

Introduction

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

Adult Topical Study Class (Bible Studies for Life – James: Living Out Your Faith)

Teachers: Craig Pleasants & Bob Kemble.

Lesson Title: Faith on Display in Facing the Enemy

Focal Scripture: James 4:1-10

Theme: You can stand triumphantly in Christ over sin, the world, and Satan.

Overview: Last week's lesson covered the end of chapter 3, where James contrasted worldly wisdom with heavenly wisdom. He elaborated further on this in chapter 4 where our lesson for this week focuses. Worldly wisdom with its envy and selfishness leads to fights and quarrels (4:1-2). Such friendship with the world is "*enmity with God*" (4:4), or an expression of hatred toward Him. God desires to have a strong and healthy relationship with us, and when we resist the devil and draw near to God, He will draw near to us (4:7-8). Through the life changing power of the Holy Spirit, we can live triumphantly as we realize that all the world offers pales in comparison to God's blessings of a victorious life.

²²Let us draw near with a true (sincere) heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil (guilty) conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Hebrews 10:22-23

*⁶Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: ⁷Casting all your care (worry and anxiety) upon him; for he careth for you. **1 Peter 5:6-7***

Adult Bible Book Study Class (Xexplore the Bible – Amos; Jonah; Hosea; Micah)

Teachers: Janice Willis & Thomas Littleton.

Lesson Title: No Escape

Focal Scripture: Jonah 1:15-2:10

Theme: Believers who run from God are unable to escape His discipline.

Overview: This week we begin a four-lesson series from the book of Jonah, one of the most familiar Minor Prophets of the Old Testament as we have heard about Jonah and the great fish from childhood. The book opens with God's direction for Jonah to go and preach to the cruel and warlike Assyrians in Nineveh, and Jonah's flight in the opposite direction.

*²Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. ³But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. ⁴But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. **Jonah 1:2-4***

Our lesson for this week focuses on how God stopped him and turned him around, starting where Jonah is cast into the sea in order to spare the ship's crew and then being swallowed by a great fish. The selected scripture covers Jonah's inside the fish prayer and God's deliverance of him back onto dry land. Even from inside the fish Jonah's prayer was heard. It is great to know we can pray from anywhere, and at any time and our merciful God will hear us. Jonah's experience was used by Jesus as an illustration of his death and resurrection on the third day (Matthew 12:39-40), which gives everyone a new chance at life.

^{9b}*that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:* **2 Corinthians 1:9b**

⁴*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

Romans 6:4

Closing Thoughts

God is very, very good to us; much more so than we deserve. If that alone is not reason enough to want to go to church to praise and worship Him, there is also the encouragement we receive from our brothers and sisters in Christ. Most of you are probably familiar with Hebrews 10:25, "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...but exhorting (encouraging) one another.*" One of the strengths of our church is how folks here encourage, edify, and build up one another in love. A quick internet search for antidepressants yields a myriad of drugs, and they have a place in healthcare; but perhaps none are more effective than a kind word from a Christian friend.

²⁵*Heaviness (anxiety) in the heart of man maketh it stoop (weighs it down): but a good word maketh it glad.* **Proverbs 12:25**

²⁴*Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health (healing) to the bones.* **Proverbs 16:24**

¹¹*Wherefore comfort (encourage) yourselves together, and edify (build up) one another, even as also ye do.* **1 Thessalonians 5:11**

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