



The Book of Luke 2015 Q2 Lesson 9

Jesus the Master Teacher

Any thoughts on why Jesus took on this role of “master teacher” during his earthly ministry? Is this ownership of this title limited only to his 30 or so years on this earth...or has always been and will forever be our master teacher?

- Unfallen beings/Lucifer?
- Creation?
- Adam and Even in the Garden of Eden?
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob...the Israelites?

We just finished an amazing study of Tim’s first book, CIBTS, at Hamilton Community Church...Russell really did a great job...and I left there marveling even more at how fearfully and wonderfully we are made – particularly our minds and our brains. And I left there even more firmly convinced that an integral part of our healing, our character development, our being set right...is the healing of our minds and setting those back in harmony with how they were originally designed. If the new covenant experience is to have the law of love written on our hearts and minds, I know at least for me, my mind is going to have to be healed in order for that to happen! The very name of this class and this ministry speaks to the importance and value that comes from reasoning out and wrestling through these issues with a teachable spirit. One of the founders of our church agrees:

“The agency of the Spirit of God does not remove from us the necessity of exercising our faculties and talents, but teaches us how to use every power to the glory of God. The human faculties when under the special direction of the grace of God, are capable of being used to the best purpose on earth, and will be exercised in the future immortal life. Ignorance will not increase the humility or spirituality of any professed follower of Christ. The truths of the divine word can be best appreciated by an intellectual Christian. Christ can be best glorified by those who serve him intelligently. The great object of education is to enable us to use the powers which God has given us in such a manner as will best represent the religion of the Bible and promote the glory of God. We are indebted to Him who gave us existence for all the talents which have been intrusted to us; and it is a duty we owe to our Creator to cultivate and improve upon the talents he has committed to our trust. Education will discipline the mind, develop its powers, and understandingly direct them, that we may be useful in advancing the glory of God.” – {CE 203.2}

So in Saturday’s lesson, the quarterly describes the desperate conditions on the earth at the time Christ came over 2000 years ago. Did you read this?

“Humanity seemed to be fast reaching its lowest point. The very foundations of society were undermined. Life had become false and artificial. Disgusted with fable and falsehood, seeking to drown thought, men turned to infidelity and materialism. Leaving eternity out of their reckoning, they lived for the present.”



I mean, is this a description of BC Rome...or yesterday's headlines? It says that understanding this background will help us better understand why Jesus taught the things he did...thoughts? Perhaps Christ taught the things he did...because we have gotten so out of harmony with who and how he made us to be. And would he teach different things if He came back today?

Much of the quarterly's Saturday lesson content came from Chapter 8 in the book of Education – entitled The Teacher Sent From God...but it is the rest of that chapter I think is so insightful and so profound...it's kind of long, but I want to read it to you, if you don't mind. I hope I can make it through the whole quote because it really speaks to my soul. I believe it also speaks so powerfully to what we teach and to the concepts that inspired this ministry...and it goes a long way toward explaining Christ as the Master Teacher.

“There was but one hope for the human race—that into this mass of discordant and corrupting elements might be introduced a new leaven; that there might be brought to humankind the power of a new life; that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world. Christ came to restore this knowledge. He came to set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness. Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity. He showed that the law of God is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the happiness of everyone, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society. God's law is given as a hedge, a shield. Whoever accepts its principles is preserved from evil. Fidelity to God involves fidelity to humans. Thus the law guards the rights, the individuality, of every human being. It ensures their well-being, both for this world and for the world to come. To the obedient it is the pledge of eternal life, for it expresses the principles that endure forever. Christ came to demonstrate the value of the divine principles by revealing their power for the **regeneration of humanity**. With the people of that age the value of all things was determined by outward show. As religion declined in power, it increased in pomp. The educators of the time sought to command respect by display and ostentation. To all this, the life of Jesus presented a marked contrast. His life demonstrated the worthlessness of those things that most people regarded as life's great essentials. His education was gained directly from the Heaven-appointed sources—from useful work, from the study of the Scriptures and of nature, and from the experiences of life. [Hopefully those sound really familiar to you!] “The Child grew, and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.” Luke 2:40. Thus prepared, Jesus went forth to His mission, exerting upon men, women, and children an influence to bless, a power to transform, such as the world had never witnessed. **Anyone who seeks to transform humanity must understand humanity**. Only through sympathy, faith, and love can people be reached and uplifted. **Here Christ stands revealed as the Master Teacher**. He alone has perfect understanding of the human soul. Christ alone had experience in all the sorrows and temptations that befall human beings. Never was another so fiercely beset by temptation. Never another bore so heavy a burden of the world's sin and pain. Never was there another whose sympathies were so broad or so tender. **A sharer in all the experiences of humanity, He could feel not only for, but with, every burdened and tempted and struggling one...**[what does it mean to you to know the God of the universe feels for you and



with you when you are burdened and tempted and struggling?] What He taught, He lived. “I have given you an example,” He said to His disciples, “that you should do as I have done to you.” “I have kept My Father’s commandments.” John 13:15; 15:10. Thus, in His life, Christ’s words had perfect illustration and support. And more than this; what He taught, He was. His words were the expression not only of His own life experience but of His own character.” – {TEd 49.3}

Have you ever had that kind of amazing teacher? The one who could motivate you...the one who could explain inexplicable concepts in a way you could understand...the one who gave you those light bulb a-ha moments. If, in our degenerated state, we can still produce incredible teachers like that...can you even imagine what kind of teacher Christ was? Have you ever registered for a class...headed off to the campus bookshop...only to discover that your professor **wrote** – literally authored the textbook?? A whole different level of learning takes place in those classes...I’m wondering if this was the disciples experience – learning from the author of the law of love...from the designer and creator of humanity!

SUNDAY

The Authority of Jesus

This week’s memory text from Luke 4:32 says, “And they were **astonished** at His teaching, for His word was with authority.” The Greek word translated as “astonished” in this text literally means “blown away”...those who were listening to or seeing Jesus act with authority were “blown away” and “dumbfounded”...such was the power of his authority.

Now Luke was acquainted with the role of authority – all types of authority – he was a physician, he was a scholar, he traveled with Paul and witnessed his ecclesiastical authority. He had rubbed shoulders with all kinds of authority...at all levels of authority, but he repeatedly emphasized in his writings that Jesus and his authority were unmatched. Why?

Jesus was born in the piddly...some some might say little hick town...of Nazareth, he grew up in a humble carpenter’s home, he was not rich, we do not have Biblical evidence that he went to university or seminary, he held no position of power. So, what is it that people were seeing? Where did he get this authority from to confront virtually everyone – Roman rulers, Jewish scholars, rabbis, secular & religious leaders, and ordinary folks? Why were these folks all so blown away? Why was His authority so noticeable and so in contrast to what folks were accustomed to?

The scribes and religious leaders spoke **BY** authority – quoting those who preceded them – but Jesus spoke **WITH** authority. With authority as the Creator, with the authority of the Father who sent Him, with the authority of His perfect life, Jesus spoke and acted so that even his enemies had to admit that “no man ever spoke like this Man!” Not just in words and works, but in life as well, Jesus spoke with absolute certainty, without contradiction or confusion. Christ’s authority derives from the fact that He was the very embodiment of truth. From the previous Education quote, “What He taught, He was...Not only did He teach the truth, but **He was truth**. It was this that gave His teaching, power.”



Sunday's lesson gives these Biblical examples from Luke of Christ's authority being recognized. Let's have some folks look up Luke 4:31-37, Luke 5:24-26, and Luke 8:22-25.

- Luke 4:31-37 – teaching people in Capernaum on Sabbath. “They were surprised and impressed – His teaching was so forthright, so confident, so authoritative, not the quibbling and quoting they were used to.” Not to mention that His voice spoke demons into submission...He was “the talk of the town.”
- Luke 8:22-25 is the familiar story of the disciples in the boat that night during the awful storm, when Christ commanded “Peace be still”...and the awestruck disciples said “Who is He anyway, that even the winds and the waves obey Him?”
- Luke 5:24-26 – familiar story of the paralyzed man who was lowered down through the room by his friends. “Which is simpler to say, ‘I forgive your sins’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? Just so it’s clear that I’m the Son of Man and am authorized to do either, or both, ‘Get up. Take your bed and go walk.’”

“Christ spoke with authority. Every truth essential for the people to know He proclaimed with the unfaltering assurance of certain knowledge. He uttered nothing fanciful or sentimental. He presented no sophistries, no human opinions. No idle tales, no false theories clothed in beautiful language, came from His lips. The statements that He made were truths established by personal knowledge. He foresaw the delusive doctrines that would fill the world, but He did not unfold them. In His teachings He dwelt upon the unchangeable principles of God’s word. He magnified the simple, practical truths that the common people could understand and bring into the daily experience. Christ might have opened to men the deepest truths of science. He might have unlocked mysteries that have required centuries of toil and study to penetrate. He might have made suggestions in scientific lines that would have afforded food for thought and stimulus for invention to the close of time. But He did not do this. He said nothing to gratify curiosity or to satisfy man’s ambitions by opening doors to worldly greatness. In all His teaching, Christ brought the minds of men in contact with the Infinite Mind. He did not direct the people to study men’s theories about God, His word, or His works. He taught them to behold God as manifested in His works, in His word, and by His providences.” – {8T 201.3}

Does doing things in God’s name...saying, “God led me to this” automatically give us or our actions authority? How do we know?

- Integrative-evidence based approach
- Prayer for wisdom, discernment, investigation, practice
- Investigation of Doctrine --

“There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation. We are living in perilous times, and it does not become us to accept everything claimed to be truth without examining it thoroughly; neither can we afford to reject anything that bears the fruits of the Spirit of God; but we should be teachable, meek and lowly of heart. There



are those who oppose everything that is not in accordance with their own ideas, and by so doing they endanger their eternal interest as verily as did the Jewish nation in their rejection of Christ. The Lord designs that our opinions shall be put to the test, that we may see the necessity of closely examining the living oracles to see whether or not we are in the faith. Many who claim to believe the truth have settled down at their ease, saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."—The Review and Herald, December 20, 1892. – {CW 36.1}

MONDAY

Christ's Greatest Sermon

The quarterly states that Christ's Sermon on the Mount, including the golden rule, is often hailed in literature as "the essence of Christianity." Has anyone ever heard referred to like that? Oh, that it were true! It is also referred to as the "ordination charge to the 12", since it appears to take place chronologically immediately after the 12 disciples were chosen. Luke's account is found in Luke 6:20-49...and the first part of this sermon is commonly referred to as "the Beatitudes". This story is only recounted in two of the gospels, and it seems that Luke (or Luke's translators) kept his interpretation much more literal and temporal. So let's take a look at some of the backwards upside-down math at work in God's kingdom. What traits are declared as blessed?

- Poor/poverty (poor in spirit)
- Hungry (hunger and thirst for righteousness)
- Weeping/mourning
- Hated/excluded/insulted/rejected/persecuted for righteousness sake

And then the "woe untos":

- Rich/self-satisfied
- Well-fed
- Laugh/everything is fun and games
- Popular/flattered/concerned with what others think

Can you imagine how strange and crazy and illogical and backwards these concepts must have sounded to the new disciples? His Kingdom is nothing like worldly kingdoms, his government operates nothing like earthly governments, and I would submit that his natural design laws are nothing like human imposed laws. Well, then it probably got even weirder in verses 27-38. The Message reads like this:

"To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously. Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to



do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that. I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. I promise—you will never regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind. Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don't condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you'll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity." Luke 6:27-38 - The Message

Isn't it tough to get your mind around these concepts on some days?

Mrs. White says this about the Sermon on the Mount in Testimonies Volume 7:

“The Sermon on the Mount is heaven's benediction to the world, a voice from the throne of God. It was given to mankind to be to them the law of duty and the light of heaven, their hope and consolation in despondency. Here the Prince of preachers, the Master Teacher, utters the words that the Father gave Him to speak. The Beatitudes are Christ's greeting, not only to those who believe, but to the whole human family. He seems to have forgotten for a moment that He is in the world, not in heaven; and He uses the familiar salutation of the world of light. Blessings flow from His lips as the gushing forth of a long-sealed current of rich life. Christ leaves us in no doubt as to the traits of character that He will always recognize and bless. From the ambitious favorites of the world He turns to those whom they disown, pronouncing all blessed who receive His light and life. To the poor in spirit, the meek, the lowly, the sorrowful, the despised, the persecuted, He opens His arms of refuge, saying: “Come unto Me,... and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. ***Christ can look on the misery of the world without a shade of sorrow for having created man.*** In the human heart He sees more than sin, more than misery. In His infinite wisdom and love He sees man's possibilities, the height to which he may attain. He knows that, even though human beings have abused their mercies and destroyed their God-given dignity, yet the Creator is to be glorified in their redemption. The Sermon on the Mount is an example of how we are to teach. What pains Christ has taken to make mysteries no longer mysteries, but plain, simple truths! There is in His instruction nothing vague, nothing hard to understand. “He opened His mouth, and taught them.” Matthew 5:2. His words were spoken in no whispered tones, nor was His utterance harsh and disagreeable. He spoke with clearness and emphasis, with solemn, convincing force. “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Matthew 7:28, 29. – {7T 269.6}

Quarterly states: “The golden rule of love – no other command of Jesus is more debated and considered more difficult to keep.” Agree?



Quarterly states: “Note Christ’s insistence on Forgiveness, liberal giving, exemplary living, and tolerance.” Why the *insistence* on these?

TUESDAY

A New Family

Jesus introduced a new concept of neighbor, a new concept of family – not defined by the usual exclusivity of caste, color, language, tribe, or religion. There was no division. Under the banner of agape love – unmerited, nonexclusive, universal, and sacrificial – Christ created a new family, *one in harmony with His original design*. This family reflects the original, universal, and ideal concept enshrined in the Genesis creation, which attests that every human being is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and, therefore, equal before Him.

What are some of the typical walls and divisions that Christ tore down in His ministry?

- Profession/reputation – tax collectors, prostitutes, “sinners”
- Dead/unclean, lepers, demon possessed, disfigured
- Poor, maimed, lame, blind

The family of Christian discipleship ought to be no less close and binding than the ties of having common parents. To Jesus the true test of family is not blood relationships but doing the will of God. It seems like we are not quite there, are we? In this world? In this country? In this denomination?

WEDNESDAY

Love Defined: The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Part 1

Only Luke records the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). This parable illustrates the horizontal dimension—the kind of love that should characterize human life – refusing to acknowledge any barrier between humans but living instead within Jesus’ definition of a neighbor: that all human beings are children of God, and deserve to be loved and treated equally.

When Jesus asked the lawyer, “What is written in the law?” what did he say? So he *knew* God’s law of love, at least he knew enough to recite it. During the time of Jesus, it was the customary for prominent Jews, such as this lawyer, to wear a phylactery on their wrist. It was a little leather pouch containing large portions of the Torah, including the one that would answer Jesus’ question. Jesus’ question directed the lawyer to what was written in Deuteronomy (Deut. 6:5) and Leviticus (Lev. 19:18) – the very thing he was likely carrying in his phylactery. He had the answer on his wrist and on his lips, but not in his heart. Jesus directed the lawyer to a great truth: eternal life is not a matter of keeping rules but calls for loving God absolutely and unreservedly and likewise all God’s creation—our neighbor, to be precise. And when the lawyer pushes further, either out of ignorance or out of arrogance, and asks: Who is my neighbor? Christ responds with the familiar parable of the Good Samaritan.

Did you know that this story really happened? Mrs. White tells us in the Desire of Ages that the parable of the good Samaritan is not an “imaginary scene, but an actual occurrence, which was known



to be exactly as represented. The priest and the Levite who passed by on the other side were in the company that listened to Christ's words (499).

Why is it significant that the priest and the Levite did not stop and help the man in need? By all appearances, they were the ones you would expect to do it! They were just like the attorney – they knew what was written in the law, they could recite it from memory, they were probably wearing it on their arm. But there had been no conversion, no heart change. The Samaritan had perhaps never heard “the law”, and yet his heart had obviously been transformed by the Holy Spirit to operate in compassion and unselfish love.

What is important to remember, is that this parable does not say anything about what we can do to be saved. Its emphasis is on how a converted person on the path to healing (or a “saved” person) ought to live.

“In His life and lessons, Christ has given a perfect exemplification of the unselfish ministry which has its origin in God. God does not live for Himself. By creating the world, and by upholding all things, He is constantly ministering for others... This ideal of ministry God has committed to His Son. Jesus was given to stand at the head of humanity, that by His example He might teach what it means to minister. His whole life was under a law of service. He served all, ministered to all. Thus He lived the law of God, and by His example showed how we are to obey it.” {DOA 649}

“In His teaching He ever presented the law as a divine unity, showing that it is impossible to keep one precept and break another; for the same principle runs through all. Man's destiny will be determined by his obedience to the whole law. It is not possible for the heart in which Christ abides to be destitute of love. If we love God because He first loved us, we shall love all for whom Christ died. We cannot come in touch with divinity without coming in touch with humanity; for in Him who sits upon the throne of the universe, divinity and humanity are combined. Connected with Christ, we are connected with our fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. Then the pity and compassion of Christ will be manifest in our life. We shall not wait to have the needy and unfortunate brought to us. We shall not need to be entreated to feel for the woes of others. It will be as natural for us to minister to the needy and suffering as it was for Christ to go about doing good... Wherever there is an impulse of love and sympathy, wherever the heart reaches out to bless and uplift others, there is revealed the working of God's Holy Spirit. **In the depths of heathenism, men who have had no knowledge of the written law of God, who have never even heard the name of Christ, have been kind to His servants, protecting them at the risk of their own lives.** Their acts show the working of a divine power. The Holy Spirit has implanted the grace of Christ in the heart of the savage, quickening his sympathies contrary to his nature, contrary to his education. The “Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9), is shining in his soul; and this light, if heeded, will guide his feet to the kingdom of God.” – {COL 385.1}