

Personal/Small Group Sermon Study

Week of September 25, 2022 A.D.

The Purpose for the Earthly Life of a Christian is to be an Ambassador for the Kingdom of Heaven

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

1. Refer to verse 16. What is the meaning of "a worldly point of view"? Does God look at people from "a worldly point of view"? Based on the language of this verse, (a) how should Christians "view" all non-Christians and (b) how should all Christians "view" other Christians?
2. Have you ever viewed Christ from "a worldly point of view"? If so, how and why? How do you view Christ now? Do you ever view yourself from "a worldly point of view"? If so, how and why? What do your answers to these questions tell you about your focus on: (a) the affairs of this world? and (b) the affairs of the Kingdom of God? Based on your answers to these questions, what percentage of your personal decisions are made from (a) "a worldly point of view" and (b) a "biblical kingdom point of view"?
3. Refer to verse 17. Can a person have eternal life without being "in Christ"? What does it literally mean for a person to be "in Christ"? Can a person who is "in Christ" routinely ignore (a) daily Bible reading? (b) daily prayer? (c) ministering to the needs of others? (d) explaining the message of the gospel to others? and/or (e) weekly fellowship with an established church family?
4. Based upon the teaching of this passage, does God expect the American culture to be able to readily distinguish those Americans who are "in Christ" from those Americans who are not "in Christ"? Does the typical lifestyle of American Christians enable the American culture to readily make that distinction?
5. In your opinion, how does the lifestyle of the church in America compare and/or contrast with the lifestyle of the church which is described in the writings of the New Testament? Is this comparison favorable to the church in America?
6. How important is it for Christians to live as "aliens and strangers" (see 1 Peter 2:11-12) in our world? What happens to the cultural influence of the teachings and precepts of the biblical writings when Christians fail to live as strangers and aliens in the world?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

7. Who initiates the salvation of every person who comes to faith in Christ? Can the salvation of any person be accomplished without a believer in Christ being involved somewhere in that process? Who devised the plan of salvation and how and when and why?
8. "Reconcile" means "to restore to friendship or/or harmony". Are all non-believers enemies of God? After their death, do all non-believers go to hell where they experience punishment and/or torment without relief? Does God expect every believer to gently and respectfully share the plan of salvation with their (a) family, (b) friends, (c) acquaintances, and/or (d) enemies? Consider 1 Peter 3:13-17.

Read Ephesians 5:22-24

9. In your opinion, does the American church submit to Christ? Do American wives submit to their husbands? Is Christ the head of the church? Can a Christian be an ambassador for Christ if he or she does not submit to the headship and authority of Christ?

Read Ephesians 5:25-33

10. How did Christ (and how does Christ continue to) demonstrate His love for the church? Is the church "radiant...without stain or wrinkle...holy and blameless" in the eyes of (a) Christ, (b) the church, and/or (c) the unbelievers?
11. Has the church been reconciled to God? Has God reconciled "the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them."? Is the world aware that: (a) God forgives and loves all humans? and (b) God wants to have an eternal, personal relationship with every person through faith in Christ?
12. To whom has God committed His message of reconciliation? Please prepare a list of all of the reasons for which you are alive each day on planet earth. Arrange those reasons in the numerical order in which they are the priority in (a) your life and (b) God's will for your life. Now what?

Consider: "For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)
You think about that. Amen.