

Adult Sunday School Class

Objective: Increase understanding of the Grace and peace of God and what it means to participate in the divine nature. (Allow the Holy Spirit to minister peace to each participating heart as we meditate on His promises.)

Opening Prayer: Thank you Father, we pause now to acknowledge your presence..... I thank you that you hear me, that you always hear me. That you never leave me or forsake me and are an ever present help. I ask for a special anointing on this lesson plan and the time we will spend together. Bless both speakers & listeners. 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: II Peter 1

Q – What do you believe he means when he uses the phrase “participate in the divine nature” ? (verse 4) - Walk in faith, to speak the words of God in faith and see the results.

Q – What does he describe as the benefit of participating in the divine nature?

- You will escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.
- The “escape” is possible because a new set of values rules in your heart and mind.
- These new values produce different interests and desires.

Q – What does Peter say that will make Christians more effective and productive for Christ?

- The attributes or virtues described in Verse 5 and following.
- 5) For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6) and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7) and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.

Q – What passage of scripture does this remind you of? - Galatians 5:

- 22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23) gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Q – What did Peter say he always wanted to remind them of?

- The message of the gospel to which he was an eye witness.
- The divine confirmation that occurred on the mount of transfiguration, again he was an eye witness.
- The words of the prophets that foretold of these events.

Q – Describe what you envision occurred when God inspired the prophets or authors of the scriptures?

- God speaks to His own by His Holy Spirit in their inner man or spirit.
- God spoke to them in a similar way in which He speaks to you, you know that you know His voice!

Q – What prevented the prophets from allowing their own thoughts or bias from affecting the word or message given to them by the Holy Spirit?

- The divine selection process. God knows all things. He knows in advance who will be a reliable conduit of His message to mankind and He knows how to control the individuals involved.
- God protects His word and creates the environment necessary to maintain it's integrity.

Q - Are there false prophets and those who assert that they speak for God in all forms of communications including the gifts of the spirit?

- There are, some speak out in ignorance, others in pride.
- Some are used by the insidious forces of evil (Satan), to deceive, if possible, even well meaning Christians.

Q – Where does Peter describe the plan of salvation? - In verse 1) Simon Peter, a servant and apostle (special messenger) of Jesus Christ, to those who have received (obtained an equal privilege of) like precious faith with ourselves in *and* through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. (Amplified version)

Q – To what does he attribute salvation or what is it that enables it? - Through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Q – What's different about the way Peter and Paul describe the plan of salvation? - They describe the same fundamentals however Paul is much more descriptive of the how & why or the process of salvation. Examples:

- Romans 10:9) If you declare 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 profess your faith and are saved.
- Ephesians 2:4) But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5) made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.....8) For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9) not by works, so that no one can boast. 10) For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Q – Is John's description of salvation more like that of Peter or Paul? - Peter

- John 1:12) Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13) children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.
- John 3:16) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 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 they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.

Q – Where does John describe the process of salvation more completely? - In I John 1 & 2 when speaking to believers.

- I John 1:5) This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6) If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. (Note, this is a present tense statement. John is saying He is doing this as it is happening, in the current vernacular, in “real time”.) 8) If we claim to be without sin, (Again, present tense.) we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10) If we claim we have not sinned, (Past tense) we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.
- I John 2:1) My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2) He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Q – To what does Peter tie the acquisition of an abundance of peace? - A knowledge of God & the Lord Jesus Christ.

Q – How does a knowledge of God produce peace? - When it is revealed to a human heart or spirit by the Holy Spirit of God.

- First the grace of God, knowing your sins are forgiven and that you will spend eternity with God
- Then as more of the attributes of God are revealed to your heart your sense of security and the awareness of His complete provision will continually increase your level of peace and contentment.

Q – Does this mean that all we have to do is explain the attributes of God to tormented or insecure people in order for them to know the peace of God?

- In order for the truth of God to have an effect on the life of a human soul it must be revealed to them by the Spirit of God.
- Telling people the gospel does not convert them. It's only when the truth of the gospel is revealed to a willing heart (spirit or inner person) that it will have an effect.
- Head knowledge or mental assent does NOT result in eternal salvation.
- Many critics of the gospel can accurately state the process of salvation but reject its principals. They demonstrate an intellectual knowledge of the plan of salvation but are unwilling to accept.

Q – Once we've heard the gospel, accepted it & acquired a knowledge of God does that produce a lasting peace?

- It can however while salvation is for the most part, a one time event, the knowledge of God and the resulting peace that it brings is progressive.
- It's more a journey than it is a destination.

Q – Do all or most true Christians (those who have accepted Christ as their personal savior and made a sincere attempt to make Him the lord of their life) enjoy the peace of God in their daily lives? - It's available to all such individuals but many do not make use of it.

Q – Why not? What's required to be able to maintain the peace of God?

- An increasingly greater and more complete knowledge of Him.
- The faith to accept the word of God and act on the revelation one has received.
- Continual reinforcement thru study, re-reading, rehearsing and meditating on His promises.
- Prayer, spending time in worship and His presence.
- Individual “quiet time” with God. Allowing God to show you His plan for your immediate future.
- Being open to the leading of God's Spirit as He attempts to teach you and lead you into all truth.

Q – What specific knowledge of God produces peace? Where do we find the definition of the attributes of God?

- In the scriptures or the word of God.
- For me, reading and meditating on the scriptures for a few minutes will cause the cares of this life to begin to fade and the peace of God to settle over me like a warm blanket.
- They help me put all of the issues of life into a proper perspective.

Q – What does it take to both participate in the divine nature and know the peace of God? - A more complete knowledge of the great and precious promises of the scriptures or the word of God.

Statement: Let's practice these two concepts in the time we have left.

- Obtaining a continuing and greater sense of the peace of God.
- Participating in the divine nature by accepting and speaking the word of God in faith.

A representative sample of the great and precious promises of God

John 3:16) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

II Corinthians 5:21) God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

I John 2:1) My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2) He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Jeremiah 29:11) For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

John 14:15) “If you love me, keep my commands. 16) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17) the Spirit of truth. 25) “All this I have spoken while still with you. 26) But the Advocate, 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.

Hebrews 13:5) Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” 6) So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.

Matthew 28:20) And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Psalms 46:1) God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

I Peter 2:24) “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.

Isaiah 40:28) The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. 29) He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. 30) Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31) but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Psalms 1:1) Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, 2) but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. 3) That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. 4) Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.....6) For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Psalms 91:1) Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. 2) I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.”14) “Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. 15) He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. 16) With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

Psalms 23:1) The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. 2) He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3) he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. 4) Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5) You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6) Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalms 103:1) Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. 2) Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—3) who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, 4) who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, 5) who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.....12) as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. 13) As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; 14) for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust....