

Mature Christian Living



Bible Class Series
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GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST

Mature Christian Living

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The Conversion For Christian Living

Text: Acts 9:20-22

Introduction: The Lord reminded His disciples of the two greatest commandments in Matthew 22:37-40. When we decide to follow Christ we begin a journey. Our entire life is one long road to our eternal destination. How did we start that journey? What do we do when we are born again?

Discussion:

I. The Quest Stage

- A. Athiest: “I know that there is no God.” – II Corinthians 4:3-4**
- B. Agnostic: “I don’t know if there is a God.” – Acts 26:28**
- C. Seeker: “I’m searching for a God.” – John 10:38**
- D. Indifference: “Who cares?” – Matthew 27:24**

II. The Commitment Stage

- A. There must be a commitment to God. – Matthew 6:33**
- B. There must be a commitment to godliness. – I Timothy 4:8**
- C. There must be a commitment to others. – Romans 15:14**

III. The Information Stage

- A. Discover the benefits of Christian fellowship. – I John 1:16-17**
- B. Find your purpose in life. – Romans 8:28**
- C. Experience spiritual maturity. – Ephesians 4:16**
- D. Seek reconciliation, renewal, and revival. – Galatians 6:1-2**

Conclusion: Conversion takes place when we have given our entire lives to God is a personal sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2). We begin this journey by hearing the gospel (Romans 10:17), believing in Jesus Christ as our Lord (John 8:24), repenting of our sins (Luke 13:3), confessing our faith in Jesus (Matthew 10:32), being baptized for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16), and remaining faithful (Revelation 2:10). The book of Acts records many conversion stories that can help us to see our current stage of conversion.

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The Conscience For Christian Living

Text: I Timothy 1:12-20

Introduction: The world around us seems disinterested in morality and ethics. Many people turn a blind eye to sins that used to be forbidden. The media, Hollywood, and the music industry has desensitized us into thinking that lust and pride are mainstream philosophies. Many are convinced that the Christianity and the Bible are old-fashioned. But God has given us a conscience. Why is that important to know?

Discussion:

I. The Common Conscience

- A. The conscience can be a witness. – Romans 9:1**
- B. The conscience can be weak. – I Corinthians 8:7**
- C. The conscience can be calloused. – I Timothy 4:2**
- D. The conscience can be cleansed. – Hebrews 10:22**

II. The Clear Conscience

- A. The conscience should feel remorse. – Psalm 51:10**
- B. The conscience should feel guilt. – Proverbs 28:13**
- C. The conscience should feel sorrow. – Romans 1:18-32**
- D. The conscience should feel free. – Romans 2:14-15**

III. The Committed Conscience

- A. The conscience runs your life. – Proverbs 4:23-27**
- B. The conscience gives a testimony. – II Corinthians 1:12**
- C. The conscience can be purified. – Hebrews 9:14**
- D. The conscience can be renewed. – I John 1:9**

Conclusion: The conscience is not a defect or disorder, but a tremendous and precious gift from God to help us stay on the right track. When the conscience is exposed to the Word of God it can operate fully and will guide us in accordance with true holiness. We must recover and apply the Biblical truth about the conscience or we will be left to offer this sinful world. Do you have a clean conscience?

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The Cost of Christian Living

Text: Luke 14:25-33

Introduction: The Bible teaches us about the high cost of salvation. Jesus paid for our lives, and for our sin debt, with his own life. Therefore, he calls upon us to take up our own cross and follow Him daily. What does that mean? And what do I need to know about the cost of my freedom?

Discussion:

I. God's Portion of the Cost

- A. God provided a way of escape. – Genesis 3:15**
- B. God provided His only Son. – John 3:16**
- C. God provides heaven to the saved. – John 14:1-6**
- D. God provided this even when we were sinners. – Romans 5:8**

II. Man's Portion of the Cost

- A. We are required to leave all and follow Him. – Matthew 4:11-22**
- B. We are required to fulfill the Great Commission. – Mark 16:15-16**
- C. We are required to follow Him daily. – Luke 9:23**
- D. We are required to put on the armor of God. – Ephesians 6:10-18**

III. The Rewards of Christian Living

- A. The wisdom we gain is worth any cost. – Proverbs 4:7**
- B. The blessings are worth any cost. – Isaiah 55:1-2**
- C. The protection is worth any cost. – Matthew 8:18-27**
- D. The living water is worth any cost. – Revelation 21:6**

Conclusion: The sacrifices we make for the sake of Christian living are so little in comparison to everything God has done for us. It is the natural result of a Christian to bear fruit for the kingdom and lead others to Jesus (John 15:1-8). The Lord will never forget those that have dedicated their lives to Him. We need to count our many blessings and glorify our Father in heaven with every breath that is inside us. God is worthy of praise!

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The Communion For Christian Living

Text: Acts 2:41-47

Introduction: The word “fellowship” is a special word. And the word “communion” is a special word. We are blessed to enjoy fellowship with the saints and share in communion with God and our brethren. Have you ever really thought about the significance of fellowship with God? Have you ever really studied about the blessing of communion?

Discussion:

I. The Communion With God

- A. The Lord accepts us into His fold. – John 10:27-29**
- B. The Lord allows us to all become one. – John 17:20-23**
- C. The Lord brings us into His light. – II Corinthians 6:14**
- D. The Lord dwells within us. – II Corinthians 13:14**

II. The Communion With Believers

- A. We have a common faith. – Acts 2:44**
- B. We have a common affliction. – I Corinthians 10:13**
- C. We have a common cause. – Ephesians 4:11-16**
- D. We have a common salvation. – Jude 3**

III. The Common Meal

- A. The Lord’s Supper reminds us of His body. – Matthew 26:26**
- B. The Lord’s Supper reminds us of His blood. – Matthew 26:27**
- C. The Lord’s Supper reminds us of our salvation. – Matthew 26:28**
- D. The Lord’s Supper reminds us of His return. – Matthew 26:29**

Conclusion: No one should want to neglect these “uncommon” blessings by ignoring our obligations (Hebrews 10:24-25). His body and His blood should remind us that we are part of His one body. God has made so many sacrifices for us. We should hunger and thirst for His love and presence when we assemble! We should long for holy communion.

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The Commitment For Christian Living

Text: I Timothy 4:7-8

Introduction: People are not always true to their word. People break their commitments at work, home, and school. People refuse to pay their bills, stay faithful to their spouse, and finish jobs on time. What's the problem? Commitment. We need to learn about Christian commitment. The Lord told us to say "Yes" or "No." Are you true to your word? Can you be trusted? Do you make foolish commitments?

Discussion:

- I. The Organization of Commitment**
 - A. A fear of God. – Exodus 14:31**
 - B. A desire for God. – Psalm 27:4**
 - C. A love of God. – I John 4:9-10**
 - D. A dedication to God. – I Corinthians 15:58**

- II. The Objectives of Commitment**
 - A. Growth – Mark 4:28**
 - B. Reward – Philippians 3:14**
 - C. Obedience – Hebrews 5:8-9**
 - D. Work – Titus 2:14**

- III. The Obstacles of Commitment**
 - A. Difficult Trials – Matthew 13:18-23**
 - B. Our Own Weakness – Romans 7:21**
 - C. Poor Training – Galatians 6:9**
 - D. False Teaching – I Timothy 6:20**

Conclusion: Some people have no religion while others have lukewarm religion, both are dangerous and lead to spiritual death. The exercise of commitment to godliness will never be made in vain. The best arena to exercise our godliness is the local assembly of the body of Christ: The Lord's Church! Lack of commitment will hinder not only you but it will hinder others around you. Are you fully committed to Lord?

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The Challenge For Christian Living

Text: Matthew 4:19

Introduction: Christians face so many challenges. The moment we decide to follow Christ, Satan hits us hard. Satan will throw everything he can at us to get us to turn away from God. The world we live in doesn't always help us because it's full of selfish people. Paul calls them carnal people. We have been called to be fishers of men. What does that mean?

Discussion:

- I. The Challenge To Hear God**
 - A. We can easily stop hearing and understanding. – Isaiah 6:9-10**
 - B. We can allow obstacles to influence us. – Matthew 13:3-9**
 - C. We gain our faith from hearing God's Word. – Romans 10:10-17**
 - D. We can become complacent. – Hebrews 5:11-14**

- II. The Challenge To Obey God**
 - A. Those around us will know if we are obedient. – Romans 16:19**
 - B. We should fear God. – II Corinthians 7:15**
 - C. Reading the Word of God can help us. – II Timothy 3:16-17**
 - D. Faith without works is dead. – James 2:14-26**

- III. The Challenge To Follow God**
 - A. Those who follow will find discretion. – Proverbs 2:10-13**
 - B. Those who follow will find direction. – Proverbs 3:5-6**
 - C. Those who follow will find discernment. – Isaiah 30:21**
 - D. Those who follow will find depth. – Isaiah 40:31**

Conclusion: It's easy to say we are Christians but it is much harder to follow Christ. The Christian walk is really not that difficult if we keep in mind that Jesus narrows everything down by saying we need to love God and our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-40). The one who confesses Jesus as Lord, repents of sins, is immersed in baptism, and walks daily with God will be able to meet the challenges of life because God will give Him strength (Philippians 4:13).

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The Courage For Christian Living

Text: Mark 15:43

Introduction: The Lord's church needs more "brave" men and women. We need people that are not afraid to stand up for what they believe. I'm afraid that many of us become like Jonah trying to run and hide when God want us to be like David and stand to fight our giants. What does it mean to have boldness and courage?

Discussion:

- I. Stop Running Away
 - A. Running with a bad attitude. – Matthew 5:3-11
 - B. Running scared or fearful. – Matthew 10:28
 - C. Running in the wrong direction. – Matthew 26:56
 - D. Running for the wrong reason. – Hebrews 12:5-6

- II. Start Building On Your Strengths
 - A. Everyone has their place. – Judges 7:21
 - B. Wait on the Lord. – Psalm 27:14
 - C. God will grant us boldness. – Acts 9:22
 - D. God is always with us! – Romans 8:31

- III. Sound The Battle Cry
 - A. There is unspoken courage. – Matthew 27:12
 - B. The battle cry is of the redeemed. – Ephesians 6:10
 - C. God has not given us the spirit of fear. – II Timothy 1:7
 - D. You get the last word. – II Timothy 4:6-8

Conclusion: We can choose to be afraid or we can choose to be ready. Believers should be inspired to persevere in spiritual warfare and trials because we fight under the conduct of the Captain of our Salvation. Ralph Erskine said, "There is no devil so bad as no devil!" God has never forgotten a single promise (II Peter 3:9)! We need to stand with Him and we will never fall.

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The Communication For Christian Living

Text: Ephesians 5:15-21

Introduction: The number one cause for divorce in our nation is poor communication. The number one cause for church conflict is poor communication. Can we learn anything from that? We are supposed to be effective communicators of the gospel. How's that going for us? Are we moving forward in the area of communication?

Discussion:

I. Communication About This Sinful World

- A. We live among a sinful generation. – Mark 8:38**
- B. Don't be easily deceived. – I Corinthians 15:33**
- C. Share your concerns with God. – Philippians 4:6**
- D. Lay aside worldly communication. – II Peter 2:1-3**

II. Communication About The Trials Of Life

- A. Bearing burdens is easier said than done. – Matthew 26:70**
- B. Seek out the purpose of the trial. – Romans 8:28-30**
- C. Somehow we can find joy. – James 1:2**
- D. We need to learn what to say. – I Peter 4:12,13**

III. Communication About The Church

- A. Our actions speak louder than words. – Luke 24:17**
- B. Our examples need to be lifted up. – I Corinthians 4:16-17**
- C. Our purpose must be realized as a church. – Philippians 4:14-15**
- D. Our faith must be shared with others. – Philippians 4:6**

Conclusion: The church cannot hide in a closet, but must be a light for all to see. The church must be a hospital for soldiers and not a nursing home for saints. The child of God must be saved, must not yield to temptation, and must learn how to be a better communicator of the gospel. The church needs better communicators! We need to share our story with as many people as possible. Don't be afraid to be yourself.

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The Contentment For Christian Living

Text: I Timothy 6:6-8

Introduction: When we read Philippians 4 we get the idea that Paul was a very content man. Whether he was in a soft bed, or on a prison floor, he doesn't seem to have any trouble sleeping at night. Can you say the same thing? Why can we just be happy with what we have? Why do we struggle with being content?

Discussion:

- I. Contentment With Our Position**
 - A. We all have different gifts. – Romans 12:6**
 - B. We are not here by accident. – Jeremiah 29:11**
 - C. We must acknowledge God's grace. – Ephesians 3:8**
 - D. We cannot forget about pride. – III John 9**

- II. Contentment With Our Possessions**
 - A. All we have comes from God. – Deuteronomy 8:18**
 - B. It's worth praying about. – Psalm 119:36-37**
 - C. We have a strong exhortation. – Luke 12:15**
 - D. We cannot have greed and envy. – Matthew 20:15**

- III. Contentment With Our Purpose**
 - A. God is in control! – Psalm 33:10-11**
 - B. We live in a sinful world. – Romans 8:20**
 - C. The secret is God's sufficient grace. – II Corinthians 12:9**
 - D. Contentment comes at any stage. –Philippians 4:11**

Conclusion: Contentment with what we have is vital to our spiritual health. Whatever our situation, it is far better than we deserve. We must learn and accept that we live daily by God's unmerited favor given thru Christ and that we can respond to any and every situation. We are enabled His divine Spirit to find contentment. Remember that self-control is one of the things the Spirit produces (Galatians 5:22-23). Are you bearing the fruit of contentment?

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The Confession For Christian Living

Text: Acts 8:35-39

Introduction: The Bible has a lot to say about confession. My favorite confession is one that Peter makes in Matthew 16. However, we all confess Christ's name when we become a Christian and we continue to confess Christ by living in Christ's name after becoming a Christian. When people look at you what do they see? What kind of a sermon are you preaching? And when you make mistakes, what do you say?

Discussion:

I. The History of Confession

- A. God has always demanded confession. – Leviticus 5:5**
- B. God restores those who turn away from evil. – II Chronicles 7:14**
- C. God blesses the broken and contrite in heart. – Psalm 51:17**
- D. God can see all sin, nothing can be hidden. – Proverbs 28:13**

II. The Hindrances of Confession

- A. Confession requires an obedient spirit. – II Corinthians 9:13**
- B. Confession requires a changed lifestyle. – II Timothy 2:19**
- C. Confession requires a dynamic example. – Hebrews 3:1**
- D. Confession requires an unwavering faith. – Hebrews 10:23**

III. The Healing Power of Confession

- A. Remorse accompanies confession. – Ezra 10:1**
- B. Forgiveness accompanies confession. – Psalm 32:5**
- C. Salvation accompanies confession. – Romans 10:9-10**
- D. Purification accompanies confession. – I John 1:9-10**

Conclusion: The confession we make before baptism is only the beginning of a changed life that confesses sin regularly to a Father who is willing to forgive. Many people think of confession as something that is private, but many biblical examples show public confession of sin in addition to private. Confession has great power when it is done with the right heart and proper motivation.

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The Course For Christian Living

Text: II Timothy 4:6-8

Introduction: Life has many different roads. Jesus tells us that they are basically heading in two directions. What road are you on? What did you do to get on that road? What can you do to get off that road? We need to rely on our G.P.S (God's Positioning System), the Bible to get us back on the right track and/or keep us steady.

Discussion:

I. The Service Road

- A. We must take one day at a time. – Genesis 12:1-5
- B. God's purposes are greater than our plans. – Proverbs 19:21
- C. We must map our faith. – John 14:6
- D. Our relationship with God must come first. – John 15:5

II. The Narrow Road

- A. We can walk and run. – Isaiah 40:31
- B. We are given two choices. – Matthew 7:13-14
- C. We obligate ourselves to make this walk. – Romans 8:1-3
- D. We must know it is an uncertain route. – Hebrews 11:8

III. The Right Road

- A. He will give us strength for the journey. – Psalm 31:15
- B. He will remove the stumbling blocks. – Isaiah 57:14
- C. He wants us to finish the race. – Philippians 1:20
- D. He will motive us move on. – Hebrews 12:2

Conclusion: The future is known by God but it is to be determined by our actions. Life is a course which can be finished with zeal and assurance. We can easily be discouraged in the Christian course. Therefore, we must keep ourselves aware of the potholes, traffic jams, and dead ends. Only you can choose the path. No one can choose it for you. And no one can walk it for you. It is your choice alone!

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The Comfort For Christian Living

Text: Matthew 11:28-30

Introduction: I love reading II Corinthians. One reason is because in I Corinthians Paul is really harsh and pointed toward the brethren. Don't get me wrong, they deserved a firm rebuke. But in the second letter he praises them for making the necessary changes. He offered them counsel and then he gave them comfort. Jesus encouraged us to trust Him to bear our burdens. Have you kept many for yourself?

Discussion:

I. The Comfort of God's Presence

- A. God promises to comfort us by His Word. – Isaiah 40:1-11**
- B. God promises to comfort us when we mourn. – Matthew 5:4**
- C. God promises to comfort us when we hurt. – II Corinthians 1:3-11**
- D. God promises to comfort us in the end. – Revelation 21:3-4**

II. The Comfort of God's Peaceful Spirit

- A. The Holy Spirit is a great Helper. – John 14:26**
- B. The Holy Spirit comforted the apostles. – Acts 1:8**
- C. The Holy Spirit dwells in every believer. – I Corinthians 6:19-20**
- D. The Holy Spirit can wash and regenerate us. – Titus 3:5**

III. The Comfort of God's People

- A. Friends should comfort each other. – Job 2:12-13**
- B. The unity of believers should bring comfort. – Philippians 2:1**
- C. Christians should comfort each other. – I Thessalonians 4:18**
- D. Christians should comfort the fainting. – I Thessalonians 5:14**

Conclusion: Jesus has overcome the world's troubles (John 16:33). We have to remember that if God is for us (Matthew 28:20) no one can stand against us (Romans 8:31). The great comfort of God's hand upon us should motivate us to do whatever necessary to glorify Him and lead others to Him. We need to comfort others and let God comfort us. This allows us to continue on the road to maturity.