

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 – My Encounter with Jesus)

Teachers: Craig Pleasants & Bob Kemble

Lesson Title: Jesus Gave Me Grace and Forgiveness

Focal Scripture: John 8:2-11

Theme: Jesus took my guilt and set me free.

Lesson Overview: Our focal passage for this week is the account of the woman caught in adultery who was brought to Jesus in an attempt by the Jewish leaders to entrap Him. Jesus responded “*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*” then “*He stooped down, and wrote on the ground*” (7-8). After her accusers “*convicted by their own conscience*” (9) slowly walked away, Jesus told her to “*go, and sin no more*” (11). Jesus’ directive to “*go, and sin no more*” hits at the heart of true repentance as we turn to Jesus and turn away from sin. Jesus, being full of compassion and grace, showed His Godly wisdom and love for sinners for which He gave Himself, the Righteous for the unrighteous. He came to forgive and give grace to all who will trust in Him. Satan, our adversary, accuses us “*before our God day and night*” (Revelation 12:10); but when we belong to Jesus, He stands in our defense as our “*advocate with the Father*” (1 John 2:1). May we embrace the freedom Jesus provides and as God has shown grace to us, may we show grace to others and reflect Christ to those around us.

¹There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1

³⁶If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. John 8:36

Adult Bible Book Class (Explore the Bible – John 12-21)

Teachers: Janice Willis & Thomas Littleton

Lesson Title: I Will Come Again

Focal Scripture: John 13:31-14:6

Theme: Jesus is building a people that will honor God for eternity.

Lesson Overview: This week we examine Jesus’ Farewell Discourse at the Last Supper. Jesus taught His disciples, and us, a powerful lesson about humility and service as He washed their feet (13:1-17). Then He identified Judas as His betrayer (13:18-30). Our focal passage picks up with Judas’ departure and Jesus telling His disciples about His imminent death which would glorify both Father and Son by destroying the power of Satan and his hold on sinners. Jesus then gave us “*a new commandment*” (13:34-35) emphasizing for us to love one another as He loved us. Next, we have Peter’s declaration of loyalty and Jesus predicting that he would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed (13:37-38). Our lesson closes with Jesus’ words of comfort and the promise “*I go to prepare a place for you*” and “*I will come again, and receive you unto myself*” (14:2-3), followed by the essentials of our faith: “*I am the way, the truth, and*

the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (14:6). The only path to the Father goes through Jesus. According to His promise, Jesus will one day return to earth, the dead will be raised, He will judge every person in righteousness, "*and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation*" (Hebrews 9:28). May we faithfully honor Jesus each day as we await His return.

¹²*Neither is there salvation in any other (only through Jesus): for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12*

Closing Thoughts

In our modern-day world of inclusivity and political correctness, Jesus' exclusive statement of John 14:6 "*I am the way (the only path), the truth (the reality of God's promises), and the life (both now and for eternity): no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*" is often viewed with scoffing and derision; but that doesn't change a thing. God's Word is unchanging and trustworthy.

In several of the recent "God Squad" articles in The News and Observer much has been made of an analogy of many paths up a mountain representing the equal validity of assorted religious beliefs; all seen as ways to reach God/Heaven through human choice, effort, and endeavor. How foolish to believe that any effort of man can attain salvation, reminiscent of man's mistake in the garden (Genesis 3:5 "*ye shall be as gods*"), and later folly at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:4 "*whose top may reach unto heaven*"). "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (Proverbs 14:12).

As God reproved Job, "*Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?*" (Job 38:4); only God, the Creator, could extend a way for us to be reconciled to Himself. "*When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*" (Galatians 4:4).

¹³*And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man (Jesus) which is in heaven. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (referring to His sacrificial death on the cross): ¹⁵That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:13-15*

Jesus is not merely one way among many ways to God. He is the only way.

¹³*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matthew 7:13-14*

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