

October

2022

ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BIBLE FOR ALL (BFA) MATERIAL FOR SMALL GROUPS DISCUSSION

October Emphasis Month – Christian Education

Sermon Series

02, 09 October 2022	Ephesians 4:10-16, Psalm 78:1-8	God's Intent for His People
16, 23 October 2022	Malachi 2:13-16, Matthew 28:19-20	Faithfulness to God's Covenant Means Making Disciples

02, 09 October 2022

Ephesians 4:10-16, Psalm 78:1-8

God's Intent for His People

Imagine an orchestra in which only the conductor, section leaders, and soloists are playing. What would this orchestra sound like?

STUDY

Read Ephesians 4:7-16. Paul urges the Ephesians to walk in Christlikeness, concerned for each other, and united in Christ. He reminds the Ephesians that they are one in Christ (just as we are), that Christ has given grace to each one of us, and that Christ has done all that is necessary to fill the universe as its King.

1. Ephesians 4:11 tells us that Christ has given us specific gifts – what are these gifts, and what is the purpose of these gifts? (vv.11-12)
2. What is the end goal that the whole Body of Christ is to attain? (v.13)
3. What is the church not to be, and what is the church to be? (vv.14-16; cf. Jas 1:6)
4. Read Ephesians 4:11-16 again. Who has responsibility for the growth of each member of the church, leading to the growth to the church?

Dig Deeper

How do the roles of apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers serve to equip the saints for the work of ministry?

What does it mean to speak the truth in love to each other? Why is this mentioned in reference to building up the body of Christ?

What happens when only some parts of the body are doing their work (ESV: working properly)? What does it mean for a part of the Body of Christ to be doing its work (v.16)?

REFLECTION

Write down a key lesson and a key verse from this study.

How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

DISCIPLESHIP IN COMMUNITY

- **Accountability:** Take note of your group's answers to Q9. Pray for each other as you begin to do this work (or continue in doing this work). Check in with each other in the week on how this is going, as well as in the next few small group sessions.

PRAY FOR ORPC – YOUNG ADULTS

- Pray for the YAs to show grace to each other as we try new ways of doing things and as we seek to be intentionally involved in each other's lives.
- Pray for God to work in the hearts of the YAs and give us a clear vision of how we should live (individually and corporately) as we explore what discipleship and disciple-making look like in all aspects of our lives.
- Pray for God to call us to action so that we may do His work in the world and proclaim His Word to the world.

PRAY FOR ORPC – BANNER MINISTRY

- Pray that our Banner Ministry will be used by the Lord to minister His word and grace to many.

16, 23 October 2022

Malachi 2:13-16, Matthew 28:19-20

Faithfulness to God's Covenant Means Making Disciples

What do you think needs to be covered in a marriage vow? Explain.

STUDY

Malachi is the last book in the Old Testament. After Malachi, there would be 400 years of silence from God before Jesus' incarnation. Malachi is written to an Israel which appeared to be faithful to God, keeping the demands of the law on the surface. Despite the surface evidence of faith, Malachi accuses the Israelites of a dead and hypocritical faith through a series of rhetorical questions and answers.

In Malachi 1:1-2:12, Israel states that God has not loved them, and that they have not been unfaithful, but Malachi proves these statements false with examples of what they have been doing. And in Malachi 2:13-16, Malachi presents another example of their deeds which leads to God's rejection of them and their offerings.

Read Malachi 2:13-16.

1. What have the Israelites done that has resulted in God no longer looking with favour on their offerings or accepting them with pleasure? (v.14)

2. Consider your answer to Q1. Why is this offensive to God? Consider also the relationship of the marriage covenant to the covenant that God made with Israel.

3. What are God's people to be doing instead? (vv.15-16)

Dig Deeper

Mal 2:16 compares the act of divorce with violence. Why do you think this analogy is used? Do you think this analogy is appropriate? Why or why not?

How is the exhortation to "be on your guard" related to the command to "not be unfaithful"?

Matthew 28:18-20 is better known as the Great Commission. Jesus has been crucified, has died, been buried, and on the third day he rose again. The women looking for Jesus at the tomb were told by the angel to tell the disciples the news and where to meet Jesus, which was also confirmed by Jesus' own appearance to them (vv.9-10). And when Jesus met them, he told them that all authority on heaven and on earth has been given to him, which is the basis of his following command.

Read Matthew 28:19-20.

4. The Great Commission can be summarised into one command. What is this command (v.19), and what does it involve (vv.19-20)?

5. The command is given to the eleven disciples at Galilee. Does it apply only to them? Why or why not? (See v.20.)

6. Jesus is God, with all the authority of God. His command is coherent with God's commands throughout the whole Bible. What do Ps 78:1-8, Eph 4:10-16, and Mal 2:13-16 contribute to your understanding of Matt 28:19-20?
 - Ps 78:1-8

 - Eph 4:10-16

 - Mal 2:13-16

Dig Deeper

What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus, according to Matt 28:19-20? Are all believers meant to be disciples, or only some?

Why is it important for us to know that Jesus is with us always, to the very end of the age?

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

7. In the Old Testament, God's covenant with Israel was often compared to a marriage covenant. In the New Testament, Jesus is often referred to as the Bridegroom, with the church as His bride. Since we are the Bride of Christ, what do the texts we have studied today tell us about our marriage covenant with Christ?

8. What does faithfulness to God's covenant with us look like for us now? Consider what we have studied throughout October.

APPLICATION

9. Are we being faithful to God's covenant with us? In what ways have we been faithful, and in what other ways have we fallen behind?

10. Think about the passage we have just studied. In what way(s) have your thinking and beliefs been renewed? What does God want you to do with what you have learnt?

REFLECTION

Write down a key lesson and a key verse from this study.

How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

DISCIPLESHIP IN COMMUNITY

- **Discuss and Commit:** As a group, talk to each other about one way in which your group can live out faithfulness in discipleship and in discipling others. Make a plan to do it together and keep each other accountable for it.

PRAY FOR ORPC – SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

- Pray that the Sunday Biblical Theology Classes and the Saturday Equipping Courses will be used by the Lord to equip our leaders and members to walk with one another in our discipleship journey as a faith community.

PRAY FOR ORPC – MARRIAGE AND PARENTING MINISTRY

- Pray that the Marriage and Parenting Ministry will be used by the Lord to build strong Christ-centred marriages and homes.
- Pray that God will use the marriage classes and mentors to teach, guide and support our young couples in their journey.
- Pray that our parenting ministry will support and equip our parents to disciple our children in the love and fear of the Lord.