

Fishers of men by God's grace and for His glory

Introduction

Below are brief introductions to our lessons this week for each adult class.

Adult Topical Class (Bible Studies for Life – Being An Authentic Church)

Teacher: Craig Pleasants

Lesson Title: Built on Christ

Focal Scripture: 1 Peter 2:1-12

Theme: Everything in the church centers on Jesus Christ.

Lesson Overview: We start the second half of our quarter with a series of lessons on the church, the living, growing body of Christ. These lessons will emphasize growth, service, and joy in the presence of other believers. This week we focus on Peter's teachings about Christian conduct. Following Jesus requires obedience; submitting to His authority and imitating His example. When we do this and continually feed on God's Word, He works to build us into "*a spiritual house, an holy priesthood*" (5). Jesus is the foundational, "*chief corner stone*" (6) of the church. Everything we are and do rests on Him. We are to live for Jesus and represent to the world how they can be "*reconciled to God by the death of his Son*" and "*saved by his life*" (Romans 5:10).

⁹But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: 1 Peter 2:9

Adult Bible Book Class (Explore the Bible – Genesis 20-50)

Teacher: Thomas Littleton

Lesson Title: Wrestled

Focal Scripture: Genesis 32:22-32

Theme: God changes His people when they encounter Him.

Lesson Overview: Our passage for this week relates Jacob's overnight wrestling match as he journeyed to a meeting with Esau. Jacob approached the reunion with his brother with much fear, knowing how he had deceived and taken advantage of him in regards to the birthright and blessing. During this anxious night "*Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day*" (24). Toward daybreak he was told "*Thy name shall be called no more Jacob (one who supplants), but Israel*" (28). The new name symbolized how God had changed Jacob's character. It was by God's grace that He visited and wrestled with Jacob, changed his name, and blessed him. Praise God for His grace; for His presence during times of trial and uncertainty, and for the ways He reveals Himself to us in those times. May we celebrate God's working in our lives and the new identity and heart we receive through Jesus our Savior.

¹⁷Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

Closing Thoughts

A key verse from our Wednesday night Bible study in Habakkuk is:

*...the just (righteous) shall live by his faith. **Habakkuk 2:4b***

My thoughts for this week are related to what exactly does this look like? It must start with salvation, accepting Jesus' atonement for our sins "*through faith in his blood*" (Romans 3:25), "*for by grace are ye saved through faith*" (Ephesians 2:8) unto eternal life. Next, we are to nurture this faith through the word of God (Romans 10:17), both at home and in church among other believers. Then we can live our faith; that others will take notice and be drawn to Christ.

¹⁷*Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.* ¹⁸*Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. **James 2:17-18***

Underpinning it all is the daily assurance that everything is in God's hands and "*with God nothing shall be impossible*" (Luke 1:37). Even during trials and hardship we must "*trust in the LORD with all our heart; and lean not unto our own understanding*" (Proverbs 3:5).

³*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,* ⁴*To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,* ⁵*Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* ⁶*Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:* ⁷*That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:* ⁸*Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:* ⁹*Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. **1 Peter 1:3-9***

Please prayerfully consider meeting with us this week for 10:00 am Sunday School as we fellowship, encourage, and study God's word together.