

Life Group Leader Notes

July 7, 2024

Purpose of the Church

The church is the only hope for the world. The condition of the church depends on the church's obedience to God's word.

In the Old Testament, when the Israelites obeyed God's word, they were blessed.

When the Israelites disobeyed God's word, they were cursed.

In the New Testament, the early church was blessed, and it grew and multiplied.

The early church possessed 4 vital characteristics.

- They preached the word. They understood the power of God's word.
- They were filled with the Holy Spirit.
- They were people of prayer.
- They understood the power of Jesus' name.

Discussion: Discuss these characteristics and how they apply to your life?

In the Old Testament, the Israelites were in bondage because of idol worship and disobedience to God's word. The people cried out to God and He sent deliverers such as Samson, Moses.... These deliverers were just shadows of the greatest deliverer: Jesus!

We, as Christ's spiritual body are called to be deliverers.

Jesus declared:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free. Luke 4:18

Discussion: Do you consider yourself a deliverer?

Samson was a Nazarite from birth, meaning he was consecrated (chosen/sacred) to the service of God. He was under vows to abstain from wine or anything from a grape vine. He was not to cut his hair and he could not touch anything dead. He was supposed to marry an Israelite. Samson disobeyed all these vows. His disobedience was due to:

- Selfishness. He was self-centered and not interested in the purposes of God.
- He gave into fleshly desires and had no regard for God's word.
- He took his anointing for granted.

He stepped out of God's will, and he was made blind. His strength and liberty were taken away. He was made to grind grain.

Discussion: What weakness of Sampson hinders your spiritual strength?