

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Redemption Crisis • Week of October 15

Introduction

Probably each of us can tell of a time when we worked hard for something only to be turned down. Maybe it was a new job, promotion or new position with our current company, maybe it was an application for graduate school, university, or entry into a specialized trade. And then you get the disappointing news: they didn't want you. You think, What is the matter with me?... What was I thinking?... Why did I think I even had a chance? The spirit of depression lurks in the shadows. Will you spiral down? Or will you allow yourself to ask: Well, maybe the Lord has something else for me. Perhaps the Lord wants me to learn something through all this... Maybe work on something personally that I didn't realize was even an issue.

Background

It has been said that we should listen to our critics, for there may very well be a seed of truth in what they have to say. Rejection is difficult. Working through issues is difficult. Yet set-backs can cause us to stop and take inventory. If we confront the deeper pain, facing the issue head-on, God will use such experiences to refine our faith if we will trust Him. For example, think about the apostle Paul. Paul (formerly Saul of Tarsus) hated this new growing movement springing up around Palestine called *the Way*. In fact, he blasphemed the name of Christ.

Saul of Tarsus did everything he could to drag out men and women in order to bring them back into line with Judaism. Until one day, on the way to Damascus, with letters of authorization in hand to confront followers of *the Way*, he himself was confronted by the risen Lord Jesus Christ: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Saul's pride and ideas come to a screeching halt. As with each of us, the objective of any confrontation we have with Christ is meant to turn us toward redemption. Years later, Paul says, "... I used to blaspheme the name of Christ. In my insolence, I persecuted his people. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was!" (1 Timothy 1:13-14a).

Read 1 Timothy 1:12-20

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

2. What are you going to do about it?

3. How can we help you?

Reflection

God can turn around for good what the enemy meant for evil. God takes our sin, and through it, shows us what needs to change in our lives. Think about it: Although sin is ugly – we don't want to see the dark corners of our heart – yet the Lord, through the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see the truth. He reminds us that we need him. There are areas in our lives we need to confront, issues we need to work on. Christ is there to help us. We all need God's love and forgiveness. With Paul, we say: 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—and I am the worst of them all.' Lord God, take our sin and use it for both conviction and humility.

In Closing

Reflect upon the two points below. Discuss briefly how the Lord has brought you through tough seasons of disappointment, rejection, or perhaps a humbling experience that refined your faith and strengthened your identity in Christ.

1. Sin is for both conviction and for humility.
2. Sin can weigh us down with shame, unless we understand it is rooted in redemption.

"Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died as were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.

Redemption

Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him.

We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus” (Romans 6:1-11).

Text: 1 Timothy 1:12-20, Luke 8:23-26, Luke 9:37-43

PLAIN TRUTH

The objective of _____ should always be _____.

1. Sin is for both _____ and for _____.
2. Sin can _____ us down with _____, unless we understand it is rooted in _____.

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

Oct. 15: Jeremiah 26:1-27:22, 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18, Psalm 85:1-13, Prov. 25:16
Oct. 16: Jeremiah 28:1-29:32, 1 Timothy 1:1-20, Psalm 86:1-17, Proverbs 25:17
Oct. 17: Jeremiah 30:1-31:26, 1 Timothy 2:1-15, Psalm 87:1-7, Proverbs 25:18-19
Oct. 18: Jeremiah 31:27-32:44, 1 Timothy 3:1-16, Psalm 88:1-18, Prov. 25:20-22
Oct. 19: Jeremiah 33:1-34:22, 1 Timothy 4:1-16, Psalm 89:1-13, Proverbs 25:23-24
Oct. 20: Jeremiah 35:1-36:32, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, Ps. 89:14-37, Prov. 25:25-27
Oct. 21: Jeremiah 37:1-38:28, 1 Timothy 6:1-21, Psalm 89:38-52, Proverbs 25:28

October 15, 2023