

SHINE Devotional

Week 46 – Lesson 1



Forgiveness

Scripture reading Acts 13:38

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:”

Forgiveness is one of the most beautiful words in the Christian vocabulary. Forgiveness is a gift that God gave to mankind through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. John the Baptist announced, *“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* (John 1:29). The angel told Joseph, *“thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins”* (Matthew 1:21). Jesus made it possible for everyone to have forgiveness of sin. Every believer who has put their faith and trust in Him had to admit they were sinners and seek God’s forgiveness. We stand in front of our God forgiven of our sins because of what Jesus did. That is why it is absolutely essential that believers be willing to forgive the sins of others. When Peter asked Jesus, how many times he should forgive his brother? Jesus said, *“Until seventy times seven”* (Matthew 18:21-35). Forgiveness should come naturally from every believer.

John D. Rockefeller built the great Standard Oil empire. Not surprisingly, Rockefeller was a man who demanded high performance from his company’s executives. One day, one of those executives made a two million dollar mistake. Word of the man’s enormous error quickly spread throughout the executive offices. Everyone had concern for their friend. One particular executive was scheduled to meet with Mr. Rockefeller. As he approached the oil monarch’s desk, Rockefeller looked up from the piece of paper on which he was writing.

“I guess you’ve heard about the two million dollar mistake our friend made,” he said abruptly.

“Yes,” the executive said, expecting Rockefeller to explode.

“Well, I’ve been sitting here listing all of our friends’ good qualities on this sheet of paper, and I’ve discovered that in the past he has made us many more times the amount he lost for us today. His good points far outweigh this one human error. So I think we ought to forgive him, don’t you?”

If Rockefeller could forgive his friend’s two-million-dollar mistake, you and I as believers should be able to forgive those we come in contact with. There is no greater way to demonstrate the love of Christ than to forgive. When you do, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 46 – Lesson 2



Justification by Faith

Scripture reading Acts 13:39

“And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

The word *justified* simply means declared righteous. It is a judicial term that totally absolves the individual mentioned from any guilt. Several years ago, a well known celebrity in our country was accused of murdering his wife. After many months of a very public trial, many believed he would be found guilty. However, the opposite occurred. The jury found him not guilty and the man went free. He was declared righteous by the courts.

You and I are hell deserving sinners. There is no way that we could ever earn heaven. A wealthy, young ruler approached Jesus one day and asked, *“Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”* (Mark 10:17). Jesus’ simple response was you need to keep all of the commandments. The rich, young ruler knew he was covetous and could not keep all of the commandments, and went away sorrowful. When the disciples said, *“Who then can be saved?”* (Mark 10:26). Jesus responded, *“With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible”* (Mark 10:27).

The religionist teaches justification by good works. Jesus taught justification by grace through faith. The only way anybody can be declared righteous is if their sins are paid for. Jesus paid for our sins by dying on the cross. When we receive Him as our Saviour, God the Father declares that we are righteous. We stand in front of almighty God totally cleansed from our sin, totally righteous in His sight, because Jesus paid it all. When you live in light of this reality, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 46 – Lesson 3



Publish God's Truth with Passion

Scripture reading Acts 13:40-41

“Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.”

Our world is filled with people who are passionate about many things. I have a dear friend who is passionate about football. If you were to go into his home, he would take you to his man cave. He converted one area of his garage into a room that is totally and completely dedicated to sports, particularly one football team. He is passionate about sports and so he should be. He is a coach and a very good one. I have another dear friend who is a hunter. I like to hunt and I have a few times in my life. However, this man provides meat for his family through hunting. He is passionate about hunting. Passion is a good thing, if we are passionate about the right things.

The New Testament believers were passionate about publishing God's truth. In Acts 13:40, we see that they gave warning about the judgement of God. They quoted the Prophet Habakkuk, warning those who had heard that they needed to obey God. They pressed for a decision. Why? Because they believed that hell was real, and that people needed to receive the Saviour or they would spend eternity there.

Years ago, my wife I were invited to give a dying woman the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When we walked into the room, I stood next to her bed with my wife and explained the Gospel. When I was finished, I asked her if she would like to receive Christ. Her response was, “No, not today.” I was stunned but my wife grabbed her hand. My wife pleaded with the lady and explained that she might not have another chance. After that lady witnessed the passion my wife had for her soul, she said she would like to pray and receive Christ. Only a few hours later, she walked into heaven forgiven and justified. It is good to have passion!

As a believer, I encourage you to have a passion for the souls of Christ. When you do, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 46 – Lesson 4



Producing Disciples

Scripture reading Acts 13:42-44

“And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.”

It is a natural thing for new believers to want to grow in their knowledge of Christ. In our passage today, the Gentiles wanted to hear the message again the following week. Peter says, *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby”* (1 Peter 2:2). In 2 Peter we are told, *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”* (3:18). The greatest thing any Christian can do after leading someone to Christ, is help them grow and become all that God wants them to be. Believers produce disciples. There are times when it is unpopular. There are times in church history when Christians were persecuted for sharing the Gospel truth. Yet, the Holy Spirit in the life of believers will convince the mature believer that he must tell other people about Christ. The Old Testament prophet, Jeremiah, had been rejected by his friends and family and by the nation of his birth because he proclaimed God’s truth. After so much rejection, he decided that he would no longer speak in the name of the Lord. *“Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay”* (Jeremiah 20:9). The Apostle Paul said, *“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”* (1 Corinthians 9:16).

True believers produce disciples. It is what they do. When Paul and Barnabus shared the truth of Christ, those who believed wanted to grow in Christ. They were so impressed by what they heard, these new believers went out and shared the Gospel message with others. I encourage you to get excited about the possibility of producing disciples and helping others grow to become more like Christ. When you do, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 46 – Lesson 5



Provoking Critics to Anger

Scripture reading Acts 13:44-45

“And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.”

The Apostle Paul was doing exactly what God wanted him to do. He was preaching with passion about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He taught about justification by grace through faith. He declared that all were sinners, needed a Saviour, and that Jesus Christ, God in human flesh, was that Saviour. There wasn't a problem until the religious people of the day saw that he was drawing a much greater crowd than they could ever draw. They were drawn to Paul's message and passion. They believed, and many got saved. The Jews were mad because they envied the crowd, and though Paul spoke with grace and expressed the love of Christ, they spoke against him, lied about him, and contradicted him privately and publicly. When you are passionate about the cause of Christ, and bold in your witness, you will make some people hostile.

Jesus said that truth divides. *“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household”* (Matthew 10:34-36). People often mistakenly believe that if they are doing that which is right and that which honors Christ, then their life will be a life of ease. That was not true in the first century nor throughout the centuries between Paul's day and ours. The message of the cross brings a person to a decision. Am I willing to admit that I am a sinner in need of a Saviour? Or will I stand in my self righteousness and declare that my sin is not sin making God a liar. If I stand defending my sin, I will hate those who declare the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Paul and Barnabas, by preaching truth and expressing the love of Jesus Christ for sinners, provoked their critics to anger. When you stand for the truth of the Gospel and the message of the Word of God, there will be those who are provoked to anger. When you SHINE for Christ, they will do all they can to diminish that light. I encourage you as a believer to SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 46 – Lesson 6



Pass on to Those Who Will Hear

Scripture reading Acts 13:46-52

“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said...lo, we turn to the Gentiles....But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.”

Many years ago, a man in our church asked me a question. “What do you think when people choose to leave Liberty Baptist Church and go somewhere else?” My response was simple. I said, “It hurts me when a friend chooses not to attend here at Liberty Baptist Church. But, quite frankly, I am too busy ministering to those who want to hear to spend much time worrying about those who do not want to hear.”

Each summer we invite college students from around the country to serve as “Summer Missionaries” here at Liberty Baptist Church. This past year, through our Summer Missionary program, we gave the Gospel to over 40,000 homes. When these summer interns come to work at Liberty, we teach them how to effectively go door to door and talk to people about Christ. We teach them how to lead someone to Christ. In their training, we make it clear that we do not waste time on those who do not want to hear. When I was young, I wasted much time arguing with people who already knew what they believed and really didn’t want to hear the Gospel message. If someone doesn’t want to hear the truth, you have no responsibility to force it on them. Paul walked away from his Jewish critics and went and shared the truth to the Gentiles. When the people of God in Samuel’s day rejected him as being judge, God said, *“they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them”* (1 Samuel 8:7). You must remember that if people do not want to hear the Gospel, they are rejecting Christ, not you. Go to those who want to hear. Jesus said, *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:”* (John 10:27). Go find God’s lost sheep. Share the Gospel faithfully with everyone. Don’t worry about those who reject you. Paul shook off the dust from his feet and went to the next city. SHINE your light for those who desire deliverance from the darkness. Preach to those who want to hear and your light will SHINE.