

EXHORTATIONS TO CHRISTIANS

BIBLE TEXT : I Peter 3:1-22; 4:1-19; 5:1-11.

LESSON 453 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthens, settle you" (I Peter 5:10).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

1 Peter 3:1-22

¹ Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

² While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear.

³ Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

⁴ But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

⁵ For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

⁶ Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

⁷ Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

⁸ Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous:

⁹ Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

Bible References:

I Peter's Instructions to the Church

1. Peter gives the duties of wives and husbands, and tells how Christian women should dress, I Peter 3:1-7;

1 Corinthians 7:13-16

¹³ And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

¹⁵ But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases*: but God hath called us to peace.

¹⁶ For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save *thy* husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save *thy* wife?

Ephesians 5:22-25

²² Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

2. He exhorteth to love and unity, and to suffer boldly for Christ, I Peter 3:8-18; 4:1-5, 7-11;

Romans 12:10

¹⁰ *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

Colossians 3:12

¹² Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

3. Christ preached to the spirits in prison before He ascended to Heaven, I Peter 3:19-22; 4:6.

4. Christians are not to think it strange when they have fiery trials, I Peter 4:12-19.

5. Elders are to feed the flock of God willingly, I Peter 5:1-4;

Acts 20:28

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

1 Timothy 4:16

¹⁶ Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

6. Be humble, sober, vigilant; your adversary, the devil, seeketh whom he may devour, I Peter 5:5-10;

Luke 22:31

³¹ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:

1 Thessalonians 5:6

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

Notes:

¹⁰ For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

¹¹ Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

¹² For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.

¹³ And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

¹⁴ But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

¹⁶ Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

¹⁷ For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

¹⁸ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

¹⁹ By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

²⁰ Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

²¹ The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by

Duties of Wives and Husbands

By God's appointment, man was placed as head of the house. Although he may not be a believer in the Gospel, he is still the head and should be treated as such so long as his actions do not go against the commandments of God. It may be that through the wife's conduct the husband will be won for the Lord. Sarah called Abraham lord through respect and unselfish devotion, but we do not believe Abraham treated her as a slave or servant.

The love between husband and wife should be mutual. If we are Christians we should share in all the affairs of life: business, social and domestic. What a woman admires in a man is strength and courage. What a man admires in a woman is beauty and fidelity. Beauty of character is of much greater importance than beauty of face and figure. The woman is the weaker vessel and she likes to feel the strength the man can give; the man appreciates the love and devotion the woman is capable of bestowing.

Peter says they are heirs together of the grace of God. If they are fellow heirs then there is an equality between them on spiritual lines. They should share each other's joys and sorrows, successes and failures.

Women's Attire

Neatness and simplicity often go hand in hand. The natural desire of a woman is to be attractive in personal appearance. But a Christian woman does not want a lot of superfluous ornaments to make her look beautiful. No amount of finery can take the place of a meek and quiet spirit. The Lord looks on the heart; if the heart is right, dress falls in line. We are told that heathen women of old braided strands of gold with their hair to make it more attractive. That explains the "plaiting the hair", which Peter mentions. It was expensive; and no amount of expensive attire can be a substitute for a gracious personality. The desire of a Christian woman is to show by her life and appearance that she is a follower of Christ; and not try to flaunt herself, and draw attention to herself by immodest dress or costly adorning.

To the Spirits in Prison

This passage of Scripture has been hard to understand. We can interpret Scripture only by Scripture. We know that in the interval between the death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection He went to Paradise, for He said to the thief on the cross, "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, was preaching to the people about the resurrection of Jesus and He quoted Psalm 16:10; "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer shine Holy One to see corruption."

Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:7-11: "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." This same Scripture is most beautifully portrayed in Psalm 68:17,18: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men."

We are told that in olden days when a general of an army won a great victory, he would lead his captives through the streets and throw out gifts from the bounty he had received.

the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

²² Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

1 Peter 4:1-19

¹ Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

² That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

³ For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

⁴ Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*:

⁵ Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

⁶ For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

⁸ And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

⁹ Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

¹⁰ As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

¹¹ If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified

Deborah in her song of victory sang, "Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive" (Judges 5:12).

We know when Jesus arose from the dead, He came forth conqueror over sin, death and hell. When He ascended on High He sent the Holy Ghost down to this earth and gave gifts unto men. What a beautiful illustration!

Perhaps the consummation will be when Jesus comes back to this earth to reign and leads His saints through the streets of the city of Jerusalem and appoints them a place to reign with Him.

These Scriptures give us some insight of what Jesus did between His death and resurrection. Just what He preached or proclaimed to those in Hades we do not know. The Bible does not tell us.

We know from many Scriptures that there is no chance after death of obtaining eternal life. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). There is no purgatory where one can go and stay until some priest prays you out.

We have the account Jesus gave of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man begged Abraham to send Lazarus back to this earth to warn his five brethren not to come to that place of torment. Abraham said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

The sinner who does not repent of his sins and get forgiveness for them while he is living in this world, has no chance of escaping the damnation of hell.

God sent Jesus to this world and permitted Him to die on the cross that we might not perish but have everlasting life. He gives us a lifetime here to make our decisions as to where we will spend eternity. But when once we have crossed over, the die is cast.

Fiery Trials

At times Christians do pass through fiery trials: trials of persecution, trials of heart sorrow, trials of sickness and affliction. We are told to rejoice inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings. The glory of Jesus will be great because of the intense suffering He passed through to bring about our redemption. If we suffer for Him here, the greater will be our rejoicing over there. If we can grasp that truth it will help to ease the burden of our fiery trials. If we suffer as a Christian, we have nothing to be ashamed of; but if we suffer for our wrongdoings, it brings disgrace on ourselves and on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Judgment begins at the house of God. We cannot do wrong and expect to get by with it. We will reap more than we sow. Many times the Lord chastens us to bring us back into line. How much better to feel the chastening rod here and profit by it, than to suffer throughout eternity! "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (I Peter 4:18).

Duty of a Shepherd

"Feed the flock of God." Peter never forgot the lesson he learned just after the crucifixion and resurrection. For over three years he had followed the Lord. He had been called away from his fishing nets to become a fisher of men. But now discouraged, restless, and impulsive, he said to some of the disciples, "I go a fishing." They said unto him, "We also go with thee." We never step aside without influencing others.

Jesus did not leave him discouraged but performed a miracle to prove to the disciples that He was the same Jesus as when He walked with them along the shores of Galilee. After He had fed

through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

¹² Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

¹³ But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

¹⁴ If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

¹⁶ Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

¹⁷ For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

¹⁸ And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

¹⁹ Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1 Peter 5:1-11

¹ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

³ Neither as being lords over

them, He talked directly to Peter's heart, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Jesus repeated the question three times. We believe each time it was going deeper into Peter's heart never again to turn aside. When Jesus told him to feed His "sheep," Peter learned a lesson he never forgot.

Now Peter is exhorting the other shepherds to feed the flock of God: to do it willingly, and not for remuneration, or financial gain, they would get; nor as being lords over God's heritage. They were to look for their reward when the Chief Shepherd shall appear.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, . . . But the God of all grace, . . . make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (I Peter 5:8-10).

QUESTIONS

1. How should a wife treat an unbelieving husband?
2. How should a husband treat a wife?
3. What kind of adorning is better than costly array?
4. What do we gain by suffering for Christ?
5. What promise will help us to pass through our fiery trials?
6. Who are to feed the flock of God?
7. What lesson did Peter learn about feeding the sheep?
8. Who is trying to devour the sheep?
9. What admonition did Peter give to help us guard against the enemy?
10. Name three things Jesus conquered through His death and resurrection.

God's heritage, but being
ensamples to the flock.

⁴ And when the chief Shepherd
shall appear, ye shall receive a
crown of glory that fadeth not
away.

⁵ Likewise, ye younger, submit
yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all
of you be subject one to another,
and be clothed with humility: for
God resisteth the proud, and
giveth grace to the humble.

⁶ Humble yourselves therefore
under the mighty hand of God,
that he may exalt you in due time:

⁷ Casting all your care upon him;
for he careth for you.

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because
your adversary the devil, as a
roaring lion, walketh about,
seeking whom he may devour:

⁹ Whom resist stedfast in the
faith, knowing that the same
afflictions are accomplished in
your brethren that are in the
world.

¹⁰ But the God of all grace, who
hath called us unto his eternal
glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye
have suffered a while, make you
perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle
you.

¹¹ To him *be* glory and dominion
for ever and ever. Amen.