



First and Second Peter Lesson 9 2Q 2017 Be Who You Are

SABBATH

Read Memory Text: “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.” 2Pet 1:5-7

What is being described? Is there a progression?

What does Peter mean by faith? Does he mean your religion? Does he mean trust, confidence? And what is the object of our faith? Is it enough to have faith, to believe in something like many people do, but not to know what?

How do we get this faith?

Were you ever taught that every person is given a measure of faith by God?

This is from the KJV Rom 12:3:

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Does this mean every person is given faith in God? If faith is trust and confidence, can that be given to a person?

Here is Rom 12:3 from the NIV:

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

Does you hear this differently? Rather than every person being given faith, it is speaking of those who have received faith from God.

Or the GNT:

And because of God’s gracious gift to me I say to every one of you: do not think of yourself more highly than you should. Instead, be modest in your thinking, and judge yourself according to the amount of faith that God has given you.



Again, the text is not saying that God gives every person faith by some supernatural outflow of power, but speaking to the fact that as our faith in God grows our understanding of reality changes and we become more humble realizing all our gifts are from God.

So, from where does faith come?

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ. Rom 10:17

What does this mean? Faith or trust comes from the comprehension, understanding and acceptance of the truth of God and His character as revealed by Christ.

What about knowledge, what kind of knowledge is being referred to? Is he talking about going to seminary and getting a degree in theology? Is he talking about an experiential/experimental knowledge? What experiential knowledge?

Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3

Consider this historic quotation:

Experience is said to be the best teacher. **Genuine experience is indeed superior to mere theoretical knowledge**, but many have an erroneous idea as to what constitutes experience. **Real experience is gained by a variety of careful experiments, made with the mind free from prejudice, uncontrolled by previously established opinions and habits.** The results are marked with careful solicitude, and an anxious desire to learn, to improve, and to reform on every point that is not in harmony with physical and moral laws. {CTBH 109.1}

That which many term experience is not experience at all; it has resulted from mere habit, or from a course of indulgence, thoughtlessly and often ignorantly followed. **There has not been a fair trial by actual experiment and thorough investigation, with a knowledge of the principles involved in the action.** *Experience which is opposed to natural law,—which is in conflict with the unchangeable principles of nature,—is not to be relied upon.* **Superstition arising from a diseased imagination is often arrayed in opposition to reason and to scientific principles.** To many a person, the idea that others may gainsay what he has learned by experience, seems folly, and even cruelty itself. **But there are more errors received and held through false ideas of experience than from any other cause.** There are many invalids today who will ever remain such because they cannot be convinced that their experience is not to be relied upon. {CTBH 109.2}

What about our knowledge of God, should it be based on genuine experience which requires careful investigation that harmonizes Biblical evidence with scientific principles and the laws of nature?



Why? Because when we refuse to do this we create superstitious beliefs, false views of God that damage the mind and obstruct God's healing.

Can you think of superstitious teachings in Christianity that deny design law?

- Transubstantiation – the idea that the communion wafer after it passes the palate and enters the esophagus changes from flour, sugar, oil, and salt to the physical flesh of Jesus' human body.
- If you have forgotten to confess some sin you will not be able to be in heaven because that sin will still have to be punished.
 - Why is this superstition? It would be like a person who has cancer from smoking who gets treatment and the cancer goes into remission, forgetting that they also chewed tobacco once and never mentioned it to the doctor—so because they forgot to mention chewing tobacco then they must be executed.
 - This is a false idea based on the false law construct
- If you confess your sins they get erased from record books in heaven
 - This is like saying when a disease gets eradicated from your body the medical record gets erased and your memories get wiped out.
- If you confess your sins Jesus covers you with a cloak of sin invisibility so that the Father cannot see your sins and thus cannot punish you for them. We call it the robe of His righteousness.
- Baptism by water cleanses you from sin
- Sacrifices of animals cleanses from sin
- Keeping feast days is necessary for salvation
- If a person dies and doesn't get last rights by a priest their soul will not go to heaven
- If a person is not buried on holy church ground they cannot go to heaven
- Others?

Look at our memory text: without correct knowledge and/or experience with God we cannot progress to the next element—self-control. How many people fail to develop self-control—which is the last fruit of the Spirit in Galatians? Could it have anything to do with a false experience, a false belief about God that incites fear and undermines trust?

These virtues culminate in mutual affection and then love—what is the difference between mutual affection and love?

Did anyone ever see the movie *The Miracle Worker*? The story of Helen Keller?

- Before Annie Sullivan Helen would do whatever she pleased, when meals served she would stick her hands in anyone's plate and take what she wanted.
- Helen's mother had great affection, compassion, sympathy for Helen, and couldn't bear to act in ways that might cause the poor child to suffer.
- So Helen's mother wouldn't set boundaries or expect anything more from the child



- Annie came and began teaching Helen, but initially Helen rebelled and there was quite a fight, a fight that the mother couldn't stand to watch, but in the end, Helen learned and eventually could use sign language...

Now, who had the greatest affection for Helen? Her mother—but who showed the greatest love for Helen? Annie—why? Because love is not simply about affection—the warm feelings and kind regard, and emotional connection; love is about doing what is actually best for another, even if it feels bad doing it. Love often requires personal sacrifice to do what is good for another.

How might this apply in our church community?

In my life it means that when people call my office from out of state, or come up to me at a seminar, with some crisis or problem and desperately want me to treat them—if I act in love what do I do?

I say no—why? Because I cannot get a proper history to actually get a proper diagnosis and then provide appropriate treatment which requires follow-up and reassessment with adjustment in treatment based on progress, with someone long distance or with a brief talk in the back of a seminar room.

However, when I say no, what do I risk? I risk being misunderstood as cold and not caring etc.

So what should I do? Do what I believe is the most reasonable, healthy and proper action, even if the other person doesn't understand.

SUNDAY

Read 2Peter 1:1-4:

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:

² Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Read second paragraph, “Peter emphasizes that...” When you think of God's divine power what comes to mind?



For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, **they have divine power** to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2Cor 10:3-5

What are we demolishing in this war? Ideas, falsehoods, that are misrepresenting God, and what weapons do we use?

Weapons with divine power—what kind of weapons are those?

I am not ashamed of **the gospel**, because **it is the power of God** for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. Rom 1:16

What is the gospel? It is God's power to save—but what kind of power? Is it the kind of power the Jews were looking for to overthrow the Romans?

What kind of power is the divine power that demolishes everything that sets itself up against the knowledge of God?

What kinds of things set up against the truth about God and misrepresent Him?

- Lies AND
- Selfishness

Thus, what are the weapons that destroy lies and selfishness? Truth and love!

Consider this historic quote from one of the founders of the SDA church, do you agree? Is this describing the same power that Peter and Paul are describing?

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but **He did not do this. Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. The Lord's principles are not of this order.** His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God's government is moral, and **truth and love are to be the prevailing power.** {DA 759.1}

When you read verses like we just read in 2Peter about the power of God, do you immediately think of truth and love, the power to free minds and heal hearts or do you think of physical power?

Now, just to be clear, did I say anything here today that says God does not have infinite physical powerful i.e. that God is not omnipotent? No! God is all-powerful, but the power of God that saves, that heals minds and transforms characters, is not physical might, it is the power of truth and love!



The third paragraph states, “We are called to love God, but how can we love a God we don’t know? We come to know God through Jesus, through the Written Word, through the created world, and through the experience of living a life of faith and obedience.”

Wow—did you see that? The lesson put in the Integrative Evidence-based Approach! The truth is spreading!

Do you have any friends in the SDA church that you need to show this to—because now that it is in the Study Guide they will feel comfortable believing it?

MONDAY

What do you think of the title of Monday’s lesson, “Love, the Goal of Christian Virtue”?

Do you agree? Yes, and if true then what does this mean?

What does it mean in regard to who is saved in the end? Are we saved by:

- denominational affiliation?
- method of baptism?
- attestation to a creed?
- legal adjustment in record books?

Or are we saved by being transformed in heart to love God and others more than self?

Any texts to support this idea?

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:
“Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ.
For the accuser of our brothers,
who accuses them before our God day and night,
has been hurled down.

They overcame him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony;
they did not love their lives so much
as to shrink from death. Rev 12:10,11

What does this text mean?



What is salvation? It is healing and what is the power that brings the healing? The power of truth and love, and where does the power of truth and love have its impact? In the hearts, minds and characters of intelligent beings, how? Truth destroys lies to win us to trust, and in trust we invite God in and the Spirit comes in and takes the perfection of Christ and reproduces it us.

Who is the accuser? Satan, and he has been hurled down, how? What hurled him down?

Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. ³² But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all **men** to myself.” Jn 12:31,32 (the word men is supplied, not in the Greek)

What is driving Satan out? And from where is Satan being driven out?

John 12:31,32 from *The Remedy*:

Now is the time for the infection of selfishness and sin in this world to be fully diagnosed and revealed as destructive; now, Satan—the prince of this selfish world—will be driven out into the open, out of the shadows, out from behind his lies and distortions about God and God's methods, out where all can see him as the murderer he truly is, and thus out of the hearts of all who love me. ³²When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all intelligences throughout the universe to me."

The saved overcame the accuser how?

By the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, which is what?

Blood is metaphor or symbolic for the life of Christ, which is the perfect character of Christ, that the righteous partake of, what Peter refers to in our text as being “partakers of the divine nature.” This is what Jesus meant in John 6 about drinking His blood and eating His flesh. Thus we overcome by believing the truth about God such that we trust God enough to open the heart to Him and then receive the Spirit and are changed in heart by receiving the perfection of Christ so that we die to survival drives and love others more than self!

TUESDAY

Read second paragraph, “Peter urges his readers...” What is the new reality? Is it a new legal reality, we get declared to be righteous even though we are not righteous, which is what is taught in the penal view?

Such a view is not a new reality, but a perpetuation of Satan’s lie; that false legal view has God presenting a mass fraud, which would be a new declared legal standing, but with no real newness of heart, mind, or character.



The true new reality is the new heart, right spirit, and recreation of the inner man where we have died to selfishness and live in a love relationship with God that inspires us to love others more and more ever day!

The new reality is the real regeneration and recreation within the believer; this is design law, not imposed law!

Read next paragraph, “The problem is that not all...” What prevents so many Christians from living spiritually fruitful lives?

Could it be they are told by their church leaders that salvation is a legal accounting of their sins, and that there is no victory, no transformation that happens until the second coming. Could it be they are told everyone continues to go on sinning right up until Jesus comes but not to worry because the legal punishment for all those bad deeds Jesus has already paid, and if you have legally accepted it, God declares you are righteous, even though you continue to lie, cheat, commit adultery, steal, murder or whatever your sin is.

Could the very theology taught, the lie of imposed law with its expectation that there is no victory, just legal accounting of sins, be a core obstacle for Christians in experiencing true victory?

WEDNESDAY

Read memory text and first paragraph, “Yes, I think...” What are the problems with the doctrine of immortality of the soul? It is based on premises that are not supported by evidence—i.e. that God, in Eden when He first created Adam and Eve gave them immortality at that point. What is wrong with this teaching?

- Denies Biblical evidence of human mortality
 - After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to **guard the way to the tree of life**. Gen 3:24
 - God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ **who alone is immortal** and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen. 1Tim 6:15,16
 - **For the wages of sin is death**, but the **gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 6:23
- What does the idea that God gave humankind immortality in Eden say about God?
 - If God has foreknowledge and knew they would sin and yet gave them immortality foreknowing millions would live just a few years, maybe a teen who sinned and never accepted Jesus, but then suffer in hell for all eternity, what kind of God would He be?
 - That God is a sadistic being, not a God of love
 - If God didn't know the future, didn't know they would sin and gave them immortality then what would that say about God?



- That God is not omniscient—He doesn't have foreknowledge
- Worse, He doesn't even have wisdom and can't even anticipate potential negative outcomes
- This doctrine of immortal soul ultimately makes God to be either sadistic, or incompetent and both views result in a god who is completely untrustworthy.

Read third paragraph, "A study of what the New Testament..." Did you notice the lesson authors have done, what SDA theologians almost always do, they skip part of this text? We cannot skip it; we must include it and understand it. So let's read the 1Thes 4, starting in verse 13 instead of 16:

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and **so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.** ¹⁵ According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, **will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.** ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first.** ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

What is going on here? First, did you notice that the concern the NT Christians had, to which Paul was addressing, is that those living on earth would go to heaven BEFORE those who have died? This is the complete opposite of what is commonly believed today.

And today SDAs often find themselves arguing with non SDA Christians over what happens at death—do our loved ones sleep in the grave awaiting resurrection, or do they go to heaven to be with Jesus?

Our modern understanding of computers help us: We are tripartite:

- Body – Soma – Hardware
- Soul – Psyche – Software/Mind/Individuality
- Spirit – Pneuma – Energy/Breath of life

When Our Computers Run Out of Power What State Do They Go Into?

- They "sleep"
- How does the Bible describe those who "die"?
- They "sleep" but, as Jesus said, those who believe in Him will never die!
- When your computer "sleeps" it is not destroyed
- If your computer backs up on a "cloud" what happens if someone destroys your machine?
- Do not be afraid of those who kill the body (hardware) but cannot kill the soul (Psyche/Software). Matthew 10:28



What happens when we die?

- The Body (soma) hardware, disintegrates to dust
- The Spirit (pneuma) energy, returns to God
- The Soul (psyche) software/individuality, is safe with Christ in Heaven, stored securely in the Lamb's book of life – the heavenly “servers”
- The person “sleeps” waiting to be “downloaded” into new hardware (bodies)

What makes most sense and harmonizes all Scripture with science and experience?

Paul's description of bringing the saved back from heaven and also raising them from the grave—their individualities (souls) software come back with Christ, while their hardware, bodies (soma) come up out of the grave, and God breathes in them the breath of life (spirit/pneuma) and they live again.

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, “That Peter expects...” Do you agree or disagree? When your computer hardware gets destroyed, can your software, data survive separately from the hardware, say on another server or backup drive somewhere?

Do we believe our individualities do survive separate from the body?

If our individuality doesn't survive, then what is being resurrected?

Jesus said, “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” Mt 10:28

Is Jesus suggesting that the body can be destroyed while the soul is not destroyed? Yes, just as we described above.

Now, is there a difference in keeping our individuality intact and having that individuality actively interacting and assimilating new experiences?

FRIDAY

read and discuss question 4: What does the concept of present truth connote? What is present truth for today?

Revelation 14, worship the Designer and reject the dictator views of God?



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

June 8-10, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC Event The Struggle is Real in Naperville, IL.

June 23,24, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be doing a seminar for the Samaritan Counseling Service in Sarasota FL. For more information www.samaritangulfcoast.com
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July 14,15, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Lakeport SDA church, in Lakeport CA.

August 18,19, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Celebration SDA church in Celebration, Florida.

September 15,16 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Church in the Valley, Aldergrove, British Columbia, Canada.

September 26-Oct 1, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC World Conference, Nashville TN, and our ministry will have a booth in the exhibit hall.

October 12-16, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Garden Grove SDA church in Garden Grove, CA. This will be a multi-speaker event focusing on the atonement. For more information contact:

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October 27, 28, 2017: Dr. Jennings will speaking at the Arlington SDA church in Arlington, TX. For more information contact: <http://www.arlingtonadventist.com/>