

Health and Healing Lesson 8 2Q 2010

The Atmosphere of Praise

MONDAY

Read last paragraph, “God did just...” thoughts? Well said in the quarterly. Where did human life originate? When did God create human life? Is it true, as the quarterly says, that our individual lives originated in Eden? What was the condition of humanity when God created mankind? What is our condition today? Why? For each of us, why are we the way we are, did God create us in this condition?

What is the implication of this truth?

- This is not as good as God can do
- God did not want you to have any defect you may have
- God did not use His power to create us with sickness and sin
- Sickness, disease, and defect are a result of sin
- God is working to heal and restore us to His perfect ideal

THURSDAY

Read third paragraph, “Every soul...” thoughts?

Have you ever met someone who created a positive atmosphere? Someone you just enjoyed to be in their presence? Have you ever met someone who created a negative atmosphere?

If we are creating a negative atmosphere what does that mean? Is such an atmosphere information? Does it reveal something? When Christ said “the good man brings forth good out of the good stored up in him and the evil man brings forth evil out of the evil stored up in him” would this include the atmosphere one creates?

If someone habitually creates a negative atmosphere would that inform of a problem in their heart? What kind of negative atmospheres are there?

- Violent
- Erotic
- Perverse
- Victimized
- Self-absorbed
- Angry, irritable, pouting

Can we change the atmosphere we create? How?

- Remove infecting agents (TV, music, games, books that instill negativity)
- Separate from people who are negative
- Fill mind with healthy material
- Surrendering heart to God and inviting in His Spirit
- Regular interaction with God, prayer, meditation, Bible study
- Counseling if needed
- Forgiving those who have injured
- Repentance for offenses
- Trust God with outcomes
- Set healthy boundaries (leave others free, not just from obvious control but to think, act, feel as they choose, even to not like you)

What kind of atmosphere is there in heaven? What kind of atmosphere do God's children create?

How about the world? Can we quantify elements of each atmosphere?

Heaven's atmosphere – love, concern, compassion, empathy, sympathy, patience, mercy, joy, freedom, truthfulness

The world's atmosphere? Selfishness, harshness, greed, coercion, control, deceit

How have God's representatives been treated by the world through history? What kind of atmosphere did they have to contend?

- Noah?
- Moses?
- David?
- Jeremiah?
- John the Baptist?
- Jesus?
- The Apostles?
- The Early Church?
- The Reformers?
- What about today?

What kind of atmosphere did all of these people create? What elements do you see in common amongst God's people? How does it contrast with those who value the world?

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, "The air has..." thoughts? Were the animals created as they are today? Have animals evolved over time? Have they changed based on environmental changes over time?

- Did God create animals to kill and eat one another?
- Consider all the breeds of dogs and cats, have all of these always been in existence? From where did they come?

What does this say about God? God designed life on earth to change based on experience, this is part of His design. And when we sin we change in unhealthy ways.

Can you identify any way in which life has "changed" because of sin?

- Humans born blind, deaf, or other deformities?
- If we live destructive lives, unhealthy, unruly, rebellious, will this change us? Will we pass along any of these changes to our children?

Life experience changes which genes are turned on and which are turned off, and we pass along not only the genes we have to our children, but also the instructions on how those genes are to be expressed.

The commandment says:

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, **punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,** ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:4-6

What does this mean? Does it mean God uses His power to punish your unborn children, babies, for your sins? Or, does it mean, that God's design for humanity is that we pass along to our children our own tendencies, and if we rebel we, in harmony with God's design (law), pass along disadvantages to our children thus punishing them?

Some people would have you believe God uses His power to punish the children for the sins of the parents. If this were true what kind of a god would he be? Which of us had a choice in our parents? Would you love and trust a god who would punish you for the sins of your grandparents?

How do we know what to believe?

Let's read what the Bible says in Ezekiel:

**18 The word of the LORD came to me: ²“What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel:
“The fathers eat sour grapes,
and the children's teeth are set on edge’?”**

³ “As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, **you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel.** ⁴ For **every living soul belongs to me**, the father as well as the son—both alike belong to me. The soul who sins is the one who will die.

⁵ **“Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just and right.**

⁶ He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of the house of Israel. He does not defile his neighbor’s wife or lie with a woman during her period.

⁷ He does not oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked.

⁸ He does not lend at usury or take excessive interest. He withholds his hand from doing wrong and judges fairly between man and man.

⁹ **He follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my laws. That man is righteous; he will surely live, declares the Sovereign LORD.**

¹⁰ **“Suppose he has a violent son, who sheds blood or does any of these other things ¹¹ (though the father has done none of them):**

“He eats at the mountain shrines.

He defiles his neighbor’s wife.

¹² He oppresses the poor and needy.

He commits robbery.

He does not return what he took in pledge.

He looks to the idols.

He does detestable things.

¹³ He lends at usury and takes excessive interest.

Will such a man live? He will not! Because he has done all these detestable things, he will surely be put to death and his blood will be on his own head.

¹⁴ “But suppose this son has a son who sees all the sins his father commits, and though he sees them, he does not do such things:

¹⁵ “He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of the house of Israel. He does not defile his neighbor’s wife.

¹⁶ He does not oppress anyone or require a pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked.

¹⁷ He withholds his hand from sin and takes no usury or excessive interest. He keeps my laws and follows my decrees.

He will not die for his father’s sin; he will surely live. ¹⁸ But his father will die for his own sin, because he practiced extortion, robbed his brother and did what was wrong among his people.

¹⁹ **“Yet you ask, ‘Why does the son not share the guilt of his father?’ Since the son has done what is just and right and has been careful to keep all my decrees, he will surely live.** ²⁰ **The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son.** The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.

²¹ “But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die. ²² None of the offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. Because of the righteous things he has done, he will live. ²³ **Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?**

²⁴ “But if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked man does, will he live? None of the righteous things he has done will be remembered. Because of the unfaithfulness he is guilty of and because of the sins he has committed, he will die.

²⁵ **“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear, O house of Israel: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust? ²⁶ If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin, he will die for it; because of the sin he has committed he will die. ²⁷ But if a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will save his life. ²⁸ Because he considers all the offenses he has committed and turns away from them, he will surely live; he will not die. ²⁹ Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Are my ways unjust, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust?**

³⁰ “Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. ³¹ **Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!**

Does God punish the children for the sins of the fathers? Then how do we understand the commandment?

One of our church founders weighed in, supporting my view that God designed us to pass along ourselves, our strengths or weaknesses to our children:

- What the parents are, that to a great extent the children will be. The physical conditions of the parents, their dispositions and appetites, their mental and moral tendencies, are to a greater or less degree reproduced in their children.--MH 371 (1905). {1MCP 138.5}
- The nobler the aims, the higher the mental and spiritual endowments, and the better developed the physical powers of the parents, the better will be the life equipment they give their children. In cultivating that which is best in themselves,

parents are exerting an influence to mold society and to uplift future generations.... {1MCP 139.1}

- Through the indulgence of appetite and passion their energies are wasted, and millions are ruined for this world and for the world to come. Parents should remember that their children must encounter these temptations. Even before the birth of the child, the preparation should begin that will enable it to fight successfully the battle against evil. {1MCP 139.2}

Is this speaking of just environment or also of genetics? Consider this quotation:

- As a rule every intemperate man who rears children transmits his inclinations and evil tendencies to his offspring ; **he gives them disease from his own inflamed and corrupted blood.** Licentiousness, disease, and imbecility are transmitted as an inheritance of woe from father to son, and from generation to generation, and this brings anguish and suffering into the world.-- T., V. IV, p. 30. {HL 57.1}

Science has proved this to be true – we change ourselves based on our choices and these changes we pass along to our children – but there is good news for all of us who were born to imperfect parents. (Those of you who were born to perfect parents don't need this encouragement):

- In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. **The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail.** The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but

in the fullness of divine power. **It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure.** Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. **Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil,** and to impress His own character upon His church. {DA 671.2}

What is being described? First, no matter who our parents were, no matter what our inherited tendencies toward evil, through the indwelling Spirit of God we can experience victory.

Second, she describes the Spirit helping us by doing what? “Making effectual what has been wrought out” by Christ. What has Christ wrought out? A perfect character, the Holy Spirit infuses us with new mind, motive, character that Christ achieved in His human brain while here on earth.

If Christ had not done this the Holy Spirit would have nothing to heal us with!

We can actually experience, because of Christ’s victory in His human brain, a new heart, right spirit and victory over all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil!

Thoughts?

But some prefer to believe God inflicts punishment for sin, how do you understand this verse:

⁴⁰ I lift my hand to heaven and declare:
As surely as I live forever,
⁴¹ when I sharpen my flashing sword
and my hand grasps it in judgment,
I will take vengeance on my adversaries
and repay those who hate me. DT 32:40,41

Thoughts? How do we understand these texts? Should we just have faith, “God said it, I believe it, that settles it”? Or should we allow scripture to interpret scripture?

A sword is what kind of instrument? An instrument of war – what kind of war is God involved in? Is it a war of physical might and power?

- For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We 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
- 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}

What kind of war are we in? A war of ideas, centering on the character of God. Is God using might and power to destroy?

- ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty. Zech 4:6

So what about this sword? Are we to believe the sword God wields is physical, or even representative of physical might and power?

- I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that

no one knows but he himself. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ **Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.** “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Rev 19:11-16

- Who is the rider? Christ,
 - With what does He make war? Justice, which is what? Rightness, or truth!
 - What does the robe dripped in blood refer to? Is it not His selflessness, His life sacrificed to save us?
 - What does the fine linen represent? Perfect character
 - What about the sword? Will Christ have a piece of metal coming out of His mouth? What comes out of the mouth? Words, and Christ is called the Word of God and what kind of words does God speak? Truth!
- For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Heb 4:12,13

What kind of war is this? What is the weapon to be used? What is the sword of God? The wicked are destroyed by the revelation of truth and love proceeding from God’s unveiled presence. Our very condition determines our destiny.

- “Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? **For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.** ³⁵ The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the

evil stored up in him. ³⁶ But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. ³⁷ **For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.**” Matt 12:33-37

This gives us the opportunity to explore the process of reasoning, or critical thinking. When you hear an idea, a concept, a perspective, maybe conflicting ideas, how can you discern which is the more accurate?

Here are some of the principles I use:

- I use evidence based integrative approach to Bible study and Come and Reason SS class does not presume to tell people *what* to think but stimulates people to think, teaches members *how* to think.
- My approach is to require any individual truth to also fit the whole. And the main central truth of Scripture, to which all truth must align, is the truth about God’s character of love.
- If any doctrine undermines the truth about God, as revealed in Christ, it is misplaced, misunderstood, misaligned or simply wrong.
- Further, all true Bible doctrine will always harmonize with God’s law, all of God’s law (including nature and science). My approach is to integrate, as my mind can assimilate it, 100% of the inspired record along with the scientific record. I don’t want to leave anything out and I don’t want to compartmentalize beliefs.

Thoughts? Is this a reasonable approach? What about experience, where does experience come in?

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. {Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene 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 did you hear in this that we can use? Examine evidence, careful experiments, examining evidence without prejudice. Why does this work? Because such experiments bring into the open the laws upon which God has designed the universe to run, and these laws are constants, testable and rightly understood lead us back to God. When we understand these laws we can use them as a barometer upon which to base our conclusions.

There is a real conflict between certain views of God being taught in Christianity and even in our church. How can you know which view is the right one? Does the above guideline give us a basis to proceed?

Are we to rely on feelings? When Bill Clinton stood before the nation and said He did not have relations with that woman, did he appear

sincere? Was he able to move people's emotions? Did he garner certain sympathy and were many inclined to believe him?

When Monica brought out her dress, was it possible some had negative feelings toward her? Were their feelings relevant to the evidence found on the dress? What was more reliable the President's declaration of the evidence?

God runs his universe on certain principles, certain fundamental laws, certain constants that life is designed to operate upon.

The Law of Love
 The Law of Liberty
 The Law of Worship
 The Laws of health
 The Laws of nature

Let's look at the law of liberty –

What happens when liberty is violated?

- Love is always damaged and eventually destroyed
- Rebellion is instilled
- If freedom isn't restored, individuality is eroded

Love cannot exist in an atmosphere without freedom

This law is not an enacted, legislated or created law – this law emanates from the very nature and character of God Himself for God is love!

It is one of the principles that life is designed to operate upon and our health and happiness is dependent upon harmony with it.

Because this is a law you can test it – test it on your spouse

- And once you are convinced that this law is real, that it works, that it is a constant, that it never changes, we have a standard against which we can test our theories, our doctrines, our

beliefs about God. God will never violate His own character of love, which means God will never violate freedom, the law of liberty.

This standard, this law is one of the spiritual weapons you can wield in warfare against evil forces:

Remember the war is over the knowledge of God, who is God, what is He like, can He be trusted

Is God like Satan has alleged

OR

Is God like Jesus revealed Him to be

This is the question

We have a standard against which we can test our theories

Is God a power monger, is God a being of stern justice who must use His power to inflict penalties

Does God say, "All I want is your love but if you don't love me I will kill you, I will burn you in hell and torture you until you die."

In every false religion of the world the central fallacy is a distorted picture of God. He is either a being who is too busy to care, detached and disinterested or a cruel being of absolute power that we must be appeased.

And what is the final contest over?

What will be the culmination of events as the Bible predicts?

A conflict of worship, over two systems over two pictures of God

- The Beast System which violates liberty, neither buy and sell
- God's system of love,
 - Greater love has no man than he give his life..
 - This is how we know what love is..

- For God so loved the world..
- these are they who did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death

What is the result of worshiping a God who does not value our freedom?

What is the price we pay for accepting lies about God?

What is the consequence to believing in a God who will use His power to destroy, a God who must be appeased in order to forgive?

It is a violation of the Law of Liberty and just as in human relationships the outcome is predictable:

- love is damaged and eventually destroyed
- rebellion is instilled
- individuality is eroded

And Jesus states that at the end of time the love of most will grow cold – Paul states they will have a form of godliness but deny its power. Why will they have a form of godliness but without power? Why will love grow cold? Because they have accepted Satan’s version of God and preach it from the pulpit!

When we have a form of godliness but worship a god who is like Satan alleges, love is destroyed and over time---

We either become shadow people

- people who have lost their ability to reason
- people who worship out of fear of punishment
- people who become non thinking empty shells afraid to have an independent thought, God said it, I believe it that settles it, we don’t ask questions we take that on faith,
- people who rigidly clinging to rules, rituals and ceremony without understanding what they mean
- We become like that god and will use power to control others, dominate others, coerce others into our way,
- We will bombing abortion clinics, flying planes into buildings.
- Use our power to silence freedom of thought and opposing views.

- o No one can buy or sell save him who is like this god.

OR

We rebel completely and reject the idea of God altogether and become a post modernist agnostic, evolutionary teaching atheist

This is Satan's goal – to destroy love and trust for God and thus destroy humanity!

Love cannot exist in an atmosphere without freedom

God cannot be saying – love me or I'll kill you, love me or I will be forced to torture you in hell forever.

If you hear a such concepts, test them, do experiments. We are to practice God's law in our lives. We are to live a life in complete harmony with God, so if someone teaches such distortions and you are confused, challenge them to test it and see what happens.

Love cannot exist in an atmosphere without freedom

Questions?

WEDNESDAY

The lesson talks about the importance of fresh air versus stale air or polluted air, no question about it. The lesson then states, "It's so much better to sleep at night with a window open, even just a little, so that we can enjoy the benefits of fresh air while we sleep." - thoughts?

Better than what?

FRIDAY

Read third paragraph, "Although there may be..." thoughts? What kind of experiences are we confronted with which will contaminate our minds? What can we do about it?