

Alpine Bible Church Men's Retreat

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Session One: **Finding your Story in God's Story.** *The Need of Biblical Discernment*

Discussion Questions: 1) Explain how Lucifer's lie in the Garden of Eden was an attack on God Himself by means of an attack on the Word of God. What doctrinal truths expose the content of the serpent's lie? (HINT: Note the truth that God and His infallible Word are one.)

2) How did the serpent disguise his lie as a series of benefits; what was he claiming to offer our first parents? What does his lie tell us about all false philosophies and all false religions? What do they have in common with Lucifer's lie?

3) God is not limited in power; his wisdom and might are infinite. So, why can't He reclaim His fallen image in mankind by an executive order or declaration? Why does man's redemption require the bloody death of His only begotten Son? (HINT: See Romans 3:24-26).

4) Explain how the serpent's lie in Eden is attached to every person born into the world, and that the lie is only removed by the new birth and faith in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Session Two: **Christ's Love comes first as Conviction of Sin.** *The priority of repentance*

Discussion Questions: 1) Explain how the gospel of Christ so radically differs from our natural religious instincts.

2) What takes place in a man's conscience when the Holy Spirit convicts that person of sin? (HINT: Will that man say the same thing about his sin as God does? That it is deserving of hell?)

3) Why do you think that Christ, the embodiment of divine love, spoke so frequently about the fear of God, about judgment, about the danger of impenitence, and the reality of eternal punishment? How were these discourses connected with His call to repent?

4) Discuss why a faulty diagnosis of the seriousness of man's sin leads to a false 'religious cure'.

5) The 'man in the street' views the keeping the Ten Commandments as a way of gaining favor with God and earning heaven. Explain how Paul corrects this view in Romans chapter 3 verses 19-20. (HINT: Rather than a ladder to heaven, the Ten Commandments are a mirror to show us the seriousness of our sin, and the need of the Savior.)

6) Describe some of the ways the Lord Jesus Christ is perfectly equipped to be the Savior of sinners. (HINT: See Hebrews chapters 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 etc.)

Session Three: **Living by the Word of His Grace.** *Guarding against 'spiritual identity theft'*

- Discussion Questions:** 1) Why is our spiritual identity an area of intense spiritual warfare? (HINT: Our spiritual identity is inseparable from the source of our standing with God; is our standing before God from our works, or from the work of Christ alone?)
- 2) What does it mean to preach the gospel to yourself? How is that accomplished? What are some of the great benefits of doing so?
- 3) Explain what it means that Christ's sacrifice on Calvary's cross was a verdict. It was a verdict about what? Who pronounced the verdict? What is the result of the verdict for believing sinners? (HINT: See Colossians 2:8-15.)
- 4) Define 'Kingdom hope'. Why does 'Kingdom hope' through Christ alone exert such a purifying force on the believer's life? (HINT: See 1 John 3:1-3; 2 Peter 3:10-18.)
- 5) How exactly does the believer daily appropriate the victory that Christ has won over sin? (HINT: See Romans 6:11-13; Colossians 3:5-11.)
- 6) Is heaven promised only to 'overcomers'? What is an overcomer? How, and what does he overcome? (HINT: See Galatians 5:24; 1 John 5:4-5; Revelation 21:7-8.)

Session Four: **A Biblical Strategy for overcoming Sexual Lust.** *Without sanctification, no one will see the Lord*

- Discussion Questions:** 1) Look at James 1:14-15. Describe the connection between enticement, and entertaining sexual fantasies about another person. What steps may a Christian man take in order to recognize, and then put to death (mortify) the enticement stage of temptation?
- 2) The flesh opposes the Holy Spirit's role in our lives (Gal 5:17). The flesh seeks to usurp the Spirit's role as 'comforter' by proposing the desirability of sexual lust. By contrast, when we yield to the Spirit in obedience, He assists us in moving our mind to treasure the 'things above' (Col 3:1-3ff.). Explain what it means to 'walk by the Spirit' (Gal 5:16-18).
- 3) Describe why cultivating satisfaction in God by means of the Spirit's enablement, guards (garrisons) our heart from the lustful invitations of the flesh. (HINT: See Colossians 3:1-3.)
- 4) The cross of Christ has severed believers from the world, and made them true worshippers (Gal 6:14). The cross applied to the believing sinner has slain (judged) the dominion of the 'old man'. Thus, the believer is 'dead to sin' and 'alive to God' (Rom 6:11-13). Why is it so important to our victory over sin to know the present value of the cross? Romans 6:11 commands us to *reckon* ourselves dead to sin. Why is *reckon* a much stronger word than know or assume? What does this *reckoning* look like in our daily fight against sin?

Session Five: 'Man up' declaring Holy War on our Passivity. *The masculine mandate: salvation is unto service*

Discussion Questions: 1) What does it mean that ministry involves risk? Describe the 'risk factor' and why it involves courage to step out, and step up in ministry. What is the connection between personal holiness and boldness?

2) Comment on this statement: 'spiritual leadership is spiritual influence, it is not bossing people around, but assuming responsibility on behalf of others'. (HINT: Note how Christ responded to the ambitions of James and John; see Mark 10:43-45.)

3) Explain what it means from Romans 12:3 that with the giving of a spiritual gift, God also gives the measure of faith needed to exercise that gift. Why does using one's gift involve faith? How does the knowledge of this promise of 'a measure of faith' granted provide a greater incentive to 'risk ministry'?

4) List some of the ways that a believing man's giftedness can be assessed.

5) Describe the 'Toe in the Jordan' principle. How does this principle bring honor and glory to God, and courage to us?

6) Do you think of your giftedness to bless others in the body of Christ as a sacred trust and stewardship? (HINT: See 1 Peter 4:10-11). What are some of the ways you can better equip yourself for ministry? Remember, service gifts are as important as verbal gifts.

7) Living for the approval of men and the approval of God are mutually exclusive. Comment on the following verses: John 5:44; 12:43; 2 Corinthians 5:9.

8) Explain how your commitment, and faithfulness in blessing others in the body of Christ is vital to your story. What does it mean that your story will be read publicly at the Judgment seat of Christ? (HINT: See 1 Corinthians 3:5-15.) How should we regularly be exhorting and admonishing one another in view of these truths? (HINT: See Hebrews 3:13; 10:23-25.)