

The Christian Life Lesson 6 2Q 2009

Sin

Read memory text – thoughts?

Because of Adam all humans are born terminal. Because of Christ a remedy exists that cures all who trust God.

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts?

What does the lesson say sin is? How do you hear it? What is the law that was broken? Why is it sin to break the law? Is it wrong to break the law because God said not to do it, or did God say not to do it because it is wrong?

What makes breaking the law wrong?

What law did the angels break in heaven? Had it been written down, were they told “thou shalt not”? What made it wrong?

Read second paragraph – thoughts?

Where does the Bible say God punished Adam and Eve?

Can someone find a text that says God punished Adam and Eve for what they did?

“cursed is the ground for thy sake” Genesis 3:17?

- The life of toil and care which was henceforth to be man's lot was appointed in love. It was a discipline rendered needful by his sin, to place a check upon the indulgence of appetite and passion, to develop habits of self-control. It was a part of God's great plan for man's recovery from the ruin and degradation of sin. {CC 18.5}

The curse on the ground was not punishment for sin, but intervention for their redemption, therapy, intercession to protect them and part of the plan for their recovery. Have you ever heard, “Idle hands are the devil’s workshop?” God was providing occupation to keep busy and decrease time to destroy self with indulgence while simultaneously strengthening the brain circuits of self governance.

If you believe the law of God is an imposed law then you believe God has to inflict punishment for its transgression. But when we see that the law of God is the law of love and violations are incompatible with life, then we realize that as soon as Adam sinned, God began intercession to save, not punishment.

Read question “What will be the major...” and paragraph following – thoughts?

- This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God’s commandments and remain faithful to Jesus. Revelation 14:12

What are the commandments of God? The lesson suggests it is the 10 commandments – thoughts?

When were the 10 commandments given? Did Adam and Eve know about the 10 commandments? Did the angels?

- Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matthew 22:37-40
- Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. Romans 13:10
- The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Galatians 5:14

- If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. James 2:8

What is THE Commandment of God? What is the law of God? Love! What is Revelation 14:12 speaking about? Loving others more than self.

2000 years ago there was a people who were Sabbath keeping, tithe paying, creation God believing, sanctuary observing, health message abiding, who fastidiously “kept” the commandments, but they did not love and when God came to them they hated Him and killed Him.

Will it be this way in the end again?

- 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?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Matthew 7:22,23

Notice what Paul says about the law:

- Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— ¹³ for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. Romans 5:12-14

Thoughts? Death reigned before the law was given, what law? Paul is saying that the 10 Commandments were not given until Moses – yet Adam broke a command, what command did Adam break? Not to eat the fruit – which occurred because? He believed a lie about God, the law of love was broken and he

distrusted God. Why did some die even though they didn't break a command as Adam had done?

One of the founders of our church understood the law of God is the law of love and it is this law Adam broke and the 10 Commandments were added later.

- "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). In this Scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and cause us to feel our need of Christ, and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. {1MR 130.2}
- If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses. {PP 364.2}

So, what does it mean to obey the commandments?

- A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. By such a one service is looked upon as drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully, and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter

murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {ST, July 22, 1897 par. 11}

Three levels of obedience –

- Level one – childlike obedience fear of punishment
- Level two – adolescent obedience love parent and don't want to hurt them
- Level three – mature obedience, understanding friendship and agreement

What obedience does God want from us, the obedience of a well trained dog? God said it, I believe it, that settles it? Does God want us to say whatever you tell us we will do, just tell us what to do, or does God want us to understand, the obedience of an understanding friend?

- The essence and flavor of all obedience is the outworking of a principle within--the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer, doing right because it is right. When the Word of God is a burden because it cuts directly across human inclinations, then the religious life is not a Christian life, but a tug and a strain, an enforced obedience. All the purity and godliness of religion are set aside. {TMK 118.4}

But adoption into the family of God makes us children, not slaves. When the love of Christ enters the heart we strive to imitate the character of Christ. . . . The more we study the life of Christ with a heart to learn, the more Christlike we become. Into the heart of every true doer of the Word the Holy Spirit infuses clear understanding. The more we crucify selfish practices by imparting our blessings to others and by exercising our God-given ability, the more the heavenly graces will be strengthened and increased in us. We will grow in spirituality, in patience, in fortitude, in meekness, in gentleness. . . . A train of cars is not merely attached to

the engine; they follow on the same track as the engine.
Whom are we following? {TMK 118.5}

What is the essence of all obedience? Love, but where does this love come from? Is it level two obedience or is it an enlightened level three obedience? It is doing right because it is right, which requires we actually understand the difference between right and wrong.

According to the writer, how do we become more Christlike? By studying the life of Christ with a heart to learn, brain research indicates the heart is the anterior cingulate cortex, which grows measurably within four weeks of meditation and worship of a God of love. It is in the ACC we experience love, empathy, compassion, altruism and where we make the choice to love others or to act selfishly. When we choose to love others, the ACC grows stronger. This description is exactly what neuroscience indicates happens in the brain when we choose to worship a God of love and act in love toward others.

MONDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? Why is sin often played down? Because we make it about behavior and performance and people get discouraged when they are taught they must perform. But, when we understand sin is a condition we are born with and God wants to heal us from it, how many would argue against God’s plan to perfectly heal all who trust Him?

Read second paragraph – thoughts? Is desire sin?

- When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ 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

What does this passage say? Desire tempts, but it isn't sin until the desire is conceived, which is the choose of the will to say yes.

Jesus in Gethsemane had a desire which tempted Him, a desire to not go through the Cross. He was tempted in every way just like us, but Jesus said no to the desire – and Jesus was without sin. The desire to sin is not sin, but part of the sinful condition which leads us to choose to sin.

The lesson asks us to read Matthew 23:23 to see where Jesus described sins of omission:

- “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

What were they omitting? Love!

In Matthew 25 Jesus speaks the parable of the talents, the lesson asks us what happens to the servant with one talent?

- “Then the man who had received the one talent came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’
²⁶ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.
²⁸ “ Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For everyone who has will be given

more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

How do you understand this parable?

God designed our brain to work similarly to the rest of our bodies, those neural circuits which are utilized are strengthened and expanded, recruit more neurons and abilities are enhanced. Those neural circuits which are not utilized are eventually deleted.

What happens to a child who was born with musical ability but never practices or plays music? What happens to someone with mathematical skills that never learns math?

If we don't utilize the abilities God has given us and invest in developing our talents, what happens to what we have? Is this an arbitrary imposition by a powerful dictator to take back what He has given us? Or is it the natural result of our own choice?

TUESDAY

Read first two paragraphs – thoughts? This theological understanding underpins the origin of the anti-abortion movement. If you believe this idea then each abortion is sending an immortal soul to hell. What do you think about this idea?

Read bottom pink section – thoughts? What does it mean?

One of the founders of our church wrote the following about the people who will be alive and ready to meet Jesus when He comes. What do you understand is being described?

- When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people

of God have accomplished their work. They have received "the latter rain," "the refreshing from the presence of the Lord," and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received "the seal of the living God." Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, "It is done;" and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Revelation 22:11. Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The number of His subjects is made up; "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven," is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. {GC 613.2}

When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. **In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.** The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old. {GC 614.1}

Thoughts about this passage? Why will we no longer have/need an intercessor? What is the job of the intercessor? What is Christ interceding to accomplish?

WEDNESDAY

Read bottom pink section – thoughts? Did Jesus ever seek to use the governments of earth to promote His agenda? What about His disciples? What about Christian’s today?

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph – thoughts? Who decides who is saved and who is lost? Who decides who enters heaven?

- This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 1Timothy 2:3,4

What does God want for all men? For them to be saved, then why will all men not be saved? Does God choose that they won’t be saved or do they choose not to be saved? Who decides your salvation?

The lesson asks, “Why was Jesus the only One who could save fallen humanity?”

Read last paragraph – thoughts?

What does it mean of sufficient value to meet the claims of the law? What does the law claim or require? The same writer said the following:

- **The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give.** He cannot meet the **claims** of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and **developed a perfect character.** These He offers as a free

gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ **imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character** after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26.
{DA 762.2}

Thoughts?

What does it mean "His own divine perfection of character to atone"? What does atone? At-one, reconcile, reunite, bring us back into unity with God. God is love, Christ, in a human brain, developed a perfect human character of love, which was in perfect accord with God's character i.e. at one with God. Thus all who trust God will be imbued with the character of God and be at one with God themselves!

Read bottom pink section – thoughts?

FRIDAY

Read questions 2 and 4 and discuss