

LESSON 2

Stewardship of Life

–Randy Tompkins–

Focal Passage: Romans 12:1-2

Central Truth: Being a good steward means positioning yourself in a correct relationship and carrying out that relationship in all aspects of life.

Teaching Aim: At the beginning of next week’s lesson time the students will bring to the class a piece of paper giving a brief account of their salvation experience and indicating the times throughout the week they exemplified Christ in action, word, and/or deed.

LESSON PREPARATION:

1. Gather a small handheld game for each group you will create at the beginning of the class. One game may be the Chinese checkers type game with a block of wood and golf tees; another might be a spindle with a string attached to it and the string is also attached to a ball; a third game might be a set of jacks and a ball; a fourth game might be a set of marbles. You may wish to come up with your own games to distribute.
2. Gather enough envelopes and sheets of paper for the anticipated attendance. Have printed on the paper “my salvation experience” as item number one and then the days of the week, Monday through Saturday, as items number two through seven.
3. Gather four sheets of tear paper or poster board and markers. Also gather something to place the paper or poster board on the walls in the classroom.

LESSON ACTIVITIES:

Attention Pacer: Group the class into small groups. Give each group a game and ask them to answer three questions about the game: What is the relationship between the pieces of the game? How important is each piece to the game? Would each piece have an important role in life without the other pieces of the game? Give the groups a time limit for their discussion. At the conclusion of the time limit ask a representative of each group to explain the game, explain their discussion, and give the answers to the three questions.

Purposeful Bible Study:

1. Read Verse 1 and then elaborate on its meaning:
 - a. Therefore – is a reference to the things that have been stated before. Chapter twelve is a continuation of the discussion in the preceding chapters. Paul has stated the law of God and has begun to move to discuss the other elements of the complex personality of God – grace, mercy, love. Many people view God as having only one characteristic – law. We need to view God’s complex personality.
 - b. I urge you – This is Paul’s way of encouraging the readers to engage in the activity he is about to present to them rather than placing it before them as a command.

- c. In view of God’s mercy – In Chapter 11 Paul guides the reader to understand there is the law of God but there is also a loving side to God that we have called mercy. In light of this loving side Paul is about to make a request.
 - d. To offer your bodies as a living sacrifice – One commentator has stated the term offer or present is used like evidence in a courtroom - To place before God as an exhibit. Allow God to see your entire being. The term bodies is not meant to be a limiting statement of the physical arrangement of our flesh only. It has a broader connotation of the entire makeup of an individual: flesh, bones, mental, spiritual, etc. The way we conduct our daily lives should be as a holy, pure, and clean activity so it could be presented as a sacrifice.
 - e. To God – In order to present something to our creator we must have a right relationship with that creator. We can not enter into the presence of God if we have not opened that door by doing what He asked we do – commit our lives to Him through the acceptance of His only son, Jesus.
 - f. This is your spiritual act of worship – Every action in which we engage has spiritual ramifications. Some think if they are not “caught” doing something unChristlike it won’t count against them. Everything we do, say, think, plan, and execute reflects on our relationship with God.
2. Read Verse 2 and then elaborate on its meaning:
- a. Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world – In other words, don’t let those without God dictate to you how you should live.
 - b. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind - Your relationship is with God. Allow Him to guide you through life.
 - c. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing, perfect will – God’s guidance for your actions will shine through all the complexities this world throws at you.

Practical Application: Place four pieces of tear sheets on the walls around the room. Have a marker by each tear sheet. On each tear sheet write out a brief story about a life situation. It would be good to make up your own stories so they would reflect the lifestyles present in your classroom.

One story might be a husband and wife arguing in front of their child and you and your child. Another might be a coworker who asks you to cut corners on a project in order to save budget and the things that are asked to be cut are things your supervisor insists on being a part of the project. Another story might be the person in front of you at a restaurant walks away from the cash register without picking up the \$10 in change they received for their meal. The person attending to the cash register does not notice, but you do. A fourth story might be a family member asks you for a small loan to help them through a difficult situation. You have the money to lend and you trust this family member.

Ask the students to go to each of the four stories, read the story, and then write how they would react or act in each situation. After all the students have had a chance to indicate their actions, discuss with the entire class the actions written for each story.

Follow-through: Distribute a sheet of paper and an envelope to each person in attendance. Remind the class that in order to be a good steward a person must have the right relationship and engage in that relationship throughout all aspects of life. Explain to the students that what you

are about to ask them to do is not easy. It will not be shared with anyone. This will be a private matter but it will be important to participate and to be truthful to yourself. Ask them to look at the sheet of paper.

1. They should notice there are places to fill in seven pieces of information. The first piece of information is to be a brief description of the time they accepted Christ as Saviour. The temptation will be to write every detail. However, it will be good enough to put it in as brief a form as possible while listing the important elements of what brought you to that point, what you did at that point, how you felt during the process, and how you felt afterward. Be sensitive at this point to realize there may be some in the class that can not put that experience to paper because it has not occurred. These people may even be people that have been attending the class for a long time and may even be church members. Encourage them to be honest in their descriptions and if anyone has a difficulty that you (teacher) or the Pastor would be happy to visit with them. Remind them what is placed on this paper will not be seen by anyone else.
2. Sections two through seven are places to list actions, statements, activities, etc. that you do on those particular days that reflect the standards of Christian Living. Again it should be a listing for each day that is complete in detail but as brief as possible.
3. Next Sunday morning they are to take the piece of paper and seal it in the envelope. Do not write anything on the outside of the envelope. Just bring it with them to class.

Conclusion: Do a quick review of what was covered in the lesson today. Mention that next week the lesson will be on Stewardship of time and talent. The scriptures that will be studied are: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Romans 12:6-13. Remind the students to complete the list on the paper that was just handed out and bring it with them sealed in the envelope next week. Dismiss in prayer.

Mark on your calendar to send a card to each class member on Wednesday to remind them to bring their list sealed in an envelope.