

Loved and Loving Johns Epistles Lesson 7 3Q 2009

Living as Children of God

Read memory text 1John 3:1 – thoughts?

Who created mankind? In Luke chapter three we read the genealogy of Christ and it ends with this:

the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,
the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch,
the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel,
the son of Kenan, the son of Enosh,
the son of Seth, the son of Adam,
the son of God. (vs 37,38)

Adam was whose son? What about Eve, whose daughter was she? Who made the angels? Whose children would they be? Did they cease to be God's children after they sinned?

When your child grows up do you say, "How great the love I have for my Johnny that I allow him to be called my child"?

Is this text talking about children of God by creation? What, then, does it mean to be called children of God? Some have asked the question, "Are only your obedient children members of the family or are the disobedient ones still your children?"

What about God? The issue here is not about all creatures being God's children by creation, or by love in His heart – they are. Another issue is going on – what?

Have you ever noticed our children look like us, physically, mentally, in personality? The question is, in our sinful state do we still look like God? Or do we look ugly, deformed, even disgusting?

From the sole of your foot to the top of your head
there is no soundness—

only wounds and welts
and open sores,
not cleansed or bandaged
or soothed with oil. Isaiah 1:6

But God didn't abandon us in this state. Instead, He became one of us in order to heal and restore us back to His likeness. Those who accept the truth about God as revealed by Jesus and open their hearts are renewed in mind, character, heart and again look like God loving others more than self. These are called His children! "Hey – look at those kids, aren't they beautiful! They are my children! They look like Me!"

But those who remain in lies, who remain in darkness about God who prefer a god that would use power to promote his way are like that god and Jesus called them children of Satan or like their father the devil.

The question as to whether our father is God or Satan is answered by which picture of God we accept and therefore who we are like in heart, mind and character.

So, while it is true all creatures are God's children by creation, not all creatures remain members of God's family, only those who look like their Father.

At the cross, which picture of God did those who crucify Christ have? What did they say to Him?

Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"

⁴¹ In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. ⁴² "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. Matthew 27:39-42

What did they want Christ to do in order for them to worship Him? Use His power to save self! They believed God is a selfish being, a being who uses power to lord over His creatures, one who is just like Satan says! This is the issue in whether we are God's children or Satan's!

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? Did you have a volitional role in your own birth? Do you have a volitional role in your adoption as a child of God? Is there a difference?

We had no choice in whether we were born into this world physically, but it is our choice as to whether we experience rebirth or not. While we do not regenerate our own hearts, heal our own deformities, or save ourselves, it is our choice to open the heart to God and allow Him to do this in us!

MONDAY

Read dark section “What is the difference between...” thoughts?

You said in your heart,
 “I will ascend to heaven;
 I will raise my throne
 above the stars of God;
 I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly,
 on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.
 I will ascend above the tops of the clouds;
 I will make myself like the Most High.”
 But you are brought down to the grave,
 to the depths of the pit. Isaiah 14:13 - 15

What is being described here? Lucifer is trying to do what? Promote self, exalt self in order to achieve what? To be like the Most High, what does that tell us about his concept of God? The entire problem of sin resulted from distortions about God, originating in the mind of Lucifer!

But notice the difference as to God's true nature and character:

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God,
did not **consider equality with God** something to be
grasped, but **made himself nothing, taking the very
nature of a servant**, being **made in human likeness.**

⁸ And being **found in appearance as a man,**
he humbled himself and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name, that at
the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and
on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:5-11

Do you see a difference between Lucifer's attitude and Christ's? Which way was Lucifer directing himself? And where did he end up? And what about Christ?

Some have pointed out that Lucifer's took five steps of self-exaltation followed by the sixth step of destruction. But Jesus took six steps of humiliation followed by the seventh step of exaltation by the Father.

Thus some conclude 666, the number of a man, is the mark of those who try to promote self, exalt self, save self. We can promote ourselves only so far with the outcome being the sixth step of self-destruction. The seventh step is not one we can do for ourselves, it is the step of healing, recreation, exaltation, glorification which is a gift from God. Only to those who surrender self to God can experience the seventh step.

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? Does it sound contradictory? What contradictions do you hear? How can we harmonize?

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. Philippians 2:12, 13

What does this text mean? Do we have a work to do? What is our work? If we have a work to do how is it that we are saved by grace through faith and not by works?

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Eph 2:8-10

How do we put all of this together? The legal model fails to give workable answers, but the healing model fits perfectly. Christ came and overcame sin as a human, developed a perfect character, exposed Satan for the liar and fraud he is, and procured our remedy to sinfulness reconnecting mankind to God’s circle of love. Our work is to “reason” with God (Isa 1:18) in order to be fully persuaded of the truth in our own mind, thus being won to trust in God. Then, in trust, we receive all Christ has done via the work of the Holy Spirit and we intelligently choose to apply God’s methods to our lives, trusting Him with the outcome.

Read bottom paragraph, “Besides the legal implications...” thoughts?

Does the term lawlessness mean we are dealing with a legal problem? If you had a person who drank alcohol, smoked cigarettes, never exercised, took drugs, ate only hamburgers

and fries, had unprotected sex with prostitutes, rode motorcycles without a helmet etc. Could we say such a person “violates the laws of health”? Could we say such a person is living in opposition to the laws of health, is against the laws of health or opposed to the law of health – anti-health law? Would that be the same as saying the person has a legal problem or there are legal implications?

This is what John is saying sin is. Sin is without law, against the law, outside the law – the question is what law and why is that a bad thing?

What is the law? The law of love! Where does the law of love originate? In the heart of God! God is love! Thus to be against the law or oppose the law is to oppose the very heart of God. God’s heart is love so to be against God is to be against love and all life is constructed to operate upon this law of love!

If one opposes the law of love what would such a person say about God? Would they represent Him correctly or incorrectly? Then what about the man of lawlessness? What are the issues at stake?

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

If we oppose the knowledge of God, what are we opposing? We would be against love or the law of love, we would then be lawless or antichrist!

Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴ He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that

is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. 2Thes 2:3,4

Where does the lawless one set himself up? In God's temple? Where is that? What temple? How does He do it? What are the weapons he uses to get into God's temple?

I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;²² Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Daniel 7:21, 22 KJV

Who is this horn that is making war against the saints? Is it the lawless one? What kind of war? What weapons are being used? He prevails until when? Until judgment is given to the saints – until discernment, wisdom, the ability to see through the lies about God and break from the power of the horn.

Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?"

He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated." Daniel 8:13,14

Is the little horn the same as the man of lawlessness? Is the sanctuary the same as the temple? What temple? How did it get defiled? From what does it need to be cleansed?

Notice the prophecy:

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.¹³ Then I saw three evil spirits

that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵ “Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.”

¹⁶ Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. Revelation 16:12-16

The Euphrates is a river which runs into what city? Babylon, and in Scripture what does Babylon represent? Satan’s kingdom, confusion, lies about God.

The angel from God dries up the river flowing into Babylon. In history has the river ever been dried up flowing into Babylon? Yes by the Medes/Persians, which are to the East of Babylon.

- When the wise men came to see Jesus from where did they come? The East!
- In the OT sanctuary service from which direction did the priests enter the Temple? The East.
- When Jesus returns again from which direction is the small cloud seen? The East!
- The East represents the messengers of God, those who bring the Good News, those who bring the final message of mercy to lighten the world, which overthrows Babylon.

This is referring to the same event as the first and second angel’s messages of Revelation 14.

What are these evil spirits that look like frogs? Why frogs? How do frogs catch their prey? With their tongue – what are these three evil spirits doing through the systems of the world? Lying about God to deceive the world into accepting Satan’s version of God.

What is The Battle of Armageddon – what is that battle?

The Hebrew Har Megiddo means Mount of Megiddo, which mountain do you see from the valley of Megiddo? Mount Carmel!

This is the Battle of Mount Carmel – what was the battle of Mount Carmel? It was over two pictures of God. Elijah was God's man and his name means *YHWH is my God!*

“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. Malachi 4:5

What does this mean? What is the final battle? What kind of war is this? What weapons do we use? Where is the battle fought? Who then is Elijah? Elijah and the kings of the East are one and the same. They are those who at the end of time speak clearly the truth about God which destroys the lies of Satan setting minds free.

“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...The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is the revelation of His character of love.” Christ's Object Lessons, p.415

Thoughts?

WEDNESDAY

Read 1John 2:20 – what is the anointing? What does it mean to be anointed by the Holy Spirit? What does the anointing of the Holy Spirit do in a person? How does the Holy Spirit work? What result is seen from the working of the Holy Spirit?

Who inspired the Scripture? Does the Spirit who inspired the Scripture contradict the Scripture or work in harmony with Scripture?

Read third paragraph “The antidote....” It is absolutely true that if we lose confidence in Scripture we open ourselves up to all kinds of error. But what about the person who has confidence in Scripture but takes the “God said it, I believe it, that settles it” approach to Scripture? Do they open themselves up for all kinds of delusions and error?

It is not enough to have confidence in Scripture we must also understand the meaning of the Scripture.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph “The word rendered...” thoughts? What does it mean to abide in Jesus? How do we do this? What prevents us from abiding in Jesus? What severs our connection with Him?

Lies believed break the circle of love and trust. To the degree we hold to lies about God our connection with Him is damaged or severed. It is the truth that sets us free and ultimately the truth about God!

Read dark section “One of the promises...” thoughts? Why spend time with your spouse or children? Is it because they promise you gifts? Why stay loyal to your spouse at all if they aren’t going to give you presents and rewards for your loyalty?

Why do we remain in Christ? Could it be that we love Him? Could it be that we find fulfillment in union with Him? Could it be that we understand, even if there was no eternal life, that right now on earth life is more rich, rewarding, fulfilling, happier when we live in harmony with Him and His methods? Do we only seek God for the rewards He promises?

In Job chapter 1 what allegation did Satan make about God and Job's relationship? That Job only obeyed God because God bought Him off with rewards, is this how we see God? Is this the motive we should be espousing?

FRIDAY

Read questions 1-4 and discuss