

Week 1 -- Foolish Praise

Opening Question: If you could have a glimpse of heaven or a glimpse of hell, what would you choose and why?

Today, we are going to talk about worshipping God

Q. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of worshipping God and Why?

Q. What do you imagine it will be like if a door were open and you could see HEAVEN?

Read Revelation 4:1-11

Discussion: Close your eyes and try to imagine being in the presence of God

Q. What do you imagine this seen being like if you were *present*?

Q. Is there anything in this passage that you would be in awe of when you saw it? What and Why?

Q. How does John describe the one on the throne? Why does it not say that it was God?

John's description of what he saw in heaven is, like the rest of the New Testament, true to the classic Jewish principle that "no one has ever seen God" (Jn 1:18; 1 Jn 4:12; compare Ex 33:20).

Q. How would you feel emotionally? What would you be thinking at that moment if you actually saw God? What do you think you would do?

The truth is that we all want to see God. One day we will all stand before this throne of God. We will fall to our knees and we will worship God.

The Big question: How can we prepare today to stand in front of our Awesome God?

Transition: Let's look at two passages that will help us to be prepared to see God

Read Hebrews 12:14 Q. What does this passage mean? What does it mean to be holy? Q. What do you think it would be like if most people today had to stand in front of our **Holy God** right now? How does that make you feel? Q. What can we do or become now so that not only we but those that we know can be **prepared to see God**?

Read Romans 12:1-2 What does this passage mean? What stands out to you and how can we apply it?

- **Being transformed not conformed/Our spiritual act of worship is offering our bodies**

Q. What does it mean to "offer your bodies as living sacrifices"?

- What Paul means becomes clear when we look at the following words. Paul tells us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, "holy and pleasing to God." It is clear what God wants: on the negative side, He doesn't want us to use our bodies for sin; on the positive side, He wants us to use our bodies only for what is good, pleasing, and perfect; in other words, *He wants us to engage in holy living.*

Q. How do we go about living holy lives that please God?

- *I want you to listen very carefully to what Paul says about this earlier in Romans:*
- Just read Rom 6:12-13 ... do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

To stand before God we must deal with sin in our lives. We must make every effort to live our lives to please God.

We all want to go to heaven. When I think of the opening question, I believe seeing hell would fill be with fear being seeing heaven would motivate and inspire me.

Conclusion: Q. What are some practical's or scriptures that come to your mind that can help us today to be prepared for eternity? **Worship God now/ prayer/meditating on the scriptures/fellowship with other believers/ understanding, obeying God's word so that we can apply it to our lives**

We need God and we need each other. Let's begin preparing today for Eternity

Week 2 -- CRAZY LOVE: USEFUL SACRIFICE

Before you have your scheduled Bible Talk, call or email all the members to have them bring something of great value with them. Once at Bible Talk, have each person briefly describe what they brought and why it is important to them.

How would you define sacrifice?

Definition:

1 : an act of offering to a deity something precious; *especially* : the killing of a victim on an altar

2 : something offered in sacrifice

3 a: destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else **b** : something given up or lost <the sacrifices made by parents>

- Can you make sacrifices without love?
- How useful is sacrifice without love?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:3

What do people sacrifice?

- Time
- Money
- Life

Read Luke 4: 40

- What was the result of Jesus sacrificing his time to heal?
- How can you imitate Jesus when it comes to sacrificing your time?

Read Acts 2:42- 47

- What did the people sacrifice?
- What was the outcome?

Conclusion

- What are you willing to do for love?
- Remind them of their treasured possession that they brought with them and how hard it would be to give it up.

Read John 3:16- 17

- What did God do because of His love?
- Jesus is a treasure sacrificed.
- Rhetorical Question: Are you willing to sacrifice time, money, etc. for His love?

Challenge:

- Get into a Bible study to learn about God's crazy love for you and His willingness to give up His Son for you.
- Make a decision to sacrifice because of God's love.

Week 3 -- Foolish Servanthood Bible Talk

- ICEBREAKER: Play a game that assigns
- Being a detective would be pretty interesting.
 - CSI makes it seem even more exciting –
 - Forensics
 - Catching the bad-guy
- If you had your choice of any job in the world, what would it be?
- What would be the job that you would most want to avoid?
 - Why?
 - It's demoralizing, no fun, not interesting
- READ MARK 10:35-45
 - What were James and John requesting from Jesus?
 - Place of honor
 - Wanted to be close to him
 - Etc.
 - What do you think their motive was?
 - What are your motives for wanting the job that you dream of?
 - Making more money, Getting ahead, Notoriety, Etc.
 - Why did Jesus say "You don't know what you are asking for?"
 - They were hasty
 - They didn't realize the struggle that might be involved
 - He knew their spiritual weakness
 - He knew their motives were not right
 - Why were they so quick to say "We can!"
 - Why did the other men respond to James and John the way they did?
 - Jealous – they didn't think about it first
 - They thought James and John were being selfish
 - Thought they were out of their mind
 - What does Jesus mean when he says you must be "Slave of all (NIV)."
 - What do you think about the idea of being "Slave of all?"
 - Hard work, humiliating, thankless, selfless
 - With your dream job in mind...
 - How can you be slave of all in your dream job?
 - What eternal fulfillment will your dream job give you?
 - What will last beyond your lifetime?
- If you want true fulfillment in any job.
 - If you want to live a life of joy and being lifted up by God.
 - It will only come by living as a slave
- It's not a popular goal in life, but it is Jesus' expectation.
 - Let's live our lives as foolish "slaves of all" so that God will be glorified by our lives.

Week 4 -- FOOLISH RELATIONSHIPS

Opening Question: What is one of the craziest things you've ever done to demonstrate your love for another person?

Q: Why do we take such measures to demonstrate love for other people?

* In the 1st century, crazy love for each other was a hallmark of the Christian Church. Let's take a look in Acts 2 to see how the early Jerusalem church showed their crazy love to one another, and hopefully pull out of the text some practical ways we can still live this way in the church today!

Read Acts 2:42-47

Q: To what sort of things were the Christians in Jerusalem devoting themselves?

Apostle's teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer, giving of their time and money,, etc.

Q: One of the first aspects of the church mentioned is that they were devoted to fellowship. When you hear the word *fellowship*, what comes to mind?

- The original Greek word that is being translated as “fellowship” here is *koinonia*. *Koinonia* referred to more than just casual conversation, casual association, or even casual potluck meals! It implied partnership and deep involvement in each other's lives; quite literally, it meant “sharing in a common life together”!
- And this passage elaborates quite well on what their *fellowship* looked like. Let's look back at vs. 44-47

Q: How often did they meet together in fellowship? *Everyday!*

Q: How would you feel about meeting together with your church everyday?

Q: What did they do together when they met?

Worshipped, shared meals together – Focused on love for God and love for one another, daily!

Q: What obligation did the Jerusalem Christians take on in order to care for one another?

Sold property and possessions to meet the needs of all; everything in common

Q: Would you be willing to sell your house or car, or just cut down on personal expenses (clothes, vacations, Starbucks, etc.) in order to support others in your church today?

Q: How did the Christians feel about doing these things – i.e. Meeting together daily and giving to each as they had need (vs. 46-47)? *Glad (joyful), praising God, etc.*

Q: What impression did their *fellowship* make on the greater society around them (v.47)?

Had the goodwill of all the people; others were drawn to the church in such a way that many were becoming Christians everyday!!!

Concluding Thoughts: Hopefully, this passage will lead us to ask ourselves important, probing questions about our own Church *fellowship* and the vital role we play in making it happen. First, do you see yourself being devoted to the *fellowship* of your church? Does that *fellowship* include meeting together frequently and regularly, as well as having equal concern for the needs of all its members? And not just physical needs, but mental, emotional, and definitely spiritual needs as well? Second and lastly, what impact does your *fellowship* make on the greater society around you, religious and non-religious alike? Prayerfully, in light of this passage, we will live out *fellowship* that draws people closer and closer to God!!!

Week 5 -- FOOLISH PERSEVERANCE IN PRAYER

Text: Luke 18.1-8

What does it mean to “always pray?”

- No matter the scenario, we should always pray. If times are good, we should pray. If times are bad, we should pray.

What causes us to “give up?” - *Lack of faith, distractions, attitudes, laziness, unanswered prayers, anger, etc.*

Why does Jesus use the example of an unjust judge? - *Jesus is contrasting the two; there is a vast difference in the character of God and man. If the unjust judge grants the request, how much more does listen to us and grant our requests that are in accordance with his will.*

Why does Jesus use the example of a widow? - *Helpless, no one to provide, protect, or take care of her.*

What was the attitude of the widow? - *She thought she had a legitimate plea. She “kept coming” to the judge; she was persistent; she persevered.*

What is the widow’s request? Is it persuasive? **NO. She only states 5 words: “grant me justice against my adversary”**

- She didn’t attempt to win the judge over with flattery, logic, or persuasiveness. She simply persevered. Perseverance in prayer is a simple concept: we continue to approach God with our request without a lot of words but simple, genuine faith.

How could the consistent ‘refusal’ (verse 4) of the judge affect the widow? How would it affect you?

What point does Jesus communicate in verses 6-7? - *God does grant justice; he will listen; he will respond.*

What will Jesus look for upon his return (verse 8)? - *“faith on earth”*

Will Jesus find this kind of perseverance in your life? What can you do to develop this level of perseverance? What will you do to develop foolish perseverance in your prayer life?

FINAL CHARGE

From an outside perspective, the widow might have appeared foolish. Some may have watched her travel to the court every day with the thought, “there she goes again, when will she learn...” She could have lost heart, been distracted, developed an attitude, etc. However, she faithfully made her journey to the judge and made her plea. In order for Jesus to find foolish perseverance in our prayer lives, we must practice the perseverance of this widow.