

*Great Principles
In the Lives
Of
Old Testament Saints
(#1)*

13 Lessons

**Prepared by:
Paul E. Cantrell**

2004

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Lesson One

“THE GREAT OBEDIENCE OF NOAH”

INTRODUCTION

1. At one time in the history of the world:
 - a) The wickedness of man had become great.
 - b) His evilness & violence filled the earth.
 - c) His thoughts were only evil continually. (Gen. 6:5-7, 11-13)
2. God’s reaction:
 - a) He was greatly grieved by His sinful creatures.
 - b) He had feelings of deep regret for having created man.
 - c) He made a decision to destroy man from the earth.
3. But in the midst of this sin-filled earth was a Righteous man, Noah!
 - a) He was the 10th generation from Adam.
 - Born approximately 126 years after Adam’s death.
 - A contemporary of Enoch for approximately 84 years.
 - The son of Lamech.
 - Father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
 - b) He is described as:
 - Just, Perfect in his generation, and walked with God (Gen. 6:9)
 - Righteous. (Gen. 7:1)
 - Ezek. 14: 12-15, 17
4. God’s Decision:
 - a) He chose Noah to save man & beast from extinction.
 - b) To save Noah and his family—and certain animals.
 - c) The rest to be wiped off the face of the earth.
5. The Hebrew writer mentions Noah in Heb. 11:7.
 - a) It is in a long list of great men & women of faith.
 - b) This verse says much for us to think about.
 - c) Especially Noah’s great obedience.

DISCUSSION

I. HE TELLS US THAT OBEDIENCE COMES OUT OF FAITH.

A. “Noah being warned of God”

- 1) God warned Noah of the impending destruction.
- 2) The basis of Noah’s faith was NOT:
 - a) On something from his own mind.
 - b) Nor a leap in the dark with no reason or evidence to go on.
- 3) But, it was based on God’s Reliable Word!
- 4) God said:
 - a) Gen. 6:13—*“The end of all flesh is come before me....I will destroy them from the earth.”*

b) Gen. 6:17—***“I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.”***

c) And Noah believed God.

B. “being warned of things not seen as yet.”

1) God said He would do something never seen before.

a) Noah had no such experience to fortify his faith.

b) In fact, his lack of such would dictate against believing such.

2) If Noah believed, he would have to accept it because God said so.

a) Heb. 11:1—***“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”***

b) Faith is the basis of receiving our Hope.

c) Basis of our faith—the word of God.

d) Rom. 10:17

C. “moved with godly fear”

1) When one believes God, he has to act!

2) Noah was moved to act out of Awe, Reverence, and even terror of what God said He would do.

3) He respected the Word of God and acted upon it as directed.

D. “Prepared an ark”

1) Noah got busy carrying out God’s command to build an ark.

a) God gave instructions on how the Ark was to be built.

b) Gen. 6:22—***“Thus Noah did according to all that God commanded him, so he did.”***

2) Noah started on a gigantic undertaking.

a) A boat—525 feet long----87 feet wide----52 feet high.

b) What an undertaking for a handful of people.

3) Noah’s work was of long duration.

a) Take a long time to gather all the materials needed.

b) Possibly 120 years.

c) His faith did not waver.

4) Noah’s work would involve great expense.

a) Just imagine the great cost of such.

b) Yet....Noah willingly paid the price.

5) Noah’s faith was seen in action!

6) James 2:18—***“Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”***

II. OBEDIENCE BRINGS BLESSINGS.

A. “To the saving of his house.”

1) His obedient faith saved him & his family.

2) All others perished.

3) 1 Pet. 3:20—***“...wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.”***

4) Noah was already righteous before the flood.

5) But his continued faithfulness saved him & his family.

B. “became heir of righteousness which is according to faith.”

- 6) Man’s righteousness comes from a faith that conforms to God’s righteousness.
- 7) Not by a dead faith.

III. OBEDIENCE CONDEMNS THE DISOBEDIENT.

A. “By which he condemned the world”

- 1) Noah believed God and told others—he warned them.
- 2) Noah obeyed God—others did not.
- 3) His obedient faith condemned the world’s disbelief.

B. 2 Pet. 2:4-9

CONCLUSION

1. God announced the coming destruction on the world in Noah’s day.
2. He has also announced the destruction of this present heavens & earth.
3. Will we be like Noah:
 - a) Be moved by godly fear to believe the Word of God....
 - b) And act upon it by obeying God.
4. Or, will we be like the wicked people in Noah’s day?
 - a) Continue with life as usual....
 - b) Ignoring the warnings...
 - c) Refusing to believe and obey the Lord?

Lesson Two

“SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME”**INTRODUCTION**

1. QUESTIONS:

- a) Why are families having so many problems today?
 - b) What are some underlying reasons for these problems?
 - c) What makes a good father in your sight?
 - d) What motivates a man to be a good father?
 - e) Why are fathers important to the family?
2. These and other questions need to be asked and answer from the Word of God.
 3. Recent surveys are emphasizing the importance of the father in the home.
 - a) *“The personality and background of the husband, not the wife, were the important factors in the success of a marriage.”*
 - b) *“Studies of delinquency repeatedly indicate that fathers are more influential than mothers in the development of delinquent behavior in their children.”*
 - c) *“If the father attends church regularly, the children will be more likely to attend regularly—regardless of the mother’s attendance record.”*
 - d) *“Dad is destiny. More than virtually any other factor, a biological father’s presence in the family will determine a child’s success and happiness.”*
 4. We often emphasize the importance of mothers in the home, but fail to emphasize strongly enough the importance of fathers as well.
 5. God gave Abraham a great compliment when He said:
“I know he will command his children and household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment....” (Gen. 18:16-22)
 - a) This compliment was in regards to his spiritual leadership of his family.
 - b) That he will teach, instruct, train his children in the Lord’s way.
 6. This lesson—See the Value of Spiritual Leadership in the Home!

DISCUSSION**I. SHOWN BY PROPER ATTITUDES!*****A. Abraham’s attitudes:***

- 1) Towards God—Fear, Respect, Faith, Submissive.
- 2) Towards himself—Humility before God & others.
- 3) Towards others—Concern & care (Lot illustrates)

B. N.T. qualifications for spiritual leadership in church:

- 1) 1 Tim. 3:2—Temperate (patient), Hospitable to others
- 2) 1 Tim. 3:3—Not a brawler, not violent, not greedy for money, not quarrelsome.
- 3) 1 Tim. 3:6—Not prideful
- 4) Tit. 1:7—Not self-willed, not quick-tempered
- 5) Tit. 1:9—A lover of what is good, sober-minded, self-controlled

C. Application to fathers:

- 1) He should be the spiritual leader of the family.
- 2) His attitudes toward God, himself, and others should be correct.

- 3) To be a true spiritual leader—he must cleanse his heart of the wrong attitudes that undermine that leadership.
- 4) *“To lead without loving can be cruel, and to love without leading is a ‘cop out.’”*
- 5) A spiritual leader in the home should feel the weight of that responsibility.

II. SHOWN BY SETTING THE PROPER EXAMPLES IN HIS LIFE!

A. Abraham’s example:

- 1) He had proven himself to God in this regard.
- 2) God complimented his life (his example)
- 3) He was an example in his **faith, righteousness, integrity, devotion to God, and giving security to his family.**
- 4) What an impact Abraham’s faith must have had on Isaac when he was ready to offer him as a sacrifice unto God!

B. Needed examples of Spiritual Leaders in the church:

- 1) 1 Pet. 5:3—(Elders) *“nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock...”*
- 2) 1 Tim. 4:12—(Timothy) *“be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*
- 3) 1 Tim. 3:7—*“must have a good testimony among those who are outside....”*
- 4) Tit. 1:6—*“Blameless...”*
- 5) One who practices what he teaches.

C. Application to fathers:

- 1) A father cannot go wrong being a proper example to his family.
- 2) He should be a role model for his children.
- 3) To be a proper example requires:
 - a) Knowing who he is & where he is going (first & foremost).
 - b) To have definite goals that are considered important for all his family.
 - c) Instability in the home is directly related to the instability of the father.
- 4) The way a son treats his mother or sisters is learned from observing the example of the father.
- 5) Vital questions:
 - a) How courteous am I to my family?
 - b) What do I convey by my tone of voice?
 - c) Do I use crude language before others?
 - d) Do I talk disparagingly of others before your family?
 - e) Do I want my children to be like I am?
 - f) Do I lead my children or preach at them?
- 6) What an impact a good example can have!

III. SHOWN BY RULING WELL.

A. Abraham’s example:

- 1) *“I know he will command his children & household....”*
- 2) He certainly succeeded well in ruling his family.
- 3) Isaac followed in the footsteps of his father.

B. Qualifications of Spiritual Leaders in church:

- 1) 1 Tim. 3:4—**“One who rules his own house well...”**
 - a) He has his children in submission with all reverence.
- 2) Tit. 1:6—**“Having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.”**
- 3) Neither the church, nor the home, needs dictators like Diotrephes. (3 John 9-10)

C. Application to Fathers:

- 1) They need to be Spiritual Leaders in the home.
- 2) They need to rule out of love, consideration, and concern for the well-being of his family.
- 3) Poem—**Why did God Make Fathers?**
 God knew that children all would need someone secure and strong
 To shelter and protect them, and to teach them right from wrong....
 Someone to take pride in, and look up to as a guide,
 Someone they could count on, and in whom they could confide....
 He knew as children grew up, they'd need the reassurance of someone
 With faith and trust in them,
 Who would always give them love; and that is why God made fathers.
- 4) The father adds his part to the home to make it a place of:
 - a) Love, Joy, and Security.....
 - b) Not a place of Fear, Bruises, and Nightmares.
- 5) **“The best thing fathers can do for their children is to love their mother.”**
- 6) It emphasizes that all is right—all is well!

IV. SHOWN BY PROPER TRAINING & DISCIPLINE!**A. Abraham's training & discipline:**

- 1) God knew that he would do this work well.
- 2) He would teach and train his children in the way of the Lord.
- 3) Eli (High Priest in the time of Samuel) failed. (1 Sam. 3:13-14)

B. Qualifications of Spiritual Leaders in church:

- 1) Tit. 1:9-11 (Whole households can be led astray without proper spiritual leaders).
- 2) 1 Tim. 3:2—**“Able to teach.”**

C. Application to fathers:

- 1) Fathers must be involved deeply in training & discipline.
- 2) Eph. 6:4—**“bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”**
- 3) The book of Proverbs is full of this emphasis on the importance of training & discipline of children.
- 4) Spiritual Leadership in the home is a must!

CONCLUSION

1. Such a man will be honored by his family & friends.
2. When we appoint elders & deacons—we are giving recognition to fathers and the job they are doing or have done.
3. Are you a spiritual leader in your home?

Lesson Three

“THE RESPECTFULNESS OF SARAH”**INTRODUCTION**

1. Rom. 15:4—*“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”*
2. We need to look for the Great Principles in the lives of O. T. Saints!
3. The one we have chosen for this morning is “Sarah.” (1 Peter 3:1-7)
 - a) What can we learn from her?
 - b) What is she known for?

DISCUSSION**I. BASIC INFORMATION ON SARAH:*****A. Her original home & family situation:***

- 1) Ur of the Chaldees. (Gen. 11:31)
- 2) She lived with her father, Tereh. (Gen. 20:12)
- 3) Her name at first was, “Sarai” (contentious)
- 4) Abraham was a half-brother to Sarah. (Gen. 20:12)
- 5) They had the same father, but not the same mother. (Gen. 20:12)
- 6) She was 10 years younger than Abraham. (Gen. 17:17)

B. Her new home & family situation:

- 1) *She was married to Abraham before leaving Ur of the Chaldees. (Gen. 11:31)*
- 2) She was 65 as they came into Canaan.
- 3) She was said to be barren—unable to bear children.

II. THINGS FOR WHICH SHE WAS KNOWN:***A. Her Beauty.***

- 1) ***Gen. 12:11***—“And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, ‘Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance.’”
- 2) ***Even at the age of 65 plus, she was considered beautiful outwardly.***
 - a) *This was approximately mid-life for her.*
 - b) *Two different kings desired her because of her beauty.*
- 3) ***But there is no indication that her beauty “went to her head!”***
 - a) *In fact, the opposite seems to be the case!*
- 4) ***Challenge for women today:***
 - a) ***Don’t let your God-given beauty go to your head!***
 - b) ***Let your beauty be an inner beauty.***
 - c) ***1 Pet. 3:2-4***
 - ***Do not let your adornment be merely outward!***
 - ***Put your emphasis where it should be on the inner person.***
 - ***Have that true beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit.***

B. Her Respect for her Husband:

- 1) **1 Pet. 3:6**—“As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord....”
- 2) **She obeyed him!**
 - a) **Two times Abraham asked her to pose as his sister, not his wife.**
 - b) **He seemed to have had a lack of faith in God’s protection.**
 - c) **So, he compromised his wife’s honor to save his life.**
 - d) **God had to intervene in both cases to save further embarrassment or to Sarah.**
 - e) **But—she obeyed his wishes—even when undesirable.**
 - f) **She is held up as a model for godly women to follow.**
 - g) **God’s admonition to Christian women:**
 - **1 Pet. 3:1**—“be submissive to your own husbands...”
 - **Eph. 5:24**—“Just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”
- 3) **She called him lord!**
 - a) **This was a respectful term that denoted their relationship.**
 - b) **She recognized, respected, and encouraged his headship in their home.**
 - c) **The male ego is fragile & needs a woman’s help!**
- 4) **God’s challenge to women today:**
 - a) **1 Pet. 3:5**—“For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands.”
 - b) **Both the holy women of old set this example;**
 - c) **As well as Sarah!**

C. Her faith in God!

- 1) **God’s promise to Abraham & Sarah of descendants is repeated several times.**
 - a) **Gen. 12:2**—“I will make you a great nation...”
 - b) **Gen. 12:7**—“To your descendants I will give this land...”
 - c) **Gen. 15:5**—“Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them....so shall your descendants be.”
 - d) **But 10 years later—no child! (Gen. 16:3)**
- 2) **Sarah worked out a plan to fulfill God’s promise.**
 - a) **For Abraham to have a child by her handmaid (Hagar).**
 - b) **Abraham went along with the idea.**
 - c) **When Hagar was with child, she despised Sarah.**
 - d) **This caused Sarah to be jealous & resentful towards Hagar.**
 - e) **She treated her harshly & caused her to leave.**
 - f) **God called her back & she was submissive to Sarah.**
 - g) **Note: Sarah’s actions showed some faith in God’s promise.**
- 3) **God repeats his promise to Abraham & Sarah.**
 - a) **Abraham is 99 years old & Sarah is 89.**
 - b) **Gen. 17:19**—“Then God said: ‘No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.’”

- c) *Their reaction:*
 - *Abraham fell on his face and laughed. (v. 17)*
 - *Sarah also laughed in her heart, later, when she overheard the angels tell Abraham she would bear a son in 9 months. (18:12)*
- d) *God also changed their names:*
 - *Abram to Abraham—Father of many nations. (Gen. 17:5)*
 - *Sarai to Sarah—Mother of nations. (Gen. 17:16)*
- 4) *The promise of a son was fulfilled—Isaac was born.*
 - a) *She was 90 years old.*
 - b) *Her reaction, “God has made me laugh, so that all who hear will laugh with me.” (Gen. 21:6)*
- 5) *Her faith was enlarged.*
 - a) *In God’s own time, the promise was fulfilled.*
 - b) *Faith is built with patience—waiting on God’s time.*
 - c) *Heb. 11:11—“By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.”*
 - d) *She shared Abraham’s hope in God & his faith in the promises of God.*
 - e) *Through testing—her faith also became stronger in God.*

CONCLUSION

1. *Sarah is held up as an example to women in particular:*
 - a) *She had not only an outer beauty, but more important an inner beauty.*
 - b) *She was respectful of God’s arrangement of husband and wife.*
 - c) *God gave her time for her faith to grow strong like her husband’s.*
2. *How are you known:*
 - a) *By your husband?*
 - b) *By your children?*
 - c) *By your neighbors?*
3. *Great principles in the lives of O.T. saints are held up as examples for us today.*

Lesson Four

“THE SIN OF LOOKING BACK”**INTRODUCTION**

- 1) Genesis 19 records a most unusual event:
 - a) The overthrow and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha.
 - b) Their wickedness was so great...God’s wrath was poured out from heaven itself.
 - c) He rained **“brimstone and fire upon them.”**
- 2) But it was during the destruction of these cities that Jesus wants us to remember a person— Lot’s wife! (Luke 17:22-32)
 - a) The angels had ushered Lot and his wife and daughters out of the city.
 - b) They gave them a strong warning: **“Look not behind thee, lest thou be consumed.”**
 - c) As they were fleeing, Lot’s wife looked back, **“and she became a pillar of salt.”**
- 3) Warnings are given in the New Testament about remembering what God did with Sodom and Gomorrha (Jude 7; 2 Pet. 2:6).
4. But Jesus did not want us to forget another lesson from this destruction (Luke 17:32).
 - a) Jesus is saying Lot’s wife can teach us a very important lesson!
 - b) In fact, Lessons are abounding in this incident.

DISCUSSION**I. SHE WAS THE WIFE OF A GOOD MAN, YET PERISHED!*****A. Association with good people can be a great help to each of us.***

- 1) Lot was a righteous man (2 Pet. 2:8).
- 2) His righteous soul was vexed by their unlawful deeds.
- 3) And yet, in spite of his being there, the city was very wicked.
- 4) The city was destroyed in spite of his righteousness.

B. Being with righteous people does not guarantee that I will be saved!

- 1) Lot’s wife was with him, but she perished.
- 2) Demas associated with Paul as a fellow-laborer (Philemon 24).
- 3) Yet, he forsook Paul, having loved this present world (2 Tim. 4:10).
- 4) Judas was one of the 12 Apostles, yet was lost!

C. Each of us have our own responsibility before God to be righteous or be lost!**II. SHE WAS WARNED OF GOD, YET STILL PERISHED!*****A. The warning was:***

- 1) Explicit:
 - a) The city is to be destroyed.
 - b) The cry for vengeance could no longer be delayed.
 - c) The cup of iniquity was full.
- 2) Emphatic:
 - a) No doubt, it will happen.
 - b) Doom already decreed.
 - c) These messengers here to see to it.

3) Merciful:

- a) God gave them a chance.
- b) Even the ungodly sons-in-law to be!

B. Yet, in spite of such, she perished!

- 1) She perished in spite of PLAIN, SIMPLE, EMPHATIC warnings!
- 2) She was moved to do something, but not sufficient.

C. Mankind is being warned today of the coming judgment!

- 1) They are clear, simple and emphatic also!
 - a) Heb. 9:27
 - b) Rom. 14:12
 - c) Rev. 6:17
- 2) Will mankind also perish as Lot's wife did in spite of the warnings?

III. SHE PARTIALLY OBEYED, BUT PERISHED!

A. She made an effort to save herself.

- 1) She began to flee the city.
- 2) She separated herself from the wicked city.
- 3) But even after leaving the city, she perished!

B. God calls for full obedience to His will.

- 1) Gal. 5:7
 - a) They had begun well, but had stopped short.
 - b) They were in grave danger of losing their salvation.
- 2) Matt. 7:21-23
 - a) They were making efforts, but had not really done what God wanted.
 - b) They perished in spite of their partial efforts.

C. The Day of Judgment will be a day of rude awakening for many people.

IV. SHE WAS SEPARATED FROM THE WICKED CITY, YET STILL PERISHED!

A. She had been mercifully spared this terrible destruction.

- 1) The Angels had warned them.
- 2) They practically dragged them out of the city.
- 3) They were snatched out of the fire...literally.

B. But after all of this, she fell back!

- 1) Bodily, she was taken out.
- 2) But what about her heart?
- 3) Why did she look back?
- 4) Was her heart still back there with her home, goods, etc.?

C. Jesus was warning the Jews of the same dangers.

- 1) When the destruction of the city of Jerusalem begins....
 - a) Don't worry about your home, your goods, etc.;
 - b) Don't look back!!
 - c) Keep on fleeing—run for your life!
- 2) He warns us today of the same dangers (Heb. 10:38-39; 2:1-3).

V. SHE COMMITTED ONE SIN AND PERISHED!**A. Her offense....ONE LOOK....She looked back upon the cities!**

- 1) She looked back to that place where:
 - a) All her worldly goods were left.
 - b) Where any friends she had made were left.
 - c) Where her home was.

2) One look, but oh what that look tells us!

B. She disobeyed an implicit command of God.

- 1) Don't look back! Clear, easy to understand.
- 2) She openly defied God's command!

C. People today are being warned-- "Remember Lot's wife."

- 1) When God says you must **Believe** to be saved—Believe it! (John 3:16)
- 2) When God says you must **Repent** to be saved—Believe it! (Luke 13:3)
- 3) When God commands **Baptism** for the remission of our sins—Obey it!
- 4) When God warns us to be **Faithful** unto death to receive a crown—Believe it!
- 5) When God commands us to **Love One Another**—Do it!.....etc.

D. What makes us think that we will be an exception to what God commands or warns?

- 1) Luke 9:62
- 2) Let's not defy God's will.

E. Was God's punishment too severe?

- 1) Absolutely not—God does not do wrong.
- 2) We fail to realize a very vital fact:
 - a) One sin can condemn any of us to hell, if God so chooses!
 - b) It is not the number of sins that causes us to be lost, necessarily.
 - c) It is the **Attitude** of the Sinner.
- 3) Her sin was in the heart! The **look** only revealed what was in the heart!

CONCLUSION

1) There are so many lessons to learned:

- a) The danger of disobedience.
- b) The folly of delay in obeying God.
- c) Severity of Divine Judgment.
- d) Intensity of Divine displeasure against sin in the heart.
- e) Difficulty of saving a righteous man.
- f) Ability of the Lord to punish the sinner.
- g) Ability of looking back into the world.
- h) Possibility of being nearly saved, yet wholly lost.
- i) How the world rejects merciful warnings of God like Sodom and Gomorrha.
- j) We can be convinced, but not converted.
- k) We cannot serve God and Mammon.

2) Remember Lot's wife and don't make the same mistake she did!

- a) Flee the city of Sin.
- b) Its destruction has been decreed.
- c) When you flee to God & His salvation—don't look back!

Lesson Five

“ENOCH: WALKING WITH GOD”**INTRODUCTION**

- 1) The desert is full of life:
 - a) It has its oasis in midst of barren sands.
 - b) It has hundreds of plants and animals.
 - c) It can be made to bloom by: skillful use of water and hard work.
 - d) Not all is bad.
- 2) The Bible has its areas that are not quite so interesting.
 - a) Long genealogies (Gen. 5:1-32).
 - b) But in the midst of such is a **“Pearl of great price!”**
 - c) After a long list of genealogies, you come to verses 21-24.
 - d) A man who was different from the rest.
 - e) His name was Enoch....a man who walked with God.

DISCUSSION**I. LET’S LOOK AT ENOCH’S LIFE.*****A. It was a life of Faith.***

- 1) He believed that God existed in the midst of a disbelieving world.
- 2) Heb. 11:5-6
- 3) He was one who trusted in the promises of God.
- 4) He stood up and spoke out for righteousness (Jude 14-15).

B. It was a life of Walking with God.

- 1) True faith involves sincere obedience.
- 2) The Bible says Enoch **“walked with God!”**
 - a) It was an obedient life, but more.
 - b) It was a way of life—persistence—determination—progress unto the end.
 - c) And he lived this life in the midst of an evil & disobedient world!
- 3) We are called upon to walk with God today!
 - a) Such involves a negative.
 - It is to no longer walk in darkness (1 Jn. 1:5-6).
 - To turn our backs on the way of evil, sin, and wickedness.
 - b) Such involves a positive.
 - It is to continue to walk in the light (1 Jn. 1:7-9).
 - To listen to the Word of God, believe the Word of God, and to continually obey the Word of God (Rom. 12:1-2).
 - c) Enoch maintained his relationship with God by walking with God.
- 4) There are two walks in this life:
 - a) After the flesh (Gal. 5:19)
 - b) After the Spirit (Gal. 5:25).
 - c) Enoch walked after the Spirit!

C. It was a Life of Witnessing for God.

- 1) His life stood out like a sore thumb.
- 2) He stood firm for righteousness! (Jude 14-15)
- c) He fearlessly rebuked evil-doers.
- d) He was like his counter-part Elijah.

II. LET'S LOOK AT ENOCH'S REWARD.

A. Heb. 11:5

- 1) Great satisfaction in pleasing those we love or care about.
- 2) Our greatest desire today should be to please God (1 Cor. 10:31).
- 3) But when we please God, we often displease those who hate God.
- 4) Jn. 15:18-25
- 5) Was Enoch hated by the world of his day?

B. Heb. 11:5

- 1) In the midst of a dis-believing world:
 - a) God acted to give testimony to His reality.
 - b) He showed the reward of righteousness.
 - c) He proved that man will live after this life is over.
 - d) He foretold of the resurrection of Christ.
- 2) A godly saint has been taken home.
 - a) His reward is our assurance.
 - b) If our faith is strong enough to walk with God:
 - We too will be rewarded
 - We too will be raised or changed into a glorious body (Phil. 3:21)

III. OUR NEED TODAY.

A. We need to walk closely with God.

- 1) By believing in Him and trusting His promises.
- 2) By becoming His child by obedience to the gospel.
- 3) By living a sincere, obedient life in fellowship with Him.
- 4) Refraining from walking after the flesh and lusts of the world.....
- 5) Following after the teachings of God's Spirit.

B. We need to also speak for God in the midst of our disobedient world.

- 1) Not only by a godly life.
- 2) But by getting involved with people—loving, helping, and encouraging them.
- 3) By rebuking the evil about us.
- 4) By telling the “good news” about Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

- 1) Our reward is stated clearly (John 11:26).
- 2) Only those who walk with God like Enoch have this assurance.
 - a) Do you have it?
 - b) Do you want it?

Lesson Six

“JOB: THE IDEAL MAN”INTRODUCTION

- 1) Living righteously is important because:
 - a) It has the promise of life (Prov. 12:28).
 - b) It means security (Prov. 13:6).
 - c) It brings peace (Isa. 32:17).
 - d) It is the only way to enter the kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 5:20).
- 2) We need to understand whom God says is righteous, or is walking in the way of righteousness in order to have the benefits of such.
 - a) Through obedience to the gospel, we become servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:16-18)
 - b) As a servant, we live as God decrees.
 - c) We must avoid trying to substitute our own ways for God’s ways (Rom. 10:1-3).
- 3) Job becomes a good example of one who was righteous before God.

DISCUSSION**I. THE REWARDS OF LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY*****A. His home conditions were very pleasant (Job 29:1-6)***

- 1) God had greatly preserved him.
- 2) God’s light had been shed down upon him in great blessings.
 - a) Constant contact with God through worship and service.
 - b) Whatever he put his hand to—it prospered.
- 3) He attributes these all to God.
- 4) Note especially the phrase: ***“When my children were about me...”***
 - a) No greater blessing to a man (after the fellowship with God).....
 - b) Than, a home life filled with Joy, pleasant Memories, and Pleasures to the soul.
 - c) Than, to have a loyal mate with which to share life.
 - d) Than, to have loving and obedient children with which to share all you have and are.

B. He was greatly respected in the community in which he lived also (Job 29:7-11).

- 1) Background:
 - a) Job was evidently father of a large family.
 - b) He had much possessions.
 - c) He served not only as head, but as chief magistrate in his clan.
- 2) He was highly respected by the young.
 - a) They were very courteous toward him.
 - b) They were conscious of his greatness and retired into the background in his presence.
- 3) Even older men showed courteous respect to him.
 - a) Dignity shown to one of high esteem or position.
 - b) They stood as he entered.

- 4) Well-to-do showed respect also.
 - a) Silence shows respect.
 - b) They would stop their talking in his presence.
- 5) General response of all (verse 11).
- 6) Job had a sense of usefulness and respect that all men seek.

II. REASONS FOR THEIR HIGH ESTEEM....JOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A. He delivered the poor and needy (verses 12-13).

- 1) He heard the poor man cry for help when oppressed by his neighbor.
- 2) He listened attentively to the orphan who was in distress.
- 3) He heard the broken-hearted widow in her dire distress.
- 4) His ear was not turned even away from the outcast when cold, naked, and hungry.
- 5) He had:
 - a) An ear for every cry of injustice and need.
 - b) A heart open to every sorrow.
 - c) A hand to reach out to the needy.
- 6) His compassion was poured out to the defenseless and poor.
- 7) In all of these matters, he was a good and just man.
- 8) No wonder, the people esteemed him so highly.

B. No effort was too great to see justice done (verses 14-17).

- 1) He took pains to understand their complaint.
- 2) If not satisfied, he persisted until wrongs had been made right.
- 3) He was thorough, and therefore successful.
 - a) In delivering the poor, fatherless, widow.....
 - b) And helping the mistreated who cried to him.
- 4) All knew he stood for justice and fairness!
 - a) Whether a man was rich or poor, all knew where he stood.
- 5) So just had been his decisions....He had gained the good opinion and high respect of all.

CONCLUSION

- 1) Jas. 1:27
- 2) Job's example of righteousness shall not have been recorded in vain.
 - a) Surely we can take courage from such a man.
 - b) Such a life deserves to be placed in such a sacred place to be a strong motivation to us all.
- 3) What about your life or mine:
 - a) Have we become a servant of righteousness through obedience?
 - b) Are we continue to walk in God's way of righteousness day by day?

Lesson Seven

“MOSES: FAITHFUL TO THE END”INTRODUCTION

1. An overview of Moses' life (Exo. 2:11-15).
 - a) Up to 40 years old:
 - 1) A Prince in Egypt.
 - 2) His future looked very good as an Egyptian.
 - 3) But he had a problem—His people were being mistreated.
 - 4) He made an effort to help them—had to flee for his life.
 - b) From 40-80 years old:
 - 1) He fled into the land of Midian....and wound up tending sheep.
 - 2) Got married....had children.
 - 3) He was learning, growing, developing to be used by God.
 - 4) At 80—He was called by God to deliver His people.
 - c) From 80-120 years old:
 - 1) He led the people out of bondage.
 - 2) He was God's prophet to Israel during the 40 years of wandering.
 - 3) God gave the Law through Moses to the people.
 - 4) A new generation was readied to go in & possess the promised land
2. Observations:
 - a) God used Moses up to the end of his life.
 - b) Heb. 3:1-2—***“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all his house.”***
 - c) The name of Moses is still a household word all over the world after 3500 years.
 - d) Why? Because he was faithful!

DISCUSSION**I. THE CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIANS:**

- A. Heb. 6:1—*Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God....*”**
 - 1) Our life is not over—until it is over!
 - 2) Rev. 2:10—***“Be faithful unto death...”***
 - 3) Our potential for service never ends unless we quit!
- B. Men & women of mature faith do affect the world around them.**
 - 1) Matt. 19:26—***“...with men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”***
 - 2) Matt. 17:20—***“...nothing shall be impossible unto you.”***
 - 3) Our effectiveness is limited because of unbelief!
 - 4) We have much to offer to contribute to a better world.
 - 5) We shouldn't give up on ourselves—Because God doesn't!

C. Emphasis is upon “Faithfulness.”

- 1) Full of Faith...making full use of our faith!
 - a) 2 Cor. 7:1—**“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”**
 - b) Develop to our fullest potential of usefulness.
- 2) Also, the idea of dependability.
 - a) Col. 2:6-7—**“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”**
 - b) The opportunities for growth in Christ are unlimited.
- 3) As well, the idea of stickability.
 - a) Rev. 3:15-16—**“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.”**
 - b) Not up & down, not wishy-washy, but constantly growing & serving.
- 4) Moses was faithful to the end.
- 5) So should we be faithful to the end.
- 6) Heb. 3:14—**“For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end.”**

II. IS THERE RETIREMENT TIME FOR THE CHRISTIAN!**A. *There is always room for growth.***

- 1) We haven’t become perfect yet!
- 2) Spiritually, we start out as babes in Christ. (1 Pet. 2:2)
- 3) But at what age do we quit growing, learning, serving?

B. *If Christ is enthroned in our hearts, we can’t help but keep growing.*

- 1) He is Lord of my life—I keep submitting to His Will.
- 2) Moses never got to the place of retiring as a servant of God.
- 3) The apostle Paul did not either.
 - a) Phil. 3:12—**“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”**
- 4) Just before his death, he could say: (2 Tim. 4:6-8)
- 5) DEATH is the Retirement time for the Christian!

C. *The Christian life is one of “Always becoming.”*

- 1) The best may still be ahead!
- 2) The height of my service to God may yet be greater.

CONCLUSION

1. Who knows—what greater service I may be able to give to God in years ahead?
 - a) My desire to be used of God can be greater.
 - b) My worship may become more meaningful & devout.
 - c) My efforts to reach out to others may become more effective.
 - d) My faith in God's promises may give me more peace of mind.
2. Our challenge:
 - a) On unto perfection!
 - b) To pray that our potential in Christ will continue to grow.
 - c) That our lives may have a greater impact for good in this world.
3. How is your faithfulness?

Lesson Eight

“THE ZEAL OF PHINEHAS”

INTRODUCTION

- 1) Background to this event (Num. 25:1-13).
 - a) Israel had wandered in the wilderness for almost 40 years.
 - b) It was about time to conquer the land and possess it.
 - c) They gradually made their way up the west side of the Jordan to begin the efforts.
 - d) But they had to pass by the Land of Moab.
- 2) The hindrances of the Moabites.
 - a) They invited Israel to the sacrifices of their gods.
 - b) The men committed fornication with the Moabite women.
- 3) The Lord’s anger was raised against Israel.
 - a) They should have known better.
 - b) Something needed to be done quickly.
 - c) Drastic action was called for.
- 4) The drastic action was—to kill all who had joined themselves to the worship of Baal-Peor.
 - a) 24,000 were slain that day by the judges over Israel.
 - b) A terrible price to pay for their disobedience.
- 5) The Zeal of Phinehas.
 - a) The people were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.
 - b) An Israelite man with a Midianite woman walked up before them all.
 - c) As though nothing had happened.
 - d) Phinehas took a javelin and killed them both.
 - e) And the plague was stopped among the Israelites.
- 6) These actions may sound quite gruesome to us today.
 - a) But don’t be too quick to judge this before you know the facts.
 - b) A closer look may help better understand why God highly commended Phinehas’ actions.

DISCUSSION

I. WHY DID GOD COMMEND PHINEHAS’ ACTIONS?

A. It was not because:

- 1) Phinehas enjoyed slaying these two people.
- 2) Nor because God told him directly to kill them.
- 3) God had commanded the Judges to kill such.
- 4) Why didn’t they kill this man and the woman?
 - a) He was a prince among them.
 - b) She was a princess among her people.
- 5) So, Phinehas quickly took action to stop the plague.

B. He was commended because:

- 1) It was a righteous, holy, impulse of his heart that he expressed.
 - a) He showed openly his zeal for God against open sin.

- b) Num. 25:11—“...*has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal.*”
- c) Num. 25:13—“...*because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.*”
- 2) The glory, honor, dignity, and holiness of God was being openly challenged.
 - a) These two were daring, shameless, and presumptuous in their actions.
 - b) Such needed immediate action or the plague would continue.
 - c) So, Phinehas acted fearlessly and promptly under the impulse of zeal for God.
- 3) It pleased God to see Phinehas’ hatred of sin & desire to see its consequences end.
- 4) Because His actions were without personal motives.
 - a) He had nothing to gain by his actions.
 - b) His concern was for his own people.
 - c) And for the Holiness of God.

II. THE OUTCOME OF PHINEHAS’ ACTIONS.

A. The plague was stopped.

- 1) The last of the open rebellion against God was stopped.
- 2) God’s righteousness was upheld.
- 3) The wrath of God was turned away from the rest of the people.

B. God’s promise to Phinehas.

- 1) Num. 25:12-13—“*Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood...’*”
- 2) God’s full stamp of approval was given to Phinehas’ actions.

C. Observations:

- 1) Phinehas became a type of Christ.
- 2) He foreshadowed the actions of God against sin.
 - a) Christ’s death for sin shows God’s zeal against sin.
 - b) It also showed God’s desire for sin to cease.
- 3) Jesus’ primary mission was not to punish sinners.
 - a) Sinners needed a redeemer.
 - b) He came to be that redeemer—to die in our place.
 - c) In doing so—He showed His zeal against sin also.
 - d) And His love for the sinner.
- 4) Phinehas was a rare man for his time.

III. GOD CALLS UPON HIS PEOPLE TODAY TO BE ZEALOUS.

A. Not to express zeal in the wrong way!

- 1) Not be zealous in sin & sinning.
- 2) Not be zealous in causing trouble.
- 3) Not be zealous in criticism of others.
- 4) Not be zealous in making excuses for not doing the Will of God.
- 5) Not be zealous to uphold religious error, false doctrine, or false religions.
- 6) Rom. 10:1-3

B. He wants us to be zealous in upholding His Holiness.

- 1) Not in the way Phinehas did—but with the spirit of Phinehas.
- 2) To be zealous for God’s sake among us.
- 3) To bring glory and not shame to His Name.

C. He wants us to be zealous in Keeping away from sin.

- 1) 1 Cor. 3:16-17
- 2) Our body is holy—it is the Temple of the Holy Spirit.
- 3) We are not to defile it.
- 4) We are to be zealous in this effort.
- 5) To do so brings honor to the Lord.

D. He wants us to be zealous in good works.

- 1) He wants our lives filled with good works.
- 2) Tit. 3:14—“...to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.”
- 3) Tit. 2:14—“...zealous for good works.”
- 4) 1 Cor. 15:58—“...always abounding in the work of the Lord...”
- 5) 1 Cor. 14:12—“Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.”

CONCLUSION

1. Lack of zeal can cause:
 - a) Our lives to lose their attractiveness to draw people to Christ.
 - b) Our spiritual lives to deteriorate till there is nothing left but a shell.
 - c) Our worship assemblies will become formal rituals.
 - d) The activity of the church to become nothing more than keeping house.
2. What can motivate such great zeal?
 - a) Careful study of these great Bible examples.
 - b) The willingness to give ourselves to a greater cause than ourselves. (Rom. 12:1)
 - c) Keep remembering what we have been saved from and unto.
 - d) Develop proper respect, reverence, and honor for the Holiness of God.
3. Zeal involves more than an enthusiastic outlook.
 - a) Such is necessary—We need proper outlook towards God & His Work.
 - b) But it has to involve actually doing something—like Phinehas!
4. May it be said of us---“***Your zeal has provoked very many!***”

Lesson Nine

“GREAT PERSEVERENCE OF GIDEON”INTRODUCTION

1. Background (Judges 7:1-7).
 - a) The Midianites oppressed Israel for 7 years because of Israel’s wickedness.
 - b) Finally, Israel cried unto the Lord for deliverance.
 - c) Gideon was chosen to lead the people to victory over their oppressors.
 - d) Israel’s 32,000 gathered against the 135,000 of the Midianites to do battle.
2. The testing by God:
 - a) **“Gideon, you have too many soldiers.”**
 - The odds of over 4 to 1 was bad enough.....
 - Now, God says, you have too many!
 - b) But God had a reason for thinning Gideon’s army.
 - Judges 7:2—**“The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’”**
 - c) We can see the Grace of God being demonstrated.
 - They couldn’t defeat them by themselves.
 - If they are delivered, it will be by the Grace of God.
 - But their deliverance depended upon an obedient faith that persevered.
3. God trimmed down the size of Gideon’s army.
 - a) 22,000 sent away from the battle area.
 - b) 9,700 were also sent away from the battle area.
 - c) Only 300 left.
 - d) Judges 7:7—**“By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand.”**
4. God’s encouragement to Gideon.
 - a) He allowed Gideon to slip down quietly into the camp of the Midianites and overhear a dream and its interpretation.
 - b) Judges 7:13-15
5. The victory.
 - a) 300 men ringed the camp of the Midianites.
 - b) They broke their water pitchers to show their lights.
 - c) They blew their trumpets.
 - d) And cried, **“The Sword of the Lord and Gideon.”**
 - e) The Midianites fled, killing each other in the confusion.
 - f) Gideon called for the men of Israel to help overtake the fleeing enemy.
 - g) 120,000 were slain.
 - h) The 15,000 left were pursued by Gideon & his 300 men.
 - They were hungry, thirsty, and faint.
 - Yet, the victory was in sight—so they persevered---The battle was won!

DISCUSSION**I. OBSERVATIONS:****A. Look at God's part in this victory.**

- 1) He delivered them.
- 2) He fought for them.
- 3) He did for them, what they could not do for themselves.

B. Look at man's part in this victory.

- 1) They had to have FAITH in God's promise to deliver them.
 - a) 300 against 135,000!
 - b) Quite a challenge to believe such.
- 2) They had to have COURAGE in the face of such over-whelming odds.
- 3) They had to be steadfast, persistence in their efforts until job was finished.
- 4) And God gets the glory!
- 5) Man has no room to boast!

C. An important lesson:

- 1) The forces of evil may appear to be of great magnitude & strength.
- 2) Especially, when we look at such with fear & unbelief.
- 3) Such makes evil appear invincible.
- 4) But such is not the case.
- 5) Thru faith in God—the odds are literally reversed!

II. GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO BE PERSISTENT!**A. Persistent in Faith.**

- 1) Col. 1:23—*“Continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.”*
- 2) Our gravest dangers are....FEAR & UNBELIEF!
- 3) Heb. 3:12—*“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”*

B. Persistent in Service to God.

- 1) Acts 2:42—*“Continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”*
- 2) Only the persistent (steadfast ones) will be rewarded by God.
- 3) Heb. 3:14—*“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”*

C. Persistent in Prayer and Praise to God.

- 1) Col. 4:2—*“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”*
- 2) 1 Thess. 5:17—*“Pray without ceasing.”*
- 3) Heb. 13:15—*“By Him therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.”*
- 4) Persistency is the watchword of the committed Child of God.

D. Persistent in our purpose to bear fruit.

- 1) Gal. 6:9—*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”*
- 2) John 15:5—*“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”*
- 3) The early church understood this concept.

- 4) Acts 5:42—“*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*”
- 5) Acts 6:7—“*And the word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly...*”
- 6) Col. 1:23—“*Gospel....which is preached to every creature under heaven.*”

CONCLUSION

1. Victory is assured to the persistent believer in Christ.
2. 1 Cor. 15:57-58

Lesson Ten

“JEPHTHAH: THE BOY THAT MADE GOOD”**INTRODUCTION**

- 1) Many people and things touch our lives.
 - a) Our hearts go out to people in sympathy and often pity.
 - b) One of the most obvious—a boy or girl that seemingly is denied a chance to make good in life.
 - c) Our hearts go out to them and we even root for them in their struggles.
 - d) We hope they can make good in spite of their situation.
 - e) We rejoice with them in their victories.
 - f) We root for the “under-dog.”
 - g) So many books and stories have been written about such people. (Cinderella)
- 2) The Bible is no exception to success stories.
 - a) Our study is about a boy seemingly without a chance that made good.
 - b) How, in spite of his obstacles, he came out victorious in the struggle.
 - c) Study is about Jephthah who became a judge in Israel.

DISCUSSION**I. THE OBSTACLES IN HIS LIFE*****A. He had a bad beginning.***

- 1) A child born out of wedlock.
- 2) It was an age of licentiousness and idolatry among Israel.
- 3) He was denied a normal home situation with good memories of parents.

B. He was denied his inheritance.

- 1) Because of his birth, he was not allowed to inherit with others.
- 2) He was robbed of any material advantages from his parents.
- 3) And...not for any grave sin of his own, but his father's sin.

C. He was even driven from what home he had.

- 1) He had to be on his own early in life—without help.
- 2) Little opportunity, if any, to work at honest labor for a living.
- 3) Lonely—no one to really be concerned about him.
- 4) No friends, no money, bleak outlook.
- 5) Evil influences began gathering about him.
- 6) Finally, he was made head over these kind of men.

II. LET'S LOOK AT HIS TRIUMPH OVER HIS OBSTACLES***A. He evidently had made the best of his situation.***

- 1) He was respected by the men he was with because of it.
- 2) He came to a leadership position among them.
- 3) Others knew of his attainments also.

B. As a result, he was later offered a greater opportunity.

- 1) In time of national distress, he was called upon to deliver his people.
- 2) His own people—who had run him out—now was calling him back.

- 3) He could have brooded over the wrong done him, but he refused.
 - a) He followed the admonition that we are given.
 - b) Rom. 12:19

C. He accepted the task and succeeded.

- 1) Their confidence and judgment in him were justified.
- 2) He did not allow his own hurt to stand in the way of great things to be done for his country.
- 3) He rose above his hurt to accept a greater challenge.
- 4) God richly blessed his efforts and he won!

D. He judged Israel for 6 years after this—ruled over the very people who at one time had disinherited him.

- 1) He died and was buried in his native land.
- 2) He is given in the list of OT worthies (Heb. 11:32-34).

III. LESSONS FOR US TO LEARN

A. Men often judge others upon basis of their misfortune, rather than from their Personal misdeeds.

- 1) Jephthah's brothers put him out.
- 2) Not because of what he had done, but what their father had done.
- 3) Jas. 2:9, 12-13

B. Heredity and Environment do not have to determine our destiny.

- 1) An obvious example of one rising above both.
- 2) We cannot blame our problems and our failures on any but ourselves.
- 3) Jas. 1:12
- 4) The real man or woman in life is the one that can overcome his disadvantages.
- 5) My faithfulness to the lord is not determined by this church.
 - a) If no one here did right—I must!
 - b) My faith must not depend upon whether this church treats me right or not.
 - c) But upon Jesus Christ and what He had done for me.

C. The things that we feel to be against us may be actually for our advantage.

- 1) Jephthah may never have received such a distinct honor of leading his people unless his circumstances had been what they were.
- 2) God is able to work out even the worse things for our good (Rom. 8:28).
- 3) Men continually give honor to those who have shown a zealous spirit.
 - a) To make something of themselves out of bad conditions (Rom. 13:7).
- 4) Our country prides itself on having Presidents that were born in poor conditions—but rose to the highest office.

D. He recognized God in his victory over the enemy.

- 1) Judges 12:3
- 2) How many would have at once swollen with self-conceit?
- 3) His rise to position and victory was a test of Jephthah's character.
- 4) He gave God the glory—He was not ashamed to do so freely.

E. Every man has a change with God.

- 1) Ancestral sins do not exclude.
- 2) Society's scornful attitude need not hinder.

- 3) While men may persecute unjustly, God will bless (Matt. 5:11).
- 4) God accepts all who truly in penitence and faith come to Him (Acts 10:34-35).

CONCLUSION

- 1) God believes in us.
 - a) He gives us every opportunity to become his child.
 - b) And....to make something of ourselves to His glory.
 - c) And....to be happy, at peace, useful, and hopeful.
- 2) But, only you can determine if that faith in you is in vain.
- 3) Meet the challenge—rise to greater service!

Lesson Eleven

“THE GREAT RESPECT OF RUTH”INTRODUCTION

1. Brief story of Ruth (Ruth 1:8-18).
 - a) It was the time of the Judges, about 1300-1400 BC
 - b) A famine had struck in the land of Israel.
 - c) Elimelech & Naomi, with two sons, left and went into Moab.
 - d) While there—Elimelech died.
 - e) The two sons married Moabitish women: Orpah & Ruth.
 - f) And then, the two sons died.
 - g) Naomi decided to go back home, since the famine had ceased.
 - h) She encouraged her two daughters-in-laws to go back to their parents.
 - 1) Orpah reluctantly did return to her family.
 - 2) Ruth would not—was determined to stay with Naomi.
2. Ruth must have been an important person to God.
 - a) The whole book is written to extol her.
 - b) She is shown to be in the lineage of David—thus, Jesus also.
 - c) The book shows many good virtues of Ruth.
 - d) But the one we want to look at is her **RESPECT**.
3. God’s people need to be characterized as respectful people.

DISCUSSION**I. SOME WAYS RUTH SHOWED RESPECT.*****A. She wanted to stay with her mother-in-law.***

- 1) Her husband had died.
- 2) Orpah reluctantly went back home. **(1:14)**
- 3) But Ruth was adamant about not leaving her. **(1:16-17)**

B. She listened to the advice of her mother-in-law.

- 1) **(2:22)**
 - a) The advice was for her safety and her virtue.
 - b) She listened and obeyed!
- 2) **(3:1-4)**
 - a) Naomi wanted to find a husband for her.
 - b) She told her what to do in order for that to be possible.
 - c) She listened and obeyed.

C. She was respectful of the customs & laws of Israel.

- 1) **(3:5)**
 - a) She recognized that this was the correct way among Jews.
 - b) She willingly conformed to their customs & laws.

D. She was respectful of God’s Laws of Marriage & Moral purity.

- 1) **(3:8-11)**
 - a) She conformed to God’s Law and was praised & blessed.

II. AREAS IN WHICH WE NEED TO SHOW RESPECT.**A. *To the Divine & Divine things.***

- 1) 1 Tim. 1:17—*“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”*
- 2) 2 Pet. 1:17—*“For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”*
- 3) Isa. 42:21—*“The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law and make it honorable.”*

B. *Human authorities.*

- 1) Human Governments (Rom. 13:1)
- 2) Employers (1 Tim. 6:1).
- 3) Husbands (Eph. 5:33).
- 4) Elders (1 Thess. 5:12-13).
- 5) Rom. 13:7—*“Honor to whom honor is due.”*

C. *Humans specifically and in general.*

- 1) Rom. 12:10—*“...in honor preferring one another.”*
- 2) 1 Pet. 2:17—*“Honor all men.”*
- 3) 1 Pet. 3:7—*“Giving honor unto the wife.”*
- 4) Lev. 19:32—*“Thou shalt rise up before the aged, and honor the face of the old man.”*
- 5) 1 Tim. 5:3—*“Honor widows that are widows indeed.”*

III. REWARDS PROMISED TO THE RESPECTFUL.**A. *Ruth:***

- 1) She found a very desirable home.
- 2) She found the true God of heaven to worship & serve.
- 3) She found a husband who would care for her.
- 4) She was blessed to have the son that was in the lineage of Jesus.

B. *For us today:*

- 1) We can be vessel unto honor. (2 Tim. 2:20-21)
- 2) God honors those who honor Him. (Ps. 15:4)
- 3) God honors those who honor His Son by serving Him. (Jn. 12:26)
- 4) Those who show respect for wisdom will be honored. (Prov. 4:8)

CONCLUSION

1. How much we need to have a society where there is RESPECT:
 - a) For one another;
 - b) For what belongs to others.
2. A society that:
 - a) Ceases to show respect of persons;
 - b) And shows respect for all persons.
3. The church needs to set the example before the world of such.
4. Do we show respect for God, His Son, and His word?
5. We show it by your actions!

Lesson Twelve

“THE GREAT COURAGE OF ELIJAH”**INTRODUCTION**

1. Rom. 15:4—*“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”*
2. We want to briefly look at the Life of a great O.T. Prophet! (1 Kings 18:15-25)
3. Background :
 - a) The Northern Kingdom of Israel had gone into deep idol worship.
 - b) King Ahab had married Jezebel.
 - c) She was a foreigner, idolatrous, and strong-headed!
 - d) She effectively brought in the idol worship of Baal.
 - e) She had prophets of God slain—except for Elijah & a few that Obadiah had hid.
 - f) She then appointed 450 prophets of Baal.
4. God sent Elijah to call all Israel to Mt. Carmel.
 - a) There was to be a contest between God & Baal.
 - b) Purpose: To see which one was the True God.
 - c) Ground rules were laid down for the contest.
 - d) All agreed that whichever God answered was the true God.
5. You know the outcome!
 - a) The prophets of Baal availed nothing after hours of calling on Baal.
 - b) Then Elijah called upon God—and He answered!
 - c) 1 Kings 18:38—*“Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trenches.”*
 - d) The people acknowledged that the Lord was the True God.
 - e) He had the people to kill the 450 prophets of Baal. (v. 40)

DISCUSSION**I. LET’S LOOK AT THE COURAGE OF ELIJAH!**

- A. He stood alone to uphold the true God.**
 - 1) No one stood with him.
 - 2) Everyone was wanting his death.
 - 3) He stood against the King, the People, and 450 prophets of Baal.
 - 4) But in reality, he was not alone!
 - 5) God was with him to give him confidence, courage, and strength.
- B. He called upon the people to take their stand for God.**
 - 1) 1 Kgs. 18:21—*“And Elijah came to all the people and said, ‘How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.’ But the people answered him not a word.”*
 - 2) The odds were too high for them to take their stand for God.
 - 3) They did agree to let the contest determine which was the true God.
 - 4) And at the end, they did acknowledge that the Lord was God.

- 5) 1 Kgs. 18:39—*“And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and said, ‘The Lord, He is the God: the Lord, he is the God.’”*
- C. *Elijah was threatened by Jezebel and had to flee for his life.*
- 1) Elijah said to God: *“I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel had forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.”* (1 Kgs. 19:14)
 - 2) The Lord reminded Elijah: *“Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”*
 - 3) So, some still had the courage, strength & backbone to believe in God.

II. A LOOK AT TWO EARLY CHRISTIANS WHO HAD COURAGE!

A. The Apostle Paul had a backbone:

- 1) 1 Thess. 2:2—*“But even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict.”*

B. Stephen had a backbone:

- 1) Not only to speak the truth boldly, but to pray for his persecutors.

C. The Hebrew writer encourages God’s people:

- 1) Heb. 13:6—*“So that we may boldly say, ‘The Lord is my helper, and will not fear what man shall do unto me.’”*

D. The Christian life is a challenge because:

- 1) We have subtle enemies to be faced (Eph. 6:10-13).
- 2) Because it takes strength & backbone to hold to God’s Truth in the face of the majority who do not believe!

III. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN STANDING FOR GOD & HIS TRUTH?

A. Having a strong faith—trust in God.

- 1) If God says a thing—that is final!
 - a) If He calls the Bible His Inspired Word—then that is it!
 - b) If He says that Jesus is His Son—Deity—then that is it!
 - c) If He says that Salvation is only through Jesus—Then that is it!
 - d) If He says that there is only One Church—Then that is it!
 - e) If He commands (Baptism) Immersion to be saved—then that is it!
- 2) Men will call upon us to compromise these great truths from God.
 - a) We must take courage, be strong, and hold fast to His Truth.
 - b) We need to speak that truth with confidence—God said it!

B. It involves the living of that truth.

- 1) We will live godly lives regardless of what it may cost us.
- 2) *“If you love me, keep my commandments”*---And we keep them!
- 3) To be true to God—we must be willing to pay the price.
- 4) The greatest price—is a denial of our self (Matt. 16:24-26).
- 5) With courage—we can walk with God in righteousness.

- 6) Rev. 3:4—***“You have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”***

CONCLUSION

1. Is it worth taking a stand for God & His Truth?
 - a) To be ridiculed, made fun of, shunned?
 - b) To be verbally & physically abused?
 - c) Having to give up family, friends, jobs, possessions, etc.?
2. Is the rewards sufficient to encourage me to take this courageous stand?
 - a) Rom. 8:18—***“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”***
 - b) Rev. 3:5—***“He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.”***
3. How is our courage—our backbone?
4. Are we holding to God and His Truth—no matter what?
5. Do we uphold & encourage the teaching of such truths?

Lesson Thirteen

“THE BROTHERLY SPIRIT OF JONATHAN”

INTRODUCTION

1. A brotherly spirit is greatly to be desired by God’s people.
 - a) The very term, Brother, suggests closeness.
 - b) And the emphasis of Scripture is that **“We be Brethren!”**
 - c) That we are brothers and sisters in the Family of God.
2. A great example of this spirit is seen between Jonathan & David.(1 Sam. 18)
 - a) **“The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David.”**
 - b) **“Jonathan loved him as his own soul.”**
 - c) Jonathan showed his brotherly spirit to David by:
 - Giving him his Robe, Garments, Sword, Bow, and his Girdle.
 - He even sided with David against his father, the King. (1 Sam. 19:1-3)
 - He even took up for David when he knew that he would lose the kingdom to David. (1 Sam. 20:30-34)
 - d) Upon Jonathan’s death, David cried out, **“How are the mighty fallen in the mist of battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful passing the love of women.”**
 - e) They both showed true brotherly affection by their attitudes & actions.
3. The N.T. strongly emphasizes the need for God’s people to have this brotherly affection one towards another.
 - a) Rom. 12:10—**“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love...”**

DISCUSSIONI. WE MUST PUT AWAY NEGATIVE ATTITUDES & ACTIONS.A. Two passages that emphasize this:

- 1) 1 Pet. 2:1
 - a) **Malice**—Evils of all kinds (attitudes & actions)
 - b) **Guile**—Deceit of all kinds.
 - c) **Hypocrisies**—False appearance of religion—cloaking a wicked purpose under guise of piety.
 - d) **Envies**—Hatred of those that possess something we do not.
 - e) **Evil Speaking**—To slander or speak evil of others—backbiting.
- 2) Eph. 4:31 (adds to list)
 - a) **Bitterness**—Sour disposition—bitter hatred towards others.
 - b) **Wrath**—Hot anger, passion.
 - c) **Anger**—Settled disposition of mind--with intent to get even.
 - d) **Clamor**—The disorderliness & shouting of epithets to others.
- 3) Such things must be put away in order to have a brotherly spirit!

II. MUST PUT ON POSITIVE ATTITUDES THAT SHOW A BROTHERLY SPIRIT.**A. Col. 3:12-15**

- 1) **Bowels of Mercies (Tender Mercies)**—Tenderheartedness.
- 2) **Kindness**—Courteous, polite & benevolent in actions & attitudes.
---Opposite of Rudeness, Stiffness, Repulsiveness, or Sour disposition.
- 3) **Humbleness of Mind**—Sinners saved by the Grace of God.
---Not arrogant, rude, self-assertive.
- 4) **Meekness**—Strength under restraint toward others.
- 5) **Long-suffering**—Realization—I have been forgiven!
---I ought to forgive others.
---Be patient with people who miss-treat me.
- 6) **Forbearing one another**—Bearing with one another—to bear long.
---Not touchy—no chip on shoulder
---Not easily offended.
- 7) **Forgiving one another**—I need forgiveness—so, I should give it.
- 8) **Love**—Which is the bond of perfection.
---The brotherly attitude that ties all of us together.
---Makes our attitudes & actions complete as a brother in Christ.

B. Rom. 12:10

- 1) RSV—“**Outdoing one another in showing honor.**”
- 2) We want and wish the best for our brother or sister in Christ.

C. Phil. 2:3-4

- 1) Not to be self-seeking or selfish in our actions.
- 2) Our motives should not be from petty ambitions or empty conceit.

D. Jn. 13:35

- 1) Our example of correct brotherly spirit—Christ!
- 2) To show a brotherly spirit as Christ did towards us.

III. LET’S LOOK AT A NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE (1 Cor. 6:1-8)**A. Poor old Corinthian Church.**

- 1) **Always picked on—used to show what we should not be or do.**
- 2) Church had all kinds of problems.
- 3) Not a very pretty picture of how the Lord’s people ought to act.

B. Let’s look at one of those problems.

- 1) **They were taking one another to court before unbelievers.**
- 2) There was envying, contentious, lack of love among them.
- 3) Paul strongly rebuked them for such attitudes & actions:
 - a) *Are you unworthy to judge such small matters among yourselves?*
 - b) *You should be able to set the least esteem among you to be a judge.*
 - c) *It is truly a shame that there is not one wise man among you.*
 - d) *For you to do such things shows that your attitudes are wrong.*
 - e) *You should be willing to be mistreated & take it patiently, rather than to do what you are doing.*
 - f) *You are at fault, you are wrong, you should change your ways.*

C. But look what came out of this terrible condition at Corinth.

- 1) We have very useful teachings in practical Christian living.***
- 2) They were shown the beauty of unity of brethren.
- 3) They were shown the beauty of the Gospel—God’s Power & Wisdom.
- 4) They were shown the beauty of a fellowship of righteousness.
- 5) They were shown the beauty of the marital relationship.
- 6) They were shown the beauty of love & concern for brethren.
- 7) They were shown the beauty of loving brethren worshipping together & building each other up in the most holy faith.
- 8) They were shown the beauty & assurance of hope in Christ. **(ETC.)**
Simply stated—Remember you are brothers & sisters in Christ!

CONCLUSION

1. How desirable to be a part of a family that:
 - a) Strives daily to put away ungodly attitudes that destroy relationships;
 - b) Strives daily to put on those godly attitudes of brotherly affection.
2. Who wouldn’t want to be a part of such a fellowship
3. Ps. 133:1—***“Behold, how good & pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”***
4. Are you contributing to such a fellowship?

