

Adult Sunday School Class

Objective: Review and apply a set of practical guidelines for Christian living.

Opening Prayer: Thank you Father, we pause now to acknowledge your presence..... I thank you that you always hear me. That you never leave me or forsake me and that you are an ever present help. I ask for a special anointing on this lesson plan and the time we will spend together today. Bless both speaker and listener. Open our hearts to receive a fresh revelation from your Spirit. I bind forces that would hinder and welcome the Holy Spirit as our teacher today. In Jesus name!

Read: Hebrews 13

Q – If you were the translator, how would you title this chapter?

- Practical guidelines for Christian living.
- A great set of objectives for anyone's New Year's resolution.

Q – How many guidelines are mentioned? - About 20, depending on the grouping of his thoughts.

- V1 – Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters in the Lord.
- V2 – Do not forget to entertain strangers. (Some have entertained angels without realizing it.)
- V3 – Remember those in prison. (As though you were a fellow prisoner.)
- V3 – Remember those who have been or are being mistreated.
 - Q – Why those who have been mistreated? - Because the scars and defense mechanisms of mistreatment can last a very long time.
- V4 – Marriage should be honored by all.
- V4 – The marriage bed should be kept pure.
- V5 – Keep yourself free from the love of money.
- V5 – Be content with what you have.
 - Q – What explanation did he follow this statement with? - Because God has said I will never leave you or forsake you.
- V7 – Remember those in positions of leadership. (They have serious responsibilities and will be required to give an account.)
- V9 – Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings.
 - **Be careful** what you listen to, especially on Christian media.
 - There are many individuals trying to differentiate themselves.
 - Some with wrong motivations.
- V9 – It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace (The grace of God) and not by certain confessions or behaviors.
- V15 – Let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise (the fruit of our lips) through Jesus Christ.
- V16 – Do not forget to do good.
- V16 – Share with others, (because it's the right thing to do) and it pleases God.
- V17 – Obey your leaders so their work will be a joy and not a burden.
 - Acts of rebellion are of no advantage to you.
- V17 – Submit to the authority of your leaders.
- V18 – Live in a way that will enable you to have a clear conscience.
 - (I'm applying his statement about himself to our own lives and integrating them with the following thoughts in verses 18 – 20.)
- V18 – Desire to live honorably in every way.
- V20 – Allow the God of peace to equip you with everything good for doing His will.
- V20 – Allow God to work in you what is pleasing to Him.

Q – How many of you had siblings or cousins to whom you were close? - I did not come from such a family and Charlie (my wife) is an only child although she did have some cousins to whom she was close.

Q – How would you describe brotherly love? (My experience in this area comes through lengthy friendships.)

- “Love your neighbor as yourself”
 - An unfeigned love, sincere and genuine.
 - From a pure heart.
 - That extends an unconditional hand of friendship.
 - That loves when not loved back.
 - That gives without getting.
 - That ever looks for what is best in others.
- Commonality or having things in common.
- Attraction (likability).
- Sharing.
- Togetherness.
- Openness.
- Giving and/or putting the other person's wants or needs first or ahead of your own.

Q – How would you describe the difference between brotherly love and spousal love? - Spousal love contains all the attributes of brotherly love and in addition it includes:

- Intimacy and the oneness that is derived from it.
- A degree of closeness that is only achieved through marriage and the commitment of a life time.
- Speaking from personal experience, a healthy and mature Christian marriage “gets sweeter as the days go by”, doesn't it sweetheart? :-))
 - Q – What is your personal experience?

Q – Does loving other people come naturally? - Is it an easy feat to accomplish?

- The short answer is no.
- However it is much easier to love some people than it is to love others.
- A brief review of the attributes described under brotherly love will tell you why it's difficult to love some individuals.
- Some people lack an abundance of commonality, they delight in individuality and uniqueness.
- They are lacking in attraction, likability, willingness to share, openness and togetherness.
- The more an individual believes “it's all about them” the harder it is to love them.

Q – Is it necessary to like someone in order to love them?

- No, you can love someone and be completely turned off by their attitudes and behaviors.
- I still have vivid memories of a conversation between my wife and my teenage daughter .
 - My wife said “I love you sweetheart but I don't like you like this”.
 - Your attitude and behaviors need to change!

Q – How would you describe the attitudes and behaviors of love? - Paul does it best in I Corinthians 13:4 – 8.

- Love is patient.
- Love is kind.
- It does not envy.
- It does not boast.
- It is not rude.
- It is not self seeking.
- It is not easily angered.
- It keeps no record of wrong.

- Love does not delight in evil.
- Love rejoices in truth.
- Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
- Love never fails!

Q – What guidelines would you suggest for entertaining strangers?

- Look to the leading of God's spirit.
- Keep your antenna up and be sensitive to any warning signals.
- Be kind, open and generous but don't be duped.
- Be wise, don't believe everything you read or hear.
- Just because someone uses Christian terminology or confesses Christianity doesn't mean they truly are a child of God and will act consistent with Christ-like attributes.
 - Christians are not perfect.
 - However Christians are consistent in their love for & commitment to Jesus Christ.

Q – Can you give me an example of individuals who fall in the category of being mistreated?

- From current events, the Syrian and other refugees of war are mistreated peoples.
- People in bad marriages and/or those with unfaithful partners are being mistreated.
- Most people with poor self esteem have a history of some mistreatment.
- Some minority populations have a history of mistreatment.
- Some individuals can NOT allow themselves to forgive and forget past wrongs & mistreatment.

Q – What should we do for individuals who are being or have been mistreated?

- Help them to the best of your ability and meet them at their point of need.
- In kindness and with gentleness provide or help them to obtain, food, shelter counseling, medical care, salvation and self esteem..

Q – What are the adverse effects of a lack of fidelity in marriage?

- It violates a sacred trust and destroys the self esteem of the offended party.
- It undermines the relationship in a way that frequently is irreparable.
- It has the ability to completely destroy a person's life and their ability to completely trust another person again.

Q – Which group of people, the “haves” or the “have-nots “, have the greatest exposure to the love of money?

- The love of money has little to do with how much one has.
- Both poor and rich are subject to a distorted value of money.

Q – What advice does the author provide for all regarding money and materialism?

- Be content with what you have.
- For Christians we might say be content with what God has given you.
- That doesn't mean we are not to try to improve our situation.
- It means we should be thankful and keep things in proper perspective.

Q – How many in the room are over 50 and consider themselves to be mature adults? - Most if not all will fit this definition.

Q – Let's go around the room and answer this question. What do you believe the 2 or 3 most important things in life are? (Don't be concerned about repeating something that someone else has said.)

- Try to keep your list to the 2 or 3 most important things.
- For me and in no particular order;
 - It's health.

- The basic provisions of life &
- Relationships including my most important relationship with God.

Q – Did anyone say money or material assets? - No, for the mature individual, those things are further down in their list of priorities.

Q – What are your assets or said another way, what is it that you bring to the “table of life”? - Be assured, a person's life does not consist in the abundance of their possessions. (Luke 12:15)

- A relationship with God or lack there of.
- Attitude.
- Personality.
- A set of values.
- Interests.
- Intellect.
- Family and relationships.
- The ability to effectively socialize.

Q – What is it that we should learn from those who have spoken and/or speak the word of God to us?

- The results of or outcome of their faith and way of life.
- How to model a Christ-like life to those we live with and come in contact with.
- We are advised to imitate good Christian values and behaviors.

Q – What key attributes of the God head stand out to you in this chapter?

- God has said, “never will I leave you or forsake you.”
- Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.
- The Lord is my helper, what can man do to me?

Q – When we come to the end of our lives what will we all want?

- To be able to look forward, into eternity, with absolute confidence in God.
- To be able to look back with no regrets.

Q – What is the sacrifice with which God is pleased? - For us to do good and share with others.

Q – Why are we instructed to obey our leaders? - So their work, the work that God has called them to, will be a joy and not a burden.

Q – What statements does this author include with his prayer request?

- A statement of the surety of a clear conscience.
- A desire to live honorably in every way.
- I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon.

Q – What is the essence of his closing prayer? - May the God of peace equip you with everything good for doing His will and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.