



Faith

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Focus



for
Teens



Sunday
School
Services

Zion Assembly Church of God
Writer: Allen Thompson

Epistles of Peter

“The Second Epistle” – February 4, 2018

Lesson – “Deception”

Scriptures – Mt. 24:11; Mk. 14:56; 2 Co. 11:12-15

Introduction to lesson

“You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time” (attributed to Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States). Don’t be fooled! In the last days, many will be deceived. Nevertheless, the Lord is coming for a glorious, victorious church. His church will not be led astray. But deception will be on the rise in these last days. Deception involves reducing and distorting the truths of God’s Word. False prophets, false messages, and false promises are plaguing churches around the world. But rest assured, you will not be deceived as long as you remain grounded and settled in the gospel of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:23). Therefore, read and study the truths of God’s Word. Know your Bible for yourself.

Key Verse: 2 Peter 2:2 “And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”

Questions to Discuss:

- ✦ What are some of the messages being promoted today that mislead Christians? (Matthew 24:11)
- ✦ What can we learn about our character versus the deception of our character? (Mark 14:56)
- ✦ How does the enemy work in order to deceive? How could his deception influence your belief? (2 Corinthians 11:12-15)
- ✦ Can workers of deception claim to be “transformed...into the apostles of Christ?”

Think about it:

John warned us in 1 John 4:1 – “try [*test*] the spirits whether they are of God.” However, too many Christians are too lazy to test or even defend their own beliefs. Others are confused because deception has changed their foundation from the solid rock to the sinking sand. We must be cautious in whom we place our confidence because Jude stated in verse 4: “For certain men have crept in unnoticed.” Just because church service has begun does not mean deception will abandon our gatherings. On T.V., two ministers were declaring why they needed private jets. Using deception and a mixture of lies, they spun webs of distorted hopes of prosperity and of distorted understanding of the message of Christ. These wolves in sheep clothes do not bring the gospel of peace but the gospel of deception (Ac. 20:29; Ep. 6:15; Tit. 3:3). These men are the representation of deception, seeking their own desires while abandoning Christ’s! “Indeed, it is not in human nature to deceive others for any long time, without in a measure deceiving ourselves” (John Henry Newman). Remember this, many people have lied so long and believed so many false messages, that they have no idea they are deceiving those around them. Don’t be deceived. Read and study God’s Word.

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“The Second Epistle” – February 11, 2018

Lesson – “God’s Judgment”

Scriptures – Psalm 19:9; Ephesians 5:6, 27; 2 Peter 2:9
Introduction to lesson

“God’s judgment is not meant to be harsh or destructive but God desires that our walk match His commandments” (A. W. Tozer). It is hard to imagine a loving God who judges. However, the truth is He will judge. David pointed out this fact: “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous” (Ps. 19:9). Fortunately, God is our judge rather than man. Man’s judgment and God’s judgment are not the same. Man often judges critically by the outward appearance of things, but God sees the inward man and judges righteously. We must make sure our righteousness is settled in the righteousness of Christ (2 Co. 5:21). One day, Jesus will return for His church (bride) and present to himself a people who have made themselves ready (Rev. 19:7; Ep. 5:27). Will you be ready?

Key Verse: “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished” (2 Peter 2:9).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Will God really judge His people? Did Israel ever suffer judgment? Look at Ezekiel 20:23-24, and then talk about Israel’s failures and successes.
- ✚ Will church leaders (i.e. ministers) escape judgment just because they are called by God? (Ro. 14:10-12)
- ✚ Will we get a fair trial before God? (John 5:30; 8:16)
- ✚ What is judged? (Matthew 12:33-37)

Think about it:

“Redemptive theology teaches that mercy does not become effective toward a man until justice had done its work” (A. W. Tozer). Think about it. You are a sinner and meant for prison. Christ comes into the courtroom and replaces Himself for you. The justice department knows your guilt, but forgiveness means your freedom. This freedom can then be used to continue in sin or to live holy. Now, think about the judgment of God. There are many Christians walking this Earth that have not heard the full gospel, and they walk in error. These Christians will be righteously judged according to their walk and also according to their understanding. For those who have heard the truth and rejected it, the judgment is far greater (2 Peter 2:21). Certainly, there is sin and rebellion taking place outside the church, and sometimes, even inside the church. We must therefore guard our spirit. God sent His Son to give us freedom and power to overcome sin (John 10:31-36). In the church, we have the great responsibility to lift up the standard of God’s Word (v. 31). But if we neglect to act responsibly in the church and become entangled in sin, we will face a shameful judgment (1 Peter 4:17). Today, many Christians sin recklessly because they believe judgment will not come to them. But those who practice sinning are called sinners, not Christians; and they will be judged as sinners (Ep. 5:6-7).

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“The Second Epistle” – February 18, 2018

Lesson – “Spots and Blemishes”

Scriptures – Romans 13:13; 1 John 3:6; 1 Timothy 6:14

Introduction to lesson

Spots and blemishes are not appropriate on clothes, silverware, or automobiles. Imagine you head to a fancy restaurant and see your silverware marred with leftover food. Would you use it? Would you think less of the quality of the restaurant? Well, the same goes for Christians. The Lord will not use tarnished individuals in a holy place. There are standards He requires from us, and we must walk appropriately (Rom. 13:13). If the church is tarnished, people who come through our doors will see its faults and never return. Why? When there is a high standard, expectations are also high! 1 John 3:6 teaches, “Whosoever abides in Him sins not.” This is a standard purchased by the blood of Christ. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we can live without spot and please the Lord until he comes again (1 Timothy 6:14).

Key Verse: “And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you” (2 Peter 2:13).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Can you really live without spots or blemishes? If so, how? (1 Timothy 6:14)
- ✚ What can truly make us anew and restore us from our blemishes? (1 Peter 1:19)
- ✚ Why is the blood of Christ so important? (1 Peter 1:14)
- ✚ Do you have any spots or blemishes holding you back?

Think about it:

The stains of yesterday can impede the vision for tomorrow. Mistakes, fallen promises, faded glories, lies, deceptions, and unrealistic expectations are all blemishes that hinder us from seeing our true potential. Romans 13:13 explains, “Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry.” It sounds easy, but for those whose vision is distorted by blemishes, the path is difficult. Driving a vehicle with dirt covering the windshield is not possible because you can’t see where you’re going. The dirt must be removed. Jesus’ blood washes away the sinful dirt of our lives. Our past mistakes and blemishes should not continue to tarnish us, for these can be removed by the precious blood of Christ, so that we may live forever victorious (1 Peter 1:19). When our vision is clear, we “know that He is righteous” and we “know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him” (1 John 2:29). This is our victory! This gives a believer a clear path to live and walk beside our Savior. Our walk will allow us to abide with Him and not sin, because we know Him and love Him (1 John 3:6). Jesus is the only one who can restore vision to our path and give light to our walk. Let Him clean your window!

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Epistles of Peter

“The Second Epistle” – February 25, 2018

Lesson – “Follow the Truth”

Scriptures – Psalm 119:160; 100:5; 3 John 3; John 8:32; 17:17

Introduction to lesson

When giving testimony in court, we state the following: “I do solemnly promise to tell the truth.” We then should tell the truth no matter the risk. But many people only pay lip-service to the truth, without actually honoring truth. Thus, truth is spoiled by deceptions and lies. Once someone has been found to be untruthful, there is a reputation risk. You cannot trust him/her. As Christians, we know the truth because truth has been revealed to us (John 8:32). Moreover, when we are sanctified and set apart by the truth, this sanctification enables us to live according to the truth that we believe (John 17:17). We are Christians because we “continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the gospel” (Col. 1:23). Following Christ is following Truth; anything less is a lie.

Key Verse: “For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteous, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them” (2 Pe. 2:21).

Questions to Discuss:

- ✚ Define truth? What does truth mean to you?
- ✚ Is our walk related to the truth we declare? What are your thoughts of people who live contrary to what they declare to be? (3 John 3)
- ✚ How good is the truth of God, and can we depend on it? (Ps. 100:5)

Think about it:

“A church which abandons the truth abandons itself” (Hans Kung). “Truth is the highest thing that man may keep” (Geoffrey Chaucer). The highest compliment a person may receive is he/she is honest and true. Long before the writer was born, a man’s handshake was his word and bond. But today a handshake means little. Nevertheless, a person’s word represents the person within. For this reason, we must practice what we preach (speak). The walk that we claim must be evidenced by our actions (Ps. 119:160). As Christians, we must do what we say. When you speak, speak with truth; when you live, live the truth; when you love, let love reign in truth and righteousness (Pro. 12:17). Jesus spoke the truth, and he also lived the truth. Today, so many people want to be called Christians, but they fail to be like Christ. Truth is missing! A true Christian’s walk is in the light of truth, and this truth is found in the pages of God’s Word. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105). “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (v. 11). Get into the Word of God; follow the truth; follow Jesus.

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