



The Role of the Church in the Community Lesson 10 3Q 2016 Jesus Won Their Confidence

I received this update from Gary Jones and Come and Reason Canada:

We have been reaching out to our brothers and sisters of all faiths this month and we have two more C&R branches one in Ontario and one in Halifax and that now makes 4 C&R branches in Canada thus far. We are working on having one in Western Canada soon.

David Clarke from Ontario stopped here in Nova Scotia on his way to Newfoundland and picked up one case of each DVD series to give out there and take the remainder back to Ontario. We are praying someone in Newfoundland will ask to become a C&R branch.

Yes there is one more thing. I was just chatting via Skype with a friend that is with Paradigm Missions in Uganda. Her name is Linelle, I told her about C&R some time ago and she check it out and is now using C&R to teach the God of Love message to close to 13 villages. From what she was saying it's a new message to the people of Uganda and most of them are from a religious background and Christian backgrounds. C&R is opening hearts and eyes in place with no light and I mean no electricity or water but they are now getting the light of God and the Water of the Spirit. I will update you with more on this, I asked Linelle to send me a email with a update on this.

*God Bless,
Gary*

Here is the email from Linelle in Uganda:

Hi Gary

I just wanted to share a little bit about what I have been doing here in Uganda and the work of Paradigm Missions and how Come and Reason has become a part of that program.

Now that we are in full swing evangelism mode it has become vital to ensure that the people who are reaching out into the community not only understand the gospel commission in its holistic context but also that they have a true and accurate picture of God to portray to the people. Sadly the culture here is one of fear. Beating is the modus operandus of homes and business and people really feel that taking advantage of others and getting something for nothing is the way to go. Children are not instructed in the way to behave, they are left to roam until an adult is annoyed with them and then they are beaten and then given instructions later. I have witnessed in horror as Christians have chosen this kind of management strategy. Women even say they wouldn't feel that their husband loved them if he didn't beat them to correct them. It's incredibly sad to walk around the block during the evening and hear the screaming of



women and children inside houses while the people on the street and in the yards pay no mind because it is standard practice.

I have been working through the Come and Reason material with my volunteers during the week and preaching the message of a God of Love in Sabbath School and church and putting it into practice in Sabbath afternoon outreach here in Kotido. They are really drinking it in and asking lots of questions and shifting their understanding. The brand new converts who have only ever heard the message of the God of Love just smile as I preach and cannot seem to get enough of this great news - which of course it is.

As you described your strategy to give Come and Reason DVDs with every Christian book purchase at your local bookshop I instantly thought of the high volume of spiritual books available in bookstores in Kampala and how popular they are. We could totally replicate that process here and have a positive impact on people's understanding of God in this way. I really believe this is the only way this country can move forward from its current attitudes and functioning. Indeed it is the only way forward for all of us.

I loved Tim's statement in the Question and Answer time of the God and Your Church series where it was spelt out clearly that God will only pour out his Holy Spirit on those who are accurately representing his character. This is exactly what we are here to do. This is evident in the leaps and bounds we are making "... in drawing all men unto Him." It really isn't our work, it is His and it is just fantastic to see the truth flourishing.

Currently we desperately need a church building to accommodate the incredible growth of the membership here. Each week new souls are added to the congregation and even those who have only attended a few times are bringing their friends and they are bringing their friends as they see the value in what they are receiving. We desperately want to construct two churches here in northern Karamoja before the end of the year and we have the land, the building plans and a builder. Now we are just praying for the \$50,000 to make that happen as we 'shake every tree'. I know you will join with us in bringing this before the Lord and putting your mind to the task as well.

God bless you as you continue to serve him in whatever way you can. You have certainly been a blessing to me and Paradigm Missions.

*Kindly
Linelle*

SABBATH

What do you think of the title? How did Jesus win their confidence? What did He do? What qualities did Jesus possess and display that won their confidence?



The Jews in Christ day had this same question, should we have confidence, trust, faith in Jesus or not, notice this discussion they had with Jesus in John 6:28-30:

Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”
Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”
So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?”

What were they looking for in order to have confidence in Jesus? Was it important for Jesus to perform miracles? Why?

Yes, it was important because one of the evidences Jesus needed to demonstrate was that He does have power over nature, sickness and death itself. Why was this an important evidence to demonstrate?

What if Jesus had only demonstrated great wisdom, love, truth, but had no power over nature, sickness and death?

In delaying to come to Lazarus, Christ had a purpose of mercy toward those who had not received Him. He tarried, that by raising Lazarus from the dead He might give to His stubborn, unbelieving people **another evidence that He was indeed "the resurrection, and the life."** He was loath to give up all hope of the people, the poor, wandering sheep of the house of Israel. His heart was breaking because of their impenitence. In His mercy He purposed to give them **one more evidence that He was the Restorer, the One who alone could bring life and immortality to light.** This was to be an **evidence** that the priests could not misinterpret. This was the reason of His delay in going to Bethany. **This crowning miracle, the raising of Lazarus, was to set the seal of God on His work and on His claim to divinity.** {DA 529.1}

So, for Jesus it was very important, that in addition to demonstrating the truth of God’s character, that He was a conduit of God’s creative energies and demonstrated miracle working power.

But, are miracles alone a good barometer for having confidence in someone? Another way to say it, are miracles alone a good basis to put our faith or trust in someone? Why or why not?

Can miracles be counterfeited? Can great magicians perform what appear to be miracles?

- Jannes and Jambres counterfeited the miracle of the staff turning to a serpent (Exodus 7:11, 2Tim 3:8)

Can true miracles be performed by agents of evil?

- Serpent spoke in Eden
- Satan showed Jesus a great panorama and transported Jesus to the top of the temple
- Satan brought fire and storm in the book of Job



- Revelation says the image to the beast will bring fire down from heaven

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

The way in which Christ worked was to preach the Word, and to relieve suffering by miraculous works of healing. **But I am instructed that we cannot now work in this way, for Satan will exercise his power by working miracles. God's servants today could not work by means of miracles, because spurious works of healing, claiming to be divine, will be wrought.**--2SM 54 (1904). {LDE 169.2}

God's people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought.--9T 16 (1909). {LDE 169.3}

What does this mean? Does this mean that the true movement of God will not be accompanied by miracles, but the false movement will be, and we merely need to watch for miracles and go the other way?

Joel prophesied that before the Lord comes there will be a latter rain of the Holy Spirit—will the latter rain come with less miracle working power than Pentecost?

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. ³⁰ **I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth** Joel 2:28-30

Would this include miracles? What about this quote from the same SDA founder:

It is with an earnest longing that **I look forward to the time [It hadn't yet happened in 1886 when she wrote this]** when the events of the Day of Pentecost **shall be repeated with even greater power than on that occasion.** John says, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory" [Revelation 18:1]. Then, as at the Pentecostal season, the **people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue.**--6BC 1055 (1886). {LDE 202.3}

In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. **The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought.** A spirit of intercession was seen, **even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost.**--9T 126 (1909). {LDE 202.4}

The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former



rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. . . . {LDE 203.1}

Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. **Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers.**--GC 611, 612 (1911). {LDE 203.2}

What does this mean? How do you understand the two statements? Is there a contradiction?

Did she say that miracles would not accompany the true work of God, or that miracles would not be the proof of God's endorsement and safety in whom we trust could not be found in miracles? In other words, was she saying that miracles are no longer valid evidence of God's true movement because both sides will be performing miracles? So, God's people can absolutely look for miracles to accompany the work, but the presence or absence of miracles has ZERO bearing on whether the work is approved of God or not.

So, how did Jesus win their confidence? In addition to miracles, what else did Jesus provide that won their confidence?

- Kindness
- Trustworthiness
- Loyalty
- Reliability
- Genuine love—for all people—breaking down prejudices
- Gentleness
- Mercy
- Knowledge of how reality actually works and able to explain the true meaning of Scripture
- Value of truth over tradition and authority of office
- Courage—standing for truth in face of institutional opposition
- True to duty, continuing His mission in spite of opposition
- Wisdom
- other qualities?

What is the message and method we are to use to win people to God's kingdom today? We have read most of the following quote before, but notice the last part, in the context of what is to be the message to win people:

It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. **At this time** a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. **His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth...** {COL 415.3}



Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, "Behold your God." **The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.** {COL 415.5}

What does it mean to reveal God's character in our own?

- The proud become humble
- The mean become kind
- The cruel become compassionate
- The selfish become loving
- The critical become merciful
- The gossips become confidants who hold their tongues
- The insecure become sure and strong
- The fearful become courageous
- The hoarders become givers
- The weak become strong
- The ignorant become knowledgeable
- The foolish become wise
- The coercive become liberators
- The discouraged become hopeful
- The doubters become certain
- The deceitful become honest
- The addicted become free
- Those in darkness become enlightened

Other qualities?

And what happens when people are changed like this? What is the impact upon them, their families, their communities?

And what does it mean when such transformation happens? How is it possible?

Is not the transformation of hearts and minds the most magnificent evidence of God's power, the miracle working power of God?

Which is the greater evidence of God's miracle working power, for the Creator to speak something into existence that is perfect, or to take corruption and return it to perfection?



This is what the church at the end of time is to accomplish—we are to proclaim a message, “Be in awe God, and reveal His character within you (bring Him glory) for the time in human history has come for people to make a right judgment about God, for people to throw off the lies about God and return to Him and worship Him who made the heavens, earth, and fountains of water—to worship the Designer and reject the dictator views of God!”

We do this by becoming the righteousness of God—“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” 2Cor 5:21

This is the final message!

And when we experience this life transforming power, renewing us to be like Jesus, should we expect other miracles to accompany our work? Do we see few miracles today because we ask for few and we expect few? Should we ask for more?

When can we have confidence that miracles will happen?

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. Jn 14:12-14

What is the condition to expect miracles?

But to pray in Christ's name means much. It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works {DA 668.2}

Remember name means character, so when Jesus says to ask for anything in His name, it means with the same character, attitude, motive, desire, purpose, reason, i.e. because you love God and others and want to advance God's kingdom.

Here is John 14:12-14 from *The Remedy*

I tell you the truth: Anyone who genuinely trusts me will also be in unity with the Father and will reveal his character—just as I have been doing. His life will be a further revelation of the life-giving power of God and the healing power of his methods. My life reveals the truth of God's character and methods; but those who trust in me will reveal that God's methods, when applied in trust via the Spirit of God, actually heal and transform those who are deformed by sin. I am going to the Father.¹³ And I will do whatever you ask—that is in harmony with my character, methods, and principles—so that the Son may bring honor and glory to the Father by revealing the healing and life-giving power of his methods.¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in harmony with my character and methods, and I will do it.



SUNDAY

Read first two paragraphs, “After desiring...” What do you understand is being described here regarding faith or confidence?

The basic concept is one of persuading a person in their own mind and heart into agreement, thus amen really means, “I agree” or “That’s right” or “Well said” or “Absolutely true.” The idea is that you as an individual have comprehended the concept, thought it through, come to understand, value and choose with your own unique identity and individuality to align yourself with that truth, to make it a part of yourself.

This is what Paul is referring to in Romans 14:5 when he says, regarding which day people esteem Sabbath or another day, that every person should be fully persuaded in their own mind. Paul is not commenting on which day is Sabbath, or the sanctity of Sabbath, but the fact that regardless of truth it has no transforming power in an individual’s heart and mind until they are persuaded and actively choose it for themselves.

The last sentence says, “Yet, when those we serve show confidence in us, we must point them to Jesus and what He has done for them.”

How do you do this? What do you tell people that Jesus has done for them? Does the explanation you provide increase or decrease people’s confidence in Jesus and the Father?

A few weeks back I brought to class an evangelistic tool some people use. It was designed to look like a one million dollar bill and on the back it read:

Here Is The Million Dollar Question: Will you go to Heaven when you die? Here’s a quick test: have you ever lied, stolen, or used God’s name in vain? Jesus said, “Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” If you have done these things, **God sees you as a lying, thieving, blasphemous, adulterer at heart, and the Bible warns that one day God will punish you in a terrible place called Hell.** But God is not willing that any should perish. **Sinners broke God’s Law and Jesus paid their fine. This means that God can legally dismiss their case:** “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Then Jesus rose from the dead, defeating death. Today, repent and trust Jesus, and God will give you eternal life as a free gift. Then read the Bible daily and obey it. God will never fail you.

Does such a presentation increase or decrease trust in God? What kind of a god is presented in this view? This is a pagan god, this is not the God Jesus revealed. This comes from accepting the lie about God’s law and seeing God functioning no different than human dictators—and who would trust a human dictator? So, what view of God do you present?



MONDAY

Read second paragraph, “At the same time...” This is a very good point, all God’s representatives (other than Jesus) are sinners, which means they have faults, weaknesses, make mistakes, are in need of the same remedy as we are. Do we allow for this, or if we see someone working for God’s cause, and find some fault in them do we get offended, do we reject the message they are presenting because of it?

- Jonah had prejudice problems, was he a false prophet?
- David had anger issues, was he God’s enemy?

Do we see God’s messengers, prophets, Apostles as real people, or do we tend to put them on some idealistic pedestals? Have you ever considered what it might have been like to be around the New Testament Apostles?

- Paul is described by the Corinthians as small, weak and a dry boring speaker
- Peter was impulsive, blurting out answers, not waiting his turn, jumping out of boats, cutting off ears, acting frequently without thinking first.
- James and John were called sons of thunder and were constantly vying for first place, seeking advantages for themselves, and judgmental of others, asking if they should call fire down from heaven on the Samaritans (Lk 9:54)
- What of Matthew? Was he perhaps quiet, unassuming, introvert—more of the classic accountant type? Or, the proud, intrusive, extortionist?

Understanding the Apostles were all human beings, does it give insight into why many people didn’t listen to them? And does it make clear why we are to point people to Jesus and not ourselves.

The same is true today, for each of us, we are not perfect, each of us has human frailties, weakness, issues we are struggling to overcome. One of Satan’s strategies when the true gospel message is presented is to get people to focus on the messenger rather than the message.

This is a classic attack on EGW and the allegations some bring about plagiarism. To me such allegations are irrelevant, the question is whether what she wrote was true or not, that is what matters, not the primary sources for each point.

Read last paragraph, “Of course, we...” What is required to be the kind of people that can be relied upon and trusted?

Does these passage help?

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.
¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. Eph 4:14,15



We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Heb 5:11-14

What quality is described here? Maturity! What does it mean to be mature?

- To be able think for oneself and discern truth from error
- To be able to stand firm for what is true and not be overly influenced by the opinion of others

Consider the types of Untrustworthiness:

- The untrustworthiness of the evil in heart, the terrorist, the antisocial sociopath, the person with intent to harm—such people we cannot trust
 - But most people are not in this category, most people that betray our trust are not intentionally seeking to do so
- The untrustworthiness of the immature
 - If you were treasurer of your church and collected \$5000 in cash and your 5 y/o child said, "I will take that to the bank for you mommy/daddy." Would you trust them to do? Because they have evil intent? No! Because they are not mature enough to handle the responsibility
 - This is what the Bible is describing above, people with good intent but they have not
 - Mastered themselves
 - Matured
 - Learned to think for themselves
 - Developed the ability to tolerate rejection if necessary
 - Developed discernment and wisdom
 - Come to love others more than self (Peter upper room)

TUESDAY

The Proverb at the top states, "A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold." (22:1)

What is the point of this proverb? That retaining one's integrity is better than compromising one's self for money.

The point of the proverb is that we are to value mature Christlike character above wealth or earthly attainments.

Absolutely true—but what is the potential misunderstanding that might occur from this proverb that would be harmful?



Valuing the estimation (esteem) of others, letting the opinion and feedback of others be the measure of your character, such that one becomes focused, not on being the healthiest most Christlike person they can be through God's grace, but instead focusing on what others think of them. Why is this a problem?

This is what Peter did when Paul confronted him publicly. Peter was concerned about being esteemed by the Jewish leaders and this concern caused him to compromise his character and misrepresent the gospel. Instead of standing for truth, instead of witnessing God's love for all people, and thus being the most Christlike person, he compromised for the approval of others and damaged himself as well as his witness and misrepresented the gospel, for which Paul needed to correct him.

I love this quote:

The greatest want of the world is the want of men--men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. {Ed 57.3}

But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature--the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man. {Ed 57.4}

Read last two paragraphs, "The means that..." What do you think of the idea of God using people who are not converted to Him to help promote the gospel and His cause?

The lesson states the support of those not on the team shouldn't automatically be accepted or automatically be rejected. What criteria should one use? What makes the difference?

- If it is given with or without strings? How about designated donation—give specifically for a building project, or food for the hungry, or missions? Does such designation mean strings attached?
- If given without quid pro quo—meaning no favors are expected in return. What if someone wants a church plant in a certain part of town so they make a donation? What if a member of the church wants a position on the church board for a large donation to the building fund? Or a position on the school board for a large donation to the worthy student fund?
- What if the money comes from sources contrary to the mission of the church? See Friday question 3
 - What determines if it is "tainted money"?
 - Where did the wealth come from to build the sanctuary of the Lord at Sinai?
 - Should the church investigate the sources of a person's money?
 - What if the money is donated by a prostitute? Did Jesus reject the donation of a gift costing a year's salary? Yet, she was converted. Would he have rejected a donation from anyone?



- What of the donation of the church board member who makes a large donation in order to have their name on a building?
- What if a drug dealer recognized the good a Christian clinic was doing in their neighborhood, because his mother benefited from the clinic and made a large donation?
- What about money gained from industrial farms or slaughter houses? Or companies that have been caught illegally dumping toxic waste?
- In the August 2016 NAD issue of the Adventist Review on page 11 there is an article entitled, “Oakwood University Church Honors NBA Legend Magic Johnson” The article reports that Magic Johnson donated \$500,000 to the Oakwood University church’s family life center and created a \$50,000 scholarship. Any thoughts on accepting this money?

Should we be in the business of investigating donations or using what is donated for God’s cause and not allowing our mission to be diverted by the donors?

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “There is no question...” Any examples of the light from the Lord with which we have been blessed?

- Health message
- Day of rest
- The Great Controversy of God’s character
- The truth of God’s character
- God’s design law

The lesson listed several theological issues for which we have light, “such as understanding the Cross, the sanctuary, the state of the dead, the Sabbath, the great controversy.”

Do we have clear understanding on all these issues? Is the explanation of the sanctuary clear, or still trapped in metaphor, symbol and dark speech?

Are all presentations of the Cross within our own church enlightening, or do some presentations actually darken the mind about God?

The last paragraph asks, “Would our community miss us if somehow our congregation disappeared overnight?” Would Come and Reason Ministries be missed if we suddenly were no longer here?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1 and 2



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 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.

September 15-17: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC National Conference in Dallas, TX. For more info, see AACC.net

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 Somerset West, South Africa

November 4: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC Fall Summit at the Calvary Chapel in Naperville, IL.