**Spiritual Matchmaking**

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**Lesson Outlines**

**Lesson #1**

**The History of the Church at Ephesus**

**Introduction**

I’m not sure who coined the phrase, “The devil is in the details” but I totally disagree. A story is developed and narrated in the details. That’s why I love Luke, the writer of the gospel of Luke and Acts. He is a stickler for details. Laying the groundwork for this study requires establishing the context of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. In doing so, we will be building a case for Biblical discipleship. This will also be our first lesson in how to study the Bible. Sue Swartz shared this short YouTube video with me. It’s a great summary of the book of Ephesians. [https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=Y71r-T98E2Q#dialog.](https://www.kingdomofheaven.link/)

Our background passages for today are: **Acts 18:1-28, 19:1-10.** If you have maps in the back of your Bible, it might be helpful to familiarize yourself with a map of Paul’s missionary journeys.

**Read Acts 18:1-23**

* Where was Paul?
* Read Mark 3:13-14 and define the “with me” principle of Jesus. From Acts 18:1-23, who was with Paul?
* What amount of time did he spend with these people?
* How do we know this? Write the names and scripture references. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What is significant about Antioch (Modern day Lebanon)?

**Read Acts 18:18-19, 24-28**

* What was the first thing Priscilla and Aquila did when they arrived in Ephesus?
* Who was their primary disciple in Ephesus?
* Where did they disciple Apollos? Read 1 Corinthians 16:19.
* From this passage, it is inferred that someone else discipled Apollos. Who was it?
* What discipling principles can we glen from their example?

**Read Acts 19:1-10, 20:24-32; Ephesians 1:1-7**

* What did Paul find when He returned to Ephesus?
* Who discipled them?
* What in this account, resembles Jesus’ strategy with His disciples?
* After 2 years of discipling these men, what were the results?
* At the end of Paul’s 3-year investment in Ephesus, he gathered his disciples, who all had become leaders, what did he say was his main purpose, (Acts 20:24-32) and what did he preach everywhere?
* Fill in the blanks. When people are evangelized and discipled, they become\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* The first 3 chapters of Ephesians are centered on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The last 3 chapters are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel.

**Let’s talk about it….**

1. The two main goals of this study, Spiritual Matchmaking, are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Otherwise referred to as being a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. We learned that disciple-making takes\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. What new thing did you learn from this lesson?
4. How did the Lord Speak personally to you through this lesson?
5. What action will you take in obedience to God’s voice?
6. Will you commit to finding at least one person to do this study with you?

**Lesson #2**

**The Address of the Saints**

**Introduction**

Disciple-making, by Jesus’ standard, is two things. It is life and truth. In spiritual relationships, the two are intermingled. To be transparent, I’ll share a bit of my life. Those of us who have reached middle age find ourselves in uncharted waters. This is a place where the child becomes caregiver for the parent, many of whom suffer from mentally debilitating diseases.  My mother-in-law is ninety-seven years old and has a form of dementia. Quite often she is very confused about where she is and how she got there. “How did you find me?” she asks us. Even though she is in the same room in the same assisted-living home, in her mind, she is always in a different place. How confused and lost she must feel.

One day when I was around ten years old, I was at my grandmother’s house playing on a frozen lake. I slipped and hit my head so hard that it cracked the ice. When I came to, I had amnesia and could only vaguely remember where I was or what had happened. We were staying at my grandmother’s house because my mother was in the hospital. You know when you are hurt how you need your mama? I didn’t even remember where she was! My daddy tried to console me as best he could. But it was a terrible feeling.

The morning I was preparing to share this lesson with my disciple group, I got word that my daddy had suffered a major heart attack. After eight attempts to resuscitate him, they put him on a ventilator and gave him medicine to keep his blood pressure going for another twenty-four hours. We wondered if his spirit had already departed to be with the Lord even though his body was there with us. At times like this, knowing where your loved one is, and if you will see them again, makes all the difference in the world. The sting of daddy’s death is still raw and painful, and while I’m still coming to terms with the fact that I will not see my daddy again on this earth, I am comforted with knowing that he is alive and well in the Father’s house. I will meet him there one day. I rest assured in this truth because when I was twenty-six, the Lord resurrected me from spiritual death. I prayed for daddy for thirteen years. He was sixty years old when the Lord answered my prayers and gave him a new spiritual address. Towards the end of daddy’s life, after battling cancer and numerous heart issues, his perspective changed. He told me not long ago, “No matter how good or how bad things are in the present, it is only temporary.” In Biblical terms, “This too shall pass (Acts 4:12; Joel 2:32). We’re transient. And we too shall pass one day. Then what? Where will we be? Think about this: Our spiritual condition determines our position with God—that’s our spiritual address. Our spiritual address will determine our final location (where we spend eternity). In the end, that’s all that really matters. That's what today’s lesson is about—the spiritual address of the saints. Our background passages are **Ephesians 1:1-4, 2:1-2, 4-7, 11-13; Psalm 139:1-24.**

**Read Ephesians 1:1, 3:1; Acts 28:16-31.**

* Where was Paul when he wrote these letters, and who was with him?
* How long had it been since Paul had lived in Ephesus?
* Read the following salutations and note where and to whom the epistles are addressed. **Ephesians 3:1; Philippians 1:1-2, 12; Colossians 1:2, 5-7, 2:6**.
* In the Greek language (it’s true in Spanish also), there is one word that stands for the English word holy and for the English word saint. What does this tell you?

**Read Ephesians 1:4-14, 3:3-6, 9.**

* What is the key theme of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians?
* What is the key phrase?
* Where were these mysteries previously hidden? Read **Ephesians 1:3-6, 3:5-6,9**.
* The book of Ephesians is split into two parts. What two things do the first three chapters cover? What is the subject of the last three chapters?
* What doctrine of the faith do we clearly observe in the first fourteen verses?

**Read Acts 17:22-28; Psalms 139:1-24.**

* Why has God determined where we should live?
* From **Psalm 139:1-24** (it is on page 22 of your workbook) make note of all the things that God knows about you.
* Thinking about your current spiritual location, do you feel close to God or far from God?
* Read **John 15:1-16**. What does it mean to abide in Christ?
* What are some practical ways that those of us who are in Christ remain there?

**Let’s talk about it….**

1. What do you think it means to have “spiritual amnesia?”
2. Regardless of his physical address, Paul could endure whatever life threw at him. He knew where home was, and his spiritual address was secure. Read **Philippians 4:4-9, 11-13.**
3. How should the reality of our spiritual position in Christ impact our everyday lives?
4. Remembering that we, too, were once separated from the love of God and without hope in this world, think of people you know who are still living in this location. What will you do about it?
5. Read the following passages, and let’s talk about the implications of these truths in the here and now. Read Matthew 24:35; 1 Corinthians 15:54; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Romans 8:18; and Revelation 21:1-8.

**Lesson #3**

**A Rotten Family Tree**

**Introduction**

Someone once said, “It is the bad news in the good news, that makes the good news so good.” To put it another way, the true gospel is a double-edged sword. Like a surgeon’s knife, it cuts to the root of the disease to bring healing. We are born with a terminal illness called sin. Every single one of us is born infected. Today I heard of a person who found out that they have a thyroid problem. Come to find out, five women in her family have the condition. In this lesson we are going to look at our spiritual family tree and discover the origin of our terminal disease called sin. To do that, we must start at the beginning. Our background passages for this lesson are **Ephesians 2:1-3, 11-12; Genesis 3:1-24.**

**Read Ephesians 2:1-3.**

* This is the condition of *all* humanity ---we are spiritually \_\_\_\_\_\_\_in our\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. (Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:3-7; **Romans 3:9-18,23; 1 John 5:12**)

**Read Ephesians 2:11-12; Romans 5:12-14, 17-19; Isaiah 59:1-7.**

* Our Condition determines our spiritual location. We were ***all*** separated for God in Adam. Once we realize our condition, we should not be surprised when sinners act like sinners.

**Read Genesis 3:1-24; John 3:1-16, 36.**

* How did we get in this hopeless location? We were all born there and trace our roots back to Adam and Eve.

**Read 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 44-47.**

* Because of our mortality in Adam, we are all appointed a day to die physically. If we remain in Adam, we will be dead eternally.

**Read Revelation 9:21, 21:8,27; Galatians 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Matthew 23:33.**

* The destination of every person who is born only once into Adam’s family is eternal separation from God in hell.

**Read Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; 53:1-12; 1 John 5:11-13.**

* There is hope for all of us in the last \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ -the “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of \_\_\_\_\_ woman.”

**Let’s talk about it….**

1. Give an example of a situation you are dealing with that gives clear evidence that sin is at the root of the conflict.
2. Why do you think a funeral is a great place for people to hear the gospel?
3. From all the passages we have read, make a list of the descriptive words used to that graphicly depict our condition in Adam.
4. If we truly believe God’s Word about hell, then why do you think we do not warn others about it and how to avoid it?
5. What do you think it means to fear God?

**The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil**



**Our First Condition:**

Dead in our sins/ Blind to God/ Have no fear of Him/Naked/ Hopeless/ Helpless/ Enemies of God/ Under God’s wrath/ Ungodly/ No God-no life

Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:3-7; Romans 3:9-18,23; 1 John 5:12

**Our First Location:**

Separated from God in Adam

Ephesians 2:11-13; Romans 5:12-14,17-19; Isaiah 59:1-3

Genesis 3:1-24; John 3:15-16,36

**Our Mortality:**

Genesis 2:17, 3:19; Hebrews 9:27; Psalm 89:47-48, 90:3-12

1 Corinthians 7:29, 15:21-22,44-47; 1 John 5:11-13;

**Our Final Destination:**

Revelation 9:21, 21:8, 27; Galatians 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Matthew 23:33

**Lesson #4**

**The Blood of a Spotless Lamb**

**Introduction**

In the first fourteen verses of Ephesians, Paul introduces the idea that God had a plan in place even before He created the world. One day, God will have His people living in His heavenly place, under His sovereign rule. In lesson #3, we learned that something went wrong in the beginning that changed our spiritual address.

In this lesson, we will start our study in **Ephesians 1:7-10, 14** and parallel some passages found primarily in the books of Genesis and Exodus. By doing so, we will see some truths that were obscure to the saints of the Old Testament but are manifested in the book of John and Revelation. (John was in Ephesus when he wrote all his books, and, after receiving the Revelation of Christ, he returned to Ephesus and spent the rest of his earthly life there.) As we work our way through these passages, following the signs and symbols, we’ll find that they all pointed towards God’s ultimate plan of redemption (Ephesians 2:1-12). The blueprint was written in crimson red. The crux of our problem is sin. God’s solution was a crux—the Latin word for cross.

Just as Paul and Apollos demonstrated by the Scriptures to the citizens of Ephesus that Jesus was, in fact, the Messiah, we will do the same (Acts 18:28). We’ll solve **the mystery of God’s redemptive plan through the death of the Messiah—the Lamb of God. Read Ephesians 1:7-10.**

**Read Genesis 3:15-21.**

* Behold Jesus as the last \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 15:21-22), the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of a woman (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7; John 19:25-27; 1 John 3:8), and His blood a covering for our spiritual \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (John 1:29; Hebrews 9:19-28; 1 Peter 1:18-20).

**Read Genesis 3:22-24**.

* Behold Jesus the One who hung on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (John 6:35, 51-58, 11:25-26; Galatians 3:13). In Genesis 4, we see Christ Jesus as a good shepherd like Abel and the acceptable offering for sin—the Lamb who was killed (John 10:10-14, 19:1-30; Isaiah 53:5-12).

**Read Genesis 6:14, 7:7.**

* Behold Jesus as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of salvation and His blood\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, as the\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, that covers and protects us from the wrath of God. (Side note: compare Genesis 9:13-16 with Ezekiel 1:28 and Revelation 4:1-5).

**Read Genesis 22:2, 6-8, 12-18.**

* Behold Jesus as the \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_of God (John 1:14-18,34, 3:14-16, 10:36), and see Him as the promised \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the world (John 4:4-42; Revelation 5:9).

**Read Genesis 28:12,14-16.**

* Behold Jesus as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ way to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_; and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of heaven. (John 1:51, 14:6; Ephesians 1:10; Hebrews 10:19-22; 1 Peter 3:18). When God sees \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ He remembers His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 22:15-20). The new covenant sign is in His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Read Exodus 3:6, 8.**

* Behold Jesus as the great \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ (John 8:58)! Like Moses, He is the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_who in His incarnation, came down to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ us from our sins (John 1:1-3,14-18; 1 Timothy 3:16).

**Read Exodus 12:21-27.**

* Behold Christ, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (John 10:7-9; Ephesians 2:1-8). Those whose sins are covered by His blood have passed over from death to life (Ephesians 2:1-8).

**Read Exodus 13:21.**

* BeholdJesus as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and the\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (John 1:6-9, 8:12, 9:5).

The story of the church at Ephesus ends in Revelation 2:1-7. History bears witness to the fact that they did not repent. But for those who do, this is how our story ends: **Read Revelation 1:5, 5:6-14, 7:9-17, 12:11, 13:8, 22:1-5.** The Lamb who was slain to purchase redemption is the Good Shephard. He will receive the due reward for His suffering. He will have His people living with Him in His heavenly kingdom under His rule. From beginning to end, Jesus Christ is, was, and has always been, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords (John 18:37; Revelation 19:11-16).

**Let’s talk about it….**

1. Following the trail of blood pointing us to God’s plan of redemption, where did we see the first killing of a lamb?
2. What two attributes of God are clearly displayed in the sacrificial system?
3. The aim of today’s lesson is not gathering more knowledge. It is learning how to hear God speak personally to us from His Word. Read James 1:19-25 and fill in the blanks. If we are going to be doers of God’s Word, we must learn to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ what we learn to our lives. Adriana Morales, one of our blog contributors, shared the following tips with me. One is called the **soap** **method**: Scripture, observation, application, and prayer. (Another acronym for this is HEAR: **H**ear the Word of God, **E**xplain, **A**pply, and **R**espond.)

**S**cripture: Read Ephesians 1:3-8, 2:13; Leviticus 10:1-3, 11:45, 17:11; 1 Peter 1:13-19; Hebrews 9:22-24, 10:19-25.

**O**bservation: The major themes in the book of Leviticus are as follows: the priesthood, the holiness of God, blood (60 times), and atonement (49 times).

**A**pplication: Therefore, considering these Truths, is there a specific area of your life that you need to change? What will you do about it? To set personal goals to live out what you have learned, here is a **SMART** application acronym: Be specific, make it measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound (James 1:19-25).

**P**rayer: **Acts** of prayer are: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication.

* Adoration: Hebrews 7:22-27
* Confession: 1 John 1:5-9; Ephesians 5:1-4
* Thanksgiving: Hebrews 13:12-15; Ephesians 5:20
* Supplication: 1 Peter 9:9-10; Revelation 5:9-13

The following quote by J.C. Ryle is a fitting conclusion and summary of this lesson. It comes from a Grace Gems devotional. It is titled, I cannot think little of sin, when… ***"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me"* (Matthew 27:46)?**

***Would I know how exceedingly sinful and abominable sin is in the sight of God? Where shall I see sin most fully brought out? Shall I turn to the history of the flood, and read how sin drowned the world? Shall I go to the shore of the Dead Sea, and mark what sin brought on Sodom and Gomorrah? No! I can find a clearer proof still! I look at the cross of Christ! There I see that sin is so filthy and damnable, that nothing but the blood of God's own Son can wash it away! There I see that sin has so separated me from my holy Maker, that all the angels in Heaven could never have made peace between us. Nothing could reconcile us, short of the death of Christ. If I listened to the wretched talk of proud people, I might sometimes imagine that sin was not so very sinful! But I cannot think little of sin, when I look at the cross of Christ! "A bleeding Savior I have viewed--and now I hate my sin!" John Newton***

**The Cross of Christ is the Tree of Life**

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**The Saints Condition:**

Alive/ Sealed/ Loved/ Healed/ Adopted/ Forgiven/ Blessed/ Holy/ Blameless/ Redeemed/ Accepted/ Reconciled to God/ Clothed in the righteousness of Christ

Ephesians 1:1-14, 2:4-10; Romans 5:6-16, 8:9-11; John 6:63, 11:25; Galatians 4:29; 1 John 5:11

**The Saints Location:**

Seated at the Right Hand of God in Christ who is the “Last Adam”

Ephesians 2:4-6; Philippians 2:6-7; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

**The Saints New Relations:**

Ephesians 1:1-14, 2:13-22, 3:14; John 3:16-17, 17:1-26

**The Saints Final Destination:**

John 14:1-6; Matthew 25:33; 1 Peter 2:24-25; Revelation 21:1-7

**Week #5**

**“But God” Makes All the Difference**

**Introduction**

As we learned in previous weeks, God planed, purposed, provided, and, ultimately paid the cost required for our pardon. It was all part of His macro plan. Now, we will focus on the micro plan, and see how the Lord works in the lives of individuals to woo and pursue them to Himself (Matthew 18:11-13; Hosea 2:14-17). Call it destiny, call it providence, call it divine intervention—but don’t call it coincidence. From first to last, God is the one who orchestrates, initiates, and instigates our salvation (John 6:44-45; Acts 2:38-39).

If you want to know if God is actively involved in your life, then take a stroll down memory lane and reminisce on the times when God stepped into the mess of your life and altered a seemingly hopeless situation. Throughout this lesson, we will refer these as “But God” moments. Granted, the circumstances that proceed these hallmarks often look impossible from our point of view, but God’s got a plan (Ephesians 1:9-14; Romans 8:28-29). The bigger the mess, the greater the opportunity for God to show up and show off His glory. What He does is synonymous with who He is. Therefore, He’ll always act according to His character. He is rich in mercy, grace, and unfailing love.

Stepping back to Paul’s letter to the saint at Ephesus, we will launch this topical study with **Ephesians 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Matthew 7:13-27, and Romans 5:6-10**. These passages comprise our Scripture for today’s lesson.

**Read Ephesians 2:1-5; Isaiah 53:6.**

* Using these Scriptures, describe the path we walked before God’s intervention.
* What does it mean to follow the course of the world?

**Read 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Colossians 1:12-14.**

* Fill in the blanks: The truth of the gospel is hidden from people who are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* From these passages, make a list of the verbs describing God’s intervention in leading individuals to Himself.
* When we are in spiritual darkness, what exactly, are we blind to?
* Read Proverbs 29:18 from different versions of the Bible. The word used here for “perish” or “cast off restraints” in Hebrew, could also be translated as: *to go wild, or to be naked.* Ultimately, those who never turn from “going their own way” will perish in their sins!
* Read Psalm 2:1-6 and discuss what society looks like when the world refuses to be restrained by the grace of God.
* There is one cure for spiritual blindness (Psalm 119:105; Romans 10:9-18;

2 Corinthians 4:5-6, 5:18-20). What will cure blindness?

**Read Matthew 7:13-27; Revelation 3:13-21**

* Read Matthew 7:13-14; John 10:1-11. What are some “other ways” people on the wide road try to get to heaven?
* Read Proverbs 14:12. How is it that people can be in church, believe in God, and yet remain lost and perishing?
* From our previous lesson, what does it mean to be spiritually naked? And what, specifically, is Jesus referring to when He said to the church at Laodicea that they need to be clothed? (Hint: Genesis 3:21).

**Let’s talk about it….**

1. Has the Lord brought any memorable “But God” moments to mind that you would like to share?
2. Using the **SOAP** method from our last lesson, what passage of Scripture spoke personally to you?
3. From your **O**bservation, what would you say is the theme of this lesson? What are some key words that stood out?
4. Is the Holy Spirit making any personal **A**pplication of these Truths to your life? If so, what will you do about it? To set personal goals to live out what you have learned, here is a **SMART** application acronym: Be specific, make it measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound (James 1:19-25).
5. After sharing some goals with one another, it is time for **P**rayer**.** As best we can, let’s try to pull some passages from today’s lesson and use them in the following **Acts** of prayer:

* Adoration
* Confession
* Thanksgiving
* Supplication

**Week #6**

**The Riches of God’s Mercy and Grace**

**Introduction**

The original languages of the Bible intrigue me. When I read a text and a question comes to mind, I pull out my large, very worn, Strong’s Concordance and go to digging. For instance, looking up the following words, I found that they are almost always prefaced with superlatives: lovingkindness, gracious, merciful, longsuffering, compassionate, and slow to anger.

Probing the depths of God’s boundless love will lead us to the very heart of God personified in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our key Passages for this lesson are as follows: **Ephesians 1:6-7, 2:4-9; John 1:14-17**

**Read Ephesians 1:6-7, 2:4-9.**

**Mercy**

**1 Timothy 1:13-16 (NET)**

***Even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor, and an arrogantman. But I was treated with mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief, and our Lord’s grace was abundant, bringing faith and love in Christ Jesus. This saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” – and I am the worst of them! But here is why I was treated with mercy: so that in me as the worst, Christ Jesus could demonstrate his utmost patience, as an example for those who are going to believe in him for eternal life.***

Why would Paul recount his story of grace to Timothy so often? Surely, Timothy knew it by heart after all the years they spent together (1 Timothy 2:1-2). The doctrines of grace and mercy permeated every epistle Paul wrote. As an Old Testament scholar, he knew all to well what he deserved (Acts 8:1, 9:8, Romans 6:23).

**Vocabulary words:**

**Greek**

* Gift: Strong’s #1435 doron: a present, specifically a sacrifice, gift offering. Ephesians 2:9
* Gift: Strong’s #5486 charisma (from Forgive) Romans 6:23
* Forgive: Strong’s #5483 charizomai (from grace) Ephesians 4:32; Luke 7:42-43
* Grace: Strong’s #5485 charis (from rejoice or joy) Ephesians 1:6-7, 2:5,7,8, John 1:14-17
* Rejoice: Strong’s #5463 charo
* Exact Image: Strong’s #5481 charakter (Hebrew 1:3) (only time used in the New Testament)
* Accepted/Highly Favored Strong’s # 5487 charitoo (from grace) Ephesians 1:6; Luke 1:28

**Read Acts 8:1; 9:8; Romans 2:4, 3:24, 4:3-8, 5:6-12,20, 6:23, 9:22-26.**

* What attribute of God is demonstrated by His patience towards sinners?
* Fromm these passages, why does the Lord wait?

**Read Exodus 34:6; Deut. 4:28-31; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Psalm 103:8-17, 145:8-9.**

* Let’s talk about some Biblical examples of mercy: Cain (Genesis 4:1-15); Joseph’s brothers (42-45); David and Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:1-13); David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:1-12: -25); The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24).
* Comparing Ephesians 2:4 with 1 Peter 1:3, 2:10; Hosea 2:23; Isaiah 54:5-10, how do these passages apply to believers today?

**Grace**

* Grace in Greek is charis. It is derived from the word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It is also connected with the following words: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* The Greek word used for gift in Ephesians 2:8 is doron. It is defined as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gift\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. What specifically is it referring to?
* Read Romans 3:21-24. Paul uses the word “justified” 27 times in Romans and Galatians. What does the word mean?
* The Hebrew word for grace is checed. It is also translated as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In fact, all these Hebrew words are connected. Read: Psalm 107:8,15,21,31; Joel 2:13.
* Read Exodus 33:19; Psalm 23:6; Hebrew 1:1-3 and John 1:14-17 and fill in the blanks. The Law came through Moses, but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ came through \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Gift**

In Gary Chapman’s book, he asserts that there are 5 love languages: words of affirmation, acts of service, quality time, physical touch and gifts. Mine is gifts. When it comes to gift giving, it’s the thought that counts, so they say. Before my husband Art was saved he presented me with a gift that spoke volumes about our relationship. It was a padded toilet seat. I was less than underwhelmed by his generosity. We can’t give what we do not possess. Now that Art has received the love and grace of God, he has learned to express his love for me in my love language through thoughtful and sometimes extravagant gifts. Have you received the gift of forgiveness, mercy and grace? To whom much is given, much will be required! Using the acronym for gift, here are some markers of someone who has received the gift of salvation in Christ Jesus:

Generosity in showing mercy

I live in humility and patience

Forgiveness towards others

Thanksgiving and gratitude.

**Let’s talk about it….**

1. Define the difference in grace and mercy.
2. Give examples of grace and mercy in your life.
3. Can you think of a person that you know who needs mercy and grace yet is totally undeserving of it? Will you ask the Lord how you might be His agent to extend these gifts to them?
4. From all we have learned, how can you tell if a person has received God’s grace? What are some markers? (1 Peter 2:9-10; Matthew 5:7; Luke 6:36)
5. How is it that God can be just, and exonerate the guilty at the same time?
6. Have you ever tried to earn God’s grace?
7. Using the **SOAP** method from our last lesson, what passage of Scripture spoke personally to you?
8. From your **O**bservation, what would you say is the theme of this lesson? What are some key words that stood out?
9. Is the Holy Spirit making any personal **A**pplication of these Truths to your life? If so, what will you do about it?
10. To set personal goals to live out what you have learned, here is a **SMART** application acronym: Be specific, make it measurable, attainable, realistic, and time bound (James 1:19-25).
11. After sharing some goals with one another, it is time for **P**rayer**.** As best we can, let’s try to pull some passages from today’s lesson and use them in the following **Acts** of prayer:

* Adoration
* Confession
* Thanksgiving
* Supplication