

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Hot Topics-Studying Ephesians - Week of October 11

“Just as you cannot understand the path of the wind or the mystery of a tiny baby growing in its mother’s womb, so you cannot understand the activity of God, who does all things” (Ecclesiastes 11:5).

Out of gratitude, let’s begin with a moment of silence for the gift of life.

Introduction

After about seven months into our marriage, one November morning I awoke and told my husband, Charles, that I felt like I had the flu. Charles said, ‘You need to see the doctor.’ I did. Only our family doctor told me I wasn’t sick, I was pregnant. Joy and surprise filled Charles’ and my conversation on the drive back home. Then reality started to sink in. Am I ready to be a mommy? Can we afford a family? It’s time to grow up. There’s no turning back. I knew God was going to take care of us, still, there were many unknowns.

Because I was a graduate student, I also made an appointment with the university infirmary, as required by my student insurance. Charles and I arrived excited, checked in, went back and waited to speak with the university doctor. As soon as the doctor walked in, he handed us about six brochures. ‘What is this?’ I asked. “It’s a list of abortion clinics,” he said. ‘Why would I need information about abortion clinics,’ I asked, ‘my husband and I want to have this baby.’ “Well,” he said, “you may change your mind and decide to wait. If so, you’ll have the numbers. Most of our graduate students elect to wait until they graduate. Just keep it in mind.”

As we quietly drove back home in the late November rain, a heaviness loomed. Just-like-that ... a new life could be snuffed out for bad timing or personal achievement. And to be honest, had I not been married, perhaps the heaviness would have outweighed the joy. Looking back, maybe the Lord was showing me that unexpected pregnancy is not always seen as a blessing. Yet, life is a gift. And sometimes gifts are discarded. We can either choose to honor the gift, or we can reject it to suit ourselves. But we will reap what we sow, for God alone is the author of all life and holds authority over all life.

Read Ephesians 6:1-4

- According to Paul’s words in v1, why are children to obey their parents? Why is this the ‘right thing to do’?
- What is the reward for ‘honoring your father and mother’ according to v3b (also Exodus 20:12)?
- How do we know the Lord wants us to have ‘a long life on the earth’? What does this tell us about the gift and sanctity of life?
- How is appropriate discipline an expression of real love?
- Referring to following Scriptures, what is our role regarding our children?
Proverbs 6:20-23; 13:24, Psalm 8:2-4; Psalm 78:1-7, Mark 10:13-16
Matthew 18:10

Just as the apostle Paul urges children to honor their parents, Paul instructs fathers (parents) to honor their children by not provoking them to anger. One way we provoke anger in children is through incessant critique and negativity. When we fall prey to the lie that I’d get more done if it wasn’t for these kids, and then take out our anger on the children, we may have just bumped up against the idolatry that lies at the root of child-sacrifice. A horrific practice of the ancient Canaanites (e.g. worship of the Ammonite god, Molech) was offering infant children for increased wealth and agricultural productivity. In other words, they gave up a child for convenience, and to be more productive and successful.

Secular culture distorts God’s love when we allow the value of an unborn child to be defined by another. The number of abortions caused by rape is about 1% and the number of abortions being the mother’s health at risk is less than 1%. Thus, 98% are elective. It is staggering to think that since 1973 there have been 63 to 66 million legal abortions since the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision. Little lives snuffed out for reasons known only to God! What happened to sacred civility for the born and unborn alike? If a nation wants to endure and be a blessing, God must be LORD of that nation (Psalm 33:12).

Read Ephesians 6:5-9

- Speaking to the sanctity of life in the workplace, how may workers (employees) honor their employers (boss, overseer, supervisors)? How can employers honor their employees?
- How must we continue to honor our aging citizens, those retired and those still in the work force?

Job was a man who suffered indescribable amounts of unspeakable pain, and apparently it was because Satan, the accuser, asked permission to snuff out his life and witness (see Job 1:6-12; 2:1-10). How does Job push through suffering and stay true to his LORD? Only heaven knows. But we see clues along the way in that, though he was bitterly honest before God and in earshot of his friends, Job determined in his heart not to sin by cursing God (Job 2:10). Job resolved in his heart not to sin by looking upon a woman lustfully (Job 31:1). Instead, he held on to faith (Job 19:23-27) finally declaring: "I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you ... I had only heard about you before, but now I have seen you with my own eyes" (Job 42:2,5).

In Closing

Could Job's story help us in knowing how to armor up when the devil comes to wage war against our souls? We live in a fallen world and our real life is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:1). Close by reading the final words of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesian Christians.

Read Ephesians 6:10-24

One Year Bible Readings

October 11: Jer. 16:16-18:23, 1 Thess. 4:1-5:3, Psalm 81:1-16, Prov. 25:6-8
October 12: Jer. 19:1-21:14, 1 Thess. 5:4-28, Psalm 82:1-8, Prov. 25:9-10
October 13: Jer. 22:1-23:20, 2 Thess. 1:1-12, Psalm 83:1-18, Prov. 25:11-14
October 14: Jer. 23:21-25:38, 2 Thess. 2:1-17, Psalm 84:1-12, Prov. 25:15
October 15: Jer. 26:1-27:22, 2 Thess. 3:1-18, Psalm 85:1-13, Prov. 25:16
October 16: Jer. 28:1-29:32, 1 Timothy 1:1-20, Psalm 86:1-17, Prov. 25:17
October 17: Jer. 30:1-31:26, 1 Timothy 2:1-15, Psalm 87:1-7, Prov. 25:18-19

HOT TOPICS

STUDYING THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Text: Ephesians 6

Plain Truth:

God spoke _____ into _____
so we are called to speak _____ the
_____ of every _____, born or
_____.

1. God is the _____ and _____ of
_____ ..

2. Every _____ has _____ because every
_____ is _____ by God.

Resources:

Pregnancy Care Center: <https://pcchickory.com/>
Crossroads Care Clinic: <https://crossroadscare.clinic/>

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