

Mt. Lebanon Church

Adult Sunday School Lesson

8.27.2023

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Below please find my sharable thoughts, so please allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that he would have you to see through the study of God's word to share.

Gods Great Mercy

Luke 18: 9 – 14

Have we ever looked at our lives in terms of our godly humility in comparison to those times when our worldly pridefulness controlled our lives. Christians are to always possess an element of humility within themselves. Humility not only strengthens our relationship with God, but it also strengthens our relationship in the body of Christ. Humility can only come through the saving grace of Jesus Christ. True humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less. Humility comes when we stop thinking of ourselves, and we start submitting to God. When did we first submit to God, it was when through obedience, by faith, we believed in Christ Jesus, and the work which he done for us on the cross. Submitting to God means putting others before ourselves, lifting one another other up, valuing one another other, and focusing on their needs of wellbeing. We can only do so when we have a true understanding of humility. Without this understanding we may intentionally try to display humility by putting ourselves down, in order to lift ourselves up, in the eyes of others.

Philippians 2: 3 – 5,.... Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves....look not everyman on his own things, but every man also on the things of others....let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus....

Since we have inherited a fallen nature from Adam, humanity tends to look out for number one. But, as Christians, through the teachings of the word of God, which gives unto us the example of Christ work on earth, we gain the wisdom and knowledge to live a selfless, humble life, full of God's love, in all that we do. One of the most important selfless acts in our Christian life is looking out for the interest of others, which means keeping our eyes open to new opportunities, so that we might bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Humility promises unity, and if we are to have unity, we ought to look out for the interest of others, so that the life of Christ may also be revealed in our body.

Luke 18: 9 – 14,....he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous....two men went up into the temple to pray....a pharisee, and....a publican....the pharisee stood and prayed....with himself, God I thank thee that I am not as other men are....the publican, standing afar off....saying, God be merciful to me a sinner....this man went down to his house justified rather than the other....

Today's scripture starts out by addressing all those who are self-righteous, which are those who look down on others whom they see to be less spiritual than they are. This comes easy to those whose mind is not guided by the spirit of God. Without submission to God, we are prone to sin, which leads to self-righteousness that ignores the truth of God's word and puts worldliness above all else. This is because humanity feels the need to follow their heart, thinking that will bring them to make the right decisions in their life. Our worldly, emotional heart is not trustworthy, and any decision based upon our worldly emotions would be unwise.

Jeremiah 17: 9 – 10,....the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?....I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways....

As Christians, we so desperately try to understand why wickedness, and sinfulness in the world seems to be growing worse. Mans outward appearance can be quite deceiving, and even when we do not know the true content of our heart, God knows. Therefore, since only God can fully know and understand our heart, then we should ask him to search our hearts to see if we are trusting in anything other than the will of God.

Now let us move on to the parable which Christ taught concerning the true purpose of prayer. We see two men going into the temple to pray. One with great pride, and one with great humility. Pridefulness will cause people to pray as though they feel God owes them something, while humility brings about a sincerity and truthfulness, that leads to repentance. There are those who sincerely seek the Lord, and then there are those who use self-righteous insincerity to keep up their spiritual appearances for the sake of worldly recognition. We are all sinners, and all that we can do is to recognize our need for Gods mercy and grace, because without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of God. For this reason, we should, as Christians, understand that everyone needs forgiveness, and that we are not better than any other, even if we do feel that we are producing good works. God promises unto us, through his word, that if we recognize our need for forgiveness, then God will lift us up.

Proverbs 11: 12,....when pride cometh, then cometh shame, but with the lowly is wisdom....

Are there those who see no need for God in their lives, sure there are, and even as Christians, often time, overconfidence will allow self-righteousness to overcome the righteousness of God in our lives. We must avoid believing that we are the master of our own fate, which means that we cannot control the outcome of circumstances in our life, only God controls outcomes and destinations in our life, which are based upon the choices in which we make, that is a reflection of our obedience or disobedience to his word.

Proverbs 18: 12,....before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility....

Life itself is uncertain, but those who humbly seek to do Gods will, may achieve his purpose and plan in their life. We should never make prideful promises to God, because our pride will betray us, and like Peter who told Christ that he would lay down his life for his sake, Peter denied Christ, not once, but three times. As Christians, we must learn to correctly assign Gods priorities in our life, which can only come by the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit. These priorities which come by Gods given power and strength, begin with humility.

Proverbs 28: 26,....he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool, but whoso walketh unwisely, he shall be delivered....

If we do not submit unto God, then surely, we will sin, because when we ignore God, we are putting the worldly desires of our life above his will for us.

1 Corinthians 1: 19,....for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent....

Isaiah 29: 14,....for the wisdom of these wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid....

Worldly wisdom and knowledge make us ineffective in our godly reasoning, therefore, instead of relying on our own intellect for guidance in our life, we must learn to rely upon the wisdom and knowledge of the truth of Gods word.

Proverbs 30: 12,....there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness....

The result of a self-righteous frame of mind means thinking that we are morally and spiritually secure in Christ. But self-righteousness means a self-centered attitude that makes us unclean in the eyes of God. Self-righteousness usually comes from following after mans appointed religious ceremonies and rituals, which they promise will make us acceptable unto God, but it does just the opposite. Therefore, God requires us to do justly, to love his great mercy, and to walk humbly.

Micah 6: 8,....he hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Let us Pray.

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