

## **“Adultery and Fornication - Sensuality”**

### **Scriptures – Genesis 1:27-28, 2:18-24**

#### **Introduction to Lesson**

Sadly, we live in a sensual, lustful world. For example, turning on the TV can be risky, because we never know what will appear on the screen. Many shows promote sexual themes, featuring people who are scantily dressed, and who speak crude language. Sometimes, commercials can be more disturbing than the actual programs themselves. But the problem is not merely television. These days, sensuality is practically everywhere – in books and magazines, on billboards, at school, at the mall, and in clothing trends and fashions. Today, people publicly joke and laugh about sexual topics. Nothing is sacred anymore. What has happened to our society? Let’s go back to the beginning in Genesis and see if we can understand God’s perspective about sexuality.

#### **Key Verse**

***“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Ro. 12:2).***

#### **Questions to Discuss:**

- God created human beings in what likeness? (Ge. 1:27)
- What genders (sexes) did God create? (v. 27)
- For what primary purpose did God create the two genders (sexuality)? (v. 28)
- Did God create man (the male) to be alone? (Ge. 2:18)
- What need did Adam have? (v. 18)
- Were the animals suitable for Adam’s need? (vv. 19-20)
- How did God make a companion for Adam? (vv. 21-22)
- Who brought (gave) the woman to Adam as a companion? (v. 22)
- How did Adam understand his relationship to the woman that God had given to him? (v. 23)
- What kind of relationship do husbands and wives have together? (v. 24)

#### **Think about it**

God made two sexes (genders) for the purpose of multiplying and filling up the earth. Today, there are more than 6 billion human beings on the face of our planet Earth. When God made humans, male and female, he made woman out of man, and brought her to the man as his companion. This was the beginning of marriage. God gave one woman to one man, that the two should become one. Thus, God placed sexuality into the marriage relationship between one woman and one man; and that is where sex belongs – in the marriage relationship. When we take sexuality out of the safety of marriage, it becomes sensual, lustful, and dirty. This is what has happened to our society. But as Christians, we must not be conformed to this world.



## **“Adultery and Fornication - Pure Hearts”**

### **Scriptures: Mark 7:1-5; 18-23**

### **Introduction to Lesson**

Do you wash your hands before you eat? It's a good, healthy habit. But it's not a sin, if you forget to wash. In Mark 7:1-5, the Jewish leaders were finding serious fault with Jesus' disciples because they ate food without first washing their hands. Washing hands was a part of their tradition in the Jewish faith. Jesus was displeased with these leaders because they placed an overemphasis on things like washing, while they ignored the more important matters of the heart. In today's lesson, we will see that sin first begins in the heart. As Christians, we need to guard our hearts against sensual desires and fleshly lusts.

### **Key Verse**

***“A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things” (Matthew 12:35).***

### **Questions to Discuss:**

- Can the things that we eat infect our bodies?
- Can the things that we eat somehow infect (pollute) our souls (v. 18)
- Why not? (v. 19)
- What defiles (pollutes) the soul of a person? (v. 20)
- Where does sin begin? Where does it come from? (v. 21)
- What sins are at the top of the list? (vv. 21-22)
- What kind of things defile (pollute) the soul of a person? (v. 23)
- What must we guard and protect from sensual, fleshly desires? (vv. 21, 23)

### **Think about it**

Purity begins in the heart, not in external actions. We are not holy simply because our speech and actions appear holy. We are holy because our hearts are made pure through faith in the blood of Jesus. Therefore, our speech and actions will be holy, when our hearts are pure and holy (Matthew 12:35). Indeed, we live in a sensual and sinful world. Sexual words, images, and ideas bombard us. Nevertheless, as Christians, we must resist sensual temptations and keep our hearts pure. We cannot avoid temptations always, but we can turn our thoughts away from sensuality and toward the Word of God (the Bible). By reading and thinking on the truths of God's Word, our hearts are kept pure and holy.



## **“Adultery and Fornication – A Godless Society”**

### **Scriptures: Romans 1:21-28**

#### **Introduction to Lesson**

Sexual sins are rampant in our society – it is systemic wickedness (evil that is prominent in our culture, even a way of life). Everywhere we turn, sensual and fleshly desires are promoted, and celebrated. How wicked is our world? Youth having premarital sex, adults being unfaithful to their spouses, divorce and remarriage, and unmarried people just living together, are all common practices. In addition, prostitution, homosexuality, transvestitism, incest, and pornography, all demonstrate the destructive nature of sexual immorality in our world. In today’s lesson, we will see how a society falls into these kinds of sins.

#### **Key Verse**

***“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” (Romans 1:22)***

#### **Questions to Discuss:**

What causes the hearts and minds of people to become spiritually darkened? (v. 21)

What happens when people reject the knowledge of God and trust in their own wisdom? (v. 22)

What results from rejecting God? (v. 23)

How does God respond when a society rejects him? (v. 24)

What two things have happened to people when they give themselves to idolatry and sexual sins? (v. 25)

What extremely wicked lifestyle demonstrates that a society has rejected the knowledge of God? (vv. 26-27)

What is the conclusion of a people that completely turn away from the knowledge of God? (v. 28)

#### **Think about it**

We are privileged to know Jesus Christ. Our relationship with him will keep us from the wickedness of this world. Jesus said, “Abide in me, and I in you” (John 15:4). Truly, the world is full of wickedness; but as long as we keep our relationship with Jesus Christ, he will keep us from the wicked evils of this world. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we refuse to follow the foolish ways of this world. We will not participate in its sensual desires, because Jesus lives in us.



## **“Adultery and Fornication – Don’t Be Deceived”**

**Scriptures: Ephesians 5:3-6**

### **Introduction to Lesson**

Sin is deceptive. Sexual sins do not present themselves as destructive and deadly, but rather as glamorous and fulfilling. The movie and entertainment industry have encouraged these false ideas. Rather than declaring the wickedness of pre-marital and extra-marital sex, and God’s judgment against such, society at large has promoted and provided “safe-sex,” especially among teens and young adults. Physically and morally, there is no such thing. In addition to physical and spiritual problems, sex outside of marriage causes emotional and psychological devastation.

### **Key Verse**

***“Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 5:6).***

### **Questions to Discuss:**

What does the apostle Paul say in regard to sexual sins? (v. 3)

Why should these sins not be named among us? (v. 3)

What other sins are improper for the child of God? (v. 4)

Rather than sensual, filthy talk, what should come out of a Christian’s mouth? (v. 4)

What does Paul declare concerning the adulterers and fornicators of this world (whoremongers and unclean)? (v. 5)

What is Paul’s warning to us? (v. 6)

How do people deceive? (v. 6)

What is the final outcome of adulterers and fornicators (v. 6)

### **Think about it**

Satan is a liar. Don’t be deceived by him. He is out to destroy you. He would like nothing other than to rob you of your purity and innocence. No matter what your friends may say about it, God made sex for marriage. Abstinence is the Biblically moral choice that honors both God and one’s own body.



## **“Adultery and Fornication – God’s Judgment”**

### **Scriptures: Luke 16:13-25**

#### **Introduction to Lesson**

In Luke 16:18, Jesus’ prohibition against adultery appears to be out of place, at first glance. But through studying the context of verse 18, the truth becomes extremely clear. What does Jesus teach before this verse? What does Jesus teach after this verse? As we look at the whole story, we will see that God will judge adultery and fornication. Though the world around us accepts these practices, as faithful Christians, we should uphold the righteous standards of God’s unchanging Word.

#### **Key Verse**

***“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery” (Luke 16:18).***

#### **Questions to Discuss:**

How many masters can a servant obey? (v. 13)

What are the two masters that Jesus identifies? Explain. (v. 13)

Why did the Pharisees ridicule and scoff at Jesus’ teaching? (v. 14)

What major error were the Pharisees guilty of committing? (v. 15)

How does God feel about people when they are wrong, but profess their own righteousness? (v. 15)

What is God’s solution for sin and unrighteousness? (v. 16)

How do we know that God’ moral laws are enforced and binding for humanity? (v. 17)

What particular sin, resulting from divorce and remarriage, did Jesus identify as the rejection of his Word (moral law)? (v. 18)

What judgment did Jesus teach for those who reject his Word (v. 29) and rather seek to satisfy their own desires? (vv. 19-25)

#### **Think about it**

Following and obeying Jesus Christ is not always the easy choice. Lazarus is an example of those who suffer for the Truth. The god of this world (mammon) offers many pleasures, but the end is everlasting punishment. However, by faithfully serving Jesus Christ and obeying his Word, we will receive eternal life.



## **“Responsibilities of Church Membership – Consecration and Prayer”** **Scriptures – Mark 13:32-37**

### **Introduction to Lesson**

In the Gospel of Mark, chapter 13, Jesus taught about his second coming. The chapter closes by urging us to steadfast faithfulness. We want to be ready for Jesus when he comes for us. When we know that company is coming to our house, what do we do? Most of the time, we prepare and get ready for them. Perhaps, we clean our house, buy some extra food, and even change our schedule to accommodate our guests. In other words, we do everything necessary to be ready for their arrival. The members of the church have the responsibility of remaining prepared and ready at all times for the coming of Christ. Readiness includes prayer. Through consistent, watchful prayer, we prepare for his coming.

### **Key Verse**

*“Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is” (Mk. 13:33).*

### **Questions to Discuss:**

When is Jesus coming? (v. 32)

Who does know when Jesus is coming again? (v. 32)

Since we do not know when Jesus is coming, what three things should we do? (v. 33)

Why should we be watchful for the coming of Jesus Christ? (vv. 34-35)

When could Jesus come again? (v. 35)

What could happen to us if we do not watch for him? (v. 36)

What is Jesus’ final warning to everyone? (v. 37)

### **Think about it**

Cell phones are great devices of communication. Anymore, people are constantly talking and texting on the phone. We can communicate with others from virtually anywhere and at anytime. When company is coming to our house, we can know they are getting closer, simply by calling one another as their arrival gets nearer. And we even can talk to one another as they pull up in the driveway. Prayer is like a spiritual cell phone. Through Jesus, we have direct access to God. As we pray and talk to God, we will not be caught off guard when Jesus comes, but we will be ready and prepared for his arrival.



## **“Responsibilities of Church Membership – Church Attendance”** **Scriptures – Hebrews 10:23-25**

### **Introduction to Lesson**

Have you ever been to an art museum? Sometimes, the pictures or paintings displayed present optical illusions. At first glance, they may look like nothing more than streaks of color or various shapes on a canvas. However, with more careful observation, you become filled with disbelief as an amazing image comes into view. Only by looking at a piece of art in the right way will you see the true creativity behind it. To some, it's just paint on a canvas, but to others who know what they're looking at, they see a masterpiece. How do you view church attendance? Is it merely a place to go on Sundays and see a few friends, or do we truly see its importance to Christ's purpose in our lives? How important is church attendance?

### **Key Verse**

*“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is”(Hebrews 10:25a).*

### **Questions to Discuss:**

What must we maintain (hold fast) at all times?

(v. 23)

Why can we be faithful? (v. 23)

What two ways can we help one another? (v. 24)

In verse 24, “provoke” has a positive meaning. It means “to push” or “point in the right direction.” In what two ways should we provoke one another? (v. 24)

As Christians, we need to be faithful, and we need to help one another be faithful. Therefore, the Bible tells us not to forsake what? (v. 25)

In coming together for church worship, in what way do we help one another? (v. 25)

We are helping each other to be faithful as we await the coming of the Lord (“as ye see the day approaching”). How often should we assemble and come together for church? (v. 25)

### **Think about it**

Sadly, some who claim to be Christians do not see the importance of church attendance – Note: “as the manner of some is.” Because they do not faithfully attend church and participate in worship, they fail to receive the benefits and blessings of church worship and fellowship. God has provided a way for all of us to stay encouraged in the faith. Church attendance is important – don't miss out!



## **“Responsibilities of Church Membership – Stewardship”**

### **Scriptures – Mark 12:41-44 (Lu. 21:1-4)**

#### **Introduction to Lesson**

Stewardship is a word that refers to being responsible with one’s money. A good steward uses his/her money for good purposes. As Christians, we should always seek to honor God with our income. Certainly, living in this world requires money – it can be costly at times. Therefore, we should work hard to earn an honest income, but then we should use that money in a responsible and God-honoring way. Our first obligation is tithing. When we tithe, we give God the first 10% of our income. In other words, if we make \$100, then we give God \$10. In addition to tithing, we also honor God by giving to special needs as they arise in the church. Through tithing and giving, we honor God and further the mission of Christ through the ministries of the church. In today’s lesson, we will see that God honors a right spirit and attitude in our giving.

#### **Key Verse**

*“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10).*

#### **Questions to Discuss:**

What were people doing at the treasury of the temple? (v. 41)

What group of people was Jesus watching as they gave into the treasury? (v. 41)

What caught Jesus’ attention? (v. 42)

Exactly how much did she cast into the treasury of the temple? Was this amount a lot of money? (v. 42)

Who literally cast in more money, the rich people or this poor widow?

Whose offering did Jesus value the most? (v. 43)

Why did Jesus value the widow’s offering above all of the rich people’s offerings? (v. 44)

What does this example teach you about the gifts and offerings which you give to God?

#### **Think about it**

In addition to our tithe, we give offerings to honor God. However, the amount of our giving is not what honors him, but rather the spirit and attitude in which we give. When a typical individual gives \$50 to missions, it means something more than when a wealthy individual gives \$50 to missions. When a wealthy person gives out of their abundance, it means less than those who give out of their need. Always remember: God does not honor the dollar amount, but he honors our motives and our faithfulness in giving our very best to him.





## **“Responsibilities of Church Membership – Service to God”**

### **Scriptures – Proverbs 6:6-8**

#### **Introduction to Lesson**

People waste a lot of precious time, doing a whole lot of nothing. How do you spend your time? Do you use it wisely? Do you realize you have but one life to live, and that you have a limited time in this world? Time is therefore a precious gift. In Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, the Bible says, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.” Therefore, none of us should waste the time which God has given us. We should use our time to serve the Lord.

#### **Key Verse**

*“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” (Ro. 12:11).*

#### **Questions to Discuss:**

When Solomon writes about the ant, what kind of people does he have in mind? (v. 6)

What can we gain by considering the ways of an ant? (v. 6)

Do ants require a supervisor or boss to manage their time? Should it be necessary for someone constantly to look over our shoulder and tell us what to do? (v. 7)

Most of the time, what do we see ants busily doing? (v. 8)

What else do you know about ants?

What happens when we fail to work hard? At school, at home, on a job, in the church?

#### **Think about it**

Certainly, we need a good balance between work, play, and rest. Play and rest are necessary to refresh ourselves, mentally and physically. But hard work brings results and gets the job done. Young or old, all of us should work in the mission of the church. Many souls are lost and need to be reached with the good news of Jesus, and taught in the truths of God’s Word. It takes hard work to build the church. If we like the benefits of hard work (such as a clean house, good grades, a pay day, and new converts in our church), then we should be willing to work hard for it. Let us all use our time wisely, work hard, and serve the Lord.



## **“A Slandering Spirit – The Slanderinger”**

### **Scriptures – Job 1:6-11; 2:1-5**

#### **Introduction to Lesson**

When someone attacks you with their words, how does it make you feel? Words are extremely powerful – they can either build up or tear down. Often their negative effects are long-lasting. Of course, the Bible teaches against slandering our neighbor, because it is against God’s love. Why does one person attempt to tear down the character and reputation of another? Slandering is devilish (of the devil). The word “devil” in the New Testament, when referring to Satan, actually means “slanderinger and accuser.” In today’s lesson, we will see how Satan seeks to slander the children of God.

#### **Key Verse**

***“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Ephesians. 4:29).***

#### **Questions to Discuss:**

Why do you think Satan shows up, and why does he roam the earth? (Job 1:6-7; 1 Peter 5:8)

What makes Job the target of slandering? (Job 1:1, 8)

How does Satan begin to undermine Job’s character? (Job 1:9)

What does Satan accuse Job of doing? (Job 1:2-3, 10-11)

NOTE: Read Job 1:12-22, then continue the discussion.

Does Satan give up easily? (Job 2:1-2; Luke 4:1-2)

How do we know that Job was a godly man? (Job 2:3)

How does Satan accuse Job the second time? (Job 2:4-5)

#### **Think about it**

When people speak against (slandering) their neighbor, they are acting like the devil. They are working and cooperating with the enemy, who desires to tear down and destroy. As Christians, we should never tear down others with our words. We should always attempt to build up others with words of encouragement and affirmation. As the old saying goes, “If you can’t say something good, don’t say anything at all.” If we attack the character of others, not only will we be guilty of slandering before God, but we will also hurt our Christian witness among those who are listening to us and watching our behavior.



## **“A Slanderous Spirit – The Tongue”** **Scriptures – James 3:2-12**

### **Introduction to Lesson**

In James 3:1-12, the apostle warned the saints about an unruly member of the body, the tongue. He described how the tongue can become an instrument of destruction. Sharp words can wound and cut down your neighbor. As Christians, we should praise the Lord with our mouths, and we should never tear down our neighbor with our tongues. If we surrender our tongues to slander, we not only destroy others, but even ourselves.

### **Key Verse**

***“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles” (Pr. 21:23).***

### **Questions to Discuss:**

What indicates a perfect Christian? (v. 2)

When a Christian can keep their tongue from evil, what else does it say about them? (v. 2)

How do we control the movement of a horse? (v. 3)

How do we control the movement of a ship? (v. 4)

**Note:** A Christian’s tongue (his mouth) indicates the control that he has over his own body. If he can control his tongue, then he also has power over his whole body.

What is necessary to start a blazing fire? (v. 5)

What happens when we allow our tongues to speak slander against our neighbor? (v. 6)

No man can tame his unruly tongue. But who can tame the tongue and give us the power to speak good things, rather than evil? (vv. 7-8)

What does it mean, if blessing and cursing come out of a Christian’s mouth? (vv. 9-10)

If you add salt water to fresh water, what happens? Can both come out of the same source? (v. 11)

Does one type of fruit tree produce a different kind of fruit? For example, does an apple tree produce oranges? What does this say about a Christian and his tongue? (v. 12; see also Mt. 7:17-18, 20)

### **Think about it**

As Christians, we should speak good things, bearing good fruit. Indeed, our tongues testify to our true selves. When we speak good things, this says that we are seeking to please the Lord in our lives. Let’s speak words of blessing to those who need to hear and see Jesus in us.



## **“A Slanderous Spirit – Enduring Slander”** *Scriptures – 1 Peter 2:21-23*

### **Introduction to Lesson**

When someone speaks against us, our human tendency is to defend ourselves and speak against our opponents. Of course, this reaction only stirs up more strife and conflict – a battle of insults and evil words. Why should we respond to foolish and false accusations? But even more, why should we defend ourselves by speaking such evil words? Rather than lowering ourselves to slander, the Bible teaches a completely different response to it – “Endurance.”

### **Key Verse**

***“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile” (1 Peter 3:10).***

### **Questions to Discuss:**

- Who suffered for our salvation? How did he suffer? (v. 21; read Matthew 27:27-31, 38-44)
- Being followers of Christ and his example, how should we live our lives? (v. 21)
- What example did Christ leave us? (v. 22)
- What kind of words did Christ speak? (v. 22)
- When he was spoken against, what did he do? (v. 23)
- When he suffered bad treatment, what did he do? (v. 23)
- When he was slandered and attacked by his enemies, how did he respond? (v. 23)

### **Think about it**

Jesus endured all kinds of evil words spoken against him, yet committed no sin, leaving us his example of faithfully enduring slander. The apostle Peter wrote, “Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing” (1 Peter 3:9). In fact, when we are spoken against, Jesus told us: “**Rejoice**, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” (Matthew 5:12). When you bite your tongue and endure slander, just remember: “great is your reward in heaven.”



## **“A Slanderous Spirit – Gossip and Rumors”**

### ***Scriptures – Proverbs 26:18-25***

#### **Introduction to Lesson**

“Hey, psssst – let me tell you a secret. Now don’t tell anybody else, but I was just told something that you will not believe. I could be wrong about this, but it’s what I heard from a very reliable source. My brother’s friend’s neighbor’s cousin was the one who heard about it. So I’m just sure it’s true.” Wait – Stop! When people talk in a secretive manner about things they’ve heard, you need to quit listening. Don’t help to spread gossip. Stop it!

#### **Key Verse**

***“Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people” (Leviticus 19:16).***

#### **Questions to Discuss:**

Suggestion: Play the “Telephone Game” where one person whispers a secret to the next person until everyone has repeated the secret. Does the last person agree with what the first person actually said and meant?

Is it funny to you, when someone spreads rumors and talks about you behind your back? (vv. 18-19)

Are gossip and rumors hurtful? (v. 18)

What happens when people spread gossip? What happens when we stop gossip? Complete this sentence: Stopping gossip is like putting out \_\_\_\_\_. (v. 20)

What kind of people stir up strife? (v. 21)

When we swallow (accept) gossip, is it good for us? If we spread gossip, is it good for others? (v. 22)

Does gossip have the appearance of being evil and bad for us? Or does gossip seem attractive and good for us? (v. 23)

When people spread gossip and rumors, can what they say be trusted? (vv. 24-25)

When he was slandered and attacked by his enemies, how did he respond? (v. 23)

#### **Think about it**

People often do not think twice about spreading rumors, but they do not like to have rumors spread about them. When we hear idle talk, we should ask ourselves: 1) “Does this sound like gossip,” and 2) “Would I want others to talk about me in this way?” When we recognize gossip and slander, we should put an end to the conversation or at least change the subject to a more positive topic.

