



The Role of the Church in the Community Lesson 5 3Q 2016 Jesus on Community Outreach

SABBATH

Read first two paragraphs, “Robert Louis Stevenson...” Nice image about poking holes in the darkness. The lesson is using the metaphor of darkness and light, in spiritual terms what is darkness and what is light?

Read John 1:1-9:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning.

³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ **In him was life, and that life was the light of men.** ⁵ **The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.**

⁶ There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that **light**, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the **light**; he came only as a witness to the **light**. ⁹ **The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.** John 1:1-9

What is the light? What is the darkness? Why don't people come into the light?

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ **But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light**, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.” John 3:19-21

What does the light do to darkness? So, if the light is the light of truth and love and darkness is the darkness of lies and selfishness, what happens when the light shines into darkness?

What did Jesus mean when He said, “This is the verdict”? Is Jesus describing a judicial proceeding and a judicial finding by the judge? What is the “verdict”?

The verdict is a description of reality, what actually is the true condition of hearts and minds and how such hearts and mind react to the truth. This is not an infliction by God or a punishment by a judge. This is a great example of how God's judgment does work!

What is one of the great sources of physical light in the world? Sun, fire, flame, and how is the presence of God, who is the source of all truth and love, depicted or how does it appear? As pillar of



fire, streams of fire, rivers of fire, tongues of fire—but it's not combustion? Is there some lesson in that?

What about this text, what do we learn?

“Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the Lord Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. ² But for you who revere my name, **the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.** Malachi 4:1,2

Let's focus on the sun of righteousness, this is “sun” but to whom is it referring? What is it that extends out from the “sun”? Beams, it is not wings, but beams, the beams of light which extend out from the sun, and what are those beams extending out from the sun of righteousness? The beams of truth and love—and what do those beams do? They heal, those who cherish and assimilate truth and love.

Jesus said, “You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” Jn 8:32 but only those who appreciate, accept and assimilate the truth, but what of those who reject the truth who call the truth a lie, does it heal them?

Also, notice how the sun of righteousness appears, the sun rises... what is the implication?

If you are in a dark cave with no light at all and you are brought out at noon on a bright sunny day what is your experience? It is overwhelming, painful and you want to cover your eyes and be protected from the sun, maybe run back into darkness.

But what happens if you are brought out of the cave at 4 a.m. and sit there while the sun rises, what then? What is the lesson?

Today, right now in this time in human history, Jesus is slowly rising, like the sun with healing in his beams of truth and love. The truth of God is becoming ever more clearly revealed. The message of mercy, the truth about God's character of love has been steadily increasing over the last 200 years. As we assimilate, appreciate, and internalize the truth we are able to appreciate and understand more and we grow more and more into God's character of love and truth, so that when Jesus appears we celebrate and rejoice and live in His fiery presence.

But for those who reject the truth and continue to live in the darkness of lies and selfishness when He appears in His glory the beams of truth and love will be overwhelming and they will run from His presence and beg the mountains to hide them from Him. They prefer the darkness to the light.

This happens at the beginning of the 1000 years and at the end of the 1000 years.



At the beginning of the 1000 years the Bible says:

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the **breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.**⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. **They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.** 2Thes 2:8-10

Notice they are destroyed by the breath of His mouth and the brightness of His coming, what is being presented here? What comes from the mouth? Words of truth and what does the splendor represent? His life giving glory, the fires of truth and love. This is the beginning of the 1000 years.

Here is a description of the end of 1000 years, when the New Jerusalem is on earth, the wicked dead are raised and the mob marches to attack the city. From the book *The Great Controversy* 664.

With military precision, the serried ranks advance over the earth's broken and uneven surface to the city of God. **By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed,** and the armies of Satan surround the city, and make ready for the onset... Now Christ again appears to the view of his enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this **throne sits the Son of God,** and around him are the subjects of his kingdom. **The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray. The glory of the Eternal Father is enshrouding his Son. The brightness of his presence fills the city of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.**"

Do you notice a couple of important depictions in this account:

1. the gates of the New Jerusalem were open up until the point the wicked marched in mass to attack it—what do we learn from that fact? That the wicked outside the city are not kept out by God. The gates were open the entire time, but none came in. They were kept out by their own condition, their own free will choice. Some get uncomfortable with this and say, “Are you saying the unrepentant wicked get a second chance?”
 - a. How would you answer that question?
 - b. What law lens—if we look only on external factors, and the actions of the ruling authority, then it could appear that the ruling authority is giving the wicked another chance—this is how level four and below see this, those with penal theologies. They don't like it, to them “it isn't fair.
 - c. But, when you see reality as it is, and understand God's design law, then you understand there is no second chance here, there is only demonstration, revelation—God is allowing the wicked to reveal what He already knows, that they are hardened and no evidence or opportunity will change that. They are fixed in their rebellion and this action on God's part to leave the gates open reveal that fact.



2. Second point, the fire, where does it flow first? Into the city, and who lives there? The righteous, so what does this reveal about the fire? Why then do the wicked suffer and die in it?
3. If this is the fire that the righteous in the city are living in, then is it the source of inflicted death?
4. But, what does love and truth do to those solidified in selfishness and lies? Is it pleasant, or as we read earlier they prefer the darkness because the light exposes their wickedness. So, what will the wicked experience in God's unveiled love and truth?
 - a. weeping and gnashing of teeth
 - b. torture and torment of mind
 - c. agony of soul, regret, shame, guilt,
 - d. how long will this continue? Until they voluntarily surrender their lives and choose no to live any more.

Here is another quote from the same book:

A life of rebellion against God has **unfitted them for heaven. Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them; the glory of God would be a consuming fire. They would long to flee** from that holy place... **They would welcome destruction**, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. **The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves**, and just and merciful on the part of God. Like the waters of the Flood the fires of the great day declare God's verdict that the **wicked are incurable**. GC 541,542

Why would it happen like this? Is God inflicting this, or is this the natural result of choosing to change oneself to be out of harmony with how life is constructed to operate?

If it does work this way, wicked beings confronted with truth and love and the reality of their own life history, their own sins being exposed causing them torment of mind, agony of soul to the point they voluntarily choose to die rather than live in a universe of perfect love—what might that imply for how long some suffer in the fire?

- Would we expect every being to come to that conclusion at the exact same moment?
- Would it be likely some might accept the reality of their condition sooner than others?
- Would it be likely some might resist the truth and deny the love longer and thus suffer longer?
- So, could this mean some might be in the fires many days until they day? If so would it be an infliction by God?

So here is a description from the book *Early Writings* which some have really struggled with. Tell me what you hear it saying now and if any parts are difficult to understand:

Satan rushes into the midst of his followers and tries to stir up the multitude to action. **But fire from God out of heaven is rained upon them**, and the great men, and mighty men, the noble, the poor and miserable, are all consumed together. **I saw that some were quickly destroyed**,



while others suffered longer. They were punished according to the deeds done in the body. **Some were many days consuming,** and just as long as there was a portion of them unconsumed, all the sense of suffering remained. Said the angel, "The worm of life shall not die; their fire shall not be quenched as long as there is the least particle for it to prey upon." {EW 294.1}

Satan and his angels suffered long. Satan bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins, but also of the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him; and he must also suffer for the ruin of souls which he had caused. **Then I saw that Satan and all the wicked host were consumed, and the justice of God was satisfied;** and all the angelic host, and all the redeemed saints, with a loud voice said, "Amen!" {EW 294.2}

What do you hear being described, in light of all we have read before, harmonizing all the previous Bible texts and statements?

Right now, here on earth today, we are being presented with truth—light, and each of us are deciding are we growing in truth or rejecting truth and darkening our own minds. God provides the truth, the light, the love, the transforming presence of His Spirit, who takes the character of Christ and reproduces it in all who trust Him—it is our choice, what choice are you making each day?

Read the last paragraph, “We’ve seen a bit...” We are to reflect Jesus—but are we to reflect others? Did Jesus say we are to be reflectors in the world or to be lights in the world? Are reflectors and lights the same thing? Is there a difference? What is the difference? Now to be sure, we are reflectors of Jesus in the sense that light/truth/wisdom doesn’t originate with us, all truth and wisdom has its source in God. However, I think there is a difference in the thoughtless reciting of truths, like a mindless recording device, and an intelligent appreciation and comprehension of the truth in which we eagerly agree and promote. The truth becomes ours at it is assimilated into our character and becomes part of our way of thinking and functioning, thus we become lights, not mere reflectors. Thoughts?

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator-- **individuality, power to think and to do.** [Does God want us to use this individuality to shine the light of truth, or wait from some instruction “say it like this, paint it like this, play it like this.” and we are to remain frozen waiting for an outside agency to move our actions for us?] The men in whom **this power is developed** [what power? the power to think and act, remember the last fruit of the Spirit is self-control] are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, **to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought.** Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, **let students be directed to the sources of truth,** [what are the sources? notice--] to the vast fields opened for research in **nature and revelation.** [science, experience and Scripture] Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen. **Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act,**



men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions. [How can institutions of learning send for such persons of strong mind? By indoctrinating them? By sheltering them to memorize Scripture, or by teaching them the integrative evidenced based approach and demonstrating how Scripture, science and experience perfectly harmonize and leading them to understand how reality actually works!] {Ed 17.2}

Does God want more than reflectors from His intelligent creatures?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “Jesus, the young...” the lesson asks half way down, “Why would Jesus stop short of completing the sentence in Isaiah 61:2?”

Read last paragraph, “Perhaps Jesus stopped...” What about today? Do we have misunderstanding as to what God’s vengeance is?

Therefore the Lord, the Lord Almighty,
the Mighty One of Israel, declares:
“Ah, I will get relief from my foes
and avenge myself on my enemies.
²⁵ I will turn my hand against you;
I will thoroughly purge away your dross
and remove all your impurities. Isaiah 1:24,25

What is the Lord’s vengeance? It is the vengeance a doctor takes upon disease, to destroy polio, HIV, Zika, Malaria—but never to hurt, abuse or injure the patient. God seeks to destroy sin, to destroy all deviations from His design, while saving all who will let Him, yet always in harmony with His character of love, which means leaving others free, just as we read above.

What do you think it means when the Bible describes the people’s reaction to Jesus’ teaching as one who taught with authority? What does that mean?

- Does it mean He was teaching authoritatively—I have authority listen to me or else?
- Was He using the authority of position—You recognize John was a prophet of God, John has endorsed me, therefore, I have authority as a messenger of God. Or, I am the Son of God and as God’s Son I have authority, you need to listen to my authority? Did Jesus make use of His position as the source of His authority?
- Was Jesus promoting an authoritarian God?
- What authority?
- The authority of truth and how reality actually works in real lives—Jesus was integrating Scripture with science and real world experiences and the truth is authoritative



Here is a quotation from one of the founders of the SDA church:

Christ spoke with authority. Every truth essential for the people to know He proclaimed with the **unfaltering assurance of certain knowledge**. [So first, His speaking with authority was the confidence and authority of one who actually knows and understands reality, what is happening, and what will happen when choices to violate God's design law are made. A doctor today can speak with this type of authority when they say, it is damaging to your health to smoke cigarettes. 150 years ago, doctors didn't have that authority—because they didn't know that reality.] **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.** [Again, Jesus spoke authoritatively because He spoke reality, truth, how things truly work, not speculation, not hypothesis, not guesses, not myth, not traditions, no religious theories—but simple reality of God's kingdom.] 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.** [What did He focus upon? the unchangeable principles of God's word—which is God's design law!] He magnified the simple, practical truths that the common people could understand and bring into the **daily experience**... [He taught how God's design law was real and impacted their daily life experiences, he was harmonizing Scripture, science and experience.] {8T 201.2}

In all His teaching, Christ brought the minds of men in contact with the Infinite Mind. [How? Notice how Jesus brought human minds into contact with God's 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, [science/nature] in His word, [Scripture] and by His providences. [experience]** {8T 201.3}

What made Jesus' teaching authoritative? They were truth—the truth of Scripture, harmonized with science/nature and experience in such a way they were actually applicable to people's lives. Jesus made sense and His teachings were sensible, not mystical, not magical, not incoherent and contradictory.

MONDAY

Read memory text, "Thou shalt love the Lord..." What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself?

Can people who don't love themselves actually love others—why or why not?

If a person doesn't have a healthy self love, valuing themselves for who they are as a child of God, at peace with themselves and God, then they are not whole on the inside; they are insecure, fearful of rejection and don't possess healthy love to give to others. Instead, such people generally seek to get from others to fill what is missing in them. They seek to get:



- love
- reassurance
- acceptance
- validation
- praise
- security

Those who don't have healthy love seek to get from others rather than seek to give to others, thus we are unable love others well until we are first healed in heart and mind by the indwelling Holy Spirit—we must come to peace with ourselves and love ourselves as children of God.

The lesson also explores when we do seek to love our neighbor who our neighbor is and the lesson states—anyone in need.

What does it mean to help someone—giving what they want? What are some reasons not to help someone in need?

Read Mark 6:1-6:

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. ² When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles! ³ Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

⁴ Jesus said to them, “Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.” ⁵ He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶ And he was amazed at their lack of faith.

Were there people who Jesus did not help, in need? But they were in need, why didn't Jesus help them?

Are there people in need we are unable to help? Should we force our help onto such people?

Whom should we seek to help? Those in need, or those in need, who recognize their need and who will permit us to help them?

TUESDAY

What does it mean to be the salt of the earth? What does salt do? How are we to be like salt?

Matthew 5:13 from *The Remedy*



"You are like salt to humanity: preserving the knowledge of God, providing the flavor of heaven, and increasing the thirst for God. But if salt loses its saltiness, unless it becomes salty again, it is useless and will be thrown out and trampled upon.

What does it mean for the salt to lose its savor?

- To lose the knowledge of God, in other words to present God in a false light, like a dictator who imposes law and is the source of inflicted punishment
- Which doesn't cause people to have increased thirst for God, but instead causes people to want to be away from Him or hidden from Him
- And causes people to become more like such a dictator God and become dominating, controlling and abusive of power to coerce others, thus the flavor provided is not one of heaven, but the flavor of hell

What is to be done with such a picture of God? It should be thrown out—we need to throw out from our Creeds, Fundamental Beliefs, Doctrines, Books, Commentaries, Seminaries all these distorted and false ideas about God!

WEDNESDAY

Read third paragraph, "Workers have done..." What does this mean?

What does it mean to prepare the soil? What do they mean that the soil is prepared before the evangelist comes—is the evangelist not to be involved in preparing the soil? Is the evangelist the harvester?

Read last paragraph, "Reaping the harvest is..." While all of the actions listed can be very useful in their place, if we go into a community to assess the demographics, community assessment surveys etc. all as part of a strategy *to get people to join our organization*, is such a process legitimate Bible evangelism? Why or why not?

Should the focus of evangelism be on getting people to join our group, or seeking to provide to people the healing Remedy of Jesus Christ and His truths, love, methods and principles so they experience regeneration of character to be like Christ—regardless of what organization they join?

What would it mean to win someone to Jesus Christ?

THURSDAY

Church planting—what does this term mean?

Read first paragraph, "It seems..." Would this be a good method to use here in America today? Why or why not?



Does culture play a role in what method we use?

If we went to a community—basically as a homeless person—with only the clothes on our back and knocked on doors telling people we are here to tell them about Jesus but need a place to stay and food to eat etc. would we represent the gospel or misrepresent the gospel?

FRIDAY

Discuss questions



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The God-Shaped Brain is now available in Korean and is available at this website:
http://book.naver.com/bookdb/book_detail.nhn?bid=9519886

The Remedy – Dr. Jennings’ New Testament Paraphrase—FREE for ios and android systems.

The Remedy—Is Now Available in Print Version in the US. We have printed 10,000 to give away and will reassess demand for them after those are gone. We are shipping a small number to Canada and Australia. **How to get copies:** In the US email orders@comeandreason.com with a valid US postal address; In Canada email canada@comeandreason.com and in Australia/New Zealand email Australia@comeandreason.com and request the number you want and we will ship them to you. If you are giving them away please give them only to people who want them. In other words, don’t put one at every seat in the church, or place setting at a potluck, or car in a parking lot. Such distribution methods result in vast numbers being thrown away. Let people know they are free and allow them to take one if they want too works best.

The Journal of the Watcher is now available as a HARD COVER book at Amazon as well as a movie in itunes for everyone without ios or android in itunes. It is also available as an APP for Apple and Android devices.

October 14-16: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Drakensville, South Africa Campmeeting.

October 19, 20: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Ladismith South Africa (venue to be determined)

October 21, 22: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Cape Town, South Africa