

Series: Living to Be a Witness

Lesson 6: “Living with a Clear Mind”

***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:** Suppose you could see into the future. You are in great health. However you see that you will be killed in a car wreck next week. What would you do this week knowing this is all the time you've got?

Background: Christ died to make the unrighteous become the righteousness of God. Therefore we should be willing to suffer for doing good. Not only should we be willing to give of ourselves, but we should be willing to live a focused life realizing that our time is completely uncertain. This is the only day or week we have! Why would we want to claim to follow Christ and yet not take on His nature of living unselfishly?

Bottom Line: Christ-focused living makes a lasting witness because it is selfless and compassionate. That only happens when we make a choice to live with a clear mind.

LESSON PLAN

Read 1 Peter 4:1-2

1. What are we called to arm ourselves with?

Question: How can we arm ourselves on a daily basis with Jesus' attitude toward sin?

2. What replaces the desire to live for evil human desires?

Question: How can the church better help the body keep the attitude of Christ toward sin?

Question: What is the will of God for your life? (*After a healthy exchange of ideas, have someone read the following:*)

- *Ephesians 5:15-21. Note that this is followed by specific roles for people in relationships. God's will is a peaceful reverent life of working together for His purposes.*

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- *Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6. What is God’s stated will?*
- *Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-19. Again, what is God’s stated will for us? (Isn’t it fascinating that the will of God is laid out so simply that anyone can understand it and yet people spend their lives worrying about rather they are truly fulfilling God’s will for their lives. It’s really just a matter of a choice to take on the attitude of Christ and tell the Father that we have come to do His will!)*

Read 1 Peter 4:3-6

3. What was life like for these Christians before they made Christ their Lord?
 - Lived in debauchery (*as-ehg’-i-a; living without restraint in life; to live without a limit to my cravings. Whatever it takes to please my desires in any area of life.*)
 - Lust (*To crave something sensually with a longing for more. It is often a craving of sexuality but can include an unbridled desire to possess anything.*)
 - Drunkenness (*To indulge in alcohol until it numbs the senses and gives a false peace and even a willingness to make unwise choices from a lack of clarity.*)
 - Orgies (*In this day the practice after a feast was to get drunk and go out into the streets with torches, music and songs in honor of Bacchus, the god of wine. That often ended up in sexual endeavors as well.*)
 - Carousing (*Like the frat house drinking matches. Today they use funnels and pour it down the person competing. Who will be the last one standing? Who is the drinking champion?*)
 - Detestable idolatry (*a disgusting act of idol worship. Like Aaron and the Golden Calf. The Greek and Roman world was full of idols to worship, usually accompanied by drunkenness and sexual immorality in the name of pleasing a god.*)
4. They have chosen to denounce this way of life and follow Christ alone. How will this choice affect the way the old friends who have not joined your new found walk of faith?

Question: How is this still true for the Christian who leaves their old ways of life?

5. When you are criticized for your faith, where can you find strength?



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Verse 6 has presented a problem for understanding over the years. Some believe that Peter is implying a second chance after death for those who reject Christ. There is a problem with that understanding. Hebrews 9:27 clearly teaches us that “...man is destined to die ONCE, and after that to face judgment.” Jesus taught in Luke 16 in the example of the rich man and Lazarus that no one can cross sides after death and judgment. So, what did Peter mean? He is simply referring to those who are now dead, but had heard the gospel. They will be judged strictly by what they did with it. Did they accept it or reject it? Those who accepted it chose to live in the Spirit and have live forever. Those who rejected it chose to live in the flesh and rejected eternal life with God.

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

6. What 2 reasons are given for being clear minded and self-controlled?

Question: How does being clear minded and self-controlled affect our prayer life?

Question: What are some of the things that cloud our thoughts and actions?

7. How are we to love each other and why?

Deeply in the Greek meant, intensely, fervently, with seriousness. If we are intensely loving others, there will be less conflict, greater witnesses to the power of the Holy Spirit, and we will attract people to the faith as the early church did by their loving witness. Notice Peter says this instruction is above all he has been saying. If we love more, we will pick at others less and end up with fewer divisions among us. That will cover a multitude of sins because they will decrease in number from the love that has prevented them. This is proactive faith!)

8. What is hospitality and how do we offer it in love?

Question: What are some ways you could be more obedient in hospitality?



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Interaction: (*This can be a question for discussion or a breakout at each table if time permits.*)
What is your gift and how are you using it faithfully to serve others?

9. What instructions are given so that God will be praised through Jesus Christ in our church?

Final Questions: What is the one idea that stands out to you most from this lesson?