

KNOW WHY YOU BELIEVE
LESSON # 22
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND EXPERIENCE

As we move towards the end of the Sunday School year, for the next four weeks we will discuss “the Christian Life and Experience.” As usual, we turn to the Bible to discover what the normal Christian experience looks like.

Our passage of scripture for the next four weeks will be from the Book of Acts 2:42 – 47:

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. [43] Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. [44] All the believers were together and had everything in common. [45] Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. [46] Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, [47] praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

This passage defines the practice of the early church directly after it was founded by Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost (fifty days after His resurrection.)

The four key elements of the practice of the early Christians in the early church were:

- 1) “They devoted themselves to the apostles “teaching **(The Bible)**”
- 2) “They devoted themselves to **“fellowship”**
- 3) “They devoted themselves to **“prayer”**
- 4) “They devoted themselves to the breaking of bread **“worship”**

Each week for the next four we will look at one of these aspects of the Christian life and experience.

BEGINNING WITH (and reviewing) THE WORD OF GOD

(I) AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

(A) The Bible contains 66 books:

- 1) 39 in the **Old Testament**
- 2) 27 in the **New Testament**

(B) The books are divided into chapters and verses for reference.

1) The chapters and verses we have in our Bibles are there to help us find our way around the Bible, they are inserted, they were not originally there.

(C) The Old Testament was written in the Hebrew language.

(D) The New Testament was written in the Greek language. (Remember that our English Bible is a translation from these original languages.)

(E) Did God make a mistake? Why the need for a New Testament? What's wrong with the Old one? Read Hebrews 8:9-10.

Hebrews 8:9-10

⁹ It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.

¹⁰ This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

(1) The foundation of the “Old Covenant / Testament” with Israel was man's obedience to it (v 9).

(a) “Covenant” means, “A Promise Made, is a Promise Kept.”

(2) The foundation of the “New Covenant / Testament” is God's action on behalf of man. (Note the "I wills" in verse 10). It was enacted by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. (Luke 22:20)

Luke 22:20

²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

(II) BASIC TYPES OF SCRIPTURE

(A) Historical: narrative that lays foundation for future things, i.e., Genesis/Gospels.

(B) Poetical: song-like, worshipful or proverb-like. Psalms

(C) Prophetical: the Word describing future events, i.e., Isaiah, Revelation, portions of the Gospels.

(D) Instructional: Practical application of Scripture, i.e., Romans, Deuteronomy, Corinthians, Proverbs.

(III) BASIC THEMES OF SCRIPTURE

(A) God - Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 1:1; Psalms 103:1

Genesis 1:1

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Hebrews 1:1

¹ In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

Psalms 103:1

¹ Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

(B) Man/Creation - Genesis 2:7

Genesis 2:7

⁷ the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

(C) Sin - 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 3:23

1 John 2:15-17

¹⁵ Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

¹⁶ For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world.

¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

Romans 3:23

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(D) Jesus - John 5:39, Luke 24:7, 44, 45

John 5:39

³⁹ You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,

Luke 24:7

⁷ "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again."

Luke 24:44-45

⁴⁴ He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

(E) Redemption - Romans 3:24; 10:8-13

Romans 3:24

²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Romans 10:8-13

⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming:

⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

¹¹ As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him,

¹³ for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

(F) Salvation - Romans 1:16; 10:8-13

Romans 1:16

¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Romans 10:8-13

⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming:

⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

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¹³ for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

(G) Satan/spirit world - Genesis 3:1, 2 Corinthians 4:4

Genesis 3:1-24

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,

2 Corinthians 4:4

⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

(H) Prophecy - 2nd coming of Jesus - Revelation 4:20

Revelation 4:11

¹¹ "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

(I) Man - Beginning and final end - John 3:17-19

John 3:17-19

¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

(IV) BASIC DIVISIONS IN SCRIPTURE

Take out your Bible and follow along by opening your Bible and looking at the placement of the books as we talk about them.

(A) Old Testament: Historical preparation for the Messiah.

- 1) 5 books by Moses - Beginning of history and the section known as "The Law"
- 2) The five books of Moses are also known as "The Pentateuch" since Pent means "five."
- 3) The five books of Moses are followed the books of Israel's history Joshua – Esther
 - a) These books give the Messiah's preparation in history
- 4) There are several books in the Old Testament that are known as "the Poetic Books."
 - a) Job – Song of Solomon
 - b) Included in these books is the Book of Psalms which contained much of the worship and many of the songs Israel sang
- 5) The books of Isaiah through Daniel are called "the Major Prophets"

a) They are called major prophets only because they are longer than the other books of prophecy in the Bible.

6) Hosea through Malachi are known as “the Minor Prophets” only because they are shorter than the other prophets.

(B) New Testament: Manifestation - Consummation of Christ.

(H) The Gospels: The life & works of Christ

(I) Acts: The further works of Christ through the Apostles.

(J) The Epistles: Church doctrine

(K) Revelation: Jesus' rule established

(V) BECAUSE THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT TO HELP US UNDERSTAND IT

(A) “The person without the Spirit does not understand the things that come from God.” (1 Corinthians 2:14)

1 Corinthians 2:14

¹⁴ The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

(B) The Holy Spirit will teach us and help us to remember (Read John 14:26)

John 14:26

²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

(VI) METHODS OF STUDYING GOD’S WORD

(A) Simply read the Bible and ask God to speak to you as you read it.

1) There are many Bible reading plans (the church offers a different one every year) to help you read through the Bible

(B) When you read a particular passage in the Bible ask yourself these questions:

“Who, What, When, Where, Why, How Come?”

C) Let's explore how we might understand the Bible for ourselves by turning to Mark 4:35-41 reading the passage and answer those questions from the verses:

Mark 4:35-41

³⁵ That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side."

³⁶ Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him.

³⁷ A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.

³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

(1) Who?

(2) What is said about the person or people involved?

(3) What does the person (people) say?

(4) What? What is happening? What are the events; in what order?

(5) Where? Where is the event taking place? Where are people going to or coming from?

(6) When? When did the events take place?

(7) Why? Why is this story included? Why here in the text? Why does one person say what he does? etc.

(8) Wherefore? So what?

(9) What difference would it make in my life if I were to apply this truth?

