

SHINE Devotional

Week 5 – Lesson 1



Just Wait

Scripture reading Acts 1:4

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.”

Waiting is not my cup of tea. When my wife and I travel across the United States, we often find ourselves stuck in an airport because of a layover. If it is around a meal time, we will make our way to the food court where there are multiple vendors. Though I hate to wait, I often find myself standing in a long line waiting for a particular kind of food. Why do I stand in line waiting for Chick-fil-A rather than go to the no name barbeque right next to me? **Because quality is worth waiting for.**

I met my wife my first year of Bible college. I wanted to marry her immediately. Her mother said that we had to wait until after we graduated to get married. I was willing to wait for three and a half years. Why? There were plenty of other girls around, but **quality is worth waiting for.**

Isaiah the prophet said, *“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”* (Isaiah 40:31). In our passage today, Jesus told the disciples to not try to do His work in their own strength. He told them to return to Jerusalem and **wait** for the promise of the Holy Spirit. You and I as believers need to heed that admonition. The Christian life is a life of faith walking in obedience to God’s direction. To wait on God does not mean to do nothing. It means to restrict yourself to what God has told you to do. Follow His direction, obey His precepts, and wait for Him to work. The Scripture is filled with stories of men who got ahead of God and hindered His plan. God wants to use you. He wants to bless you. God wants to accomplish His purpose in and through you. Let Him do His work in your life in His time. When you learn to wait on God, doing things His way, in His timing, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 5 – Lesson 2

Obedience Is Essential



Scripture reading Acts 1:12-13

“Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.”

Several years ago, a friend of who lived in southern California, met his family at Disneyland for a family day. At the end of the day when they were leaving, my friend's father looked at him and gave him specific instructions to follow him on the way home. He did not tell him why but there were several ways to get to their home from Disneyland. However, his father asked him to follow him. My friend determined that he would obey. While he followed, he noticed his father was taking the long way home. He knew that if he took another way, he would get home much faster than his father. He also knew that it was essential to be obedient and continued to follow his father. His father drove down to the heart of Los Angeles and pulled into the parking lot of the Staples Center where that evening their family enjoyed a home game of the Los Angeles Lakers. If my friend would have chosen to take a shorter way home, he would have missed what his father had in store for him.

Out of impatience or thinking you know better, you may make a choice to do things our own way. When we do, we miss out on the blessings of obedience. God has a plan of which we do not know in its entirety. The disciples did not know why God wanted them to wait in the upper room, but they did what God told them to do. In obedience, they went back to the upper room and encouraged others to wait with them. They prayed and waited on God. Because of their obedience, they saw the power of God's Son. Obedience was the key for their lives and it's the key to your life. When you learn to obey, you, as a believer will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 5 – Lesson 3

Corporate Prayer



Scripture reading Acts 1:14

“These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.”

This year at Liberty Baptist Church, we have divided our church into thirty-nine different prayer groups. We are doing everything we can to encourage corporate prayer. Our thirty-nine prayer group leaders pray for the members of their group on a regular basis. On a quarterly basis, these prayer groups will meet throughout the city to pray for church needs and individual needs. This pattern is found throughout Scripture. Jesus said, *“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 18:19). When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He said, *“Our Father”* (Luke 11:2). This indicates He wanted them to pray together. Throughout the Book of Acts, the power of God would fall as the people of God prayed corporately.

Here is the question of the day, “Who do you pray with?” Husbands should pray with their wives. Parents should pray with their children. Church members should pray together. I like to hear the testimonies of our political leaders when they mention that they pray together in the US Capitol. We need to pray individually, but there be a special blessing in corporate prayer. Let me encourage you to be involved in praying together for one another. The disciples prayed together and the power of God fell upon them.

As we seek His face, we too will see His power. Find a prayer partner and commit to pray for one another’s needs. Get involved in corporate prayer within your church. When you do, you and your church will SHINE.



Conforming to Scripture

Scripture reading Acts 1:15-16 & 20

“And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus...For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.”

The disciples were instructed by Jesus to go back to Jerusalem and wait. They did exactly what He told them to do. As they were waiting, they searched the Scriptures to get direction from God concerning His future plans. In verse 16, Peter says, *“Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled”* (Acts 1:16). Peter was concerned that, the apostles, conformed their lives to the teaching of Scripture.

Psalm 109:8 says, *“Let his days be few; and let another take his office.”* Believers are not saved by keeping the law of God but by obeying God’s Word. We receive direction that causes our lives to prosper. God said it to Joshua this way, *“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success”* (Joshua 1:8). Over and over, we are admonished in Scripture to obey God’s law. When we do, we will see His blessings. The Apostle Paul said, *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”* (Galatians 6:7). The law of sowing and reaping is a valid Christian principle.

Let me encourage you to do everything you can to conform your life to the teaching of Scripture. The disciples did and they prospered. If you do this, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 5 – Lesson 5



Without Christ It Doesn't End Well

Scripture reading Acts 1:17-18

“For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.”

It never ends well when someone chooses to disobey God. There are only two records of what happened to Judas after he betrayed the Lord. Matthew tells us that he *“went and hanged himself.”* (Matthew 27:5) and Luke tells us that, *“and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.”* The indication is that he hanged himself on a tree over the edge of a cliff. The rope somehow slipped, and his body burst apart. This was a man who walked with Jesus, heard Him teach, watched Him perform miracles, and yet, chose to live his own way and follow his own opinion.

I cannot recount in this short devotional how many times in forty-two years I have watched people, believers and unbelievers make a self-centered and self-willed decision that affected them in a negative way the rest of their lives. Some will blame it on how their parents treated them. Some will blame it on a negative incident with a former church leader. Some preachers blame their failures brought on by their own self will, on their family, or spouse. It doesn't matter why we choose to do our own thing and disobey the Word of God. When we do whatever we do it will not end well. The opposite is true when you choose to do God's will and obey His Word. If you refuse to allow bitterness to control you and wait on Him, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 5 – Lesson 6



Casting Lots

Scripture reading Acts 1:26

“And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”

Is casting lots a good way to determine God’s will for today?

NO! Today we have the completed Word of God and the Holy Spirit to show us his will.

1. It is the will of God that you be thankful.
1 Thessalonians 5:18, *“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”*
2. It is the will of God that you be morally pure.
1 Thessalonians 4:3, *“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.”*
3. It is the will of God that we serve others.
Ephesians 6:6, *“Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”*
4. It is the will of God that you submit to the authorities that God places over you.
1 Peter 2:14, *“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake:...For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.”*
5. It is the will of God that you give your body to Jesus and not be conformed to this world (Romans 12:1-2).

These are things that we know are the will of God. If we are doing these things, we are delighting ourselves in the Lord. We are walking in His Spirit. We can do whatever we want to do knowing it is the will of God, because He will place desires in our hearts that we will want to fulfill. Psalm 37:4 says, *“Delight thyself also in the Lord: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”*

In the Old Testament, they had to cast lots but as a child of God you do not have to. You have the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit of God. When you surrender to Him and His Word, then you will SHINE.