

WEEK EIGHT

Billy Sunday,

“ We are more positive there is a Hell than we are that the sun will rise tomorrow.”

“If the Lord would let me go down to Hell and give the invitation, I’d depopulate it in fifteen minutes. I wouldn’t need to preach for eight weeks.”

Hyman Appleman

“The Devil has only to get a boy, a girl, a man or a woman to put off salvation long enough, and he has accomplished his purpose.”

Jack Hyles

“A young preacher came and asked me what kind of preacher he ought to be. Should he be a hell fire and brimstone preacher or a deeper life preacher. I simply asked him, ‘Is there a hell?’”

THE LIFE OF CHRIST:
LEARNING FROM THE LORD

EXPERIENCE THE CHANGE

Every election is about change. We heard it in the last election and it will be the them of the next. However, seldom is that change ever filled with satisfaction. Yet Peter, James and John are about to witness a change that they will never forget.

These three were considered to be a part of the inner circle of Jesus. Why was this so? Why did they get this privilege more than the other nine? What was special about them?

We see that Peter seems like one who may have needed a little more supervision. Impulsive and impetuous, he needed a little more attention from our Lord. God was preparing Peter for a tremendous work. He would preach a dynamic spirit-filled message that would lead three thousand to

the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

James and John, Boanerges as they were called, were tremendous preachers themselves. They were the Sons of Thunder. They knew how to preach and be heard! They were to be the bookends of the apostles. James would be the first martyr and John the last.

More than anything else, I think this dynamic trio simply enjoyed the presence of Jesus. They took advantage of every opportunity to be with Him. They might have been the ones prone to get up a little early and stay up a little late just to gain a few more minutes with Jesus. They were not to be disappointed. You are never disappointed when you spend extra time with Him!

Here in this mountain top experience, we find Jesus transfigured before them. His glory had been veiled by His flesh. Think of the bride whose beauty is visible yet shielded by her veil. We all know the joy of the groom who removes the veil to kiss his wife for the very first time. This will be the eternal glory of heaven!

Here the veil of His flesh yielded a sneak preview of the glory of the King of Kings and Lord of lords. The shekinah glory could be seen. His divinity shown through. While Peter took note of the incredible company, the Father separated Him from them noting His unique and supreme position: "This is my beloved Son. Hear ye Him!"

DAILY READING:

Mark 9:2-13, Matthew 17:1-13,
Luke 9:28-36

1. Using all three passages, describe the change that took place in the clothing of Jesus.
2. Who did Jesus take up to the mountain with Him?
3. Which ancient prophets appeared with Jesus?
4. Which apostle spoke up and what was wrong with his suggestion?
5. What was the response from heaven?
6. How does Revelation 21:23 relate to this passage?

APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

DAY

1

Cities/Places

HELP MY UNBELIEF

Are you a believer? How did you come to be one? Do you ever doubt even the slightest bit?

I hope you realize that faith is not something that you work up within yourself. Too many people have “The Little Engine That Could” kinda faith. Do you recall that childhood story where the little railroad engine is climbing the steep mountain. He’s nearly out of steam. It’s doubtful that he will make it to the top but he knows he must. So he changes “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.” Eventually, he self confidence gives him the strength to crest the top of the mountain and travel freely on the rest of his journey!

Unfortunately, that has become the picture

of faith for many. It is something we must work up within ourselves.

Did you notice the faith of the father in our reading today? At first he proclaims “I believe” as though saying it makes it so. Many prayers of salvation are outward affirmations of empty hearts. How pointless that is! But then in honesty he cries “ Help thou mine unbelief.” This was a cry of honesty.

At this moment, he acknowledged that even our faith is dependent upon God. This is a truth that the apostles would acknowledge in Luke 17 faith when they pray “Lord, increase our faith.”

Paul acknowledges it in Ephesians 2:8-9, teaching that not only is a salvation a gift

but so too is the faith to believe..

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

For the second time now, Jesus predicts His death and resurrection. This is a time when they will need faith. This time there was no response. They didn’t quite understand what Jesus was saying. They remembered the last response Peter gave and how the Lord rebuked Him. So this time they simply wondered in silence. Although they did not yet understand this message it would soon become the dynamic theme of all their preaching!

DAILY READING: Mark 9:14-32, Matthew 17:14-27, Luke 9:37-45

1. Have you ever prayed “Lord increase my faith?” Why or why not?
2. What does the demon possessed son teach us about those under Satan’s influence?
3. What did Jesus prophecy would happen?
4. How did the disciples respond to this prophecy?
6. In what unique way did Jesus pay taxes?

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DAY
2

Cities/Places

I AM THE GREATEST

Those are words that will never fall from the lips of a humble servant of God! Yet the disciples were disputing amongst themselves who would be the greatest. The greatest danger in the church is a competitive spirit amongst its members. How often do people get their feelings hurt because they wanted a position that someone else got. Perhaps they wanted to pray and the preacher called on someone else.

I am convinced that the greatest rewards will go to the humblest servants. Perhaps that person that served in ways no one else ever noticed or knew of will receive the VIP award in heaven. The congregation will be shocked. "We never knew they gave that much. We never knew all of the behind the scenes work they did. We

never saw them on their knees in prayer that often. We didn't see their name in the church bulletin. They never had a title or position. How did they get the VIP award?" The answer quite simply is that they were the humble servants who needed no recognition on earth.

Jesus then takes a child into his arms and makes a profound statement. "If you are going to receive me, you will receive this child." The greatest time to reach a person for Christ is during his childhood. Jesus knew the importance of youth ministry.

The dumbest thing I've ever heard a parent say is, "We won't make our children go to church. We'll let them grow up and decide."

Oh yeah, the devil loves that one! "Sure!" he says, "Let me have them till they're grown. They'll never decide for Jesus!"

What kind of intelligent philosophy says "Give them to the world and the devil for eighteen years then just hope they will choose God!" That's just plain ignorance. During their youth you teach them the valuable lessons of life and they will remember them all of their life. If you want to be great in God's eyes, give attention to young people. Lift up children before the Lord.

Never consider your esteem before men but rather seek God's approval on all you do.

DAILY READING: Mark 9:33-42, Matthew 18:1-6, Luke 9:46-50

DAY
3

Cities/Places

1. What was the dispute among the disciples?
2. How can the first be last and the last first?
3. What did Jesus say would be better than offending a child who believes in Him?
4. What is meant by offending a little child?
5. Why is youth ministry important in the church?
6. How can we be the best (greatest) servant of Christ?

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HELL! NO!

Just say “NO” to hell! Say “NO” for yourself and “NO” for others by being a soulwinner!

Hell is a real place. Just days ago a man said, “The way my life has been, I feel like I’m in hell now.”

The truth of the matter, as I told him, is that without Christ this is as close as he’ll get to heaven. But with Christ this would be as close as he would get to hell. I told him he needed to decide if he wants this to be his best time or worst time. In eternity, life is going to get infinitely worse or infinitely better.

His response was very common. People want to allegorize that which they don’t want to believe. They find a way to fictionalize it because it makes them feel

better. But feeling better about it today won’t make you feel better about it in eternity.

Jesus didn’t preach about hell as a state of mind. He didn’t preach about it in an allegorical fashion. Jesus never taught “hell on earth.”

An ignorant world says, “A loving God would never send anyone to hell.” They are ignorant of the teaching and purpose of Jesus. They fail to realize that He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He didn’t come to condemn but to save. Jesus gave Himself on the cross so that man could escape hell! According to 2 Peter 3:9, He is not willing that any should perish. But man has to make a choice of repentance and receive the faith that He offers freely.

Revisionist preachers and false teachers fail to note that Jesus preached more on hell

than He did heaven! Some have calculated that Jesus preached on hell ten times more than He did on heaven. Every time you read the word perish in the Scriptures it is in the context of hell. “Should not perish” means should not burn in hell forever and ever, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quench, where there is the eternal blackness of darkness forever, where the eternal cry is “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!”

If there is no hell, then there is no heaven. If there is no hell then Jesus was a liar! If there is no hell then the Bible is not true. We insist that there is a hell not because we want there to be a hell but because we want people to escape hell. Jesus has made a way! Salvation is free. God so loved... that man should not perish!

Be saved and be a soulwinner!

DAILY READING:

Mark 9:42-50, Matthew 18:7-14

1. Write a complete description of hell based on these passages.
2. According to Matthew 25:41, who was hell originally created for?

Look up the following passages and write what they teach about hell.

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|------------------------|---------------------|
| 3. Revelation 20:14-15 | 4. Revelation 20:1 |
| 5. Revelation 19:20 | 6. Matthew 13:41-42 |
| 7. Matthew 12:32 | 8. Revelation 14:11 |
| 9. Matthew 25:46 | 10. Jude 13 |
| 11. Isaiah 33:11-14 | 12. Luke 16:23 |
| 13. Isaiah 5:14 | 13. Revelation 21:8 |

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DAY
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Cities/Places

PROBLEM SOLVING

This passage teaches the church how to handle and resolve disputes within. Jesus had no allusions that saved people will be without strife. In fact, He anticipated it. Believers are sanctified positionally but must be sanctified practically. In other words, we must live what we are.

Unfortunately, this passage is probably one of the least practiced portions of Scripture in the church today. The flesh takes precedence over the Spirit and people respond emotionally and carnally. Most would rather gossip and stir up strife than to legitimately solve a problem.

What does Jesus say should be the first step when one has been offended? Go to

the one who offends. How do we approach the offender? In a spirit of reconciliation. Notice that the goal is to "gain thy brother." We don't approach them confrontationally, shaking our fist or wagging our finger in their face. Go in a spirit of humility. Go with the thought in mind that maybe you are the one wrong. Be willing to hear and listen to an explanation.

When that doesn't solve the problem, go with one or two others. If you are serious about resolving the conflict don't undermine the dialogue by taking people who will side with you regardless of the facts. Don't create a bias before your confrontation. The purpose is not to gang up on someone. Choose people who will

be honest and tell you if you are wrong just as quickly as they will side with you if you are right.

If that does not resolve the issue, then take it to the elders of the church. Approach the pastor. Seek his biblical insight and wisdom. From there a serious problem would be brought before the church for resolution. However, disputes from two parties who love the Lord can and should be solved long before reaching this point.

In fact, as we continue reading, we learn the value of forgiveness. It is most often better to forgive than to be vindicated. We should prefer to be the one wronged than the one that would wrong another.

DAILY READING: Matthew 18:15-35

1. What is the first course of action when someone wrongs you?
2. How would Ephesians 4:1-4 relate to this passage?
3. How does Psalm 133:1 relate to this passage?
4. How often should we forgive?
5. Do the math. If we follow this to the number, how does this break down?
 $70 \times 7 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$
Divide that number by 24 hours. $\underline{\hspace{2cm}}$. This is how many times an hour you should forgive.
Divide 1440 minutes by this number. $\underline{\hspace{2cm}}$. This is how frequently you should be ready to forgive.
6. Since we know that Jesus wasn't speaking legalistically, what is the real point He was making?

APPLICATION

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DAY
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Cities/Places

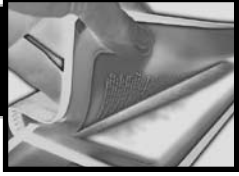


TABLE TALK



PASTOR'S MESSAGE