

## **Bible Study Outline for January – December 2016**

**Theme: You are Christ's Ambassadors II Corinthians 5:20**

### **Word from Pastoral Team**

#### Study Instructions

##### **i. Introduction**

God loves man so much that when man sinned, He came looking for them to save them. There are some who see God as the first Evangelist, in that He came looking for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden after they had sinned.

In His illustration of Himself as the Good Shepherd, Jesus stated that there are other sheep that currently are missing and need to be found. That is why Jesus came. He started the search and taught us how to do it by His example.

Before He ascended to heaven, He entrusted the remainder of the work to His disciples. They were to continue and finish it. It is only when the work is completed that He is coming back to take His children home.

Therefore it is in our interest to pursue this assignment diligently so we can go home and rest. Storm clouds are brewing on the horizon and are fast approaching. Storm clouds of violence, immorality, greed, godlessness etc. are beginning to pervade our society at such an alarming rate.

It is for these and other reasons that now is the time for us to rise up and fulfill our part of the responsibility of bringing in the harvest before the storm clouds release their rain. God has promised to be with us to the very end.

##### **ii. Study instructions**

###### General Instructions

This study has been designed with the study time as 40 minutes in mind. As such the possible time allocation is as follows:

- Opening prayer                      2 mins
- Learning memory verse        5 mins
- Main Study                            25 mins
- Memory Verse revision        5 mins
- Closing prayer                        3 mins

Most of the time when we get home, we do not complete the study we began in church. The questions in these studies are designed such that we will be able to complete them within the allotted time.

Cross referencing has been reduced to the barest minimum so we can focus on the text. As much as possible, let the focus be on the text and bring the answers from there.

The versions of the bible from which the memory verses have been taken are: Bible in Basic English (BBE), Contemporary English Version (CEV), Good News Bible (GNB), God's Word (GW), International Standard Version (ISV), King James Version (KJV) and 1912 Weymouth New Testament (WNT).

The memory verses have been chosen from these various translations. The hope is that they will make memorization easier as they reflect the study.

#### Guidelines for the Study Leader

1. Don't be afraid of silence especially after questions requiring careful thought. Where silence is "unusual" reframe the question.
2. Never say that an answer or viewpoint is wrong. But tactfully ask, "In what verse did you find that?" or "How did you arrive at that?" or "What does someone else think about this point?"
3. Ask several people to contribute viewpoints especially on strategic interpretation or application questions.
4. If a strong disagreement arises, refer to the text. Make a valid summary of the positive points and move on. If there is no clear answer, refer to another passage or assign the subject to be worked out for next time.
5. Encourage shy members by looking their way occasionally. When you sense they are ready for verbal participation, ask directly a simple but important question.
6. Discourage talkative members from monopolising by directing questions to others. If necessary, speak to them privately about the need for discussion rather than a lecture in the group.
7. Show the well informed members who frequently digress with cross references or other topics the value of keeping to the text.
8. Omit cross references unless necessary. Sometimes, it means someone is trying to solve a problem superficially by citing another passage rather than searching the present text more carefully.
9. Suggest that controversial issues be discussed another time other than during the Bible study. Majority of members may get their time wasted on controversy.

### iii. **Study outlines**

#### **Section 1: The Ambassador**

An Ambassador is chosen and appointed by the head of a country or kingdom to represent the interests of their citizens in a foreign land. The Ambassador becomes resident in that country and is committed to the welfare of her citizens. We are called as Ambassadors and sent out by God to represent Him in our generation even as we live in this world. The primary reason is that the citizens of heaven who are lost will find their way back.

In this section, we want to discover a few things about the Ambassador of God. Namely, who is he or she? What are some of the characteristics that set the Ambassador apart? In what way is the Ambassador supposed to help and assure the missing citizens of a warm reception so they return to the Kingdom.

You are God's Ambassador so get ready to apply all that we will learn in the next twelve studies to your own life. God bless you as you gain further insight into who you are as an Ambassador of the Kingdom of God.

### **Study 1: II Corinthians 5:20**

#### Introduction

In our world today, many people lobby to be chosen and given positions of responsibility. Positions in government, the church and the palace are keenly sought after. The King of kings also seeks for people to send as His representatives. We will seek to understand what kind of responsibility is on offer for the children of God.

#### Memory Verse

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." II Corinthians 5:20 (NIV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. Who has called us to be ambassadors?
2. What does God want to do through us?
3. What are we supposed to doing?
4. In what way does this give meaning to our lives as Christians?
5. Have you been a worthy ambassador of the King of kings?

#### Conclusion

Candidates for any office are well screened before they are selected. The very thought that in spite of all our limitations, God is pleased to choose us should humble us and spur us on to give our best. There is work for us to do so let us make up our mind to please our King who sends us.

### **Study 2: I Corinthians 3:16-17**

#### Introduction

God does not just send anyone. He has very strict criteria that He follows. At the very basic level, the person must have acknowledged Jesus as their personal Saviour and Lord. However one other thing is the need for God to be happy to go with the person. Let us discover together what this means.

#### Memory Verse

"Don't you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" I Corinthians 3:16 (GW)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. How is the believer described in this passage?
2. What marks out the believer as an ambassador of Christ?
3. What do some believers do that displeases God?
4. What are some of the specific things we do that constitute displeasure to God?
5. In what ways can we ensure we honour God with our lives?

#### Conclusion

God is Holy and Righteous. He is not able to dwell or stay with anyone or anywhere that sin is welcomed and reigns. If we will fulfill our role as His Ambassadors and enjoy His presence, then we must make every effort to live under His Lordship. That means hating what defiles. May God grant us more grace to live that kind of life.

### **Study 3: Mark 10:45**

#### Introduction

There are many styles of leadership and service in our world today. However you can only model the kind that is used by the one who sends you. If indeed we are being sent by God, then what was His style of leadership and service that we must copy. Our study will help us better understand His style.

#### Memory Verse

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people." Mark 10:45 (GNB)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What was the mindset of Christ as He came to earth?
2. What could He have demanded when He came?
3. What does it mean to serve, especially those who do not know Christ?
4. In what practical ways can we serve at home, work and in church?

#### Conclusion

Jesus our Lord came to serve so as to help us be reconciled to God. Our mandate as servants of God is to serve those who are being called into the kingdom of God. In the week ahead of you, ask God to show you one practical way you can serve.

### **Study 4: II Corinthians 12:7-9**

#### Introduction

When one has been assigned work to do, it requires strength, energy resources etc.. Is it possible that God will give us work to do without equipping us to do it? How we do God's work is important to Him, more especially because of man's tendency to be proud. What provision has God made? Let us find out.

#### Memory Verse

"But his answer was: "My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak." II Corinthians 12:9a (GNB)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. Is it possible to work as Christ's ambassador in our own strength?
2. Give a reason for your answer?
3. What provision has God made for us to function?
4. How would you describe the grace of God?
5. How can we make use or benefit from this grace?

#### Conclusion

It is only when we acknowledge that we need help that we can request and make use of the grace God so freely gives. Grace opens up for us God's reservoir of resources that are needed for the work. The Ambassador can only depend on the One who sent him; his own strength will fail woefully.

### **Study 5: Romans 10:13-15**

#### Introduction

Every employee is employed by someone who is in charge. The Ambassador has been chosen by God but who actually sends them out? The reason why they are sent out must be well understood else they engage themselves in all other activities but that which is important to their King. Who has sent you out?

### Memory Verse

"And how can anyone tell them without being sent by the Lord? The Scriptures say it is a beautiful sight to see even the feet of someone coming to preach the good news." Romans 10:15 (CEV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. Can any person appoint him or herself as an Ambassador? Why?
2. Why is there the need to send out ambassadors?
3. Has God chosen a selected few to be His ambassadors?
4. Why do you think God chose you as His ambassador?

### Conclusion

We have been sent out by God; not our parents, Church Leaders, group executives nor even our own selves. It is good to know that once it is God who has sent us out, we are ultimately accountable to Him. If you were called to account today, what would your answer be? Think about that.

## **Study 6: John 7:37-38**

### Introduction

The Ambassador needs to be prepared and equipped for the responsibility assigned to him or her. God has various stages He will take us through as well as aids to help us. The life He has, He also wants it to pulsate through us. How this is done and our part in the process is our focus in our study today.

### Memory Verse

"Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." John 7:38 (NIV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What does Christ give to all those He chooses to send out?
2. What does it mean if a person admits to be thirsty?
3. What do you think is the significance of "living water"?
4. How often do you think we are allowed to drink of this water?
5. Of what relevance is this "living water" to the non-Christian?

### Conclusion

In our normal lives, we do not drink water on a yearly, monthly, weekly or daily basis. Rather any time we feel thirsty, many times during the day we drink water to quench our thirst. It must be the same with us, we do not need to wait till Sunday but moment by moment let us go back and drink deep so others will be blessed by our lives.

## **Study 7: I Corinthians 9:18-22**

### Introduction

An Ambassador's responsibility is a full time one. It is very difficult for it to be said that this is my "private time" so when duty calls I will not respond. It is a call to serve at all times. The question then becomes, who are you serving? Together let us try and find a good answer to this question in our study.

### Memory Verse

"Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible." I Corinthians 9:19 (NIV)

➤ Study Questions

1. How many categories of people was Paul attempting to reach?
2. Was he serving them on specific days or all the time?
3. Is it possible to be alert all the time, looking for an opportunity to share the gospel with people?
4. Currently whose slave are you?
5. How can we also develop this mindset that Paul lived by: to be ready at all times to reach as many people as possible?

Conclusion

Each moment, there are people making decisions that will destroy their lives while some are also dying without a hope for eternity. It is for such people that God calls us to pray and proclaim His good news to. Consider this: is it possible that for every person who will spend eternity outside God's presence, Jesus suffered in vain? What will you do about that?

**Study 8: Luke 9:23**

Introduction

Though the choice as to who is sent as an Ambassador lies with God, when we are chosen it calls for commitment on our part. There will always be a price to pay when we accept God's offer to represent Him in a dying world. In today's study, we will find the steps by which this commitment becomes acceptable to God.

Memory Verse

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23 (KJV)

➤ Study Questions

1. What are the four choices that Jesus placed before the disciples?
2. How do you understand what is means to "deny himself" and "take up his cross daily"?
3. Why do you think these two, especially, are important in the life of the ambassador?
4. Which of these four choices do you find most difficult to remain true to?

Conclusion

The Ambassador's call is a call to be selfless in all they do. This can be likened to the corpse which ceases to be conscious of its external surroundings. Can we be like that and be alive only to God and our responsibility to save as many people in a world that are headed for destruction? Will you deny yourself and take up your cross even as you follow Him?

**Study 9: Acts 4:12**

Introduction

In presenting the Kings message, it must be made clear how the King wants to be approached. Alternative routes tend to be illegal and when caught there is always the possibility of prosecution. So what is the approved route that is acceptable to the King? We must know it and then proclaim that.

Memory Verse

"Only Jesus has the power to save! His name is the only one in all the world that can save anyone." Acts 4:12 (CEV)

➤ Study Questions

1. Who alone has the power to save mankind from sin and God's wrath?
2. What about all the other deities that are being worshipped? Why?
3. Do you fully agree with this assertion?
4. In what ways can we help others to understand this?

Conclusion

In order to satisfy the fallen human nature, man has devised so many alternative routes in their quest to get back to God. However, there is only One that is recognized by God. If we believe it, then let us make every effort to proclaim it so others will find it, use it and be saved.

**Study 10: Isaiah 44:22**

Introduction

We live in a world where we have learned to run and hide because of our sins. Our perception of our sin and the guilt is what makes us flee from God. What is God's response to this? Is God ready to receive us or are we doomed eternally? Let us pick some answers from today's passage.

Memory Verse

Seek the LORD while he may be found. Call on him while he is near." Isaiah 55:6 (GW)

➤ Study Questions

1. What three things has God done for us?
2. Due to what God has done, what is He now asking us to do?
3. In what way is this good news for the non-Christian?
4. With this assurance, how can we encourage them to return to the Lord?

Conclusion

When we become self-centered or focused, everything is seen from our own view point. The burden of sin we carry tends to cloud our vision and plug our ears to God's call to return. The Ambassador must be ready to encourage a return to the Father for that is the yearning of God's heart. Will you make the Father glad by making this fact known?

**Study 11: Acts 2:37-40**

Introduction

When a person is lost, they will need guidance as well as direction to be able to get back on track. Without this guidance many continue to stray while others go round in circles. As Ambassadors, we are sent by God to help meet this need. In our passage let us together seek to understand our role better.

Memory Verse

"Peter said, "Turn back to God! Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven. Then you will be given the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38 (CEV)

➤ Study Questions

1. What was the response of the crowd after they had heard the message of salvation?
2. What are the three elements in the prayer Peter encouraged them to pray?
3. What other assurances did he give to them?
4. Are these assurances for the Jews alone?
5. How can we also benefit from these assurances?

## Conclusion

Confession and prayer are key requirements in being reconciled to God. Many of us need help to begin that journey and that is why God sends out Ambassadors. The assurances are not for us alone so let us go out there and share it that God has prepared a bountiful banquet for all who will come back.

## **Study 12: I Thessalonians 2:18-20**

### Introduction

There are many who will look for the benefit before they start a job. Others work for the pleasure of it. God on the other hand thinks differently. What has God prepared and reserved for his Ambassadors upon completion of work? Today we will discover it as we conclude the first section of study.

### Memory Verse

"After all, when the Lord Jesus appears, who else but you will give us hope and joy and be like a glorious crown for us?" I Thessalonians 2:19 (CEV)

### ➤ Study Questions

1. Who is the ambassador's number one enemy?
2. What is his key strategy?
3. What does the apostle describe as being his reward when our Lord appears?
4. If our Lord appeared this moment, will you have a reward to present to Him?
5. How can you make sure your reward remains till He comes?

## Conclusion

God is not unrighteous to forget or ignore your sacrifices even as you partner with Him for the salvation of souls of mankind. The souls that your unceasing prayer and tireless proclamation helps come back will be the jewels around your crown in heaven. Resolve to press on as God waits eagerly to reward you on resurrection morning.

## **Section 2: The Ambassadors Message**

The Ambassador sets off carrying a message from the one who sent him or her. This message is addressed to both the leaders of the country or kingdom, as well as the citizen who are in transit there. The message is such that it is the very words of the Sovereign and can be trusted as such.

In this section, we want to examine the message that has been entrusted to us as Ambassadors of the King of Glory. We will look specifically at what the message is, why this specific message and some of the obstacles the message will have to overcome in order to reach the lost citizens.

It is only when we grasp the message entrusted to us well that we can become worthy Ambassadors of the King who has sent us. May the equipping we receive in this section empower us to perform our roles excellently.

## **Study 13: Romans 3:23, 6:23**

### Introduction

We have various man made standards by which we justify ourselves. These either position us as being better or lagging behind others. It produces either pride or a



sense of low self-esteem. However when we are positioned against God the result is something else. What is that result?

Memory Verse

"All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory." Romans 3:23 (CEV)

➤ Study Questions

1. What have all mankind done?
2. How would you in a very practical way define sin?
3. What is the standard which man has fallen from?
4. What are the consequences of this?
5. What is God's solution to the problem of sin?

Conclusion

All of creation was made to reflect the glory of God. That is the standard by which all things are being measured. When we fall short we are doomed eternally for all our man made standards are futile. We must work hard so the gift of God is not wasted. Our message must be that simple.

### **Study 14: Luke 3:7-9**

Introduction

We are tempted to think that once we have not been caught we can get away with all that we do. In God's sight, He sees everything as nothing whatsoever can be hidden from His eyes. He both rewards and punishes. Let us continue to examine God's message to mankind about His expectation of us.

Memory Verse

"The ax is ready to cut down the trees at the roots; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire." Luke 3:9 (GNB)

➤ Study Questions

1. What kind of fruit is expected from the trees?
2. Will a relationship without the desired fruit save the tree?
3. What kind of judgment has been prepared for trees that do not bear good fruit?
4. How can the fruit of repentance be identified?
5. Can a non-Christian bear the good fruit God is looking for?

Conclusion

A tree will bear a particular fruit. Man was created in the image of God and as such God is looking for His-kind of fruit. Failure to find it calls out for His judgment. The admission of failure to meet the standard of His glory opens the door for forgiveness and restoration. The lost must definitely hear this.

### **Study 15: Mark 1:14-15**

Introduction

The gospel is also called the good news. What is good about news when a person is wallowing in sin and a life with seemingly no hope? Our Lord Jesus Christ began His earthly ministry with this message of hope. In our study today, let us acquaint ourselves with this message of hope.

Memory Verse

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" Mark 1:15 (NIV)

➤ Study Questions

1. What did our Lord call on the people to do?
2. Why was He calling on them to do this?
3. What does it mean to repent?
4. What happens when a person repents?
5. Should repentance happen once or it should be a continuous activity?

Conclusion

God in His infinite love did not wait for events to come upon us unawares. That is why He is reminding us that our home is in His Kingdom with Him. Though we rebelled, He assures us that we can return via the door of repentance. This indeed is good news and as Ambassadors we must publish this for all to hear.

**Study 16: John 14:6**

Introduction

For every illness there are specific medications that serve to cure it or correct the condition. The condition of sin and man's attempt to return to God also has only one cure as prescribed by God Himself. What is this cure? Are there alternatives? Our study today will show us.

Memory Verse

"Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one goes to the Father except through me." John 14:6 (GW)

➤ Study Questions

1. How many ways can a person use to get back to God?
2. What does this verse tell us about all other ways?
3. How do you understand the phrase "except through me"?
4. "The good news is about a person". How true is this statement?

Conclusion

The good news further points us to the one door that God has opened for all mankind to use in coming back to Him. All the other doors will not lead man to God but further and further away from Him. As they are in darkness already, we must alert them before it becomes too late.

**Study 17: Romans 1:16**

Introduction

We live in a world that uses multiple criterions in a bid to discriminate among people. It could be age, gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic background etc. Is the good news reserved for a special group or the gospel is open for all peoples? Let us move on and find out what one of the limitations of salvation is.

Memory Verse

"I'm not ashamed of the Good News. It is God's power to save everyone who believes, Jews first and Greeks as well." Romans 1:16 (GW)

➤ Study Questions

1. Is the good news limited in its ability to save only few people?
2. What is the condition given for salvation?
3. How can all these people come to the point of believing?
4. What does it mean to be ashamed of the good news?

5. Why do you think some Ambassadors are ashamed of the good news?

#### Conclusion

Thank God that in Him there is no discrimination at all. If any such thing exists, then it is the outworking of the Ambassador who is refusing to represent the King who sent them out. By doing this he or she betrays the King and denies of the good news. Pause and ask yourself, is there any group or person you feel ashamed to share the good news with?

### **Study 18: John 6:63**

#### Introduction

Those who are in darkness are described as being dead in sin. When something is dead it ceases to have any life in it. The good news however promises new life for all who will receive it. What is the source of the new life and how can it be received? Our study will help us answer this question.

#### Memory Verse

"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you – they are full of the Spirit and life." John 6:63 (NIV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. Where are we to focus if we want to experience real life?
2. Which Spirit is being referred to in our passage?
3. What is the message entrusted to us able to do for people?
4. What "other kinds" of messages are others sharing?
5. Why do you think those messages are unable to bring life into people?

#### Conclusion

Life is not just about living. It is about a meaningful existence that enables a person to please God in all they do. This kind of life can only be ours as we receive and live according to the word or message God sends to us. You may be the last step between eternal life and death for someone. Will you allow God to use your mouth to pass on life? Think about it.

### **Study 19: Colossians 1:27**

#### Introduction

Where there is no hope, dreams die and life just fades away. When the clouds are dark, hope is the ray of light, the beacon that encourages us on. What message of hope is there in the gospel? Is there any ray of light to guide the lost child of God back to heaven? Let the study help us answer that.

#### Memory Verse

"to whom God wanted to make known the glorious riches of this secret among the gentiles-which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (ISV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What are some of the things people hope for?
2. What secret is being revealed in our passage above?
3. What is this "hope of glory"?
4. How do you think this message will bring comfort to its hearers?
5. Are you personally confident of this hope?

## Conclusion

When we have Christ as our Saviour and Lord living in us by the presence of His Holy Spirit, we have an eternal hope. There is hope for both today and tomorrow that we will abide in God's kingdom. This message must be heard; so, join other Ambassadors and make it known.

## **Study 20: John 5:24**

### Introduction

There is so much power in words. Words can either build up or pull down. There are many things the word of God does but what will it do for the poor lost sinner who is struggling in darkness? In our passage today we will find the answer to that question.

### Memory Verse

"I am telling you the truth: those who hear my words and believe in him who sent me have eternal life. They will not be judged, but have already passed from death to life." John 5:24 (GNB)

### ➤ Study Questions

1. What must happen before the life the message gives to become ours?
2. How is this life described here?
3. By acting on the message what is the believer spared from?
4. What are some of the things that prevent us from hearing and understanding the message?
5. How should we then handle the message, knowing that there is a lot of power in it?

## Conclusion

A free gift cannot be forced upon any person. There must be the willingness to receive the gift and use it. Without this action the recipient will not derive the intended benefit from the gift. Let us help those who need to benefit, hear well and then believe the message of a wonderful gift.

## **Study 21: Luke 3:8-9**

### Introduction

One of the modern practices is to belong to one group or another. Though we may not be members we can claim it by association due to birth, school, marriage etc. Is it possible to apply this mindset in our relationship with God? What is it that God expects of us? Let us hear what God says through John the Baptist.

### Memory Verse

"Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.'" Luke 3:8a (NIV)

### ➤ Study Questions

1. What were the people bragging about in the passage above?
2. What did Abraham do that they sought to be associated with?
3. What are some of the other things that are used as points of association?
4. Does salvation begin with a group or the individual?
5. Why is a personal commitment to the message important for all?

## Conclusion

God expects everyone to have and maintain a personal relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. That is the beginning point for everyone. It is important to settle this issue. It is the only way to guarantee acceptance by God on judgment morning. Are you certain you have a personal relationship with Him?

## **Study 22: Mark 4:18-19**

### Introduction

There are many things in this life that compete for our attention and commitment. Some of them become obstacles and attempt preventing the hearers from having the maximum benefit of the message. What are some of these obstacles? Let us turn to our study to find out.

### Memory Verse

"but the worries of life, the deceitful pleasures of riches, and the desires for other things take over. They choke the word so that it can't produce anything." Mark 4:19 (GW)

### ➤ Study Questions

1. What are the obstacles mentioned in our passage that work against the message?
2. In what ways do they compete with the message in our lives?
3. When these obstacles triumph, what then are the results?
4. How can we guard our lives against these obstacles?

## Conclusion

When we only look to the things around us then things about God seem to appear in the distance. While we are concerned about the earthly temporal things, the eternal issues overtake us unawares. The right focus can only be gained as we give heed to God's message of guidance and direction.

## **Study 23: Colossians 2:8-10**

### Introduction

The battle for the souls of men, rages in their mind. There are many things that have taken root in the mind of people that stands tall as obstacles to their salvation. It is only when the Ambassador understands this that they can partner with God to break it. In today's study let us identify a few of them.

### Memory Verse

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Colossians 2:8 (KJV)

### ➤ Study Questions

1. What things are itemized in our passage today that also stands as obstacles needing to be overcome?
2. What are some of the "traditions of men" that are common now a days?
3. What is God's response to these obstacles?
4. How will you ensure that you are in and remain in Christ as your Head and source of all fullness?

## Conclusion

One major obstacle is various aspects of the culture and traditions of a people. What do you do when the culture and traditions of a people conflict with the word of God? By our confession and lifestyle, it must be clear that the word of God is the final authority in all we do? Is there any tradition you hold on to more than the word of God? Pray for God's grace to lift His word higher than the tradition.

## **Study 24 II: Corinthians 4:3-4**

### Introduction

Why is it that the good news that seems obviously clear to some of us, others are incapable of understanding it. Why is it so? Who is responsible for this inability to understand our message? We need to find answers to this question. When we have done so, we will be able to present our message so that they will receive salvation.

### Memory Verse

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, II Corinthians 4:3-4a (KJV)

### ➤ Study Questions

1. Who are those described as lost in our passage?
2. What is it that makes them lost?
3. Who is responsible for this?
4. What are some of the things and ways he uses to blind their minds?
5. Is it possible for the Ambassadors message to overcome this obstacle? How?

## Conclusion

The Ambassador is engaged in a battle that was fought and won on the cross at Calvary. The spiritual darkness and blindness that the enemy has used to hold many in bondage has been dispelled. The light of the good news banishes all darkness. Will you march out, holding high the gospel so that its light will pierce the dark blindness of the mind and release many captives? God and the captives are depending on you.

## **Section 3: The Ambassadors Methods**

Every institution has the methods that are employed to accomplish their tasks. This is the same when it comes to fulfilling the responsibility of an Ambassador. The one who sends you always provides the tools or equipment that is needed. Instruction is also given as to how the work is to be done.

In this section we want to learn a bit more about the provision the King has made for us to be successful in our work. We will also learn about how the work must be done. It is not any kind of method that can be used to accomplish the King's work. There are some details that cannot be overlooked.

The King who sends out as His Ambassadors has set the stage for us to be successful according to His standards. This standard is faithfulness. As we refresh our minds in this section, may we go out and be faithful in doing and living our lives His way even as we leave the results in His hands.

## **Study 25: Acts 1:8**

### Introduction

There are many methods by which most things can be done. There are however strict rules that must be adhered to when we agree to serve God as His Ambassadors. We must identify the provision He has made to get His work done. In our study today we will identify God's primary provision. Let us go ahead.

#### Memory Verse

"But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8 (GNB)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What did the early disciples need to be witnesses as called by God?
2. How would they receive this needed provision?
3. When this provision was received what would it accomplish through them?
4. Why do you think the Holy Spirit is indispensable to an Ambassadors work?
5. What can you do to experience more and more of the Holy Spirit's presence?

#### Conclusion

God's work will always have to be done God's way. That is why God has graciously given us His Spirit. Any attempt to do His work in any other power will fail. What is your relationship with the Holy Spirit like? In the week ahead of you, try and work at deepening your relationship with Him for better impact as God's Ambassador.

### **Study 26: Isaiah 61:1**

#### Introduction

In our contemporary world of today, many people who profess to be Christians attempt to "use" the Holy Spirit for all kinds of things. While some are brazen, others are bizarre. It is important for us to understand why He is here so we can cooperate with Him for good success. Let our study help us know why He is here.

#### Memory Verse

"The Spirit of the LORD God has taken control of me! The LORD has chosen and sent me to tell the oppressed the good news, to heal the brokenhearted, and to announce freedom for prisoners and captives." Isaiah 61:1 (CEV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What does the Holy Spirit do to us once God calls us as Ambassadors?
2. What three main areas of work are described in this passage?
3. Can this work be done without the participation of the Holy Spirit? Why?
4. What must we do to remain continually available for use by the Holy Spirit?

#### Conclusion

The main role of the Holy Spirit today is to help release those kingdom citizens who are bound by the enemy and usher them into heaven. This is what glorifies the Father. Anything that deviates from this is definitely not of God. Are you also using the Holy Spirit or allowing the Holy Spirit to use you. Ponder over this.

### **Study 27: Luke 10:2**

#### Introduction

When the Holy Spirit comes we receive all the divine enablement that we need to accomplish our responsibility. As the Ambassador must be in constant touch with the

King, so must we. Our Lord Jesus Christ told the disciples some of the things that need to be discussed. Our passage today will help us understand that.

#### Memory Verse

"He told them, "The harvest is large, but the workers are few. So ask the Lord who gives this harvest to send workers to harvest his crops." Luke 10:2 (GW)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What picture is painted of the extent of the work?
2. The Lord also describes a limitation, what is that?
3. Which additional responsibility is then given to us?
4. How much of our individual prayer life is an answer to this request?
5. Take a moment to pray for more workers right now.

#### Conclusion

Prayer is a very important necessity in the life of every believer. This aspect has been abused over the years. Many prayer times are devoted to "me, myself and I". Our prayer lives must change as we pray for more Ambassadors. However, remember that you are the first one whom God would want to use.

### **Study 28: Matthew 28:18-20**

#### Introduction

When Ambassadors are sent out, they are given letters of authority. These letters inform all they will meet about who is authorizing them to carry out their work. This is very important because when they issue commands they must be obeyed. What authority do we have, and from whom? Let us hear it from God Himself.

#### Memory Verse

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Matthew 28:18 (NIV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What is it that has been given to our Lord?
2. What is the coverage or extend that it covers?
3. How does this relate to our work as Ambassadors?
4. Why should this inspire confidence in us?
5. Now that you know you have the complete backing of heaven, how should you respond to the task before you?

#### Conclusion

We have the complete backing of Heaven behind us as we serve as God's Ambassadors. In the course of our service, the obstacles in the heavens and on the earth will have to show obedience because of the One who has sent us. Therefore be encouraged that the authority given you, once used well success is assured.

### **Study 29: Matthew 12:29**

#### Introduction

Many of the people, who want to come back to God, find out that there are many obstacles, barriers and limitations placed in their way. Without external help they keep struggling with little or no chance of success. Our study today will help us identify who is behind this and how we can deal with him.



### Memory Verse

"In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man's house." Mark 3:27 (NIV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. Who do you think is referred to as the strong man in our passage?
2. Why is it important to tie him up first?
3. Where does the Ambassador derive power to fight and overcome this strong man?
4. Name some of the "houses" of the strong man that are holding people captive in your area.
5. Take a moment to pray binding the specific strongman and ask for the release of captives and prisoners. Continue along this line all week long.

#### Conclusion

We have an enemy who is holding captive many people who are supposed to be in the Kingdom of God. He will not be ready to release them because he sees them as his slaves. One of the ways by which we exercise our authority is to bind (i.e. limit his ability to influence, blind and hold captive people) him. Let us continually exercise this authority in prayer until all God's people are back home.

### **Study 30: II Tim 2:15**

#### Introduction

The message of the King is what the Ambassador will have to proclaim all the time. If any other message is proclaimed we are rebelling against the King. What is the message of the King and how best can we show our loyalty to the King as well as His message? Let us find out from the Word of God Himself.

#### Memory Verse

"Do your best to win full approval in God's sight, as a worker who is not ashamed of his work, one who correctly teaches the message of God's truth." II Timothy 2:15 (GNB)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. In our text today, what is it that will guarantee us approval in God's sight?
2. What must you be doing to win that approval?
3. What here is referred to as the Ambassadors message?
4. Why is God's truth of utmost importance?
5. What steps must you take to better your life as a continuous student of God's word?

#### Conclusion

It is practically impossible to please God when we do not know what He is saying to us. As God's Ambassadors, we need to grow in our knowledge and experience of His word. It is then and only then that God will "promote us" with additional responsibility. Our effectiveness to a large extent depends on our knowledge of His word. What new plans will you make to help you win God's full approval?

### **Study 31: Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**

#### Introduction

We have studied earlier that it is God who sends people out to be His Ambassadors. We have also taken note of the message that has been entrusted to the Ambassador. It is now time to ask ourselves, how does He send them out? Is there any particular beneficial order? Let us pick an answer from today's passage.

### Memory Verse

"Later the Lord chose seventy-two other followers and sent them out two by two to every town and village where he was about to go." Luke 10:1 (CEV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What is the better option mentioned in our passage?
2. What reasons are given for this position?
3. Why do you think God chooses not to send us out alone?
4. What are some of the things we can do to support one another even as we go out with God's message?
5. Take a moment to pray that God would lead and strengthen you as you partner with at least one person as God's Ambassador.

### Conclusion

In the beginning when God created man, He intended that they would set out to work in pairs. It is the same with our work in His Kingdom. Who is partnering with you even as you pray for more workers in the harvest field? You cannot do it alone. Think and pray that God will let you meet kingdom helpers along the way.

## **Study 32: Acts 8:27-39**

### Introduction

There are many people in the church and the world who have listened, read and even discussed the scriptures with others. Notwithstanding they have very little or at best an unclear understanding of what the bible says or means. What can be done to help these people is what we want to study about today. Let us proceed.

### Memory Verse

"The Spirit said to Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay close to it." Acts 8:29 (ISV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. Why do you think the man was not able to understand what he was reading?
2. Why do you think the Holy Spirit gave Philip those instructions?
3. When he went close to the chariot what was the result?
4. In what ways can we draw close to those God is sending us to?
5. What would have happened if Philip was not sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit?
6. Pray for yourself to become more and more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

### Conclusion

When a person is far off, in order to reach that one, we need to draw close. That was the example of Jesus our Lord, when He left His glory above and came down to our level. It is possible to draw close and still retain your purity and right standing with God. Pray for God's wisdom and direction even as He leads you to draw close to someone.

## **Study 33: John 9:1-5**

### Introduction

The Ambassador knows the responsibility that has been entrusted to him or her. As human as we are our lifespan is finite. It is only in heaven that we will have bodies that last for eternity. On this earth we are limited. How then should we live our lives here? Do we have all the time? Do consider what our passage teaches us today.

### Memory Verse

"As long as it is day, we must work the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work." John 9:4 (NIV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. What was the work of God that was needed in the life of the man born blind?
2. What was to be the result of this specific work of God?
3. Is there a specific time to work the works of God?
4. What do you think Jesus meant by no one can work at night?
5. Take a moment to pray that God will endow you with a sense of urgency as night is approaching.

### Conclusion

Everything that has a beginning also has an end. It is what is accomplished in between those two ends that will count when we all stand before the King to be judged. What are you investing your life in? Are you doing your part of the work that has been entrusted to you faithfully? Remember, you will give account one day.

## **Study 34: Matthew 25:31-40**

### Introduction

There are many needs that people have to contend with on a daily basis. Some of the needs have to do with the basic necessities of life. How is the Ambassador supposed to respond? Is there even a place for this outside just proclaiming the message? Will it matter in eternity? For some answers let us get into the study.

### Memory Verse

"The King will reply, 'I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these followers of mine, you did it for me!'" Matthew 25:40 (GNB)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. In our passage today, what served as the basis of judgment or separation?
2. What are some of the practical ways in which the good news must show?
3. Why do you think the righteous were surprised?
4. What was their reward for this act of service?
5. Prayerfully think through what you can also do for one of Christ's "least important followers".

### Conclusion

The practical, meaningful demonstration of our message is a key requirement of the King who sent us. The message is holistic and as such it must be seen that way. God grants us the wisdom to know what need is to be met, when and also how. Let us pray for discernment to meet this requirement so on that day we will not be ashamed.

## **Study 35: Acts 16:22-30**

### Introduction

We learnt earlier that there is a strong man who needs to be bound before God's people in captivity will experience the release to return. There are times it may seem as though the strong man is winning the battle by inflicting seeming defeat on us. What should our response be? Can our response work for God's glory? Let us see.

### Memory Verse

"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God, while the other prisoners listened." Acts 16:25 (CEV)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. Why were Paul and Silas in prison?
2. What happened to them before they were placed in the dungeon?
3. What was their response to all that they had been through?
4. How did their response impact the other prisoners as well as the jailer?
5. What has been your response to suffering? How can it be used to draw others to Christ?

#### Conclusion

In this world we are sure of troubles but Jesus encourages us to be happy because He has already overcome the systems, structures and the god of this world. Let us do away with the grumbling and press on for there is a crown and prize waiting for us. Let us complete our work with joy in our hearts for our God is faithful.

### **Study 36: I Corinthians 3:1-7**

#### Introduction

One of the major problems associated with pride is the desire for acknowledgment and acclamation. This may ultimately lead to the destruction of the work we have done successfully to that point. How does humility reckon all the work that is done? What response will help guard our heart so we can press on and do exploits for God? Paul's admonition to the Corinthian church will help us.

### Memory Verse

"So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is important because only God makes it grow." I Corinthians 3:7 (GW)

#### ➤ Study Questions

1. How was Paul describing the believers in the church at Corinth?
2. What behavior patterns were manifesting in the church?
3. Who or what were they being encouraged to focus on?
4. What does a wrong focus do to the Ambassadors of God?
5. What has been your focus as God's Ambassador? Will God call you carnal or spiritual? An honest and faithful Ambassador or a dishonest one?

#### Conclusion

We are only unprofitable servants. God has set Jesus as the standard by which He will assess all of us. Instead of comparing among ourselves, let us strive on a moment by moment basis to be more and more like Christ. Let us never forget that without the input that comes from God, all our efforts will remain fruitless.