

Health and Healing Lesson 13 2Q 2010

Social Support: The Tie That Binds

SABBATH

Read memory Text: - I want to thank this class, locally and online for your support, camaraderie, friendship and love. I have experienced God's love through all of you and pray will we continue to grow in His love.

Read first two paragraphs, "It is very clear..." thoughts?

Have you ever been isolated? Is it hard? Is there a difference from being alone to being lonely? Can you be lonely in the midst of people? Can you be isolated yet not lonely? What makes the difference?

I have many patients who struggle with loneliness, they fear isolation, fear being alone. They believe the worst thing possible is to be a single person and so they constantly seek relationships.

Question – what is worse, to be a single adult, or to marry the wrong person?

While God made us for relationship, including marriage relationship, that doesn't mean marriage to anyone is better than not being married.

Thoughts?

What impact does social isolation and lack of human contact have upon developing children?

The study of the effects on human infants of extreme deprivation, in particular the emotional and tactile care-giving aspects, was carried out on infants reared in Romanian orphanages. At the age of two years, these children did not show the usual variation of cortisol levels that were found in

home-reared children. Carlson, M., & Earls, F. (1997) Psychological and neuro-endocrinological sequelae of early social deprivation in institutionalized children in Romania. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 807, 419-428.

Studies from Romanian orphanages reveal that childhood neglect, lack of nurture, caressing, holding, touching etc. results in alteration in neural development including the oxytocin/vasopressin system related to human bonding.
<http://www.pnas.org/content/102/51/18247.full.pdf+html?sid=56a8f379-e1bc-4846-a9b6-2ad4db43d791>

These brain changes increase the rates of mental and physical illness in adults who were neglected as children.

SUNDAY

The dark section in the lesson states, “How does...”

What characters did our first parents have?

Not a shadow interposed between them and their Creator. They knew God as their beneficent Father, and in all things their will was conformed to the will of God. And God's character was reflected in the character of Adam. His glory was revealed in every object of nature. {AH 26.4}

What is the character of God? The lesson states it nicely, “The unselfish love and concern for others that marked Jesus’ life also must have been reflected to some degree in Adam and Eve before the Fall, who were from creation made ‘in the image of God.’”

What happened? They sinned, but why? What was God’s design, purpose? Why did God put the tree of knowledge in the Garden? What did He warn them would happen?

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Gen. 2:17. {CC 13.1}

What is the warning here? What was actually said? How do we interpreted the meaning of the text? Did God say, “if you eat I will be forced, in order to be just, to execute you”? Does this text tell us why they would die?

Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. . . . They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels; but before they could be rendered eternally secure, **their loyalty must be tested.** At the very beginning of man's existence **a check was placed upon the desire for self-indulgence**, the fatal passion that lay at the foundation of Satan's fall. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the garden, was to be **a test of the obedience**, faith, and love of our first parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, **on pain of death.** They **were also to be exposed to the temptations of Satan;** but if they endured the trial, they would finally be placed beyond his power, to enjoy perpetual favor with God. . . . {CC 13.2}

How do you hear this? What does it mean? Why test their loyalty? On pain of death? Does that mean God would have to inflict death if they disobey, or could it mean that if they disobey they will deviate from the basis of life and the only result is death? If God said you are forbidden to jump off the Empire State Building on “pain of death” would that mean God would kill them if they did? How do we know which way? Keep reading – next paragraph.

God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; **but in that case man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automation. Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could**

have been no development of character. . . . It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule. {CC 13.3}

Why was the tree placed in the Garden? What was God's goal for mankind? What was mankind to accomplish?

God made man upright; He gave him noble traits of character, with no bias toward evil. He endowed him with high intellectual powers, and presented before him the strongest possible inducements to be true to his allegiance. **Obedience, perfect and perpetual, was the condition of eternal happiness.** On this condition he was to have access to the tree of life. . . . {CC 13.4}

What was the condition of eternal happiness? Why? If God said, as long as you obey and don't jump off the Empire State Building, this is a condition of eternal happiness or health – what would it mean? Is it similar? Do violations of God's law cause God to become an enforcer of pain, suffering and death, or do violations of God's law damage us and result in our suffering and death – unless remedied?

Here is another place she states it:

The Lord placed man upon probation, that he might form a character of steadfast integrity for his own happiness and for the glory of his Creator. He had endowed Adam with powers of mind superior to any other creature that He had made. His mental powers were but little lower than those of the angels. He could become familiar with the sublimity and glory of nature, and understand the character of his heavenly Father in His created works. Amid the glories of Eden, everything that his eye rested upon testified of his Father's love and infinite power. {Con 12.1}

What was Satan's allegations as to why death would come if one broke the law?

In the opening of the great controversy, **Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed**, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, **it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan**; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted. It was proved, he declared, that the law could not be obeyed; man could not be forgiven. Because he, after his rebellion, had been banished from heaven, **Satan claimed that the human race must be forever shut out from God's favor**. God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner. {DA 761.4}

What is Satan's position? Why can mankind be saved and Satan cannot?

But even as a sinner, **man was in a different position from that of Satan**. Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. **Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will**. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. **For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God**. {DA 761.5}

What does this mean? That Satan, at some point, solidified his character in selfishness to the point it could not be changed. What draws us back to God? The truth about God's character of love!

Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; **but mercy does not set aside justice**. The **law reveals the attributes of God's character**, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for

man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Cor. 5:19. {DA 762.1}

What is God's character? Love, what does the law reveal? The law of love, the principle of life. It cannot be changed to meet man in his fallen condition, but sacrificed Himself in Christ for our redemption - what does this mean?

Imagine someone breaks the law of respiration and ties a plastic bag over their head to selfishly hoard their CO₂ – can the law be changed to meet this person in their condition? No! Will someone coming and tying a bag over their own head and dying to pay a legal penalty help them? What is needed, the plastic bag needs to be removed. Notice in the very next paragraph what she says Christ came to do, to achieve justice!

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}

What does the law require? Why does the law require this? Why does the law of respiration require the bag be removed? Christ came to earth and did what? Developed a perfect character and offers this as a free gift – to us, He doesn't offer a legal payment to His Father or the law, this was never required. What was required was that we are back in harmony with the design template for life. It is so simple and sensible! Thus Christ restores us back to His original image!

MONDAY

Romans 14:7 For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone.

What does this passage mean? How do we impact each other?

What about the adage "I'm not hurting anyone but myself?" Or, "Its my life I can do with it what I want?"

What is the root to sin? Selfishness, have we become so selfish we have lost the ability to empathize, to appreciate how we are all interconnected?

A 2007 study of 16,475 college students who completed an evaluation called the Narcissistic Personality Inventory between 1982 and 2006 found that measures of narcissism have risen steadily in the 25 years covered by the study. By 2006 two thirds of the students had above average scores, which was 30% higher than in 1982.

The study asserts that narcissists "are more likely to have romantic relationships that are short-lived, at risk for infidelity, lack emotional warmth, and to exhibit game-playing, dishonesty, and over-controlling and violent behaviors."

Twenge, the author of "Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled — and More Miserable Than Ever Before," said narcissists tend to lack empathy, react aggressively to criticism and favor self-promotion over helping others.

"Permissiveness seems to be a component," he said. "A potential antidote would be more authoritative.

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,254904,00.html>

Thoughts?

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “All humanity...” thoughts? What does it mean? How would you explain it?

Read third paragraph, “No one hates his...” thoughts?

I have patients who hate their bodies, their looks, some have something called Body Dysmorphic Disorder, others have obesity, others have chronic pain states, others are paralyzed – I have patients who hate their bodies. Paul himself said, “what a wretched man am I who will save me from this body of death.”

Why do people not like their bodies? What is the common underlying theme? That something is wrong, something isn't working like it was designed to work and what we don't like is the dysfunction. Should we hate our bodies or simply work to fix what is wrong, if possible?

When we think about relationships, the church does the church ever get dysfunctional? Are there elements in the church that sometimes don't function properly? Should we hate our church or simply work to fix what is wrong, if possible?

Do relationships affect our emotional and physical health?

Absolutely!

WEDNESDAY

The lesson asks us to consider some Bible passages and inquire what lessons we can learn from these:

- By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35
- Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. Romans 15:7

- Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32
- Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:13
- Therefore encourage each other with these words. 1Thes 4:18
- Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16
- Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. 1Peter 3:8
- Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 1Peter 4:9
- But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 1John 1:7

Read last paragraph, “An outstanding...” thoughts?

What does love look like in action? Consider Helen Keller, has anyone seen the movie The Miracle Worker?

Did Helen’s mother love Helen? How did the mother treat Helen? What was happening to Helen? What about Annie Sullivan? How did she treat Helen? Was it love? Who did Helen in the end love more? Why?

THURSDAY

Read third paragraph, “Think for a moment...” thoughts? This is right, we were designed for service, to give, giving is living, this is the law of love in action. It results in greater health across the board.

Fear results in greater self focus and taking, protecting, hoarding, exploiting, etc. and is the medium of isolation and death. But love is the medium of other centered regard and brings healing and life.

If we refuse to live a life of love what happens? Does God have to use His power to inflict pain and suffering? Why or why not?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1-3