

MARCH 2024

Theme: Pressing Forward in Jesus Christ



GRANT HILL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

SUNDAY SCHOOL ADULT LESSON GUIDE

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Theme: “Pressing Forward in Christ Jesus”



March 2024

1st Quarter

Unit 3 Theme: Walking in the Light

Our Unit theme for the month of March is Walking in the Light. Walking in the light means seeing things the way God sees them and responding the way he does. This is sharply contrasted to walking in darkness which is characterized by a sinful lifestyle. Christians are called to live holy lives characterized by God's love and the fruit of His Holy Spirit. We walk in the light when we hate the sin we fall into and name it for the ugly thing it is and agree with God about it and turn from it. Confessing sin is a crucial part of walking in the light.

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Unit 3 Theme: Walking in the Light

Lesson Topic: What is the Spiritual Meaning of Light?

Lesson Scriptures: Matthew 5:13-16; Ephesians 5:8-20; John 8:12

Key Verse: Then Jesus spoke and said unto them, "I am the light of the world: he that follows me will not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life". -*John 8:12*

Essential Question: Why are you still walking in darkness when the light is available?

Lesson Aims

At the end of this lesson participants will understand that:

1. Light cancels darkness
2. If you are walking in darkness, make the connection so that all things will become clearer to you.
3. Jesus came to the earth to bring some hope into this dark world, but you must be willing to lay everything out in the open and not try to hide things from yourself, from other people, and most importantly from a God who knows it all and sees it all.

Introduction

Jesus said in John 8:12 that "I am the light of the world." What did he mean by that statement? Well let's take a look at the next line in that verse. He said that whoever follow me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." What happens when we walk in darkness? So what does light do for us? There are several ways to answer this question, but whatever your answer is it should include these two things: 1. Light illuminates; it brings things to our attention what we couldn't see in the dark. 2. Light helps us stay on the right path and see what is in front of us so that we can make an intelligent decision. In the spiritual sense the light gives us clear vision of where we need to go and what we need to do to be the kind of believers that God wants us to be. And now on to our exposition so that we can see what else spiritual light can do for us.

I. You are the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16)

The setting of today's lesson: In chapter 4 Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. After his encounter with Satan Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues, preaching the gospel, healing all manner of sickness and diseases, and calling his disciples. A great multitude began following him so went up into the mountain with his disciples and began to teach the people.

He began with the beatitudes, and then in verse 14 he began to talk about the light.

What shall we take away from these verses?

- Verse 13 will be included in our discussion even though it talks about salt and not light
- What does salt do? Why is it no longer any good if it loses its savor (NIV – saltiness?)
- What good is a Christian who has lost their Christianity?
- Jesus message to his disciples was that no matter how the world treats you, you must be a blessing to the world.
- A handful of salt can diffuse its flavor far and wide and do a great work in the lives of the

people.

- The doctrine of the gospel is like salt in that it is quick, it penetrates the heart to cleanse and preserve. Hebrews 4:12 says that the word of God is quick, and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword.
- The disciples of Christ having learned the doctrine of the gospel, and being employed to teach it to others, were as salt.
- So, are you salt or are you just salty?
- Do we get to choose whether we want to be the light or not? Did Jesus say that we could be or should be, or did he say we are?
- Why do you think Jesus said that our light cannot be hidden.
- Why is it important for your candle to be on a candlestand and not under a basket? What is another way to express this thought?
- Verse 16 says let your light shine before men that they might see your good work and glorify your father. How do you let **your** light shine? Make sure that your works are for his glory and not your own.
- Those around us must not only hear our good words but see our good works so that they may be convinced that religion is more than just something we talk about. They must be convinced of the truth and excellency of the Christian religion and may be provoked by the holy spirit to imitate your good work so that God may be glorified.

II. Walk as children of the light (Ephesians 5:8-20)

- You were once in darkness but now you are the children of the light. Live as children of light. Walk in your destiny. Hold your head of high.
- The fruit of the light is goodness, righteousness, and truth.
- Children of the light seek what pleases the Lord.
- Instead of dwelling in darkness you are to expose it (remember, darkness and light cannot co-exist).
- The disobedient do things in secret, but everything exposed by light becomes visible.
- Live as the wise do. Take advantage of every opportunity because the days are evil.
- Understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit.
- Speak to one another with Psalms, hymns, and songs from the spirit.
- Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lesson Applied

Today's discussion lets us know that we are the light of the world. Jesus is depending on us to bring light into this dark world. A world where we have taken what was once wrong and try to make it right. We have done away with laws and standards and ways of doing things that existed in the past, and now we have this new morality which means no morals at all because anything goes, and if you don't go along with it you become a victim of cancel culture; meaning if you don't convert to the new standard they cancel you out (in other words you don't matter because you won't get with the program). The word of God tells us that darkness and light cannot co-exist. In other words, you can't serve two masters, you are either going to be in the light or the darkness. If we are to be the light of the world, we must keep our light burning every day and everywhere we go. It doesn't make sense to stay in darkness when we have the opportunity to walk in the light does it. Not to me, what about to you?

Unit 3 Theme: Walking in The Light

Lesson Topic: The Light of Jesus

Lesson Scripture(s): Genesis 1:3; John 8:12

Key Verse(s): “Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, 'I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.'” NLT

Essential Question: Are there dark areas in your life that need the Light of Jesus?

Lesson Aims: The participants are to understand that:

1. Jesus brings light to those who walk in darkness and gives sight to the spiritually blind.
2. Acknowledging darkness is the first step toward seeking light.
3. Only those who recognize their blindness and desires His light can receive.

Introduction

There are two types of light in the world, physical and spiritual. When we were born into this world, we recognized physical light, and by it we learned of God's handiwork in the things we see. Now, although physical light is good, God even said it was good and yes, it is necessary to be able to see, but there is another Light, a Light so important that the Son of God had to come in order to both declare and transmit it to men. As spiritual beings, we need spiritual light to grow and feel true happiness. Our lesson text this morning speaks of Jesus declaring “I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but have the light of life.” Notice that Jesus didn't say “I teach you about the light” or that I help you find the light,” although He does those things. No, He said “I am the light...”

In declaring Himself to be the Light of the world, Jesus was claiming that He is the only source of spiritual light. He was and is the manifestation of pure spiritual light. His words and actions are the epitome of that light such as compassionate healings, kind sayings, encouragement, mercy, loving deeds. All of that is good light. And God wants us to be receivers of that spiritual light, shining for others to see through our words, our actions, and our joyous smiles.

Exposition

The meaning of spiritual light can become clearer when we consider the nature of spiritual darkness which is its opposite. Jesus said if we follow Him, we “will not walk in darkness.” You see when we walk in a dark place, we experience unpleasant and even harmful or even deadly things such as:

We bump into things and hurt ourselves.

We might even seriously injure or kill ourselves if in deadly area.

We don't enjoy the beauty of our surroundings because we can't see.

We feel anxious, fearful, and disoriented.

We end up in dead ends, sometimes repeatedly.

The Bible has this to say about darkness “The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble” Proverbs 4:19

“They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about in darkness” Psalm 82:5

“Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness” 1 John 2:9

“People loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed” John 3:19-20

In simple terms, living in darkness means we lack understanding, and we do foolish and harmful things that lead to tragic eternal consequences. Failing to love others is also darkness because it is the total opposite of the character of God, who is full of light. Those who love the light are engaged in a battle against darkness. You see there truly are unseen evil forces fighting against us as stated in Eph 6:12.

Light originates from the presence and person of God. It flows into our hearts and minds through the Holy Spirit who enlightens, teaches, reminds, warns, and leads us to love and do good things. So how do we receive this spiritual light?

1. We turn on the light switch by believing in Jesus with all our heart
2. Sincere discipline talking with Father God through prayer as Jesus taught us
3. Studying His words in scripture, allowing the Holy Spirit to enlighten us
4. Desiring God and His ways more than anything else
5. Obey what we receive. We learn, then obey, then learn more, and obey that. It is progression from light to light, from grace to grace

And when we receive spiritual light, we experience it as understanding godly things, wisdom to act well, and the desire to do good. We are to become points of light for others by being kind, merciful, loving, respectful, and allowing ourselves to be confidently different. In fact, Jesus taught us that we should do that. “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” Matthew 5:16. We as Believers are depicted as the light of the world. Just as the moon has no light of its own, it reflects the light of the sun, so we are to reflect the Light of Christ so that all can see it in us. The Light is evident to others by the good deeds we do in faith and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Billy Graham stated “Our goal should never be to bring recognition to ourselves, but to bring glory to God. There is a fine line between being a light and putting on a show to get attention.” It must be of a regenerated heart.

We must always maintain a credible and obvious witness in the world. A witness that shows us to be faithful, God-honoring, trustworthy, sincere, earnest, and honest in all that we do. Also, we should be ready to give an account of the hope that we have (1 Peter 3:15). The gospel Light we have is not to be covered but made obvious for all to see and benefit from, that they, too, may leave the darkness and come into the Light. Just as we take a candle into a room to dispel the

darkness, likewise, the Light of Jesus Christ has to be taken into the darkness of sin that engulfs the hearts and lives of those who are not following Him. That's the condition behind having this Light, that we follow Him. If we do not follow Him, then we will not have the light of Jesus, the truth of His Word, or eternal life.

Conclusion

In Summary, Light” in the Bible can be a metaphor for life, happiness, righteousness, or understanding. The Bible is clear that light comes from the Lord God, the “Father of the heavenly lights” (James 1:17). He is the opposite of evil. Putting it all together, “walking in the light” means “growing in holiness and maturing in the faith as we follow Jesus.”

The apostle John repeatedly used the “light” metaphor in relation to the Messiah. For example, he writes that Jesus is “the true light that gives light to every man” (John 1:9). In 1 John 1:7 he says, “If we walk in the light as He [God] is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” In verse 5, John says that God’s very nature is light. Jesus, then, is the provider of light to the world.

Our Christian duty is to live in the light God gives: “Now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light” (Ephesians 5:8). When we walk in the light, we cannot walk in darkness. Sin is left in the shadows as we let our light “shine before men” (Matthew 5:16). “Walking in the light” means we consider Jesus as “the light” in this world, and we “walk” in that light by following His precepts, living in His power, and growing in His grace. It is God’s plan for us to become more like Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

Source(s): rchristianbohlen.com; GotQuestion.org
Bible: New Living Translation (NLT)

Unit 3 Theme: Walking in the Light

Lesson Topic: God is doing a new thing

Lesson Scripture: Isaiah 43:14-19

Key Verse: Behold I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall you know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. *-Isaiah 43:19*

Essential Question: Are you tied of the same old thing? If so God is ready to do a new thing in you life

Lesson Aims

At the end of this lesson participants will understand that:

1. God is ready to do a new thing in your life.
2. When God touches our lives old things become new to us.

Introduction

The 43rd chapter of the book of Isaiah gives us a look at the great work of man's redemption by Jesus Christ and the grace of the gospel which believers partake of. The prophet Isaiah is addressing the Children of Israel while they were in captivity in Babylon. His message included:

1. Promises made by God to his people in their affliction and their deliverance out of it.
2. A challenge to idol worships to recognize the omniscience and omnipotence of God.
3. Encouragement given to the people of God to hope for their deliverance
4. A method taken to prepare the people for their deliverance by reminding them of their sins that sent them into captivity so that they might repent and seek God's pardoning mercy.

Exposition

God is Doing a New Thing. An analysis of Isaiah 43:14-19

Verse 14 – The ebb of faith and hope of God's people in Babylon was so low that they needed assurance that they would be released out of their captivity. God reminds them that he is their redeemer and he is the holy one of Israel. He repeats the same message in verse 15. (what is your Babylon? Who is your redeemer?)

Verse 15 – God says “I am the creator of Israel, your King. Sometimes God has to remind us who he is.

He is our creator. He knows all about us. The Creature can never be greater than the creator.

Verse 16-17 God assures his people that he will find a way to break the power of the oppressor that held them captives. He will make a path in the mighty waters. God reminds the people of the great things he did when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. He made a way to break the power of the oppressor who held them captive. He made a way for them in the sea. Pharaoh's chariots and horses laid down at the bottom of the sea and became extinct, never to rise again.

Verse 18 – for encouragement and hope it is good for us to remember what God has done previously for his people and against their enemies. God promised to do to do greater things for

us than he did in the days of old. Some may ask where are the wonders and miracles of the old days? Look around! Do not undervalue the present things as if the former days were better than these. Forget about comparing them. Know enough about the events of your own day to convince yourself that the Lord is God alone. It is he that was, still is and will always be.

Redeem the time. There are different ways of doing things but the same God, the objections, and the same results if you follow the instructions.

Verse 19 – The Lord will do a new thing. The new thing is in no way inferior to the things of old (Job 7:8). The old things in a manner will be lost in the new thing; in the new proof that the Lord lives (Lamentations 22:23). God promised, not only to deliver his children, but to make a way for them through the rivers and the wilderness. It does not matter what you are facing God will make a way. He that produces dry land in the sea can produce water in dry land (it does not matter what the circumstances are, God will deliver).

Will you allow God to do a new thing in your life or is it going to be more of the same old thing? Going to the same old places, hanging with the same people, talking the same old talk, and living the same lifestyle when God is calling for you to try something new.

The Lesson Applied

- You can never predict when God will change the course of your life
 - Be ready then to change course on a moment's notice
 - Always listen to his voice. He speaks to us in many different ways
 - Remember that God may ask you to do something that is new to you and may seem impossible to you, but remember, nothing is impossible with God
 - The new thing that God is doing is not for us to forget what he has done in the past, but to let us know to not just hold on to the past, but be prepared to move in a different direction and do even greater things in the kingdom
 - If your ministry is not growing and you are not touching and changing lives, go back to God and ask him for assurance that you are walking in the path that he has laid out for you.
 - Make the choice to follow God's lead, believe in his word, and praise him through it all.
- If we don't, we will miss out on the "New Things" that God has in store for us.

Unit 3 Theme: Walking In The Light

Lesson Topic: A Joyful Heart

Lesson Scriptures: Proverbs 17:22, Galatians 5:22, Luke 15:10, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 1Thessalonians 5:16

Key Verse: Proverbs 17:22 (ESV)

A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

Essential Question(s): Why should believers be joyful?

Lesson Aim(s)

At the end of this lesson the participant will understand that:

1. What it means to have a joyful heart.
2. Understand why we should keep a joyful heart.
3. Help others understand the gift of joy.

Introduction

Joy is not an option, but an essential part of Christians lives. Joy is the natural reaction to the work of God, whether promised or fulfilled. Joy expresses God's Kingdom, and his influence on earth. Think about a time when a loved one showed up unexpectedly. How excited were you to see him or her? The joy brought to your heart for the loved one is the same joy we should have as we walk in and spread God's light. When reading the Bible, joy is commanded by God. God's commitment to us is everlasting joy in him.

Exposition

Joy is a gift from God. (Galatians 5:22) The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the result of the Holy Spirit's presence in the life of a Christian. The Bible makes it clear that everyone receives the Holy Spirit the moment he or she believes in Jesus Christ.

As Christians, we have the Holy Spirit producing his fruit in us and we have the Holy Spirit's power available to conquer the acts of the sinful nature. Joy in the heart of the creature (man/woman) corresponds to goodness in the heart of the Creator. Joy is the fitting response in the receiver (Christians) to the goodness of the Giver (God).

Serve God with a Cheerful Heart. (1 Corinthians 15:58) We were not meant to work just to get a paycheck, or to prove our worth, or to gain our identity because we're insecure or prideful. God didn't design work to be a drudgery, or a necessary evil. That disease infected our work when we fell from grace.

God created us to serve him and serve with gladness. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 4:10-11, "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and

ever. Amen.” Peter makes it clear that we have received our gifts from God for two purposes to serve others and to bring praise to God. Serving isn’t about us receiving attention or glory; it is for Him to receive glory.

Rejoice always. (1 Thessalonians 5:16) Paul’s primary intent was to exhort and comfort the Thessalonians. He encouraged them to live daily in a way that pleases God. He instructed them to be always ready for Christ’s return. When we adjust to God’s way of thinking and relating to others, we are reminded that, as Christians, we can even rejoice in the midst of trials and suffering. Rejoicing is not just a suggestion; it is a command, and it is commanded always. We can always choose to praise the Lord.

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit. If we are always filled with the Spirit, and the Spirit causes us to rejoice, then it follows that we will rejoice always. We can rejoice always, knowing that “in all things God works for the good of those who love him” (Romans 8:28).

The Lesson Applied

A joyful, positive mindset is key to experiencing healthy relationships and a fulfilling life. Since the heart is the center of our inner life, its condition and tone reach the outermost parts of our existence, including our bodies and even our relationships with others. If our hearts are elevated, our bodies will be lifted, our words will be uplifting, and our relationships will be enriched. If our hearts are crushed and broken, the condition of our bodies will break down, and we will have no strength to encourage others. God’s work is always the overflow of his joy in being the triune God.

References

Desiringgod.org
Gotquestions.org
Holy Bible

Unit 3 Theme: Walking In the Light**Lesson Topic: Light Eliminates Darkness****Lesson Scriptures: 2nd Corinthians 6:14—7:1; 1 John 1:1-10**

Key Verse: 2nd Corinthians 4:6 “For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Essential Question(s): How can light eliminate darkness?

Lesson Aim(s)

At the end of this lesson the participant will understand that:

- Light can eliminate darkness when we trust in God.
- God is our true light to all our problems when we give our worries to Him.

Introduction

The apostle Paul describes those in a sinful state before knowing Christ as possessing a darkened, closed mind and a hardened heart: “Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him”. Unbelievers live in spiritual darkness because Satan, the god of this world, has blinded their minds. Satan is out to kill and destroy us. He does not want us to see the glorious light of the gospel. “Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don’t believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don’t understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God”.

Exposition

- From the moment we sinned, humans have lived in a fallen world. All people are born in a fallen state of sin and separation from God. Until a person is reborn of God’s Spirit, he or she lives in spiritual darkness. Sin darkens our understanding and destroys our spiritual sight, cloaking us in deep darkness: “But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble”
- Moses compares this state of sin and disobedience to groping about like “a blind person in the dark”.
- One of Job’s friends speaks of those who are lost in spiritual darkness: “Darkness comes upon them in the daytime; at noon they grope as in the night”.
- Spiritual darkness is the state of a person who is living apart from God.
- The Old Testament book of Isaiah, in prophesying of the Messiah, speaks of a deep spiritual darkness that enveloped the people: “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned” This passage reappears in the New Testament, in to announce that those who have come to know the God of Israel through His Son Jesus Christ are the ones who have been delivered from spiritual darkness and now walk in the light of God’s life.

The Lesson Applied

As we applied what we have learned, spiritual darkness refers to all that is in opposition to the light of God's love in Christ. The good news that Jesus brings to this world is that His light, His life, giving Spirit, floods light and life into the spiritual darkness of the sinner's heart.

The One who opened the eyes of the blind can also bring us out of spiritual darkness. No matter how deep the darkness, the light of God's love and truth overcomes every sin that separates us from God.

Living in rebellion to God and His will is equivalent to living in spiritual darkness. Paul for example, when the Lord commissioned him, He said, "I am sending you to the Gentiles to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God's people, who are set apart by faith in me"

Scripture References: Proverbs 4:19, Deuteronomy 28:29, Job 5:19, Isaiah 9:2, and Matthew 4:16

References: gotquestions.org

References

The lessons are based on the Grant Hill Missionary Baptist Church Sunday School Ministry writers understanding of the topics being discussed, and sited references listed and given credit as written.



1. The KJV Bible
2. The Handbook of Bible Application
3. gotquestions.org
4. Desiringgod.org
5. Holy Bible