

Mt. Lebanon Church

Adult Sunday School Lesson

1.21.2024

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.

A High Calling

Ephesians 4: 1 – 16

Our salvation is an act of God's goodness and grace, and it is God's desire that all who have received this free gift of salvation might come to understand the practical responsibilities of this gift and apply it to our daily practices. Our privileges in Christ are opportunities for practical living. Now, God does not equip each one with the same measure of grace, but we are given sufficient enough grace needed to live a life that glorifies God. This means that within our salvation comes spiritual gifts, and we are to exercise these spiritual gifts through helping one another, and as believers, build up, equip, encourage, comfort, and support the saints in their spiritual service within the body of Christ. Ideal training means placing the needs of others first, which means that in order to have the greatest impact possible, personal involvement is required. No one person should be put in a position where they are providing most of the work of the ministry in the congregation, for when this takes place, others do not serve, and the congregation's growth becomes stagnant. Sadly, the reality of this is common within the body of Christ, for many only want to be seen in recognition, with no responsibility of works. Therefore, we are to encourage one another, so that every believer is growing in their spiritual maturity and actively participating in serving in the body of Christ. For we are all apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. So, what is the reality of our calling, it is the measure of the gift of Christ given according to the measure of God's grace.

Ephesians 4: 1 – 7,....I....beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you were sealed....forbearing one another in love....endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit....there is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling....one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all....but unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ....

God wants us, as Christians, to apply our spiritual learning into our daily living. This means living our life honoring God's gift of grace, which would be living Christlike. Walking in a manner that is beneficial to our heavenly calling.

Acts 17: 28,....for in him we live, and move, and have our being....for we are his offspring....

We should be so concerned about the sinfulness and lack of spiritual maturity in this world, that it should motivate us more and more to share the goodness of Gods salvation with others. Even though God is not far from us, sin will still separate us from God. Therefore, we must always express our constant dependence upon him for he is the giver of life.

Luke 20: 38,....for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him....

Our strength, physical and spiritual, comes from God. Life is a gift, and we owe are existence to God. We are created by God, and in him all things come together, we cannot exist apart from him.

Hebrews 1: 3,....being the brightness of his glory....theimage of his person....upholding all things by the word of his power....by himself purged our sins, set down at the right hand of the majesty on high....

All that Christ has done, he did so that all of humanity might receive forgiveness of sins by faith believing on the name of the only begotten Son of God. Christ sustains all things by the power of his word and is now seated at the right hand of God waiting for the day when he will come again to receive us unto himself so that where he is, we may be also.

Ephesians 4: 8 – 12,....wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men....

Psalm 68: 18,....thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them....

Christ Jesus our Lord ascended into heaven after he rose victorious from the grave. Through his sacrificial death and his glorious resurrection, he paid the price for all sin, and broke the power of sin and death in the lives of all who would trust in him. Christ triumphed over everything that sought to overcome him. He took captive everything that enslaved all mankind from the beginning of time, and also all those things that sought to overwhelm God the Father as well. He defeated sin by living a sinless life, he and offered up his life blood as the full and final payment for all sin. He overcame the grave through his resurrection, and he secured our authority over sin, death, and hell. Because of Christ victory, God was enabled to bestow gifts on all those who would trust in him. These spiritual gifts and abilities are for the benefit of the body of Christ, which comes through the Holy Spirit of God.

Ephesians 4: 9,....now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth....

Here in this passage of scripture it does not say that Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth, it asks the question, did he descend into the lower parts of the earth. Now, this is the only scripture text in the word of God that speaks of this. Some say that it is speaking of the time when Christ first came to this earth, born as a human being. Others say it speaks of the time and place when Christ told the thief on the cross:

Luke 23: 43,....Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee, to day thou shalt be with me in paradise....

Then there are those who claim this scripture speaks of the time when Christ's body was laid in the tomb, (he descended into the grave), that is to say his body was put in a sepulcher.

John 19: 41 – 42,....a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid....there laid they Jesus....

1 Peter 3: 18 – 20,....he went and preached unto the spirits in prison....

Now, in this passage of scripture it states that he went and preached unto the spirits in prison. Some say this passage refers to the time when Christ body was in the sepulcher after the crucifixion and his spirit was preaching unto spirits in prison. Are these spirits those of the fallen angels that it speaks of in:

Jude 1: 6,....angels which kept not their first estate....reserved in everlasting chains....

Or are they the spirits of those that perished in the flood of Noah's day who were wicked, those who God destroyed by the flood.

Whatever the case may be, one thing we know for sure is that Christ, no matter what scenario we believe, that through the crucifixion and the resurrection, there is the proclamation of victory over all sinful wickedness and disobedience, and for this reason, we are to proclaim this victory while doing the work of the Lord, through the perfecting of the saints, through the preaching of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, which brings souls into the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4: 13 – 16,....till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man....that we....be no more....tossed to and fro....but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him....even Christ....from where the whole body fitly joined together....unto the edifying of itself in love....

Our ultimate goal, should be to bring all believers into the unity and knowledge of Christ, so that the body of Christ might grow in faith, and grow in spiritual maturity, with the understanding to preach the gospel of salvation to a lost and dying world, looking ever unto the coming of Christ for his church, this is our high calling in God.

Let us Pray.

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