✚ When should an individual be baptized? (Acts 8:35-38)

Think about it: In spite of its importance, water baptism itself is not salvation. Baptism alone will not save a person from his or her sins; nor will baptism in water take the place of repentance. Water will not remove sin from a person’s heart; and baptism cannot make a person into a new creature. If a person goes into the water as a sinner to be baptized, he will come out of the water as a sinner, except he repents and believes in Christ. Thus, water baptism is performed after the born again experience when the individual has become a new creature in Christ Jesus. On the day of Pentecost, Peter instructed the people to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). If water baptism alone could have saved them, it would not have been necessary for him to preach repentance and faith in Christ.

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Church Membership

“Qualifications of Membership” – November 9, 2014

Lesson – “It is written!” (Accept the Word)

Scriptures – Romans 10:14-17

Introduction to lesson

There is something remarkable about the words of our Savior – they give us life, peace, love, power, understanding, and strength. In this world, we are not even promised tomorrow, but with our Savior we are promised so many good things. The Bible declares the promises of God in Christ. The Bible gives us a firm promise because “it is written!” In God’s word, it is written that I will not be forsaken; I will not taste spiritual death; I will not be comfortless; and I will have power and authority in his name. God’s words of truth are a promise that all things are possible through Jesus Christ. What God promises, he upholds, and he never waivers. But not knowing what is written in his word leaves us ignorant of his promises. Members of Zion Assembly must accept the Bible as God’s word and should seek to know what is written in its pages.

Key Verse: “It is written” (Luke 4:4).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Can an unbeliever (someone who does not have faith in Christ) call upon the Lord? (v. 14)
- + Can a person be saved without hearing the word of God? Can he be saved without the knowledge of Christ? (vv. 14, 17)
- + Do you want a call on your life to preach or declare the gospel? If the answer is no, evaluate verse 14. Who am I to say the word (the gospel) stops with me?
- + Are your feet beautiful in God’s eyes? (v. 15)
- + How can the Bible (the word of God) be relevant today? The New Testament was written some 2,000 years ago. Is it just as true today as it was then?
- + Do you have a desire to know more of God’s word?
- + Do you have a desire to tell others about Christ?

Think about it: The world needs to know that “it is written” (Lu. 4:4). But who will declare the word of the Lord? Who will be willing to go and share the message of Christ? “It is written” means “I promise.” In the Scriptures, the Lord has promised all that he will do. He has given us his solemn word. He has placed his authority and faithfulness on the line. Thus, he cannot and will not turn from what he has said. He is committed to his word. That same passion and commitment is required from us as well. As Christians, are we also committed to the word of God? What we promise, we too must uphold. When we become members of Zion Assembly, we pledge our commitment to the authority of the Bible, for “it is written.”

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Church Membership

“Qualifications of Membership” – November 16, 2014

Lesson – “Walking Together” (Unity)

Scriptures – Col. 3:12-17

Introduction to lesson

Someone who thinks less of themselves and more of others is not showing a sign of weakness, but of great character and strength. Putting others first shows a real team spirit. A team player does what is in the best interest of the team. When you are able to surround yourself with a group of individuals who are team-minded, you can accomplish anything. Jesus assembled a team of individuals who came together in a common initiative in order to accomplish the task of spreading the gospel. Each one had to lay aside his own desires for personal gain, and pursue the desires and accomplishments of his Lord. Walking together in unity, they accomplished the great task of spreading the gospel that we still know and share today. Likewise, when we become members of Zion Assembly, we must commit ourselves to walk together in unity in order to carry out Christ’s mission in the world.

Key Verse: “Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3).

Questions to Discuss:

- + Is it better to love or respect someone? (Col. 3:12-14)
- + Paul writes to the Colossians to explain the power of love. Is love power(ful)? Explain.
- + Have the words of Christ helped you to love God and others, or are they still just words to you? (v. 16)
- + Is praising God publicly difficult for you? If so, what hinders you? (v. 16)
- + Does verse 17 mean that whatever I do in word or deed can be declared in Jesus’ name? Explain.
- + Considering the questions above, what could prevent you from having unity with others in the church?
- + Can a believer have unity with Christ but not with the members of the church? (Look at 1 John 4:19-21).

Think about it: Love is the basis for unity in the church. In the busyness of life, we should understand that communication will sometimes breakdown. People may become spiritually sidetracked. Some will allow the cares of life to engulf them. Others will just flat-out quit. The love we have for one another will help to restore our communication, get us back on track spiritually, encourage the weak, and restore backsliders. We should encourage and uplift one another at all times. We must hold dear and protect the love and unity that God desires among us. When we join the church by covenant, we are making this commitment to God and one another.

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Church Membership

“Qualifications of Membership” – November 23, 2014

Lesson – “Till the End” (Commitment)

Scriptures – Luke 14:27-33

Introduction to lesson

What would have happened if Noah had not finished the ark (Hebrews 11:7)? What if Abraham had become unwilling to sojourn in the Promised Land (He. 11:8-10)? Even more intriguing – what if Jesus had climbed to Calvary and not completed his sacrifice? We are facing a declining commitment in America with broken promises laid on the ground everywhere. The church in the United States has failed to live up to the commitment it made to God, and now we are reaping the rewards of this failure. Paul said, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4:7). We must be faithful to the finish. Paul explained that only then will we receive a crown of righteousness. Our race is not finished until Jesus calls us home. Anyone can start, but only those who are dedicated will finish the race. When we become members of the church by covenant, we are pledging our commitment to give our very best to Christ and the church.

Key Verse: “Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house” (Proverbs 24:27).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ What is Christ trying to say about commitment? (Lu. 14:27)
- ✚ How many of you have thought you had all of the materials needed to build something, but later found out you were short?
- ✚ Have you counted the cost of building the church that Christ wants us to build (vv. 28-30)? Are you committed to building a church that is spiritually alive and full of love and power?
- ✚ Does God’s grace allow for a believer to lack commitment?
- ✚ What have you promised God? Have you kept it?
- ✚ How prepared are you in your spiritual walk? How can the church assist you in your commitment to God?
- ✚ What is your greatest limitation in being committed to Christ and the church?

Think about it: Commitment is much more than saying, “I am committed.” Whatever you promise or whatever you set your hands to do, you should do so with the intentions of completing the task to the glory and honor of the Lord. Be diligent when you begin the race; stay focused during the tough times; be cautious of distractions; and complete the task with honor and distinction. Don’t forget that God has a reward for those who walk in his ways and keep themselves from the ways of the world. It has been said, “One can always measure a man’s devotion to the cause of Christ by his readiness to be called to responsibility, by his diligence in it, by the personal risks he runs through in his involvement in it, or by the ease with which he lays it down.” When we become members of Zion Assembly, we are saying, “I am committed to Christ and his church.”

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Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Pam Jones

Church Membership

“Responsibilities of Membership” – November 30, 2014
Lesson – “Church Attendance”

Scriptures – 1 Corinthians 12:18-25; Hebrews 10:23-26

Introduction to lesson

“My place at the table” - Yes I had a place at the supper table when I was growing up and so did everyone in the family. Each one knew where he/she was to set at the table. When it was time for the meal, it was expected for you to be there at your place. The benefits of being at your place were: you received the necessary nutrition for each day; it was your time to share about your day; and it was the time to receive any instructions concerning the household. Yes, I also have a place in the body (1 Co. 12:18); and when it is time for the church service, as a church member, it is vital that I be in attendance to fill my place in the body. How vital is **CHURCH ATTENDANCE** for members? Dwight L. Moody answered that question very well – “Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man.”

Key Verse: “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple” (Ps. 27:4).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Your place in the body (church) is to please who? (v. 18)
- ✚ How important is each member of the church? (v. 21)
- ✚ Is one member more important than any other? (vv. 23-24)
- ✚ How vital is church attendance for the church member? (Heb. 10:23-25)
- ✚ Does it really matter if a church member misses church?
- ✚ What does it mean when I say, “No one else can fill your shoes?”

Think about it: Every member counts one. You are needed and important! When we become a member of the church, certain expectations go with being a member. As members we should support the church and the pastor by faithful church attendance. As the word says in Psalm 27:4, “One thing have I desired of the Lord . . . that I may dwell in the house of the Lord.” Members should come together regularly to encourage each other in the faith. Church services provide an excellent opportunity for members to receive and also to give of their time, talent, and service in order to strengthen the whole body. When one member is missing, the body feels it. Whether it’s the dinner bell or church bell ringing, you will find me in my place ready for whatever the Lord wills. **COUNT ME IN!**

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Sunday
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Services

Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Pam Jones

Church Membership

“Responsibilities of Membership” – December 7, 2014
Lesson – “Stewardship”

Scriptures – Luke 16:1-2, 10-12; Matthew 25:14-21

Introduction to lesson

“**You are in charge!**” These were the words spoken to me when my boss walked out of the office that day. From that day forward as manager, I was the one who was to give account of what was accomplished in the business. My faithfulness to the task brought success. I was chosen and paid to oversee the assets and work of the business. I arose to the challenge to be a good steward, was accountable and faithful in my service, and met all my managerial responsibilities. In today’s lesson, let’s take an exam and grade ourselves. What does it mean to be **Good Stewards** in the house of God? Stewards bear the responsibility for that which has been entrusted to them. Stewards should be **ACCOUNTABLE** to the Lord (boss, superior, master). Have we been responsible for the quality of our service to God (Luke 16:1-2)? Next, does the Lord find us **FAITHFUL**? Can we be entrusted with the work of the Lord? Faithfulness is a spiritual virtue and discipline that affects every part of our lives from the least to the greatest of matters (Luke 16:10). Stewards must be faithful. Also, when we examine ourselves as stewards, we should look at how we spend our money. Our accountability and faithfulness in tithing and giving is a principle taught in the Scriptures.

Key Verse: “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Co. 4:2).

Questions to Discuss:

- What did the steward do with the master’s goods? (Lu. 16:1)
- What did the master require of the steward? (Lu 16:2)
- How was the talents passed out to the servants? (Mt. 25:15)
- What did each servant do with the talents they received? (vv. 16-18)
- What reward was given to the servant who had done well with the talents given him? (vv. 19-21)
- What was the man’s statement about the good servant? (v. 21)
- As members of the Lord’s church and stewards in the house of God, what do we want to hear him say to us when he returns?

Think about it: Exam is over; how did you do? Because I met all of the requirements in the business that I managed, in time I was given the opportunity to become the owner of the business. “You have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many thing” (Mt. 25:21). Being a member of **God’s church**, we serve are caretakers – **stewards** in the house of God with **God-given responsibilities**. As stewards, we must be **accountable** to our Lord and be found **faithful** in all areas of our lives, including finances; so that when Jesus returns, we will hear him say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” *Stewardship is a responsibility of membership.* **YOU ARE IN CHARGE** of the talents God has given you.

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Church Membership

“Responsibilities of Membership” – December 14, 2014
Lesson – “Service”

Scriptures – Jn. 13:1-17; Mk. 10:45; Mt. 10:1-8

Introduction to lesson

“I need a volunteer.” How many times have you heard a teacher, youth director, or pastor speak these words? If this statement was spoken by a teacher in the first grade, almost every hand in the room would go up because children want to be the one chosen to be a special volunteer or helper. What if the Sunday School teacher spoke these words to you today, would your hand go up? As stated on Wikipedia: “*Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic (compassionate and selfless) activity and is intended to promote goodness or improve human quality of life. In return, this activity can produce a feeling of self-worth and respect. There is no financial gain involved for the individual. It is helping, assisting, or serving another person or persons without pay.*” There is great value in volunteerism. So much more can be accomplished in the church when the members of the church volunteer. Desiring to fulfill the responsibilities of membership, we can serve in the mission and ministries of the church by putting our hand in the air when we hear someone say, “Volunteers anyone?”

Key Verse: “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which you have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (He. 6:10).

Questions to Discuss:

- Jesus knew something was about to happen. What was it? (Jn. 13:1)
- What did Jesus lay aside and take up? (v. 4)
- To do service for our Lord, what must we lay aside and take up?
- What lesson did Jesus teach us by washing his disciples’ feet? (vv. 12-16)
- If we know and practice this lesson, how will we be? (v. 17)
- What does “labour of love” mean to you? (He. 6:10)
- Jesus gives us an example of serving, how can we follow his example? (Mk. 10:45)
- When Jesus sent forth the twelve disciples he empowered them to do what? (Mt. 10:1-8)
- Jesus said, “Freely ye have received, freely give.” What did Jesus mean by his statement? (v. 8)

Think about it: The church moves forward when we as members volunteer to serve and give our time and abilities. Service is our duty and Jesus is our example, for we should be willing to deny ourselves and minister to the needs of others. Volunteerism is realizing that we have the God-given responsibility and ability to give to others in Jesus’ name and that God himself will reward us one day. “Volunteers anyone?”

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Church Membership

“Responsibilities of Membership” – December 21, 2014

Lesson – “Spiritual Growth”

Scriptures – Ac. 2:42, 46-47; 1 Pe. 2:2-3; Ep. 6:18;
Ep. 5:19-20; Re. 4:11

Introduction to lesson

It’s your move! This summer at youth camp, there was a table set up with a “Checkers” game, and never was that table without someone playing the game during free time. Many times as I was close to the table, I heard the words, “It’s your move!” Also, I heard, “King Me!” I knew that players had reached the other side of the checker board and now had double-the-power to win. It’s time for us, as members of God’s church, to *move forward* in our **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**. The spiritual development of a believer will come through in his practice of the disciplines of the faith. Each move, such as ***Bible Study***, ***Prayer*** and ***Worship***, to name a few, will move us closer to spiritual growth in the Lord, and in turn, will give us the power to overcome the enemy.

Key Verse: “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen” (2 Pe. 3:18).

Questions to Discuss:

- How important is it for members to attend regular Bible study, prayer, and worship services; and what are the benefits of said services for the individual and for the corporate body? (Ac. 2:42, 46-47)
- As members of God’s church, what must be our desire and why? (1 Pe. 2:2-3)
- How do you describe the words that Jesus speaks to us according to John 6:63?
- How are we to pray; and explain how we can actually do this? (Ep. 6:18 & 1 Th. 5:17)
- How do we worship; and why worship? (Ep. 5:19-20; Re. 4:11)

Think about it: “King Me!” As a player of a checker game, the ultimate goal is to win. As you are planning each move, your desire is to reach the other side so that your checker piece can be given power to enable you to win. As members of God’s church, we want to win in the spiritual battle. But victory is no accident. It is our responsibility to cultivate our relationship with the Lord. Our desire must be **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**. To obtain this growth, we must commit ourselves to the following moves: **BIBLE STUDY**, which will provide the spiritual food and nourishment for continual growth in the Lord; **PRAYER**, which is the spiritual lifeline for every believer. Through Spirit-filled praying, we build up our faith in the Lord; and **WORSHIP**, which should be a way of life for every member of the church. Singing, rejoicing, and giving of thanks must be a part of our daily walk with God. **IT’S YOUR MOVE!!!**

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Church Membership

“Responsibilities of Membership” – December 28, 2014

Lesson – “Holiness”

Scriptures – 1 Jn. 2:15-17; Ro. 12:1-2; 1 Th. 5:22-24;
Ja. 1:27; Tit. 2:12-14

Introduction to lesson

“*Something on the inside, working on the outside*” – Does this statement make you want to stand and sing? – “*Oh what a change in my life.*” What is the something on the inside? The words of the song say that it’s “Jesus” on the inside, but let’s take a deeper look. HOLINESS is inward purity expressed through our words and actions; and this is the result of sanctification. God has called us into holiness (1 Th. 4:7). If there is to be a change on the outside we must live a pure (holy) life. By pursuing holiness and maintaining inward purity, we will be pure outwardly as well. Every believer must follow and pursue God’s holiness – but how? 1) Do not love the world; 2) Do not be conformed to the world; 3) Abstain from all appearance of evil; 4) Keep oneself unspotted from the world; and 5) Deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord (He. 12:14). Let’s focus our hearts on Jesus Christ!

Key Verse: “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (1 Pe. 1:15).

Questions to Discuss:

- We are not to love the world; so what is in the world that we are not to love, and what will happen to the world? (1 Jn. 2:15-17)
- How are we to present our bodies? (Ro. 12:1)
- If we are not to be conformed to the world, then how can we be transformed? (Ro. 12:2)
- We are to abstain from all appearance of evil, how and why? (1 Th. 5:22-24)
- What are we fulfilling when we keep ourselves unspotted from the world? (Ja. 1:27)
- How shall we live when we deny ungodliness and worldly lust? (Tit. 2:12)
- Jesus gave himself for us, that he might what? (Tit. 2:13-14)

Think about it:

I STAND CHANGED – Holding myself to a higher standard, which is God’s Standard; and this standard is HOLINESS. It is the responsibility of every member in Zion Assembly to pursue holiness until we become perfected and glorious in the sight of Jesus. The sign of God’s church is holiness. The heart on the inside, being purified through sanctification, is working on the outside through pure living, which is HOLINESS.

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