

Personal/Small Group Study Notes

Week of October 30, 2022 A.D.

Can Christ's Power Rest on You?

(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 12:1-10

1. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The first century church was willing to be persecuted for their faith in Christ. They earnestly believed that being executed for their faith in Christ was far better than staying alive on earth."
2. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "A majority of the Christians in America prefer to remain alive on earth for as long as possible. For them, heaven can wait."
3. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "There is absolutely no reason for a Christian to want to go to heaven if Jesus is not there."
4. Refer to verses 2-4. How do you describe and/or define "paradise"? Is there any "paradise" on earth that can offer as much joy and delight as "the third heaven"? Which experience does God expect humans to love and desire the most: (a) life on earth or (b) life in the third heaven? Is it sinful for a Christian to love and desire life on earth more than life in heaven/paradise?

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7

5. Conceited means: "having or showing an excessively high opinion of oneself". Do you sincerely believe that Paul's experience in paradise could have caused Paul to be conceited? If Paul had become conceited, what difference would it have made: (a) in Paul's service to God and (b) in God's plan for the church on planet earth?

Read Proverbs 6:16-19

6. Haughty means "arrogantly superior and disdainful". "Haughty" is a synonym for "proud". Why does God hate pride? Is there any room for pride in the life of a Christian? Is pride a problem in the American (a) culture and/or (b) church?

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

7. Does God intend for the church to be a powerful influence for change (a) in our culture, (b) in each family unit, and (c) in the functioning of our government? Please give the American church a report card on its success as God's ambassadors and servants in each of the three spheres of influence listed in (a) through (c) of this question.
8. Please identify and/or describe one or more circumstances in which you and/or your church family have (for Christ's sake) experienced (a) weakness, (b) insults, (c) hardships, (d) persecution, and/or (e) difficulties.

Read Colossians 3:1-4

9. Is verse 1 to be understood literally or figuratively? Are you (a) a physical being and/or a (b) a spiritual being? What disciplines do you and your church family faithfully follow in order to be obedient to the command of verse 1.
10. Refer to verses 2-3. During any "typical" 24-hour day, is your mind focused primarily on (a) earthly things or (b) the things of heaven? During the "typical" 24-hour day, was the mind of Jesus focused primarily on (a) earthly things or (b) the things of heaven? In which of these two areas of your life is it the more obvious that "you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God": (a) earthly things or (b) the things of heaven?
11. Refer to verse 4. Is Christ your life? When Christ "appears" and you stand before the judgement seat of Christ, what do you expect Jesus to say about the focus of your heart and your mind during your time on earth? In all honesty, during your life on earth, is your relationship with Jesus the top priority in your life? If not, what is your top priority and why?
12. Are the contents of the Bible (a) 100% true, (b) partially true, or (c) not true at all? Is Jesus for real? Is heaven for real? Did Jesus suffer, bleed, and die to pay the punishment for your sinful rebellion against God? Are you willing to deliberately and voluntarily suffer hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for the sake of Christ? If not, will this be a point of discussion when you stand before the judgement seat of Christ?

Consider: It is easy to "be a Christian" when there are no hardships, persecutions, or difficulties for so doing so. But, will you be found faithful when the suffering and persecution begins? "You think about that." Amen.