



Fullness of Life



SENIOR ADULT MINISTRIES

FULLNESS OF LIFE 2024

“Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.”

Isaiah 46:4

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LIFE IS A JOURNEY ON THE PATH OF LIFE

The Church of the Nazarene, through the NDI department, is committed to our senior adults, knowing that they pour out a wealth of experience that will enrich the class and the teacher through their contributions and experiences.

We also consider them to be extremely important and would like them to be assigned the special task of interceding for the congregation, as they tend to have more time to be alone with God in prayer.

When leading the ministry of the senior adults, you must think about the mission and purpose of this great ministry:

1. Spiritual enrichment.
2. Socialization and camaraderie.
3. Opportunity to learn and share experiences.
4. Contribution of knowledge and blessing for younger generations.

Objectives of this ministry to senior adults should:

1. Provide spiritual nourishment from the Word of God.
2. Minister to their physical, emotional, and social needs.
3. Encourage and help them so they can minister to others.

MINISTRY PLAN FOR SENIOR ADULTS

INTRODUCTION:

The Church of the Nazarene, through the NDI department, considers it crucial to provide educational teaching to all ages from birth through senior adults. Everyone has an important space to which we are committed to providing the necessary spiritual food and the attention that each member deserves, fulfilling the mandate of Christ: "Jesus replied, 'They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.'" (Matthew 14:16)

JUSTIFICATION:

For the NDI Department, it is of utmost importance to give attention to our senior adults since they have already given through their service to the church, and they are very valuable. It is therefore necessary for them to feel important and useful to the congregation to provide wise counsel and prayer support to the younger generations.

OBJECTIVE:

Provide comprehensive care to senior adults within the congregations of the Church of the Nazarene so that they can be discipling disciples of Christ through his Word, and at the same time, reach others for his kingdom.

N°	ACTIVITY	DATE
1	Provide classes for senior adults, including care and attention appropriate for their age.	January to December
2	Provide a space once a month to do crafts and work appropriate for their age	January to December
3	Schedule retreats and leisure times	January to December
4	Schedule occasional afternoons where senior adults can display their crafts for sale and generate income for themselves.	January to December
5	Celebrate special services for senior adults and recognize those who have had birthdays - every three months	January to December
6	Request sponsors for the needs of seniors	
7	Others	January to December

BUDGET:

N°	DETAILS	TOTAL
1	Raw material for craft work	\$
2	Refreshments for meetings	\$
3	Transportation for retreats and gatherings	\$
4	Other	\$

CONCLUSION:

Our Church recognizes senior adults as people who are highly regarded and valuable, to whom respect and consideration must be given, providing spiritual, material, and emotional care, during this stage of life until death arrives.

By Rev. Evilanda Solís de Cruz

LESSON 1 - YOUR WORDS CAN BUILD OR DESTROY

KEY VERSE: MATTHEW 12:36

(Advice from a senior adult)

INTRODUCTION:

Our words generate blessings or curses, because what comes from the depths of the heart is what harms or builds up others. Matthew 12:34 says, "You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of." Jesus was harsh when pronouncing these words, but in reality, he only wanted to teach us to speak words that bring peace to the listener.

Now Jesus reinforces the seriousness of idle words by saying that people will be judged by their idle words on the day of judgment. The word "idle" comes from the Greek "argós", which means "inactive; lazy; completely useless. This describes all words that do not please God: they are curses, full of vainglory or pride, blasphemous, completely vain, and destructive. Ephesians 5:4 says, "Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving."

THE BIBLE WARNS US:

The Bible warns us of the danger that idle words have, because we will give an account for them. "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:36-37). We will be judged by the facts (Matt 25:31-46). Words build or words destroy.

Poisonous snakes were known because their poisonous mouth revealed an inner evil instinct. Each person is judged by their words because their words reveal the state of their heart. "For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (Luke 6:45). If a person is often angry, rude, obscene, or immoral, you can be sure that this is how they are "on the inside." If a person is always kind, encouraging, and polite, then you can be sure that's how they are "on the inside." Obviously, it is possible for someone to put on a false appearance to deceive others regarding his character. However, sooner or later what is inside will come to be known. "...the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart" (Luke 6:45 ISV).

ACT RESPONSIBLY IN YOUR ACTIONS:

What is responsibility? It is the state of being responsible, answerable, or accountable for something within one's power, control, or management. It involves the good use of freedom and taking charge of one's own actions. It reflects respect towards others and towards oneself.

Responsibility is a virtue that leads us to assume the consequences of our intentional actions, the result of the decisions we make or accept.

That's why your words can build or destroy, discourage, or inspire, heal or harm.

Words that are not used for good are idle words. Idle words are, vain, foolish, unprofitable. They are wasted words.

God has given the words of believers authority and power, which makes them precious. Precious things should not be wasted. "I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you" (Luke 10:19).

CONCLUSION:

The Bible reminds us of the importance of our words and their impact on our lives and the lives of others. We must be aware of this and work so that our words are aimed at building, not destroying. In this way, we can improve our personal relationships and our lives in general.

One of the most effective ways to apply this verse to our lives is to become aware of the words we use daily and ask ourselves if our words are necessary, constructive, and respectful. If we cannot answer yes to this question, it is better to say nothing and work on finding a more effective way to communicate.

We can also learn to actively listen, try to understand others before responding, and choose our words carefully so that they are as effective, loving, and respectful as possible. That way we will show love to everyone.

TO DO IN CLASS: Find the 7 words hidden in the word search. These words remind us that we must speak to edify, encourage, and inspire others.

(Words to find: loving, effective, constructive, necessary, respectful, understanding, listen).

Z	U	S	E	V	I	T	C	U	R	T	S	N	O	C
B	N	C	F	L	N	O	P	Q	D	A	R	T	G	E
R	D	S	T	U	G	K	V	O	S	P	Q	E	S	F
V	E	S	M	A	L	O	V	I	N	G	S	S	U	F
G	R	A	Y	C	Z	X	T	Y	H	C	T	M	L	E
N	S	V	E	T	N	M	D	W	L	X	Z	I	P	C
E	T	I	L	K	E	J	H	U	G	F	S	S	A	T
C	A	S	C	K	V	B	F	N	Q	T	W	E	R	I
P	N	N	S	I	Y	T	T	R	E	W	Q	I	M	V
R	D	U	Q	A	C	Z	S	N	D	C	V	B	N	E
P	I	R	L	E	I	B	N	S	O	P	W	Q	A	S
I	N	P	P	H	Y	G	T	F	R	D	E	S	W	A
Q	G	S	M	S	C	N	E	C	E	S	S	A	R	Y
Z	E	O	L	O	K	I	U	J	H	Y	G	T	F	R
R	E	C	O	M	P	R	E	S	A	B	R	I	T	O

End by reviewing today's Bible verse.

LESSON 2 - PRACTICAL ADVICE FROM AN ELDER TO THE PARENTS OF THEIR GRANDCHILDREN ON RAISING CHILDREN

KEY VERSES: PROVERBS 2:1-5

INTRODUCTION:

The book of Proverbs shows us divine wisdom in the form of proverbs, teachings and advice that can be applied in daily life for new generations (children of inexperienced parents). To do this, we need to put the following tips into practice:

EARLY INSTRUCTION: in Hebrew means from childhood to adolescence. INSTRUCTING a child means age-appropriate teaching, and this begins in childhood. The first years are especially important as a child's character is being formed and children are taught values that they will never forget. The Holy Scriptures are full of wisdom from a spiritual mindset that will help in the formation of children.

This wisdom, discernment and understanding must be sought as if they were hidden treasures.

INSTRUCT WITH LOVE:

We must think: God is speaking this Word to me. And I must believe this Word and receive it as the medicine that heals all our ills. How will you study the Word of God? By receiving and storing it, being attentive and putting into practice the following verbs: receive, treasure, incline, apply, cry out, seek. Solomon describes the many ways we should seek wisdom.

Timely advice: To be wise parents we must:

AVOID ABUSE IN DISCIPLINE

Parents should agree on the methods and practices they use to discipline their child(ren), as this helps them grow and mature. However, it is essential that this discipline is always applied with love and guidance, avoiding any form of abuse or excessiveness that could harm the relationship between parents and child, and harm the child's feelings, causing future damage.

DISCIPLINE WITH LOVE

By disciplining their child(ren), parents are actually training them to be well-adjusted and independent adults. To do this, boys and girls are taught to be responsible for their actions, establishing limits and rules that show them what to do, how to behave, and the consequences if they disobey the rules.

SHOW UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Love should not be based on perfect behavior but must be unconditional. Kids are not perfect, just like we aren't perfect. We can still carry out our responsibilities as parents with unconditional love.

BE CONSISTENT

When discipline is exercised wisely, clear and consistent boundaries are established, promoting a safe and healthy environment for a child's development. Discipline is how you can prepare your child(ren) to face life's challenges and become responsible, empathetic people who are capable of making good, practical, and correct decisions.

CONCLUSION:

Wisdom allows us to discern right from wrong.

Intelligence helps us understand what is right and what is wrong,

Prudence helps us make decisions by measuring their consequences.

May Jesus grant us the necessary wisdom and intelligence to act in accordance with ethical and moral principles according to the Holy Scriptures.

TO DO IN CLASS:

In the table, make a list in the second column of the reasons why you can and should advise parents and younger generations according to the specific passage.

BIBLE PASSAGES	MY ADVICE FROM GOD'S WORD
Psalm 92:14-15	
Proverbs 9:10	
Proverbs 13:22	

A final, yet no less important, recommendation is to pray every day for your children to be good parents and for your grandchildren and younger generations.

LESSON 3 - GOD'S MERCY LASTS A LIFETIME

KEY VERSE: PSALM 30:5

INTRODUCTION:

It is a custom of human beings to call this world “cruel” due to the different circumstances that arise in our lives. Sometimes we cry for the sufferings that arrive suddenly like shooting stars that leave a flame of fire in the heart, or like a meteor that suddenly makes a crater in the soul. The least we can do is cry; we have no desire to sing.

This is where we Christians must overcome times of trial, just like David. He learned to overcome trials and that is why he advises the following:

I. BAD TIMES DO NOT LAST FOREVER (V. 5^a)

- a. David was no different from us, He had a living hope; problems don't last forever.
- b. God couldn't choose anyone better than David. He knew about dark nights, persecutions, betrayals, loneliness and the pain of death, contempt and humiliations.
- c. David tells us that the night ends when the day begins. Psalm 43:8 - Your day begins when you decide to praise God.
- d. We should not sit down and cry until everything passes; the only thing you will see is the darkest night.
- e. Worship hastens the dawn; joy comes with Christ at dawn.
- f. Anger lasts only a short time. The problems and sorrows that the psalmist had gone through didn't even compare to the later happiness. God is not a being who appreciates anger; although he may be disgusted with man's behavior, this is not sustained.
- g. The idea of crying, according to the Hebrew, is like a stranger or a wanderer who stays alone for one night, in other words, the pain, the sorrows, the problem will soon pass.
Psalm 84:6 says “Crossing the valley of tears they turn it into a fountain...” Let's not stay in the valley of tears; let's cross over and run to the other side of the river; there is salvation.
- h. The wrath of God is momentary and caused by sin, but God's favor lasts all night. This brings us to the next point.

II. JOY COMES TO THE THANKFUL

- a. “Joy” in Hebrew is “rinnah” it means a cry of joy that accompanies a great victory; it is a song of joy.
- b. We have the Holy Spirit living with us to help us have joy in the midst of terrifying situations. This means that we are not condemned for life, those moments of sadness mean that it is important that we have God's favor... "At night the crying will last, but in the morning joy will come."
- c. The apostle Paul in 2nd Corinthians 4:16-18 teaches us that he had gone through difficult situations and tribulations, but he had eternity with the Lord in mind.

In 1 Timothy 1:12 he says, "But I know whom I have believed, and I am sure that he is able to keep my trust for the last day."

CONCLUSION:

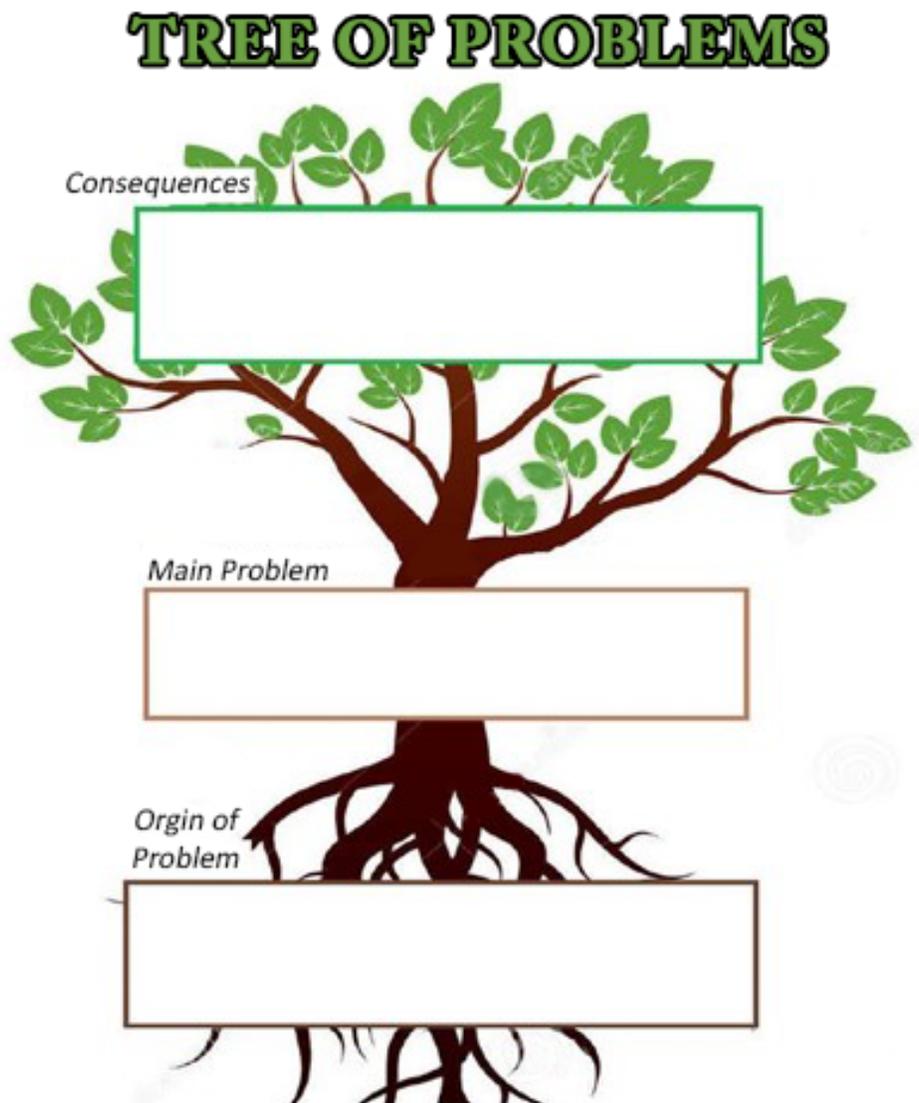
As Christians, we have gone through the desert, through drought, through hunger. On the path of life, there are thorns and thistles, but the Lord tells us that joy comes at dawn. That comforts us because it will not be a lifetime and we have a powerful one who fights alongside us; his Word confirms that in Psalm 144:1-2

"Praise be to the LORD my Rock,
who trains my hands for war,
my fingers for battle.
He is my loving God and my fortress,
my stronghold and my deliverer,
my shield, in whom I take refuge,
who subdues peoples under me.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Create a problem tree.

- On the trunk write the problem
- On the roots write the origin of the problem
- In the branches, write the consequences that the problem has generated
- And on the leaves write the solution to the problems



LESSON 4 - I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU

KEY VERSE: ISAIAH 49:15

INTRODUCTION:

Isaiah inspires all readers through this passage in which Jehovah compares his love to that of a mother's love that is so deep and unforgettable.

I. CAN A MOTHER FORGET? - v. 15

- a. Mothers have a close relationship with their children because they carry them for nine months in their womb. They breathe, eat, and live for their child, providing them with everything they need. Then that care continues at birth and throughout their life.
- b. This passage tells us that there are mothers who forget their children and abandon them, however, God's love is even deeper than that of a mother.
- c. God's unconditional love is to protect his people.

II. I HAVE ENGRAVED YOU ON THE PALMS OF MY HANDS - v. 16

- a. The tissue of the hand is very sensitive, and this is confirmed through our sense of touch which allows us to feel objects and identify them with our hands. We can all appreciate the idea of God's hand being engraved with our name, our person and our life.
- b. "Kings and queens shall serve you; they shall care for all your needs." v. 23 (TLB)
- c. "Then you will know that I am the Lord; those who hope in me will not be disappointed."
- d. "Then all mankind will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." v. 26b

APPLICATION:

God's word says: "I will not forget you". Today, God is telling us in this time of crisis, pandemic, coronavirus, problems, etc., we have His promise. But it is we who forget God, we who don't respond to his care. Today more than ever, we need to approach Him seeking divine protection from the God of Love, to be covered by the protection of the Most High, Psalm 91:1.

CONCLUSION:

The God that we experience is a God of consolation, of hope, of infinite love, who is available to give us the attention that each of us needs. Unfortunately, God's love is not always reciprocated. Sometimes, we distance ourselves from his protection and care. We leave the place where we are safe and start making wrong decisions and fall into disgrace. Let's stay where we need to be ... under His loving care!!!

TO DO IN CLASS:

Make a craft for a mother that you can give as a gift using recyclable materials.



LESSON 5 - TRANSFORMATION OF THE BELIEVER OR A NEW CREATION

KEY VERSE: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

INTRODUCTION:

Paul tells us that all believers have died with Christ and no longer live for him or herself. Our lives are no longer of this world; now they are spiritual. Our "death" is that of the old sinful nature that was nailed to the cross with Christ. We were buried with him, and just as he was raised by the Father, so we too are raised up to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4 NKJV). That new person who was raised up is the one Paul mentions in 2 Corinthians 5:17 as the "new creation."

I will talk about three points that come from this verse that teach us the following:

I. BEING IN CHRIST - v. 17a

- a. What does it mean to be in Christ? It means to live like him and imitate him in all areas of our life. It is thinking like him; it is doing what he would do. The person who is in Christ does not fear the evil one nor does he fear the problem.
- b. The person who is in Christ endures the trial, overcomes the temptation, and rejects them.
- c. The person who is in Christ gives no place to the enemy in their life; they leave no doors open to be tempted.

This brings me to my next point.

II. BEING A NEW CREATION - v. 17b

- a. The "old" refers to everything that is part of our old nature, i.e., natural pride, love of sin, past habits and passions, etc. Galatians 5:19-21 - the acts of the flesh.
- b. The new creation focuses externally and sets their sights on Christ instead of looking internally at themself. The old things died; they were nailed to the cross along with the sinful nature.

III. THE NEW IS HERE - v. 17c

- a. Old and dead things are replaced with new things, full of life and the glory of God.
- b. The soul of the new creation delights in the things of God and hates the things of the world and the flesh.
- c. Our purposes, feelings, desires, and ideas are fresh and different. We see the world differently; as a consequence, we practice the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)

CONCLUSION:

Our new nature hates the sin that still has power over us. The difference is that the new creation is no longer a slave to sin, as it was before. Now we are free from sin, and it no longer has power over us (Galatians 5:24-25). God has crucified the flesh with its passions; the good thing is that now we can live and walk in the Spirit.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Spiritualize this illustration of the butterfly with your life and your conversion as God's prevenient and saving grace reached you so that you are now a new creation. Write on a piece of paper and then share with the group.

Then he answered her: "You are a Wonderful Butterfly. While you were sleeping, I created wings with many beautiful colors for you to make you look even more beautiful, and do you know what else? Now you can fly!"

"Fly!" the butterfly said very excitedly, and she did somersaults. The beautiful Wonderful Butterfly thanked God for her transformation and, being very happy, she went to greet every flower she could find.



LESSON 6 - AN URGENT CALL

KEY VERSE: REVELATION 3:20

PANORAMIC INTRODUCTION:

Mark R. Fairchild of Huntington University explores the lukewarm reputation of the Laodicean church, while examining recent archaeological excavations in Laodicea, Turkey, in his article “Laodicea’s ‘Lukewarm’ Legacy”.

Laodicea was a great commercial and administrative center characterized by fruitful banking operations and numerous commercial transactions. That is where its pride came from. Many beautiful mansions were built in this city, the ruins of which are still visible. Some of them were probably owned by Christians.

Laodicea, blessed with the fertile land of the Lyco River valley, had rich pastures for raising sheep. Using careful crossbreeding, the ranchers of this city managed to obtain a production with black, soft, shiny wool whose commercialization placed it in one of the most flourishing clothing industries which manufactured special clothing, as well as famous carpets.

Laodicea was the center of a prestigious medical school, specializing in an optometry school. Roman Catholic doctors stood out during this time and were identified by a symbol: a rod with intertwined snakes around it. Today this symbol is still in use. Laodicea was hit by constant earthquakes over the years (60-61 A.D.), yet the people did not accept any monetary aid because they were proud of their riches. However, a tax exemption was granted in order to contribute to and help with the rebuilding of the city.

I. A RICH BUT POOR CHURCH

Just like the city of Laodicea, the local church was also rich. With their many resources they created plans and programs, but they did not take God into account, leaving Him out.

God wants his children to be prosperous in everything. However, there is a danger when you grow in material prosperity but not in spiritual prosperity at the same time. This is what God warned the Israelites about before they entered the Promised Land: “You may say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today” (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).

Material prosperity must go hand in hand with spiritual prosperity. “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers” (3 John 1:2 NKJV).

If material wealth becomes the goal of life, then we lose perspective on what is truly important: God. This is what happened to the Laodicean church. “You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked” (Revelation 3:17).

II. BLIND AND NAKED - v. 18

The Lord also describes the church as “blind and naked.” This description had to hit hard with the Laodicean believers, because these were things they believed they had.

Laodicea was famous for a locally manufactured eyewash, which cured eye diseases. Therefore, blindness was far from a concern for them. They also did not believe they were naked because woolen clothing was made in this city.

But just as they were spiritually poor, they were also spiritually blind and naked. They were blind because they could not see the reality of God or the spiritual realm. They were spiritually naked because they were clothed with their own works, but not with the righteousness of God. Peter describes blindness as the lack of spiritual virtues (2 Peter 1:5-9). They were blind because they had not allowed the virtues of the Holy Spirit to transform their character. Their lack of virtue became evident “on the street,” and thus they were left naked, leaving their spiritual poverty exposed to everyone. But to avoid this, the Lord advised them to gain spiritual treasure.

I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see” (Revelation 3:18).

The people of the Laodicean church thought they had everything, but in a spiritual sense they did not have much. They believed in Jesus as their Savior, but not as their Lord. They were saved, but they had not allowed their lives to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

III. AN URGENT CALL

When Jesus said, “I stand at the door and knock,” He was inviting the members of the Laodicean church to recognize their miserable spiritual condition and receive His true gift of salvation. Like the apostle Paul, the Laodiceans needed to realize their absolute dependence on Christ: “What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith” (Philippians 3:8-9).

To those who open the door, Jesus promises an intimate communion, relating it to enjoying a dinner together. And he offered this great reward: “To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne” (Revelation 3:21). These words were Christ's commitment to the church of Laodicea.

CONCLUSION:

This message is not exclusive to Laodicea; it is also a warning to examine ourselves. Has our enthusiasm as Christians diminished? Are we excluding Christ from our lives? Have we relegated to placing more importance on other things before God? Is Christ Jesus standing outside our hearts knocking at the door? “Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Revelation 3:22).

How can we “buy” spiritual treasure? The prophet Isaiah reveals this:

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters... buy... without cost” (Isaiah 55:1-3). Today Jesus continues to say, “I stand at the door and knock!” To the churches that are filled with ordinary Christians, He sends a sincere invitation to have total communion with Him. He who has the keys to the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:19; Revelation 1:18; 3:7) calls us all to hear His voice and open the door so that He may come in and share a meal with us. Jesus said: “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35).

TO DO IN CLASS:

ACTIVITY:

Discuss with your group:

- Have you suffered from spiritual anemia at any time in your life?
- Could you comment on why?
- Have you experienced spiritual atrophy by giving more importance to other things before God, in the practice of spiritual disciplines?
- Could you as a group develop a spiritual restoration project?

LESSON 7 - A PLEASANT MEMORY

KEY VERSE: PROVERBS 10:7

INTRODUCTION:

The great heroes of the Bible are each remembered for leaving behind a legacy, both because of their work and also because of their exemplary life. The Holy Scriptures have more than 3000 characters in total; but not all of them have a predominant role in the Old or New Testaments. Some are remembered more easily because they played an important role at a certain point in their life or in history; But knowing who the most mentioned characters in the Bible are helps us understand that the events of their lives marked a future to be remembered; and that their actions left a deep mark on history, memory, family and society. Why are they remembered?

I. FOR THEIR TRUST IN THE LORD

We found a kind of “Hall of Fame” of great believers of all time. The main quality that unites them is that throughout their earthly lives, they put all their trust in the Lord, and that is why they were capable of doing great things.

- a. Nowadays, people consider famous people or people who have some outstanding ability as heroes. However, in the Bible, this title is given to those who dedicated their lives to serving God. That is to say, what made them stand out was not a characteristic that they had, nor an ability, nor a talent, nor anything like that; what made them stand out is the fact that...
- b. They put their faith in the Lord no matter what the circumstance. That is why they are outstanding, and their lives serve as an example for all believers.

II. THEIR MEMORY WILL BE PERPETUAL

There are two types of memory, positive and negative.

NEGATIVE MEMORIES

- a. In their sin the wicked perpetuate their memory. Those who are not contented to be on the road to hell themselves, must drive others down the same cursed path, and their memory will surely be fixed in the memories of their victims.
- b. What putrid animal matter is to our physical senses will be the memory of the wicked to our moral sensibilities when they are gone.

POSITIVE MEMORIES

We need 3 things to remember:

- To hear,
- To obey,
- To do works of faith.

The first is the basis of everything. To produce good fruit, we must listen to God, devour his Word at church and also in the intimacy of our closed room. The key to hearing God is to be silent and pay attention. Talk to him but also be silent so you can listen to him. He knows your heart and knows everything about you, so take the time to listen to what He wants to tell you. This is a challenge, and you should not get frustrated because you have never heard Him with your physical ears. God often speaks to us from within ourselves.

CONCLUSION:

Deuteronomy 30:9-11 promises: "Then the Lord your God will make you most prosperous in all the work of your hands and in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your land. The Lord will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your ancestors, if you obey the Lord your God and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law and turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach."

TO DO IN CLASS:

Create two groups, one will point out positive characteristics, the other group will point out negative characteristics about each character listed below. Present your observations to the class.

OLD TESTAMENT CHARACTERS WHO HAVE MADE HISTORY, POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE.

- Moses, a prophet and leader of the people of Israel during the exodus.
- Noah, a just man, faithful to God, builder of the ark.
- David, the second king of Israel.
- Abraham, the patriarch of the Jewish people.
- Elijah, a brave prophet, defender of the worship of God.
- Elisha, a prophet, successor of Elijah.
- Enoch, a faithful man close to God who lived a just and pious life.
- Joseph, the son of Jacob and ruler in Egypt.
- Daniel, a young man who remained faithful to God in the midst of an idolatrous people.
- Joshua, Moses' successor, led the people into the Promised Land.
- Solomon, King David's son, known for his wisdom and wealth.
- Esther, a young Jewish woman who saved her people from extermination.
- Ruth, a young Moabite, loyal to her mother-in-law. She appears in the genealogy of Jesus.
- Isaiah, a prophet with great spiritual vision.
- Jacob, a son of Isaac. Became the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Samuel, a prophet and judge. He anointed Saul and David as kings.
- Isaac, a son of Abraham and Sarah, the son of promise.
- Samson, a judge of Israel remembered for his physical strength.
- Adam and Eve, the first human beings.
- Abigail, a wise and brave woman who helped King David.
- Deborah, a judge and prophetess who led Israel.
- Job, a man who was faithful to God and who suffered great calamities.

LESSON 8 - THE BENEFITS OF GOD'S HANDS AND EARS

KEY VERSES: ISAIAH 59:1-2

INTRODUCTION:

By his grace and mercy, God uses two parts of his body to bless the church. These are the hands and ears according to God's revelation to Isaiah.

I. THE BENEFITS OF HANDS

- a. Anecdote: A 6-year-old girl brings her father a picture that she had drawn; It was a face of a person at the top of the page with long hands that looked like ribbons that reached down to where a little doll was. The father asks the girl, "What is the meaning of this drawing?" She explains: "This is the creator, and these are his hands. Don't you see that his hands reach down to me?"
- b. God's hands have a special function, but like the father in the story and the people of Israel, they could not understand the picture, nor the dimensions of God's hands. To understand the language of the Lord, we must go to the potter's house so that He can explain to us what we must do and what we must say to the people, to do His will.
- c. We are clay in the hands of the potter, God wants to mold us, make us new, because sin puts a barrier between us and God. What do the hands of God do?
 - They lift you up. (Psalm 91:12)
 - We "will be a crown of splendor in the Lord's hand". (Isaiah 62:3)
 - They bless the children. (Matthew 19:14)
 - They provide safety. (John 10:28-29)
 - They bring healing. (Matthew 20:34)
 - They raise the dead. (Luke 7:13-14)

Jesus' hands have nail scars so that we can be believers and not disbelievers. With them he touches, caresses, heals, sets free, embraces. We are engraved on God's hands so as not to be forgotten. Isaiah 49:15-16

II. THE FUNCTION OF GOD'S EARS

Another blessing for God's people is his ears which are very useful to us. Why?

- They listen to our complaints. (Job 7:11)
- They listen to our prayers and supplications. (Ephesians 6:18)
- They hear our prayers. (Psalm 34:15)
- They listen to our groans. (Romans 8:26)
- They hear our grieving. (Matthew 5:4)
- They hear our deep sighs and cries of anguish. (Luke 18:38)

Sometimes all these cries are not heard because sin has separated us from God. Isaiah 59:2 says: "...your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear". If our prayers are not answered, we need to take time to reflect. Possibly we are tired of praying, or our sin has separated us from God.

CONCLUSION:

What do the hands of God have?

Why are they important?

Because he made us, we are clay in his hands, we are his people. But the best description of God's hands are the words that Jesus spoke before his death: "...into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46). Those are the same hands that gave a hug to the prodigal son who returned home. God wants to bless us and listen to our prayers, but we need to confess our faults, humble ourselves and live in holiness.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Analyze the drawing and write inside the vessel what you want God to remove and reshape in you as He sees fit. Then color.



LESSON 9 - THE FRAGILITY OF LIFE

KEY VERSES: ISAIAH 40:6-7

INTRODUCTION:

The prophet Isaiah was called by God to bring a message of hope and salvation to his people, and this verse is part of that message. The verse begins with: "A voice says, "Cry out", shout. The question is why? Isaiah wonders what he has to cry out, what message must he convey with such intensity. And then comes the answer:

I. "ALL PEOPLE ARE LIKE GRASS AND ALL THEIR FAITHFULNESS IS LIKE THE FLOWERS OF THE FIELD." – v. 6b

This message is very important, because it reminds us that deep down, we are all equal, that we all have the same needs and conditions, and that ultimately, life is fleeting and we should not seek glory and fame, but seek to enrich our spiritual life, to be prepared to live as God commands. "For God will bring every deed into judgment, ... whether it is good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

By comparing us to grass, this verse calls us to humility, it can be an important reminder of how we should live our lives. First, we must be grateful for the time we have been given and live our lives with a sense of urgency and purpose. Instead of worrying about earthly and fleeting things, we should focus our attention on things that are spiritual and eternal.

II. "THE WORD OF OUR GOD ENDURES FOREVER" - v. 7-8

We humans wither like the grass and flowers, but the word of God remains forever. The word of God is constant and something we can depend on day after day. Now, let's see how we can apply this passage to our lives and be alerted to take advantage of it. What does it mean to us and how does the fact that the Word of God is eternal bless us? This means that no matter when it was written, everything that God spoke is valid for our lives, at all times of the year and throughout the existence of humanity. God is eternal and will reign forever. He does not tire, his power is infinite, nor does his wisdom diminish because his knowledge is perfect. And he will fulfill everything he promised in his Word because he is faithful.

CONCLUSION:

This warning comes to us at a good time; because our lives are so intense and full, and it is almost impossible to make time for reflective thought and to live a Christian life along with everything else going on. We are literally "withering" where we stand. We must all accept this warning that speaks to us and alerts us. This passage warns us, reminds us, that each human being is like the flower that withers in the evening, and that this is how our lives are. So, I wonder: Why do we view the Christian life with such indifference? If we know that our lives depend on God, the Creator of the Heavens and the earth, is it not necessary to depend on Him, since all Glory belongs to Him?

The only thing that is permanent and lasting is the Word of God and it will be fulfilled. Let us heed the call to put our lives in order today.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Have a time of fervent prayer using Psalm 123, which helps us to humbly recognize our vulnerability and depend on God again.

Prayer always comes from a person who looks at themselves and says, "I don't know what to do; I don't have what I need. I don't have what is required to win or to get through this situation." But prayer always goes beyond that initial recognition of insufficiency. After admitting their helplessness, the person who believes turns his eyes toward God, stretches out their hands, and opens their soul in expectation of the heavenly Father's merciful response. The words of Psalm 123:1-2 immediately come to mind.

- 1 I lift up my eyes to you,
to you who sit enthroned in heaven.
- 2 As the eyes of slaves look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a female slave look to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God,
till he shows us his mercy.

Blessed is the person who recognizes their essential fragility, and who always entrusts themselves to the Almighty before undertaking anything of importance in life.

LESSON 10 - PRIORITIES THAT SENIOR ADULTS SHOULD HAVE

KEY VERSES: MATTHEW 6:19-21

INTRODUCTION:

When we arrange our lives and our priorities before God, when we give Him what belongs to Him and obey Him, we are prioritizing what is most important, leaving the less important in the background. I want to talk to you today about the skill or capacity of knowing how to choose priorities. God will take care of us. In order to enjoy this beautiful promise, we must learn to PRIORITIZE, to value everything spiritual, and Jesus has laid these foundations to achieve it.

I. “DO NOT STORE UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES ON EARTH” - v. 19

This is equivalent to having the wrong focus. Sometimes as human beings we prioritize things like TV, Facebook, etc. for our own desires. But when we do this, we neglect the spiritual area of our life.

We prioritize having friends and we do everything they ask of us to keep their friendship and not lose them, but when we concentrate on those friends, we neglect our eternal friend.

We prioritize how we dress and fitting in and sometimes we go to great lengths, to even the extent of stealing, in order to have the latest iPhone, designer shoes and clothes, but we forget that what we really want is to dress in fine white linen clothes like the Bible says. In Matthew 22:11-12, the wedding garment in the parable represents the pure and spotless character that true followers of Christ will possess. It was granted to the church “to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright,” “not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”

II. RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF STORING UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN - v. 20

Where thieves do not break in and steal, where moths and vermin do not destroy. This refers to leading a righteous life, that is the priority, seeking the Lord first, then soccer, the beach, the movies... first spend time studying the Bible then go to the movie, first spend time fellowshiping with fellow believers and then you will have friends to spend time with.

Accumulating treasures in heaven is leading a righteous, just life, with Christ at the center.

Where is Christ? Above, seated at God’s right hand. Paul said “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above...” (Colossians 3:1) where there is no moth or vermin, nor thieves to steal. No one can destroy what God has prepared for his children.

III. GOD ESTABLISHES PRIORITIES - Deuteronomy 6:5

“Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” We are commanded to love the Lord our God above all things! That’s a priority!

Whoever does not give value or importance to God is not arranging their life well! There are those who believe that they give value to God, but do not understand that their actions prove otherwise.

Do not try to convince yourself by saying, I love God, but I am very busy, or I have to work a lot, because everyone who makes excuses has not placed God as a priority in their life; The more excuses you make, the faster your relationship with God ends. You already know that if your priority is God, no human plan should interfere with his will.

CONCLUSION:

Many invest their lives in their studies, in their work, in their family, etc., something that is normal in people's lives, the most dangerous thing is when secular or earthly things take the place of eternal things in our lives. It is not bad to study, or to work, or to have a family, ever, I recommend all these things because it is part of the development and growth of a person but know that the number one thing in your life will define the condition of the other areas of your life.

The question we should ask ourselves is, “Where is God in our lives?” It is not bad to pursue dreams, goals, purposes in life, but it is dangerous when these dreams, goals and purposes replace God's eternal plan for our lives. Remember: what is earthly is temporary but what is eternal remains forever.

What is the disposition of your heart? What are you looking for? What excuses have you given to God? He knows your thoughts; he knows if you are ready or not for one thing or the other. You have to make a serious decision! Ask for forgiveness and recognize that you are one of the many who have made excuses, because when you made excuses to yourself or to others, you were actually making excuses to God, and you didn’t want to do his will but your own.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Read Matthew 13:44-46 to enrich your knowledge.

Answer the following questions by placing the answers in the blank spaces where they correspond.

A Valuable Treasure!

MATTHEW 13:44-46

Jesus told these parables:

"The kingdom of _____
is like treasure _____
in a field. When a man _____
it, he hid it again, and then in his
_____ went and sold all he
had and bought that _____.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is
like a _____ looking for
fine _____. When he found
one of great _____, he went
away and sold everything he had
and bought it."



Use these words to complete the verses:
PEARLS—FIELD—FOUND—HEAVEN—
HIDDEN—VALUE—MERCHANT—JOY

Fill in the missing syllables to read the message :
COV—TRE—END—UR—SUS—EAT—TO—OU—HA

O ___ GR ___ EST ___ ASURE IS TO
DIS ___ ER T ___ T JE ___ IS ___ R FRI ___.

LESSON 11 - TRUST IN THE LORD TO BLOOM

KEY VERSES: JEREMIAH 17:5 -7

PANORAMIC INTRODUCTION:

Why did man fall into a curse?

God is holy and cannot look upon sin, while man is a sinner, who has a fallen nature, who is at enmity with God. This state of affairs caused a total and eternal separation between God and man - and between man and God.

When Adam sinned... he, and his entire generation, was cursed. Instead of walking with his Creator in the cool of the evening, and enjoying communion with the Lord, Adam hid from the face of God, because he was afraid and embarrassed, and his God-focused heart was replaced by a self-centered soul. He gave in to his own carnal desires rather than depending on the Lord's almighty provision.

When Jeremiah said "Cursed is the one who trusts in man" he was referring to our self-sufficiency and independence apart from God which causes man to become self-dependent instead of remaining dependent on God. The hearts of men turned away from the Lord and became obsessed with a man-centered reliance, instead of a God-centered trust. So much so that man said: "...let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves;" (Genesis 11:4).

I. THE CURSE OF TRUSTING MAN

a. Cursed is the one who trusts in man: v. 5

One could say that this curse does not require the special activity of God; this curse is simply a result of our trust being placed in the wrong hands, the hands of deceitful and unsuccessful men. In other words, in everything we do or undertake, we must depend on the Lord, He is our governor, we are not without limits.

b. They will be like a bush in the wastelands: v. 6

Jeremiah imagines a weak and dry bush in the wastelands about to die from drought. This is the image of the one (believer or not) who trusts in man instead of the Lord; they are dry and unsustainable.

"The 'bush' referenced in Jeremiah 17:6 could be a dwarf juniper, stunted and barely alive in an environment that has low rainfall and poor soil." "According to Nogah Hareuveni, a Bible plant expert, in Hebrew the name of this tree is called "Arar", which sounds similar to the curse word "arur" and is part of a play on words that is central to this poem." (Tverberg)

“The Bedouins call this tree the ‘Cursed Lemon’ or the ‘Apple of Sodom’ because it grows in the salty wastelands surrounding the Dead Sea, where Sodom and Gomorrah once stood. It is believed that when God destroyed Sodom, he also cursed the fruit of this tree. When the fruit of the Dwarf Juniper is opened, it makes a ‘psst’ sound, it is hollow and full of cobwebs, dust and a dry hole.” (Tverberg) “Interestingly, the cursed tree looks like it’s thriving, as if it has survived even in difficult times and has still done well in life.”

II. SECURITY PRODUCES TRUST IN GOD AND HAPPINESS: v. 7

- a. The text says “blessed” which means: Blessed with abundance, blissful, joyful, happy. This indicates that the source of happiness is trust in God and not only that, but God is our trust.

One of the most evil things for human beings is anxiety, anguish, restlessness, and grief which brings worry and illness. In Mark: 4:37-41 (tempest)

- b. Christians also have fears, we are assailed by worries, sometimes we are annihilated by helplessness and consumed by anguish, because we want things fast and instantaneous. But sometimes God wants to teach us something or leave us a message and as a teacher God is creative. In difficult conditions we have to trust in our God, because we know that our Father is in charge, and HE will know how to get us through any circumstance.
- c. Wise Solomon tells us: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5). If we are going to trust God, we must do so with all our hearts. Let’s give our God all the issues that we have, all that worries us, all that torments us, and trust in Him and He will take care of it. That situation that we are worried about right now, let’s bring it to the feet of the Lord and see how HE resolves it. When we trust in God we are blessed.

III. TRUST IN GOD PRODUCES SECURITY: v. 8

- a. The prophet Jeremiah continues: “They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream.” Psalm 1:3 reminds us: “That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.” For example, let’s look at the text that references “water”. Where there is a plant and water, the plant always bears its fruit.

The best of all is to know and trust that God will get us through. There may be adverse weather, heat, drought, etc., but the “water” of God continues to flow.

What is the best place for a tree? Next to streams of water. What is the best place for a human life? Next to the source of the water of life which is God.

Brothers, if we are going through a time of uncertainty, let us take advantage of the grace of our Lord. His grace will always flow faithfully.

- b. The prophet Jeremiah tells us that we are like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream, meaning that we deepen our trust in God. Sometimes it seems to us that we are like the disciples on the Sea of Galilee, along, struggling in the middle of a sea of problems,

seriously battered by the waves and afraid because we do not know what will happen. But it is wonderful to see the Master arrive walking on the waters and tell us: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

The whole world is experiencing a very difficult situation, we are worried about what will happen these days, the only thing we can do is trust in our God. We trust in God! in the midst of our troubles.

The prophet Jeremiah ends verse eight by saying: "It [the tree] does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." Brother, if you trust in God, he will have an answer. Its leaves will always be green and will not stop bearing fruit. When drought comes, we can understand the anguish, the scarcity of water, but this tree will not get tired, that is, it will not be restless, it will not be anxious, much less will it dry up, because it has the rich humidity that the flow of the stream provides.

- c. Clearly a tree that grows next to a stream of water is supplied by it and even in times of drought, its roots grow deeper and it obtains food. This analogy is used in the Bible, water symbolizes the presence of God and the Holy Spirit, and we are the trees. If we grow in the word and keep seeking the presence of God, we will never dry out because even in tribulations the Lord will meet our need and help us get through the storm. But if we move away from God and his presence (perhaps little by little and without realizing it), the time of drought/trial will come and we will not have the deep roots (the knowledge of the word) to keep us standing, nor the presence of God to guide our steps. It is there that we dry up, and it is not until we are about to die that we look for an answer or solution. We dry out because we stop looking for fresh water daily, because the cares of life prevent us from doing so, because we do not take the time to make the study of the word and intimacy with our Father a priority in our lives.

CONCLUSION:

TO FADE OR TO BLOOM:

It is necessary that we draw closer to God to flourish. John says that the branch bears fruit when it remains in the vine. John 15:4

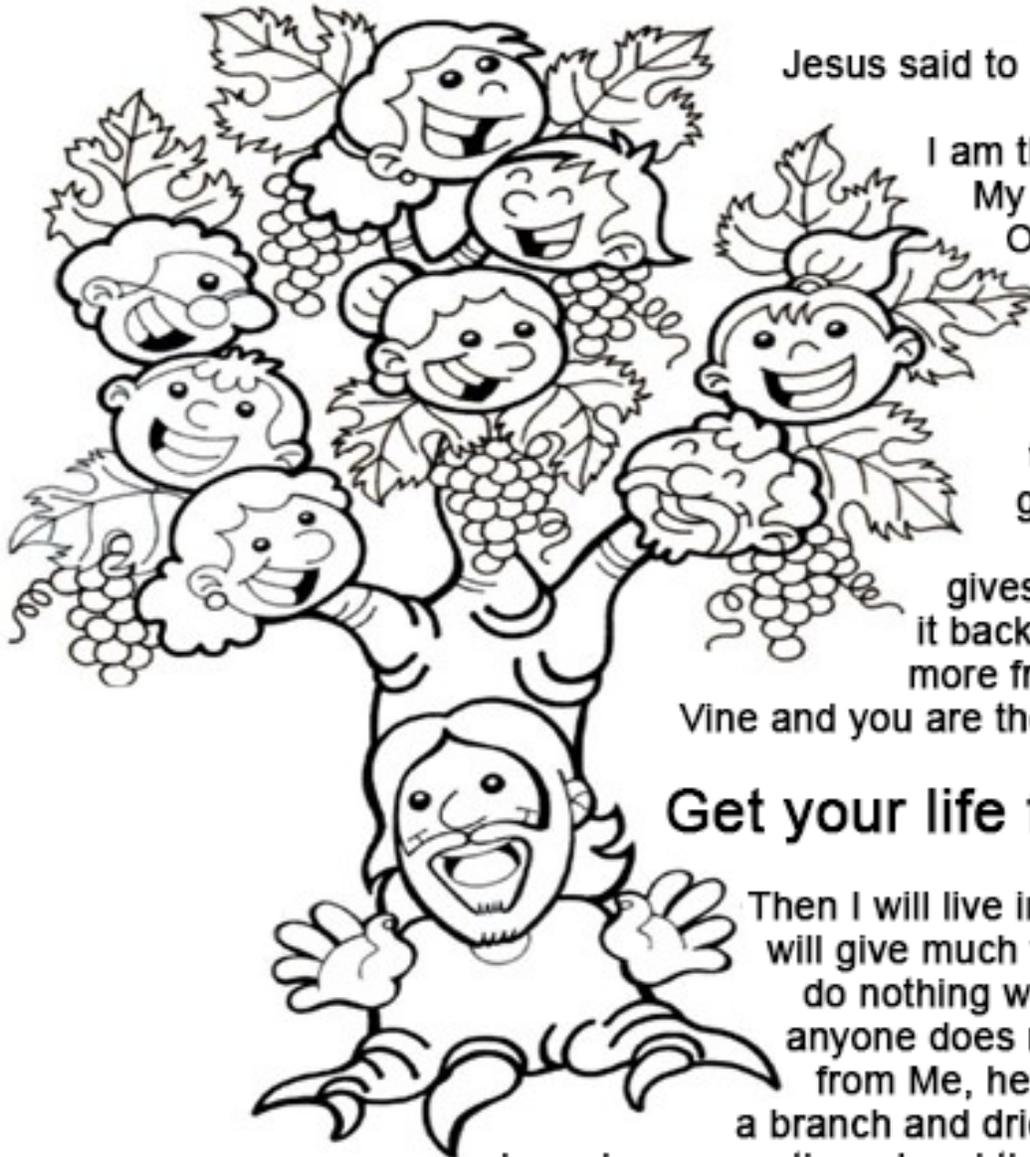
Separated from the vine we die; We dry out because we daily stop looking for fresh water, because the cares of life prevent us from doing so, because we do not take the time to study the word and spend time in intimacy with our Father. This should be a priority in our lives.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Read John 15:1-2 & 5-6 carefully and meditate on the fact that we have been created to bloom and bear fruit. Then color the picture (optional). The instructor has the freedom to change this activity if they so desire, and taking the group's needs into account.

Jesus is the True Vine

(John 15:1-2 & 5-6 NLV)



Jesus said to his disciples :

I am the true Vine.
My Father is the
One Who cares
for the Vine.
He takes
away any
branch in Me
that does not
give fruit. Any
branch that
gives fruit, He cuts
it back so it will give
more fruit. I am the
Vine and you are the branches.

Get your life from me.

Then I will live in you and you
will give much fruit. You can
do nothing without Me. If
anyone does not get his life
from Me, he is cut off like
a branch and dries up. Such
branches are gathered and thrown into the
fire and they are burned.

LESSON 12 –THE SPIRITS INTERCESSION FOR US

KEY VERSES: ROMANS 8:26-27

INTRODUCTION:

Weaknesses can be understood as deficient qualities of our personality, but weaknesses can have a happy ending thanks to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Now we have the Holy Spirit who lives in us, who is a mediator for us, and who intercedes for us in our weaknesses.

What does the Holy Spirit do for us? What is his function?

I. THE SPIRIT INTERCEDES FOR US - v. 26

- a. To Intercede means “to act on behalf of another person in difficulty or trouble” as a mediator, as an attorney, as a supporter, as a protector...
- b. Weakness ends, but the Holy Spirit who is energy, power, strength will support us like a strong arm and will lift us up, so we do not faint.
- c. Sometimes we ask for one thing, but the Lord gives us another. Paul asked three times for the thorn in his flesh to be removed, God responded: “My Grace is sufficient for you”. The gifts I have given you are sufficient; My grace is sufficient...God knows what we need before we even ask Him. Matthew 6:8
- d. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us through wordless groans: the Spirit has a connection with the Father and with the Son who understand each other; when we don't know how to pray, the Spirit intercedes on our behalf.
- e. The wordless groan is a strained sound that expresses pain, sorrow, etc. because He feels our pain, He feels our sorrow. He acts as an intermediary before the Father, presenting our requests.

Why do we depend on the groanings of the Holy Spirit? It's because He knows what we ought to pray for when we can't find the words.

On other occasions, these desires are based on our feelings and emotions, so we make bad decisions, and then the Spirit does not intercede for us, because we ask selfishly for carnal desires, or for vainglory, ...

II. THE CRY AND SUPPLICATION OF THE SPIRIT IS EFFECTIVE - v. 27

- a. How good and gratifying it is to know that there is someone who searches hearts deeply, in order to help us. The psalmist said: “My help comes from the LORD, Maker of heaven and the earth”, so that we know of his greatness and majesty the Psalmist mentions God's great creations.

- b. We may face many adversities, but the Holy Spirit gives us courage when we are weak, He gives us strength. Sometimes we are unable to sustain ourselves, we feel breathless, but the breath of the Spirit gives us life. (v. 16-18)

CONCLUSION:

One of the great mysteries of life as senior adults and as Christians who pray, must be our attitude, a vitamin food lifestyle of Christians.

The apostle Paul emphasizes this in Ephesians 6:18 “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.”

Prayer is the energy that allows the Christian soldier to put on his armor and take up his sword.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Study the prayer hand that gives us steps to take when we pray, starting with the little finger. Have a time of prayer, using these steps.



LESSON 13 - GOOD COMMUNICATION DEMONSTRATED BY HIS GRACE

KEY VERSES: NUMBERS 22:12

INTRODUCTION:

In the Old Testament God made use of various elements of communication to deliver a message:

1. He spoke directly to Adam and Eve using his voice and being in person.
2. To Jacob through a dream.
3. To Moses through a burning bush.
4. To Pharaoh through the ten plagues.
5. To the people of Israel Through the prophets.
6. To Jonah through a fish.
7. To humanity through Jesus Christ and the apostles...

When speaking to a person, God uses whoever he wants, so the advice of others should not be underestimated, because when the Lord wants to send a message even the stones will speak. "I tell you," he [Jesus] replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." Luke 19:40

I. WHY DID GOD USE A DONKEY TO SPEAK TO BALAAM?

When the people of Israel were traveling through the land of Moab, Balak, the king of this territory, was greatly afraid of the people of Israel. So, he sent for the prophet Balaam to curse the people of God and offered him a lot of money in exchange.

"But God said to Balaam, "Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because they are blessed." (Numbers 22:12). God had already given instructions to Balaam, but when King Balak offered him treasures and money to curse the army of Israel to lose the battle against them, greed led Balaam to disobey the voice of Jehovah.

II. DON'T IGNORE THE DONKEY OR THE WAY GOD SPEAKS

"When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, it turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat it to get it back on the road." (Numbers 22:23) The Lords opened the donkey's mouth so it could speak, establishing a dialogue between the animal and the prophet of God. The donkey began by saying: "What have I done to you to make you beat me? Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?"

The donkey was the last resource that God used to speak to the prophet; In the same way there are people that God is using to speak to us, but many times we do not accept their advice because we consider them to be inferior.

The Angel of the Lord said to Balaam: “The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared it.” (Numbers 22:33)

CONCLUSION:

The donkey, being an animal of burden, and sometimes considered a bit clumsy, ended up showing more wisdom than the prophet and ultimately saved his life. Today there are many people who, like Balaam, are ignoring the counsel of the Lord.

God speaks again and again; the problem is that many do not want to listen to the advice that comes from God and that is why God uses other people and situations to communicate his message. Today God speaks to us through the Bible, through pastors and leaders, through the elders of the church with the purpose of giving us a message or advice for our good. In the book of Hebrews 1:1-2 it also tells us the following: “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.”

It is important to learn that God loves humanity and does not want anyone to be lost, that is why He can use whoever He wants, hence the importance of valuing those people who are around us and who at any moment can become an instrument of blessing. Now tell how God spoke to you through his prevenient, saving and redeeming grace to make you a redeemed person.

Now you can do the same with someone else and talk about the love of Jesus so that God can demonstrate his mercy and redeem others from his sins.

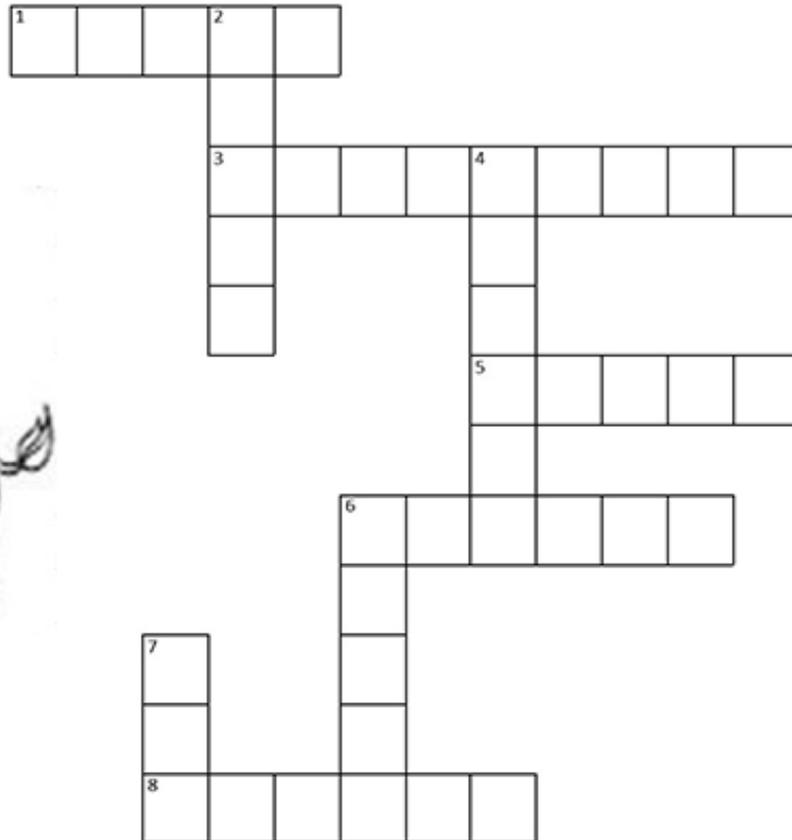
TO DO IN CLASS:

Read Numbers 22:28 and fill out the crossword puzzle by answering each question.

THE DONKEY THAT SPOKE

"Then the Lord opened the donkey's mouth, and it said to Balaam,
 'What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?'"

Numbers 22 :28



HORIZONTAL

1. Why did the king want to hire Balaam?
3. What does God want from us?
5. Who stood in the donkey's path?
6. What was the name of the donkey's owner?
8. What animal spoke?

VERTICALE

2. What did the angel have in his hand?
4. Who did the king want to curse?
6. What was the name of the king who wanted to hire Balaam?
7. Who made the donkey talk?

LESSON 14 - THE IDENTITY OF JESUS, THE PRINCE OF PEACE

(With the Support of "The DNA of Nazarenes", A School of Leadership book)

KEY VERSES: ISAIAH 9:6

INTRODUCTION

DNA is responsible for transferring the genetic characteristics of our ancestors to us that define our identity; and our identity is expressed through our: story, theology, makeup, mission, and lifestyle. Isaiah encapsulates the value of the Messiah who inherited our identity when humanity needed it most.

In a world full of war and violence, it is difficult to see how Jesus could be the omnipotent God acting in human history and be the embodiment of peace. This is what happened in the Old Testament, even the people of Israel, knowing the prophecies God had given to them, doubted the most wonderful prophecy given by Isaiah 9:6. He will be called the Prince of Peace.

I. PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF THE MESSIAH (ISAIAH 9:6)

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

This is truly one of the most amazing prophecies ever given. No doubt, in reference to Mary's promised child, Immanuel (God with us) "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14) The child who was to be born is the human being Jesus who came into this world as a baby, and this given Son is the Second Person in the divine trinity. Immanuel is the earthly name chosen by God for His Son and portrays the character of the Child. Immanuel means "God with us" or "God is among us."

Now, in Isaiah 9:6 he describes the divine names that can only be true of the Messiah, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. The Messiah is presented as a man, because he was a descendant of David, but He was God too.

II. THE IDENTITY OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE IN ISAIAH 9:6

1. For to us a child is born:

This predicts the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ (see also Isa 7:14, note). His birth would be in a defined place and time in history, and that messianic Son would be born in an original and extraordinary way.

The purpose of Christ's coming was for "us"; to benefit all those who accept Him as their Lord and Savior. Isaiah saw the darkness and sadness of the nation, and he also saw the son of God who would be born to eliminate that darkness and illuminate the world. That grace reached us. We can now bear witness to what he did for each one of us and now we can reach others for his kingdom.

2. To us a son is given: (Saving and redeeming grace)

God planned to "give" his Son as an atonement for our sins. Jesus is the son of God and He exists eternally as the son. The Messiah is often depicted as having been sent by God, or given as a gift from God, as noted in Acts 4:12; John 3:16; John 17:3. The Messiah was preeminently God's gift to us. Man had no right over Him, and God willingly gave his son as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, only by his grace.

3. And the government will be on his shoulders:

Jesus will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords and the government of the whole world will be on his shoulders, and he will rule over all the kings of the earth and his kingdom will have no end.

4. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor:

A counselor is one who gives advice or guidance, and Jesus Christ gave wonderful advice when he was on Earth. We read in the Bible that “the crowds were amazed at his teaching.”

He is a wise, understanding Counselor with extraordinary understanding of human nature. His advice does not consist solely of reprimands or admonitions, but more often takes the form of lovingly teaching and giving recommendations.

Jesus is our “Wonderful Counselor,” our perfect Example and infallible Teacher. He shows and tells us how to live, and He is never wrong, because in Him (Colossians 2:3) “... Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” The testimony, even of his enemies, was that (John 7:46) “No one ever spoke the way this man does,” “All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. ‘Isn’t this Joseph’s son?’ they asked?” (Luke 4:22)

5. Mighty God:

In him would dwell all the fullness of truth, Mighty God! In our passage both Hebrew words are used. First, a child will be born, and his name will be “EL”, which is a word for GOD. We are familiar with the use of the word “EL” when God is called El Shaddai, a term you may have heard.

And he will be called EL GIBBOR, a word that means POWERFUL. This word refers to a power that breaks through and brings victories. The conqueror of all things.

Deuteronomy 26:8 says: “So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders”. Calling Jesus Mighty is saying that He is the captain of the victors. He is the boss of the heroes. He is the King of kings, and He is the Lord of lords. He is the Mighty God! How blessed we are to have a God who can do anything and who is strong enough to help us with our problems.

6. Everlasting Father:

Highlighting his absolute and eternal deity, as well as his omnipotence and the unity of the Father and the Son in the Divine Trinity. Jesus is also referred to as “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father.”

The question that may arise is how the Son could also be “The Everlasting Father”. Actually, this phrase could also be translated as “Father of Eternity”, which reminds us that the eternal son was the Creator of time, as well as space and matter, and indeed, of all things (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16). In the unfathomable, yet glorious mystery of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus also pointed out that “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). He is Almighty God “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9).

The title “Eternal Father” alludes to the power and authority of the Messianic King to grant human beings the perspective of living eternally, and this is transmitted to his children who have received him as Lord and Savior of their lives.

7. Prince of Peace:

His rule would bring peace through deliverance from our sins by his grace and mercy, Which indicates that He is the first leader who will bring true peace to the world. He is the great Peacemaker (Colossians 1:20) "having made peace through the blood of His cross."

Jesus brings peace of mind to his followers because the Lord Jesus "...will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You" (Isaiah 26:3). He brings peace to the world as the "Prince of Peace," because peace will characterize his reign on earth.

In addition to eternal life, man needs peace with God and with his neighbor. Even in our time, those who submit to the authority of the "Prince of Peace" have achieved peace (Isaiah 2:2-4).

CONCLUSION:

The Messiah promised in Isaiah was a promise to which the gospels could attest by demonstrating his miracles and wonders, with perfect wisdom, to which all bore witness, because he brought words of life revealing his perfect plan of salvation.

In addition to having compassionate qualities, his rule would bring peace to humanity through his saving and redeeming grace.

TO DO IN CLASS:

Make a card with the names given to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6. Fold along the middle line and write a greeting. You can give it as a gift.

