

adult

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Sunday School That Clicks

Lesson 12 / November 22, 2009

Life and Godliness

for use as

STEP 1 

Lesson 12

Focus:

God has empowered us
to live for Him.

Lesson 12

Bible Basis:

2 Peter 1:3-15

Students will think about what it means to live a godly life like Peter describes.

OPENING STORY The Person in Need

Begin the class discussing this idea:

Think about a time when you encountered a person or group in need. It could be a homeless person seeking a warm meal, a coworker who needed lunch money for the day, a shelter that needed coats for the winter, or a family you know having trouble making ends meet. What was your reaction to that need? Did you help right away? Did you turn a blind eye? If you chose to help, how did it make you feel? If you chose to ignore the problem, how did you feel afterwards? Did it bother you for a long time?

Helping others is one of the characteristics of a Christian that is most often noticed by other people. We can help many people with our actions, or we can make a difference for just one person, as the following story points out.

OPENING STORY [read it aloud to your class, or make copies and pass it around]:

ONLINE FUNDRAISING DRIVE SAVES SENIOR'S YEAR

A North Carolina student facing a one-day deadline to make a \$5,100 tuition payment or leave school received the full amount in less than a day—thanks to an online campaign led by a campus minister.

Demorris Davis, 22, is in his senior year at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina, thanks largely to the intervention of Jason Speier, who until recently oversaw THRIVE, a campus ministry for nearby Webster Baptist Church.

Speier met Davis two years ago through outreach activities and maintained a friendship with the Charlotte native.

Lesson 12
Memory Verse

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

—2 Peter 1:3

However, it wasn't until the beginning of this school year that the minister learned his friend owed the university \$5,100 due to a mix-up involving his financial aid information. Davis had to pay the money by the following day or head home.

"Nobody knew," Speier said. "He didn't tell anybody."

Immediately, the minister turned to the elaborate online network that he uses to support and disseminate information concerning his ministry. He made a passionate appeal for help through Facebook and his own blog. He urged friends to make donations either through his PayPal account or through direct payments to the school's registrar's office on Davis's behalf. Donors were asked to post their giving amounts on the THRIVE Facebook page.

Speier described his desire to help in spiritual terms. "Demorris had a debt that he couldn't pay, so we had to help," said Speier. "We had a debt that we couldn't pay, so Jesus had to pay it."

Davis had gone to catch a Greyhound bus that evening for a return trip home for good when he got a call from Speier urging him to come back to college because help was on the way. That night, in a move that reinforced Speier's belief in Davis's character, the student gave a pair of his shoes to a homeless man at the bus stop.

Speier admitted that he didn't think the whole amount could be raised in such a short period of time, but help came in some unexpected forms.

"I thought we would have larger donors but we got a lot of small donations," said Speier, who said most of the individual gifts were no higher than \$200.

By 3 p.m. on deadline day, Davis was square with WCU, thanks to faith and the power of online communication. The recipient thanked his benefactors in a video posted on the THRIVE page.

"Every person has influence on a certain amount of people," said Speier. "We just wanted to use the influence to do something good."

[Now form small groups and have your class discuss the following questions.]

- Why do you think this fund-raiser was so successful?
- How do you feel when you have the opportunity to give to someone and you don't give to that person?

- ▶ Do you think we develop a giving spirit after someone has been generous to us? Why?
- ▶ Why do you think one person can inspire so many others to get involved in a single cause?

(When you are finished with the questions, go on to Step 2 in your *Adult Teacher's Guide*, where you read the Scripture and begin to discuss it.)

News Source:

AOL News, "Late Fundraiser Keeps Student in School," by Maurice Boyer:

[<http://news.aol.com/philanthropy/article/facebook-fundraiser-saves-college/675645>]

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Focus:

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Lesson 12
Bible Basis:

2 Peter 1:3-15





HE HAS PROVIDED EVERYTHING

God gives us the power to grow spiritually. He gives us the resources we need and knowledge through His Word about how to live a holy life. Peter said that a life of faith leads to more goodness, knowledge, self-control, godliness, and love for others. These actions do not come automatically; they require hard work and an openness to God's leading. It is our responsibility to seek His learning and growth. As Warren Wiersbe reminds us in his commentary on 2 Peter, "The readers of this letter knew the truth and were even 'established' (2 Pet. 1:12) in it, but that was no guarantee they would always remember the truth and apply it."

If we say that we are followers of Jesus, we must live like the person we are following. With the help and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we have to constantly apply what we know to be the truth. When we encounter those in need of help, we have to do what we can to help them, but we must also live the life of goodness, knowledge, self-control, godliness, and love modeled by our Savior.

[Activity]

Discuss the following as a class or in the small groups you had in Step 1:

-  Good deeds are not the way to salvation, but does that mean they are unimportant to God? Explain your answer.
-  Which of the Christian qualities that Peter mentioned do you need more of in your life?
-  What is our ultimate reward for maturing in our faith (see 2 Pet. 1:10)? Do we also see rewards for our faith here in this life?
-  Think about people you know who are struggling in some way (maybe they have financial trouble, a physical handicap, or an illness). Try to bless them anonymously this week. You could send them a money order with no return address or leave a bag of groceries at their door. Pray that they will then be inspired to bless someone else as a result of how you made them feel.

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Memory Verse

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

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End the class with prayer. Thank God for His wonderful gift of salvation and for His patience with us as we try to live out the truth He has called us to follow.

(David C. Cook is not affiliated with and does not endorse any website listed on these pages.)