

Health and Healing Lesson 10 2Q 2010

Integrity: Wholeness and Holiness

SABBATH

Read memory text – what would this look like today? Any examples?

What is integrity? According to the dictionary

- adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty

Wouldn't it matter then what ones morals were, what ones principles were?

Where does one derive ones principles?

- a fundamental, primary, or general law or truth from which others are derived: *the principles of modern physics.*
- a fundamental doctrine or tenet; a distinctive ruling opinion: *the principles of the Church.*

Does it make a difference which definition we use and live by?

Examples:

- The Jews in Christ day had principles set by the church on what they could do on Sabbath. Did the Pharisees and religious leaders adhere to these principles? So, if those principles were the standard then they were people of integrity-
 - Then why did Jesus have conflict with them? Was He breaking the Sabbath? What were the principles Jesus was living by?
 - What did the wrong principles in regard to the Sabbath lead the Jewish leaders to do? Crucify the Lord of the

Sabbath and want Him off the cross so they could keep the Sabbath.

- What is the true principle of the Sabbath? Is it the mere avoidance of work? Is it avoidance of going out to eat? Is it attendance at church? Is it the mere avoidance of chores, homework and TV/Radio? What is the principle of the Sabbath?
- What about today – any examples like this of people in the church keeping the Sabbath based on church rules rather than God's principles? Could they also crucify Christ?

What would lead people to do this? How could people crucify God while they think they are keeping the Sabbath? Where could they come up with such distorted principles?

- We are not to think of God only as a judge, and to forget him as our loving Father. Nothing can do our souls greater harm than this; for **our whole spiritual life will be molded by our conceptions of God's character.** {RH, April 5, 1887 par. 10}
- Having received the faith of the gospel, the next work of the believer is to add to his character virtue, and thus cleanse the heart and prepare the mind **for the reception of the knowledge of God. This knowledge is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation; and it is this alone that can make one like God in character.** Through the knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ, are given to the believer "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." No good gift is withheld from him who sincerely desires to obtain the righteousness of God. {AA 530.3}
- **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 worshipping 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 worshipping the true God. {FLB 59.8}

If you were to describe the characteristics of the god the Jewish leadership worshipped at the time of Christ what would they be?

- Powerful
- Vengeful
- Wrathful
- Severe
- Exacting
- Unforgiving

Have you heard leaders today presenting similar picture of God? Are such attributes God's true characteristics? Who is represented by such? Satan, what are God's attributes?

- Love
- Selflessness
- Mercy
- Forgiveness
- Kindness
- Patience
- Gentleness
- True to principle – His character of love (Justice – doing what is right)

Why would people go along with the ugly picture of God and what happens if they do?

- If we mistake the wisdom of man for the wisdom of God we are led astray by the foolishness of man's wisdom. Here is the great danger of many in -----. **They have not an experience for themselves. They have not been in the habit of prayerfully considering for themselves, with**

unprejudiced, unbiased judgment, questions and subjects that are new and that are ever liable to arise. They wait to see what others will think. If these dissent, that is all that is needed to convince them that the subject under consideration is of no account whatever. Although this class is large, it does not change the fact that they are inexperienced and **weak-minded** through long yielding to the enemy, and will always be as **sickly as babes**, walking by others' light, living on others' experience, feeling as others feel, and acting as others act. They act as though they had not an individuality. Their identity is submerged in others; they are merely shadows of those whom they think about right. Unless these become sensible of their wavering character and correct it, they will all fail of everlasting life; they will be unable to cope with the perils of the last days. They will possess no stamina to resist the devil, for they do not know that it is he. Someone must be at their side to inform them whether a foe or a friend is approaching. They are not spiritual, therefore spiritual things are not discerned. They are not wise in those things which relate to the kingdom of God. **Neither young nor old are excusable in trusting to another to have an experience for them.** Said the angel: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." **A noble self-reliance is needed** in the Christian experience and warfare. {2T 129.2}

Thoughts?

Does this remind you of any scripture texts? This takes us to Sunday's lesson.

SUNDAY

Read top paragraph, "Compromise is so easy..." thoughts?

- "Especially as one gets older things do not often appear so black and white as they once did."

Thoughts?

- ¹¹ We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, ² instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And God permitting, we will do so. Heb 5:11-6:3

What is being described?

- When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. 1Cor 13:11

What is the context of Paul's statement? The chapter on love and what is the purpose of the chapter on love, to give a list of rules or to move people to a higher principle?

What does it mean to be righteous? The children don't understand righteousness, instead they are focused on rules, dos and don'ts, why is this, is this something normal for children?

What are normal developmental stages from childhood to adulthood?

Piaget –

- Sensorimotor - birth to 24 months of age, primary integration of sensory experiences with motor coordination, learning by touching, smelling, hearing, seeing, tasting, building a data base of experiences
- Pre-operational – ages 2-7, children learn to develop thoughts about the world and represent the world by thoughts, language develops, drawing and objects are used. The child cannot solve problems in their mind, thinking is self centered, they cannot empathize well,
 - An example of egocentrism, children cannot distinguish their perspective from others. Three views of a mountain are shown the child and then the child is asked what a traveling doll would see at various angles. The child always picks their own view.
 - At this age they also experience animism, believing inanimate objects have lifelike qualities like the chair was mad at them and made them trip.
 - So how might they conceive of God?
 - Unable to demonstrate conservation – have two beakers of water, one tall and thin the other large and wide, fill the tall thin one up, pour it into the large one and then repeat, which leaves the large beaker only partially full, then refill the tall thin one all the way to the top and ask, which has more water. The child who has not mastered conservation says the tall thin one.
 - Other studies revealed that only 50% of children master this level even at age 13, this impairs ability to see life from another perspective.
- Concrete operations – 7-11 years of age, begin to use basic logic, if A is larger than B and B is larger than C, then A must be larger than C. They can order things in sequence, classify things together that are similar in nature, they can reverse a sequence. But they cannot abstract reason. They begin to start seeing other's perspectives.
- Formal operations – begins around 11 and continues throughout adulthood – can abstract, think logically, hypothesize, include hypothetical possibilities, see various

perspectives on a problem, empathize with others, see the gray and not see only black and white.

What if someone doesn't make the developmental transitions in thinking? What if someone remains in concrete operations? Would that affect their view of God? Would it affect why they do what they do? Did Paul deal with people like this? Would he be speaking of people like this in Hebrews? What about today? Do we have people like this in the church?

Let's look at something even more profound to our situation in the church:

KOHLBERG'S STAGES OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

A. PREMORAL OR PRECONVENTIONAL STAGES: Behavior motivated by anticipation of pleasure or pain.

STAGE 1: PUNISHMENT AND OBEDIENCE:

Avoidance of physical punishment and deference to power. The immediate physical consequences of an action determine its goodness or badness.

The atrocities carried out by soldiers during the holocaust who were simply "carrying out orders" under threat of punishment, illustrate that adults as well as children may function at stage one level.

STAGE 2: INSTRUMENTAL EXCHANGE:

Marketplace exchange of favors or blows. "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours." Justice is: "Do unto others as they do unto you." Eye for an eye mentality. Wrong doing must be punished.

Vengeance is considered a moral duty.

B. CONVENTIONAL MORALITY: Acceptance of the rules and standards of one's group.

STAGE 3: INTERPERSONAL CONFORMITY:

Right is conformity to the behavioral expectations of one's society or peers. Individuals act to gain approval of others.

Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others within the group. "Everybody is doing it." One earns approval by being conventionally "respectable" and "nice."

Sin is a breach of the expectations of the social order.

Retribution, however, at this stage is collective. Individual vengeance is not allowed. Forgiveness is preferable to revenge. Punishment is mainly for deterrence. Failure to punish is "unfair." "If he can get away with it, why can't I?"

STAGE 4: LAW AND ORDER:

Respect for rules, laws and properly constituted authority. Defense of the given social and institutional order for its own sake.

"Justice" normally refers to criminal or forensic justice. Justice demands that the wrongdoer be punished, that he "pay his debt to society," and that law abiders be rewarded. "A good day's pay for a good day's work."

Injustice is failing to reward work or punish demerit.

Authority figures are seldom questioned. "He must be right. He's the Pope (or the President, or the Judge, or God)."

STAGE 4 ½:

Between the conventional stages and the post-conventional Levels 5 and 6, there is a transitional stage. College-age students that have come to see conventional morality as relative and arbitrary, but have not yet discovered universal ethical principles, may drop into a hedonistic ethic of "do your own thing." This was well noted in the hippie culture of the 1960's. Disrespect for conventional morality was especially

infuriating to the Stage 4 mentality, and indeed was calculated to be so.

C. POSTCONVENTIONAL OR PRINCIPLED MORALITY: Ethical principles

STAGE 5: PRIOR RIGHTS AND SOCIAL CONTRACT:

Moral action in a specific situation is not defined by reference to a checklist of rules, but from logical application of universal, abstract, moral principles. Individuals have natural or inalienable rights and liberties that are prior to society and must be protected by society.

Retributive justice repudiated.

The statement, "Justice demands punishment," which is a self-evident truism to the Stage 4 mind, is just as self-evidently nonsense at Stage 5. Retributive punishment is neither rational nor just, because it does not promote the rights and welfare of the individual. Only legal sanctions that fulfill that purpose are imposed-- protection of future victims, deterrence, and rehabilitation.

The freedom of the individual should be limited by society only when it infringes upon someone else's freedom.

STAGE 6: UNIVERSAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES:

An individual who reaches this stage acts out of universal principles based upon the equality and worth of all human beings.

Persons are never means to an end, but are ends in themselves. Having rights means more than individual liberties.

This is the "Golden Rule" model. A list of rules inscribed in stone is no longer necessary.

At this level, God is understood to say what is right because it is right; His sayings are not right, just because it is God who said them.

Persons at this level have accepted God's invitation to "come and let us reason together".

THE FOLLOWING ARE OBSERVATIONS THAT WERE MADE BY KOHLBERG

1. STAGE DEVELOPMENT IS INVARIANT.

One must progress through the stages in order, and one cannot get to a higher stage without passing through the stage immediately preceding it.

2. IN STAGE DEVELOPMENT, SUBJECTS CANNOT COMPREHEND MORAL REASONING AT A STAGE MORE THAN ONE STAGE BEYOND THEIR OWN.

3. IN STAGE DEVELOPMENT, MOVEMENT THROUGH THE STAGES IS EFFECTED WHEN COGNITIVE DISEQUILIBRIUM IS CREATED, THAT IS, WHEN A PERSON'S COGNITIVE OUTLOOK IS NOT ADEQUATE TO COPE WITH A GIVEN MORAL DILEMMA.

4. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE FOR A HUMAN BEING TO BE PHYSICALLY MATURE BUT NOT MORALLY MATURE.

5. KOHLBERG BELIEVED THAT ONLY ABOUT 25% OF PERSONS EVER GROW TO LEVEL SIX, THE MAJORITY REMAINING AT LEVEL FOUR.

The Bible enjoins principles of modesty, humility, and wise stewardship of the money. Application of these principles might preclude the purchase of expensive jewelry, furs, flashy cars, or other items primarily for show. A person functioning at level six would have no problem applying these principles. Persons functioning at a level four on the other hand, might make rules about "jewelry" (in a church for instance) or red dresses, or cosmetics. But they might not even notice a flashy

car or the lady who wears a new dress every single week. Those things aren't on the list. If Kohlberg's observation is true, then level 6 thinkers would be in the minority. They might even be misunderstood and persecuted by a level 4 majority (Christ being the primary example).

STAGE THEORY AND THE ATONEMENT

Level 1: Man sinned and offended God. God responded with angry vengeance taking the life of Jesus.

Level 2: God somehow struck a bargain with the Devil, a market place exchange of Christ's life, paid as a ransom to the Devil, in trade for the devil's releasing his hostages. In the popular version, Satan found out too late that God had conned him, when Christ rose from the dead.

Level 3-4: The Law must be kept. Man broke the Law. Someone had to pay the penalty. "The wages of sin is death." Jesus paid that penalty. The integrity of the Law was maintained.

There is an aspect of truth on the law must be kept when the law is understood as the law life is built upon.

Level 5-6: He demonstrated that separation from God is death. ("Why have you forsaken me?") Since we separate ourselves from Him, not He from us, He is not our executioner. He allowed Satan to play out his hand, exposing his selfish character for all both man and angels to see, and thus erasing all sympathy for the accusations of the fallen foe. God's character was vindicated.

Level 7: Atonement becomes at-one-ment. God did what it took to win our love and trust, destroy the infection of sin and restore us to unity with Him again. Neither God, nor His law, defined as the eternal principles upon which He bases His government, change, but our understanding of His law changes, and God speaks to us at each level of our understanding. It is a mistake to cling to expressions appropriate to an earlier age of understanding, regardless of how valid and useful they were in their own context, when more appropriate expressions exist.

We must be patient with our brethren who perhaps are just beginning their maturing process, and allow the pastor to preach for them sometimes. For even as God was laying down detailed concrete rules for the Israelites, He was already looking forward to the day when He would "write His laws on our hearts."

Thoughts?

MONDAY

Read last paragraph, "If we are honest..." thoughts? Is withholding information the same as deceiving? What did Jesus tell His disciples before His ascension? How did Jesus respond to Herod?

TUESDAY

Read last paragraph, "So much promise.." thoughts? Isn't this good news, that we can be changed? Can we be changed without our active involvement in the process? What is the change like for the one being changed? Is it always pleasant, or in fact, is genuine change, at some point, always painful as we fall on the rock, are broken and die to self?

WEDNESDAY

Sexual integrity? Any questions?

For those who haven't watched the presentation on this please visit our website and watch the presentation: Human Sexuality, God's Design, Your Kids and Their Questions.

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, "some easily..." thoughts? How do you hear the "commanded" portion?

FRIDAY

Read first paragraph:

The greatest want of the world is the want of men-- men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. {Ed 57.3}

Thoughts?

Questions 1 – 4 read and discuss