

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: Growing in Christ

Focal Scripture: Colossians 1:9-14,21-29

Theme: We should encourage and help one another grow in Christ.

Lesson Overview: This week we will focus on Paul's prayer for the Colossian church. In this passage we see his passion for nurturing believers to become mature in their faith and it provides a pattern which can teach us how to pray for, and help others to grow in Christ and not get side-tracked. Paul wanted his readers to increase in spiritual wisdom, so they could separate truth from error. It is God's desire that we persevere in faith and grow into the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). We are to help others become all Christ intended them to be, while continuing to develop ourselves. May we be effective mentors and models of spiritual maturity.

²⁷To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: ²⁸Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Colossians 1:27-28

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

Teacher: Thomas Littleton

Lesson Title: Dreamer

Focal Scripture: Genesis 37:5-8,18-28

Theme: Jealousy opens the door for acts of hatred.

Lesson Overview: This week we begin a series of lessons about Joseph, with a lesson about his dreams and his brothers' jealousy which led to them selling him into slavery in Egypt. Our focal passage opens with Joseph telling his brothers about his dream which indicated that they would all bow down before him. This added to their jealousy "*and they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words*" (8). Reuben was able to dissuade his brothers from killing Joseph, instead placing him in a pit while planning to come back and rescue him; but while he was absent, the others sold Joseph to Ishmaelite slave-traders on their way to Egypt. We must be careful about showing favoritism and guard our words, so as not to incite jealousy in others. Jealousy is dangerous because it corrupts one's heart and usually leads to more tragic sin.

*¹⁴But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. ¹⁵This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. ¹⁶For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. **James 3:14-16***

Closing Thoughts

One of the favorite analogies the News and Observer “God Squad” column likes to use bugs me to no end; that of many paths up the same mountain. The premise being that whether one is Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, etc; they all reach heaven up their own particular path. The problem is that even when they reach the pinnacle of their efforts, they will sadly discover a huge gap, coming up short of their goal. The analogy reminds me of the Tower of Babel, where people decided to build a tower “*whose top may reach unto heaven*”; and “*the LORD came down to see the city and tower, which the children of men builded*” (Genesis 11:4-5). Despite their best efforts, the Lord, the Creator of the universe, looked down and viewed in derision their foolish attempts. The Bible is clear that man cannot save himself; only Jesus can bridge the gap between God and man. The only way to salvation is by God’s grace through faith in Jesus. Many people may react negatively to this fact, yet it is not something the church just made up. It was a specific teaching of Jesus.

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***

⁶*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. **John 14:6***

No other religious teacher came to earth as God’s only Son, no other could die as the perfect sacrifice to atone for our sins, and no other rose from the dead. There is no other way, but God’s Way.

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

⁵*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; ⁶Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. **1 Timothy 2:5-6***

²⁰*And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. **1 John 5:20***

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