

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide SB 08.08.2021

TESTIFY OF JESUS! – Acts 20:22-28

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

This past Sunday was the first day of Elul and the last month of the Jewish year. Perhaps the best-known Elul tradition is the blowing of the shofar every weekday after morning services. This repeated for 30 days until the Jewish new year, Rosh Hashanah (Feast of Trumpets). The daily shofar blasts are intended to rouse God's people from complacency and jolt them into repentance. After 10 days from Rosh Hashanah, the Jews enter into the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement). The customs associated with Elul are all intended to help cultivate the proper mindset for this holy day. The Jewish tradition teaches that all of humanity is called to account for their sins and a divine judgment is issued. Many scholars believe the forty days leading to the Yom Kippur, are the days when Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness. On that 40th day, Jesus came to Nazareth, went into the synagogue, and stood up to read the scrolls of Isaiah 61. He then declared the scripture had been fulfilled in Him to preach the good news. All bore witness to Him and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. Later, Paul also bore witness and preached the good news of the sovereign Lord. Let's get into our study.

1. How would you characterize the sound of trumpets? What are some examples of actions that typically follow the sounding of the trumpets?
2. Have you ever prepared or rehearsed for a big event? If so, describe the preparation or rehearsal.
3. What stood out to you during this week's study?

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 20:13-16 and Romans 5:3-5

In his final farewell, Paul preached the whole counsel of God to the church in Ephesus. To preach means "to declare a message as the herald of a king". Paul preached knowing the extreme circumstances and persecution that awaited him. Yet, he was willing to suffer, even unto death, to preach of King Jesus. Paul found glory in tribulations and persevered. It is quite natural to glory, or exalt what is positive, but not in sufferings and tribulations. In the Greek, perseverance means to "abide under or stay under pressure". Staying, or persevering under pressure produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint (Romans 5:3-5).

1. Who are called to preach the message of Jesus? (Matthew 28:19-20)
2. How might we preach the whole counsel of God today? (Romans 10:9)
3. Paul was willing to suffer, even unto death, to preach the gospel. In the United States, few are persecuted to the point of death for sharing the gospel; however, many are persecuted with words. Perhaps, the gospel could eventually be perceived by the world as a form of "hate speech". How does one persevere in preaching the gospel in these challenging times? (Proverbs 3:5-7)
4. Paul found glory in trials and tribulations. How might we find glory in trials and tribulations? (James 1:2-4)
5. Perseverance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint (Romans 5:3-5). Why does this hope not disappoint? (1 John 5:13-14, 1 Peter 1:3-6)

Visitation/Restoration in 2021

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 20:28-38 and Ezekiel 33:6-7

Paul warned wolves or false teachers would rise up to deceive and turn some away from the truth; therefore, be on watch. (vs. 29-31). Ezekiel 33:2-7 describes the watchman. The watchman has an important role with great consequences. When he sees and warns others of danger, anyone who does not heed the warning, their own blood is on their hands. If the watchman sees the danger and does not warn, the blood of anyone who is lost is on the watchman's hands. Paul is saying, be a good and faithful watchman, looking out for each other, and give the warning of the wolves who want to desperately separate the church from God. Paul was a good watchman. He never underestimated the great importance of the church and kept his eyes focused on Jesus.

6. Why is it important to be on the lookout for wolves or false teachers in the church? (John 10:10, Ephesians 5:6)
7. Who are the watchmen of today? (Hebrews 13:17, Mark 14:38)
8. Who are the ones who do the ministry of the church? (Matthew 5:13-16)
9. Why is it important for a good watchman to keep their eyes on Jesus? (Hebrews 12:2)

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

In Luke 4:16-22, when Jesus spoke in the synagogue of Nazareth, He opened up the scroll to Isaiah and read from the beginning of the chapter through the first line of verse 2. When He sat down, He simply said today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing, but only part of the prophecy was fulfilled. The rest of the prophecy refers to the day of vengeance for those who do not believe. We are in the acceptable year of the Lord, a year of deliverance and grace; however, the trumpets are sounding for the Lord's return and there will be a day of judgement. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). The Spirit of the Lord is upon us, and we have a holy obligation to preach the gospel, to help the poor, oppressed, and needy in their midst.

1. We have a holy obligation to preach the gospel. How might you preach the good news of Jesus this week?
2. Paul was willing to suffer, even unto death, to preach the gospel. To what extent are you willing to preach the gospel?

PRAYER

Lord, Thank You for this acceptable year of grace and delivering us from the wages of sin. Thank You we have the gospel of Jesus and the anointing of the Holy Spirit to preach this good news. Help us to persevere in trials and tribulations through the hope we have in you. Finish the work You have started and may we bring glory to Your name. Maranatha. In Jesus name, Amen.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me, To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4:18-19)