

Introduction

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

Adult Topical Study Class (Bible Studies for Life – The Holy Spirit in Our Lives)

Teachers: Craig Pleasants & Bob Kemble.

Lesson Title: Indwelt by the Spirit

Focal Scripture: Romans 8:9-17

Theme: The Holy Spirit's presence in our lives affirms our relationship with God.

Overview: Our lesson for this week focuses on God's presence in the person of the Holy Spirit within every follower of Christ, drawing upon Paul's discourse on new life through the Spirit found in Romans 8. The opening verses of this chapter provide a good introduction to our focal passage for this week.

*¹There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: ⁴That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. **Romans 8:1-4***

We're all sinners (Romans 3:23), offending in one point and guilty of all (James 2:10), deserving of condemnation to the death penalty of eternal damnation (Romans 6:23); *"but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 15:57) there is now no condemnation. We will not experience the wrath of God, because the Spirit has set us free from the wages of sin. In the weakness of our flesh, we cannot meet the requirements of the law. *"There is none righteous, no, not one"* (Romans 3:10). Yet because of God's great love for us, the righteousness of God by faith in Jesus Christ is imputed to all that believe. The Holy Spirit is the earnest (guaranteeing pledge or deposit) of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:14) and gives us the power each day to walk in righteousness.

Adult Bible Book Study Class (Xexplore the Bible – 1, 2 Kings)

Teachers: Janice Willis & Thomas Littleton.

Lesson Title: Compromised

Focal Scripture: 1 Kings 11:1-13

Theme: Ungodly partnerships lead to spiritual compromise.

Overview: Last week in chapter 8 we studied Solomon's prayer and speech of dedication upon completion of the new temple. Chapter 9 opens with God's response and warning to Solomon:

¹And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, ²That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. ³And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I

have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

*⁶But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: ⁷Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: **1 Kings 9:1-3, 6-7***

Chapters 9 and 10 go on to elaborate on Solomon's greatness, accomplishments, and riches; including the visit by the Queen of Sheba who had heard of his fame and traveled from her distant land to validate everything she heard was true. Solomon had everything one could want, but in that he forgot God and allowed ungodly influences to enter his life and corrupt the nation. Our lesson for this week focuses on the compromises and consequences of Solomon's sin.

Closing Thoughts

*²⁰Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! **Isaiah 5:20***

Prior to last week's Sunday School, some of us were conversing about the lengths that our news and entertainment seem to be going to these days to make sin appear "normal" and even something to take "pride" in, while Christianity is portrayed as bigoted and intolerant. This constant bombardment greatly misleads the younger generations and desensitizes even long time Christians to the seriousness of sin. When sin no longer troubles us and God's Word is no longer our standard, how long can our nation and world survive?

¹³Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Matthew 5:13

Jesus is quite clear here with the point that if Christians lose their distinctive saltiness and make no effort to affect the world around them, we are of little value to God. If we are no different from the world, "wherewith shall it be salted/seasoned?" We are to have a positive impact, as salt brings out the flavor in food; and we must counteract the moral decay in society, as salt purifies and preserves food from decay. If we fail in these functions, we're failing to represent Christ in a world that so desperately needs Him. Being "salty" is not easy, and we'd do well to remember as the returned exiles learned, "*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts*" (Zechariah 4:6). May we ever stand for Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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