

Series: Living to Be a Witness

Lesson #4: "Living in Right Relationships"

***Announcements, encouragement to invite people and opening prayer.**



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** Have you ever had a time in your life when you were stuck to something and the bond seemed to be unbreakable?

Bottom Line: The bonds we build make a statement of faith. Our decision to accept Christ as Lord, to repent and be baptized into Christ brings the Holy Spirit as a bond with God into our lives. However, we make a statement in the way we live our lives about that bond's power.

LESSON PLAN

Read 2 Corinthians 6:1-2

Background: If God made] his appeal to people through Paul (5:20), there was a sense in which Paul was a fellow worker with God (cf. 1Co 3:9). As such he was concerned to plead God's cause with unbelievers and believers alike. So, this urging is addressed to the whole body of Christians at Corinth, "not to receive God's grace in vain." That phrase may mean one of two things: (1) Paul does not want the Corinthians to show by their present lives that they had received God's grace to no purpose. God wasn't transforming their lives. OR (2) Paul does not want the Corinthians to spurn the grace of God, which was being perpetually offered to them. The problem is they could fail to profit from that grace by refusing to purify themselves from everything that contaminated body and spirit (7:1; 12:20-21), by allowing a difference to develop between their faith and their conduct, or by embracing a different gospel (11:4), one based on observing the Old Testament law as the ground of acceptance before God. That is the setting for the potential problem God wants Paul to address. God is being proactive for their good.

1. When is God helping the Christians in Corinth?

We enter into the Kingdom relationship with God through Jesus and we are always in the NOW in our relationship. Now is the time of God's favor and now is the time of His salvation. God is always working in the now.

Question: How do you think God wants the Christians at your Church to apply this?



Series: Living to Be a Witness

Lesson #4: "Living in Right Relationships"

Read 2 Corinthians 6:3-10

2. Why were they careful to identify possible stumbling blocks?

That various accusations were being leveled against Paul was inevitable, given the success of his ministry and the jealousy of others. His concern was that such charges be totally without foundation, that no "minister of reconciliation" be guilty of inconsistent or dishonest conduct, and that no tool for divisiveness be given anyone who wished to ridicule or malign the Gospel. The life of the Christian minister is the most eloquent advertisement for the Gospel.

Question: How can ministers create stumbling blocks by carelessness in their ministry?

3. What negative and trying examples of going the extra, extra mile does Paul give for their ministry?
4. What positive examples or actions does Paul give for their ministry?
5. How is it possible to minister but not minister in the Holy Spirit?
6. How does Paul describe what has been happening to them in their ministry of planting and building churches for Christ?

Question: How do you think we stack up against Timothy and Paul in our ministry? Do we maybe whine a little easier? Quit a little easier? Why?

Series: Living to Be a Witness

Lesson #4: “Living in Right Relationships”

Read 2 Corinthians 6:11-13

7. What plea does Paul issue to the Christians at Corinth?

Question: Why is it so hard for us to hear someone of faith try to point out God's plan for our lives, how we should live?

Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Interaction: Have someone draw a picture of a YOKE on the board and explain how it works. Ask them what happens when you put a Shetland pony and a Thoroughbred in the same yoke. What about an ox and a horse together in a yoke? You get the picture. You want a matched set to create the power you need, to work together in harmony to produce tremendous force.

8. What does God have Paul command the Christian NOT to do?

Question: What are some of the binding relationships we can get in where 2 parties are affected by every action?

9. What reason does Paul give for making such decisions? (*Those who see Jesus as the source of all truth have a Christian worldview for their actions. Those who do not have Jesus' as Lord have the truth of this world as the source for their actions. That truth is not absolute and is usually self-serving rather than God-serving. One is guided by light and the other is guided by darkness.*)

Series: Living to Be a Witness

Lesson #4: “Living in Right Relationships”

10. God has Paul take it one step further and sets up the contrast:

- a. Light versus _____
- b. Christ versus _____

i. *Belial was a Hebrew term meaning worthless or destruction. This name for Satan is not found elsewhere in the OT or NT but was used in the Judaism of Paul's day. It is derived from one of Satan's characteristics, worthless and treacherous. It is used in context with Satan's activity as an opponent of God, which fits Paul's concern for the church.*

- c. Believer versus _____
- d. Temple of God versus _____

11. What OT prophecies about the Temple of God in us through Christ does Paul quote?

Final Questions: What is the one idea that stands out to you most from this lesson? How could you help others with this information? How does the whole issue of mutual respect among Christians need to be addressed more clearly?