

Riverview Baptist Church  
Sunday School Teaching Plan  
June 29, 2014  
“Be; Do; Live.”

1. Preparation: Ten Minutes, 9:35-9:45
2. Prayer: Ten Minutes 9:45-9:55
3. Purpose Statement: Five Minutes, 9:55-10:00
4. Paperwork: Attendance, Contacts, Assignment of ministry/outreach follow-up. Five minutes, 10:00-10:05
5. Presentation: Thirty-five Minutes, 10:05-10:40  
Engage—Read---Explain---Apply
6. Prayer: Five Minutes, 10:40-10:45

### Memory Verse

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.” Hebrews 12:28, NIV

### The Big Idea:

Sermon Scripture: Hebrews 12:14-17, 28  
Sermon Title: Receiving God’s Unshakable Kingdom: Part 2 - Worship

Sunday School Scripture: Hebrews 12:14-17, 28  
Sunday School Title: “Be; Do; Live”  
Big Idea: To enjoy God’s unshakable kingdom, we must pursue holiness, peace, and grace, flee sexual immorality, and walk closely with our unshakable God.

As we continue our study in Hebrews, this week is the second in a five part series called *God’s Unshakable Kingdom*. This title comes from Hebrews 12:28, which is our memory verse again this week. Last week, we discussed the importance of listening to God’s voice.

Did anyone sense God speaking to you this week? In the past, how has God spoken to you personally? When God does speak to you, how do you recognize His voice?

This week, we will discuss what we must be and do in order to live in an intimate, unshakable relationship with God.

### ***READ Hebrews 12:14-17 & 28***

### **INTRODUCTION**

Remember that the original letter written to the Hebrews was meant to teach and encourage a group of Jewish believers. The audience was struggling in their faith because of persecution and trials. In chapter 12, the author sparks renewed hope in them by pointing to God’s unshakable kingdom, which they are in the process of receiving. Not only will they experience this kingdom in Heaven and throughout eternity, but they are in fact receiving it now – today – in the present. In verse 28, the author writes, “since we **are receiving** a kingdom that cannot be shaken.” God’s kingdom started with Jesus and will continue into eternity. Believers have access to that kingdom right now. And that kingdom cannot be damaged or destroyed. Despite persecution and difficulties, God’s kingdom will not be shaken – now and forevermore. BUT... the enjoy this unshakable kingdom, believers must keep several things in mind. First, we learned last week that we must listen and respond to God’s voice. We cannot enjoy God’s unshakable kingdom if we don’t listen and obey the King. This week, we’ll see that the best way to enjoy living in God’s unshakable kingdom is to walk closely with the king.

Hebrews 12:14-17 give several real-life, pedal-meets-the metal instructions. They can be understood and studied under 3 topics: What the Christian should BE, what the Christian should DO, and how the Christian should LIVE in God’s unshakable kingdom.

## 1. BE

### A. HOLY

Hebrews 12:14 tells us to “be holy; for without holiness no one will see the Lord.” To be holy means to be set apart for the things of God; to be specially selected and used for God’s purposes. It’s neat to think that God has set us apart with plans to use us in specific ways. Picture a toothbrush. Now, it’s in no way a holy object, but it does perform a specific and necessary task. If you’re like me, you set your toothbrush aside in one specific location every day. And that location will keep the toothbrush as clean as possible and prevent it from being contaminated. Now imagine that someone else chose not to treat your toothbrush with the respect it deserves. Even though you’ve set apart your toothbrush to use exclusively for brushing your teeth, this other person comes along and uses it to clean dirt and grime out of his shoes. And then he uses it to clean and detail his truck. And then he uses it to clean the toilet. After the toothbrush has been used for all those other tasks, would you want to continue using it to brush your teeth? The original task of the toothbrush, though simple and common, is now compromised because of contamination. The toothbrush is no longer set apart. Instead of being saved to only perform that one specific task of tooth brushing, it was used for many other common tasks. And the result is contamination and a loss of purpose.

In a strangely similar way, we are like the toothbrush. God has called us out of our sin, given us a salvation through Christ, and set us apart to live a new life through His grace. God has special plans to use us in specific ways for His glory. In order to stay focused, to avoid sin, and to maintain our usefulness and purpose, we must be holy. We must continue to live “set apart” lives for God. We cannot be involved in the common tasks and purposes of this world and simultaneously maintain our holiness. Being like this world and becoming involved in its affairs will contaminate us, affect our purity, and influence our effectiveness for God. “*Be holy! Be set apart! Be different!*” the author of Hebrews encourages his readers. Choose to live in God’s unshakable kingdom instead of in the temporary world. Choose to be about God’s business instead of pursuing the dead ends of this world. Be holy and set-apart, not common and contaminated.

### B. MINDFUL OF GRACE

And while we’re striving to live holy lives, set apart for God, we need to rely on God’s grace. It’s interesting that grace and holiness are mentioned together here because they are so different. In fact, they could almost be considered opposites. If someone or something is holy, no grace is needed because no sin is present. But living a sinless life is impossible for us. And that’s where grace comes in. We are called to live holy lives for God. But we are also called to rely on God’s grace for the times when we stumble or fall short. Not only are we to rely on God’s grace, but we are also to offer that grace to others. Striving for holiness while relying on grace keeps us humble and thankful. We realize that holiness is not something that comes easily for us, and we are grateful that God’s grace gives us the opportunity and strength to live as we should. Without grace in the equation, we can become judgmental of others and prideful within ourselves. Grace reminds us that our status as holy saints, set apart to receive God’s love and be used for God’s work, is only a gift. It’s not something we could have earned or achieved for ourselves. Being mindful of God’s grace as we strive for holiness is essential because it keeps our hearts humble and thankful, which makes us more teachable and useful for God.

*How is your attitude different toward something you recognize as an unwarranted gift vs. something you view as deserved or earned? What lies at the root of an attitude of entitlement? How can focusing on God’s grace make us more humble and thankful in our daily lives?*

## 2. DO:

### A. PURSUE PEACE

In order to enjoy living in God’s unshakable kingdom, we are to do everything within our power to live in peace with those around us. Admittedly, this sometimes takes work. We don’t always work and play well with others. But peace – the presence of wholeness and forgiveness and grace – is a trademark of the Christian life. Jesus said the world would be able to recognize his disciples by their love for one another. As Christians, the watching world should see that we are different because we pursue peace in our relationships. This means that we may not always be able to take the easy way out of a difficult conversation or a

troublesome friendship. We may have to ask for or offer forgiveness at uncomfortable times. Offenses might have to be overlooked; second (or third or fourth) chances given; necks stuck out on the line. It's not easy to live in peace with those around us, but the Bible commands it.

***READ Mark 9:50, Romans 12:18-21, Romans 14:19, and 2 Corinthians 13:11***

*What are some obstacles to peace in our relationships with others? What are the benefits of peace?*

Throughout the New Testament, believers are called to live in peace with one another. Peace isn't commanded because it's easy; it's commanded because it reflects God's love for us to others. God sent Jesus to pay the penalty for our sins and offer us forgiveness for all the sins we've ever committed in the past, present, and future. He did this so that we might have peace with Him – an intimate relationship of wholeness, love, trust, and grace. And God desires for us to have this kind of peace in our earthly relationships, too, just to give the watching world a glimpse of our loving, forgiving Father.

## **B. FLEE SEXUAL IMMORALITY**

Hebrews 12:16 says, “see to it that no one is sexually immoral.” 1 Corinthians 6:18 says “flee from sexual immorality.” Sexual sin is something we have to carefully guard against. In fact, there are times when we have to actually run from it. Whether it's dwelling on lustful thoughts, viewing images that tempt, or keeping company that might seduce, sexual sin starts small and spreads rapidly, trapping and destroying us. If we are to be part of God's unshakable kingdom, we must pursue purity and flee sexual immorality. When I think of fleeing sexual immorality, I think of Joseph in Potiphar's household.

***READ Genesis 39:1-12***

How did Joseph respond to the temptation of sexual sin? First, his priority was to please God, not his flesh. In verse 9, Joseph says, “How could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” Joseph's main concern was honoring God. Second, Joseph avoided the temptation as much as possible. Verse 10 says Joseph refused to go to bed with Potiphar's wife, “or even be with her.” Joseph knew that simply being in her presence brought temptation, so he avoided being near her at all. Third, when the opportunity for sexual sin presented itself, Joseph fled. Literally. Verse 12 says Joseph “ran out of the house.” He didn't stick around to flirt with danger or try to resist temptation on his own. Instead, he fled from sexual immorality. Like Joseph, we need to acknowledge the danger of temptation and the seriousness of sexual sin. We need to do everything within our power to flee from it.

*What preventative measures can we take to avoid sexual temptation in the first place? When we do encounter temptation, how can we respond?*

## **3. LIVE**

### **A. IN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

The most sure-fire way to enjoy living in God's unshakable kingdom is to walk closely with God in an intimate relationship. Unfortunately, too many of us give our time, attention, and energy to other things and only offer God our left-overs. We let other people, activities, and things take priority over our relationship with God. And this tendency isn't something new. The struggle to keep God first goes all the way back to the Old Testament times. Hebrews 12:16-17 speak of Esau, who was considered godless because he sold his inheritance to his brother in exchange for a hot meal. At first glance, Esau's poor choices may not seem to have much to do with us. But a closer look will show us that Esau had trouble with priorities, much like we do. In a moment of weakness and hunger, Esau was willing to trade his inheritance to his brother in exchange for dinner. Esau cheapened and even despised his inheritance by trading it for something else worth much less. He willingly exchanged his inheritance (his future security and wealth) for dinner (something small and temporary). Are we guilty of doing the same thing? Do we focus on temporary, earthly things instead of investing ourselves in things of eternal significance? Does our personal relationship with God suffer at the expense of all the other people and activities we pursue?

*What are some things we trade or substitute for a personal relationship with God?*

It's great to know we live in God's unshakable kingdom. But it's even better to know we live there with an unshakable God who loves us and wants to be in an intimate relationship with Him. When we truly pursue Him, we will find that any sacrifice made or loss suffered for our unshakable God and His unshakable kingdom is more than worth the cost.

**CLOSING:** To enjoy God's unshakable kingdom, we must pursue holiness, peace, and grace, flee sexual immorality, and walk closely with our unshakable God.

### **APPLY IT!**

Are you pursuing holiness? Are you living a "set apart" life for God?

How can you cultivate peace in your relationships with friends and family?

What safe-guards do you need to establish to help you avoid sexual sin?

Is there anything in your life that you need to set aside or trade in to focus more on your personal relationship with God?

### **STUDY NOTES:**

(These are for your own study. This is NOT the lesson. Commentary written by David Guzik and available online: [http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/guzik\\_david/](http://www.blueletterbible.org/commentaries/guzik_david/))

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Get right with both men (**pursue peace with all men**) and with God (**and holiness**). Discouragement makes us sloppy and unconcerned with our personal relationships.

Regarding holiness, we are told **without which no one will see the Lord**. A lack of holiness is a critical obstacle to a close relationship with God.

**Lest anyone fall short of the grace of God:** We must get right with God's grace. So look diligently to keep both yourself and others from a return to legalism in either outward form or inward attitude that falls short of God's grace, **lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble**.

"A *bitter root* is a root that bears bitter fruit ... So it is possible for the seed of bitterness to be sown in a community and, though nothing is immediately apparent, in due time the inevitable fruit appears." (Morris)

Many are corrupted because of bitterness towards someone they feel has wronged them, and they hold on to the bitterness with amazing stubbornness! What they must do is remember the grace of God extended to them, and start extending that grace towards others - loving the undeserving.

A legalistic attitude will always produce a bitterness that defiles many; its emphasis on what we should do for God before what He has done for us in Jesus puts us (and those around us) in a terrible performance trap.

**Lest there be any fornicator or profane person:** Get right with your moral conduct; remember that there are blessings reserved only for the *pure in heart: they shall see God* (Matthew 5:8).

**Like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright:** Many Christians today sell a birthright of intimacy with God as cheaply as Esau sold his birthright (Genesis 25:29-34 and 27:30-40).

**Though he sought it diligently with tears:** Esau's birthright wasn't restored simply because he wished it back. It could never be regained because he despised it.