

The Refiners Fire Lesson 8 4Q 2007

Seeing the Invisible

SABBATH

Read first paragraph – thoughts?

In the KJV it reads “Faith is the substance of things hoped for...”

In this text, the word *substance* is a Latin-based word derived from the Greek word *hypostasis*. Let’s do a little word sleuthing and discover what these words mean in English. *Hypostasis* has two parts, the first part is *hypo*, meaning *low* or *under* as in *hypoglycemic* (low blood sugar) or *hypotension* (low blood pressure) or *hypodermic* injection (under the dermis/skin). The second part, *stasis*, means *standing* or *standstill*. *Hypostasis* was translated into Latin as *substance*; the first part, *sub*, means under as in *subway* or *subterranean* or *submarine*, and the latter part, *stance*, means *standing*. With this insight, then, we could offer this modern English translation of the passage: “Faith is our *understanding* of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The more understanding you have, the more faith you have. *Could It Be This Simple?* p. 81.

Thoughts?

Any examples? What about gravity? Can you see gravity? Do you have understanding of gravity? Does your understanding of it enhance or undermine your faith?

What about radiation? Can you see radiation? Do you have some understanding about radiation? Does your understanding undermine or establish your faith?

What about magnetic fields can you see magnetic fields? Do you have some understanding of them? Does your understanding increase or decrease your faith?

Think of these examples – let’s travel back in time 1500 -2500 years and you had some magnets could you conceive of a way to use your magnets so that people would think you had supernatural powers? Why would the people think you had supernatural powers? Because they didn’t understand about magnets!

What about radiation – could you use radiation in a way to make people think you were supernatural, why? Because they didn’t understand – if they understood they would not be deceived.

Does God want us to understand Him? His character, principles, methods, to know Him intimately? Is this to be based on evidence? What evidence? Romans 1:20, life of Jesus etc.

Read second paragraph – What does it mean to “see Jesus and God?” Where do we look? Nature? Bible? Life of Jesus? Are these things evidence? If you see God in nature and the life of Christ and come to trust God is that trust based on claims or evidence?

SUNDAY

Read fourth paragraph “In verse 32...” – thoughts?

How could we think that God could send Jesus to die for us and then turn mean and stingy? How could we think this?

Because some have taken the truth that God cannot act counter to His character or law to mean God was required to execute His Son on the cross –

As evidence that some think God is actually the source of death –

For a loving God to maintain His justice and righteousness, the atoning death of Jesus Christ became "a moral and legal necessity." God's "justice requires that sin be carried to judgment. God must therefore execute judgment on sin and thus on the sinner. In this execution the Son of God took our place, the sinner's place, according to God's will. The atonement was necessary because man stood under the righteous wrath of God. Herein lies the heart of the gospel of forgiveness of sin and the mystery of the cross of Christ: Christ's perfect righteousness adequately satisfied divine justice, and God is willing to accept Christ's self-sacrifice in place of man's death." 27 Fundamental Beliefs 111

“Christ's self-sacrifice is *pleasing* to God because this sacrifice offering took away the barrier between God and sinful man in that Christ fully bore God's wrath on man's sin. Through Christ, God's wrath is not turned into love but is turned away from man and borne by Himself." Ibid.

February 2007 Woodrow Whidden, contributor to Ministry Magazine - Why did God the Father choose a cross to be the instrument of death? Why did He not choose to have Christ instantly beheaded or quickly run through with a spear or sword? Was God unjust in executing judgment on Christ with a cross when He could have done it by beheading, a noose, a sword, a gas chamber, a bolt of lightening, or a lethal injection?"

What does inspiration tell us?

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt

anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:13-15

And one of the founders of our church, just to show my position is not divergent from our founders:

Satan had caused the Jews to rebel against God by refusing to receive His Son, and by staining their hands with His most precious blood. No matter how powerful the evidence now produced that Jesus was the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, they had murdered Him, and would not receive any evidence in His favor. EW 208

Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken. {DA 761.2}

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. {1SM 235.2}

The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us, but in our hearts and characters.--Letter 406, 1906. {7ABC 464.2}

It was generally believed by the Jews that sin is punished in this life. Every affliction was regarded as the penalty of some wrongdoing, either of the sufferer himself or of his parents. It is true that all suffering results from the transgression of God's law, but this truth had become perverted. Satan, the author of sin and all its results, had led men to look upon disease and death as proceeding from God,--as punishment arbitrarily inflicted on account of sin. Hence one upon whom some great affliction or calamity had fallen had the additional burden of being regarded as a great sinner. {DA 471.1}

Thus the way was prepared for the Jews to reject Jesus. He who "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" was looked upon by the Jews as "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;" and they hid their faces from Him. Isa. 53:4, 3. {DA 471.2}

God had given a lesson designed to prevent this. The history of Job had shown that suffering is inflicted by Satan, and is overruled by God for purposes of mercy. But Israel did not understand the lesson. The same error for which God had reproved the friends of Job was repeated by the Jews in their rejection of Christ. {DA 471.3}

Not only was this error repeated by the Jews it is being repeated by Christian's today, Isaiah prophesied about this:

Surely he took up our infirmities
and carried our sorrows,
yet we considered him stricken by God,
smitten by him, and afflicted. Isaiah 53:4

Thoughts?

In the bottom pink section it states, "Spend some time meditating on the truth that God has given Jesus to die in your place..." What does it mean that Jesus died in your place?

Why do I go through all of this? You know that the GNT was last week. I discovered that rumors are flying all over the west coast in our church about the GNT and our team. People are circulating rumors that we are Moral Influence Theorists – which we are not!

I myself am being alleged to be a MIT – this I assertively deny!

MONDAY

Read John 14:13,14 "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

What does it mean to ask in Jesus name? Does it mean to put a tag line on the end of your prayers?

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. The Saviour's promise is given on condition. "If ye love Me," He says, "keep My commandments." He saves men, not in sin, but from sin; and those who love Him will show their love by obedience. {DA 668.2}

Is this how you think of praying in Jesus name?

If we are praying in Jesus name what will we be asking for? Things that are working to glorify the Father – and what does it mean to glorify the Father? To reveal the truth about Him!

What about when we are praying and it seems like there is no response? Thoughts?

In Daniel chapter 10 we find some interesting insights:

DA 10:12 Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. ¹³ But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come....

DA 10:20 So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; ²¹ but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince. ¹ And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him.)

Notice a couple of things, first as soon as Daniel began to pray the angel was dispatched to fight on Daniel's behalf – but the angel met resistance – from whom? "The prince of Persia" Who is the prince of Persia? It is not the king of Persia for he is specifically mentioned separately and later the angel says he was there to support and protect Darius who is the king of Persia. So who is the prince of Persia? One of Satan's angels?

How is Satan described in the Bible? The prince of this world – so Satan is the prince of this world and he has underling angels assigned to different regions and two are mentioned here the prince of Persia and the prince of Greece.

When we pray angels from God are dispatched to counter the influence of these Satanic agencies.

And then what about all those people who pray “in Jesus name” yet who will be lost in the end, why? Jesus said

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' Matt 7:21-23

Could it be they are praying with the words “in Jesus’ name’ coming from their lips, but their idea of God and Jesus are different from the truth?

Again one of the founders of our church to show my views do not diverge from our founders:

Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. Are we worshiping the true God as He is revealed in His Word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place? God is a God of truth. Justice and mercy are the attributes of His throne. He is a God of love, of pity and tender compassion. Thus He is represented in His Son, our Saviour. He is a God of patience and long-suffering. If such is the being whom we adore and to whose character we are seeking to assimilate, we are worshiping the true God. {FLB 59.8}

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? Were we in legal trouble with God? Yes and no –

No in that our problem was not that God was now required inflict an external just penalty upon us – that is a distortion a falsehood –

But yes, in that we were no longer in harmony with the law of love, the eternal law that emanates from God’s character, the law upon which life is based to operate. So we were in trouble – but not with God, we were dying and God was our only hope of healing and restoration.

The problem was God could not simply declare us to be holy and righteous – even though He wants us to be holy and righteous. He had to actually restore holiness and righteousness in us and this is what Christ came to do.

Does the law of God require death? Many say it does, can someone show me a text?

Psalms 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul. What does the law of the Lord do? It revives, regenerates, restores, heals, recreates – thus the new covenant “I will write my laws on your hearts and minds.” In restoring the law of love in us we are healed, regenerated restored, recreated.

This is what Christ came to do. In the being Jesus Christ the law of love was perfectly restored and the law of sin and death defeated.

What is the power that is available to us today? Paul speaks about the good news being the power of God unto salvation – what is the good news? The truth about God and His character of love and the victory achieved by Christ!

WEDNESDAY

Why do people worry if they trust God? Is having an emotion of stress, anxiety or nervousness sin? No, look at Gethsemane was Jesus stressed, anxious and likely even nervous? He was

certainly distressed and distraught and experienced emotions so powerful he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood and was tempted to avoid the cross, but yet was without sin. So powerful emotions are not sin.

Why? Because sin is lawlessness – living outside the laws upon which life is designed to operate, living outside of the law of love and liberty. Did Christ ever stop loving? Ever act selfishly? No!

While powerful emotions are not sin, they can tempt us to sin, James chapter 1 tells us this. They can tempt us to choose to act in ways that are outside of God's law of love.

So why do people worry if they trust God? Might they still have constructs about God that undermine trust? Might they still be battling with old habits, fearful habits of thinking and reacting? Might they be battling with self?

Last paragraph states "But does God still care enough to intervene when a divorce is looming or we feel totally useless? The Bible says that He cares enough to transform any situation." Does God care enough? Does that mean any situation, such as a pending divorce will be transformed by God?

The Bible says God wants all men to be saved 1Tim 2:4, will they be? Why not?

Are there some things God cannot do?

God cannot lie Heb 6:18

God cannot be tempted by evil James 1:13

God cannot love and program us like robots at the same time for love requires freedom – Zech 4:6.

So can God transform any situation?

In bottom pink it asks “is there anything too hard for God?”
How about the hearts of some men and women and Satan?

THURSDAY

Is God faithful when He cannot be seen? Is He faithful when we are not? Is He still there when we disobey?

Have you ever heard if you go where you know God doesn't want you to be God will not go with you? If you go in the theater the angels will stay outside?

When Jonah got the word to go to Ninevah – did he go where God wanted? Did God abandon Jonah?

In Esther's day where were the children of Israel, who were living in Persia, supposed to be? In Palestine, but where were they? Did God abandon them?

When mankind fell into sin, did God abandon us?

Don't teach that God abandons us or leaves us if we sin, teach the truth that sin damages and destroys the sinner and if persisted in will one day result in our hearts and minds being so hardened we will no longer be capable of recognizing or responding to truth.