

Redemption in Romans Lesson 12 3Q 2010

Love and Law

What do you think about the title? Is there a difference between love and law? If so how? If not why not?

SABBATH

Read second paragraph, “Romans contains...” thoughts? What would cause a person to desire to obey?

- Truth – about how obedience heals and disobedience destroys
- Love – experienced from God and others
- Fear? What about the time honored method of inciting fear of punishment? Is there a place for this? Yes – when and where? What happens if this method never changes?

- The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely--because he is required to do so--will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right--because right doing is pleasing to God. {COL 97.3}

- 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}

What happens if fear of punishment, or fear of loss of eternal life, or fear of embarrassment or any other fear remains our motivator for obedience? Rebellion and failure to mature – what then about sermons designed to incite fear?

What obstructs or interferes with our desire to obey?

- Lies – clearly lies about God, but what about lies about what obedience is and is not? And lies about why we obey?
- Misunderstanding of God’s law and universe
- Habits
- Emotions/feelings of attachment to disobedience
- Discomfort of change – what if the truth is that a certain diet is healthier than the one you were raised upon?
- Pain of accepting the truth – what if the truth means a certain way of living is unhealthy, like living together without being married, and someone you love and admire is in such a situation? What would accepting the truth mean? We cannot model ourselves after the person we admire, our estimation of them may fall, this may be disappointing and we may be unwilling to allow this? What happens if we are the one in such a relationship?
- Stress of relationships, what if accepting the truth results in rejection from family?
- Stress of society – what if accepting the truth results in loss of job or imprisonment?

Last paragraph states,

“One could even argue that because of the added revelation after Jesus came, the New Testament requirements are more difficult than what was required in the Old. New Testament believers have been given an example of proper moral behavior in Jesus Christ.”

Thoughts? What do you think this means? What argument can be made for the idea that it is harder after Christ than before? Were the requirements of salvation different before the cross than after?

God requires at this time just what He required of the holy pair in Eden--perfect obedience to His requirements. His law remains the same in all ages. The great standard of righteousness presented in the Old Testament is not lowered in the New. It is not the work of the gospel to weaken the claims of God's holy law but to bring men up where they can keep its precepts. {FW 52.1}

It is unsafe to trust to feelings or impressions; these are unreliable guides. God's law is the only correct standard of holiness. It is by this law that character is to be judged. If an inquirer after salvation were to ask, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" the modern teachers of sanctification would answer, "Only believe that Jesus saves you." But when Christ was asked this question He said, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" And when the questioner replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, . . . and thy neighbour as thyself," Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:25-29). {FW 52.3}

What do you hear? Has there been a change in the requirements? And what are the requirements? Love – why is this the requirement? Because this is the basis upon which life is constructed to operate – it is the same as asking why is it a requirement we breathe?

Is it harder today than before the cross? Or is it easier now that we have a clearer picture of God and the assurance that Christ has won the battle?

SUNDAY

Read second paragraph, “For starters...” thoughts?

Several points to contemplate –

- Faith is not a substitute for obedience – why? If you are sick and go to your doctor and you have a kind, loving, competent doctor, and you trust or have faith in your doctor and he tells you that you need to change your diet, exercise, cut out

alcohol, get 7.5 hours sleep per night. Will your trust in the doctor substitute for actually choosing to apply to your life what He has instructed? If you are sick and the doctor gives an antibiotic, if you trust the doctor what will you do? Will trust substitute for taking the antibiotics? Is this similar to our relationship to God?

- The lesson states, “The moral precepts are still in force.” How do you hear this? What does it mean?
- The paragraph states that “if we stumble, we are not cast away but have a High Priest who intercedes in our behalf.” (Heb 7:25). What does this mean? What is our High Priest interceding to achieve? What does intercession look like? Where and with whom does He intercede?

The lesson quotes Heb 7:25:

“Therefore he is able to **save completely** those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”

What does it sound like the High Priest is interceding to achieve? Our salvation – which means what? What needs to happen for us to be saved? Does God need to be persuaded to save us? Does God need some cosmic legal loophole created so He is allowed to save us? Is the obstacle to our salvation found somewhere in God?

What is the obstacle to our salvation? Is it not our own sinfulness? Then when we sin where would the High Priest intercede? Would it not be in our hearts and minds to heal and restore?

The OT sanctuary gives examples of this – where is the law in the old system? In the Most Holy place – where in the new covenant? In our hearts and minds. Where was the blood administered in the old system? Throughout the courtyard and building – where in the new? Inside us (John 6). Jesus is the light which lightens the world and is represented by the solid gold candlestick, but we are the branches connected to

the vine and are to let our light shine – what happened to the candle stick twice per day? The High Priest and only the High Priest trimmed the wicks so they would shine brighter – meaning that Christ works in our hearts so we will shine brighter for Him!

In the parable of the wedding what was to happen to the guests? They were to wear new clothes – was someone interceding standing between the guests and the Lord of the supper preventing Him from seeing them or did the Lord provide new clothes for the guests? Is the High Priest clothing/cleansing us or obstructing the view of the Father?

In Malachi 3 the Lord comes to His temple and does something – He cleanses the Levites – this is what our High Priest is interceding to accomplish!

Next paragraph asks us to consider Romans 12:1:

- Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your **spiritual act of worship**. NIV
- I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your **reasonable service**. KJV
- I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the compassions of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your **intelligent service**. Darby

Thoughts? What does this mean? What does it mean to be spiritual?

The Greek translated as “spiritual, reasonable, logical” is log·ik·os

What do you hear in this word? Can a person be spiritual without being logical and reasonable?

When we talk about being sealed by God what is that seal?

Just as soon as the people of God are **sealed** in their foreheads--it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, **but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved**--just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; {FLB 287.7}

What does it mean to be settled intellectually? What does it mean to be settled spiritually? How does this relate to what Paul is telling us in Romans 12:1?

Consider smoking – have you evaluated the truth about what smoking does? Have you been settled into the truth intellectually so that no graph or chart or statistics from a tobacco company could shake you out of that truth? Are you not only settled intellectually, but have you also decided to never smoke and in character and behavior you are settled beyond the point you could be induced to smoke? This is spiritual settling, settling into the character and behavior.

Consider a smoker – have you ever known one who was convinced and intellectually settled into the truth of the harm smoking does, yet they keep on smoking? This would be a person who is settled intellectually but not spiritually.

And I have a rare patient who actually believes that smoking is good for their lungs and such a person is not settled intellectually or spiritually.

So what is Paul telling us? Is it reasonable and logical for a person to understand the truth about smoking and choose to be so settled they will never smoke? Is it reasonable and logical to be so settled into the truth about God, His kingdom of love, our inherent condition and inability to fix ourselves, that we present ourselves fully to Him for His healing and we intelligently choose His methods

for our lives, and through His grace actually love others more than self?

TUESDAY

Second paragraph states, "The concept, the principle of government, is God-ordained. Human beings need to live in a community with rules and regulations and standards." Thoughts?

Is it true we need a community with rules, regulations and standards? Is this true only for our condition in sin or will we still need rules and regulations when sin will be eliminated?

Is there a difference between rules, regulations and law?

Why does a child need a "rule" to brush their teeth? Does the child need the rule? Once the child is an adult does the child need the rule? Was it only needed because the child didn't have such principle upon the heart?

Where is God's law to be written? In the heart and in heaven will there be a law? Absolutely! What law? The law of love! Will there be codified rules and regulations? Absolutely NOT!

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, **the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of.** In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. **There is perfect unity between them and their Creator.** Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. **So in every soul wherein Christ, the hope of glory, dwells, His words are re-echoed, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart."** Psalm 40:8. {MB 109.2}

Why do you think so many religious people emphasize rules and regulations?

The effort to earn salvation by one's own works inevitably leads men to pile up human exactions as a barrier against sin. For, seeing that they fail to keep the law, they will **devise rules and regulations of their own to force themselves to obey.** All this **turns the mind away from God to self. His love dies out of the heart,** and with it perishes love for his fellow men. **A system of human invention, with its multitudinous exactions,** will lead its advocates to judge all who come short of the prescribed human standard. The atmosphere of selfish and narrow criticism stifles the noble and generous emotions, and causes men to become self-centered judges and petty spies. {MB 123.1}

Thoughts? Have you ever felt under a system of multitudinous exactions? How do we avoid it? What is the truth about God's law?

Do we expect a written law in heaven?

Paul evidently didn't:

We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. ⁹ We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine ¹¹ that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. 1Tim 1:8-11

Why will we not need a written law, or regulations, or rules in heaven?

This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. **I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.** Heb 8:10

WEDNESDAY

Read top dark section "Owe no man..." thoughts? What fallacy or false assumption exists in the question? That there is a law other than the law of love! There is no other law in God's universe and perfect harmony with the law of love is perfect harmony with all God's law!

- But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to give. "I do nothing of Myself," said Christ; "the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." "I seek not Mine own glory," but the glory of Him that sent Me. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18. In these words is set forth **the great principle which is the law of life for the universe**. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the Father's life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. **And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life.** DA 21
- **God is constantly employed in upholding and using as His servants the things that He has made. He works through the laws of nature, using them as His instruments. They are not self-acting.** Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a Being who moves in all things according to His will. MH 416
- **Many teach that matter possesses vital power--that certain properties are imparted to matter, and it is then left to act through its own inherent energy; and that the operations of nature are conducted in harmony with fixed laws, with which God Himself cannot interfere. This is false science,** and is not sustained by the word of God. Nature is the servant of her Creator. **God does not annul His laws or work contrary to them, but He is continually using them as His instruments.** Nature testifies of an intelligence, a presence, an active energy, **that works in and through her laws.** There is

in nature the continual working of the Father and the Son. Christ says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:17. {PP 114.4}

- **But His energy is still exerted in upholding the objects of His creation. It is not because the mechanism that has once been set in motion continues to act by its own inherent energy that the pulse beats and breath follows breath; but every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the all-pervading care of Him in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." Acts 17:28.** It is not because of inherent power that year by year the earth produces her bounties and continues her motion around the sun. The hand of God guides the planets and keeps them in position in their orderly march through the heavens. {PP 115.1}

God is love. His law is love and all nature, as God designed, is an expression of this law. All laws of nature are designed to operate as expressions and in harmony with God's law of love, which is His character.

Thoughts?

Read first paragraph, "As Jesus...." Thoughts? Why is the law still binding? Why will the law always be binding? Does our position undermine the standard and exactness of the law or does it make it much more uncompromising? The law cannot be changed to meet the sinner in his sin – why? So if the law cannot be changed what must be changed? Not the penalty of the law – not appeasing, paying or any other way – but the sinner must be changed, to be brought back into harmony with the very standard life is built upon!

Bottom green section – read and discuss

THURSDAY

Read Romans 13:11

And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

Thoughts? What does it mean? What does it mean to wake up from slumber?

Last two sentences of first paragraph state, “Though, ideally, Judaism even in Old Testament times was a religion of grace, legalism arose and did a lot of damage. How careful we as a church need to be that we don’t make the same mistake.”

Thoughts?

Read last paragraph, “Though Paul...” thoughts?

Is our faith really meaningless without the second coming? If there was no second coming would that mean there is a better way to live than in harmony with the law of love? If we “obey” only to get the reward of the second coming are we really obeying or is it still all about self?

Angels were so interested for man's salvation that there could be found among them those who would yield their glory and give their life for perishing man... SR 45

Isn't it God's goal to heal our hearts to such a point?

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.
1John 3:16

Isn't it still better to live as God designed, if for only a few years, than to live out of harmony with His law for centuries? In fact, isn't living out of harmony with His law the very basis of pain, suffering and torment?

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, “Yet, it is...” thoughts? How do you hear this? What does “spirit” of the law mean? Which is greater, the 10 Commandments or the law of love? Why?

Read fourth paragraph, “Paul here shows...” thoughts?

What does practical love look and act like? Any examples?

- Gifts, flowers, kind words, smiles, food, clothes, shelter
- What about vaccines, time outs, spankings, prison?

Does love ever act contrary to love? Does love ever end?

- What about the final destruction of the wicked?
- How is the final destruction of the wicked an act of love?

Those who have chosen Satan as their leader and have been controlled by his power are not prepared to enter the presence of God. Pride, deception, licentiousness, cruelty, have become fixed in their characters. Can they enter heaven to dwell forever with those whom they despised and hated on earth? Truth will never be agreeable to a liar; meekness will not satisfy self-esteem and pride; purity is not acceptable to the corrupt; disinterested love does not appear attractive to the selfish. **What source of enjoyment could heaven offer to those who are wholly absorbed in earthly and selfish interests?** {GC 542.1}

Could those whose lives have been spent in rebellion against God be suddenly transported to heaven and witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever exists there,-- every soul filled with love, every countenance beaming with joy, enrapturing music in melodious strains rising in honor of God and the Lamb, and ceaseless streams of light flowing upon the redeemed from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne,--could those whose hearts are filled with hatred of God, of truth and holiness, mingle with the heavenly throng and join their songs of praise? **Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no;** years of

probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven; but they have never trained the mind to love purity; they have never learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late. **A life of rebellion against God has unfitted them for heaven. Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them; the glory of God would be a consuming fire. They would long to flee from that holy place. They would welcome destruction,** that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. **Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God.** {GC 542.2}

Like the waters of the Flood the fires of the great day declare God's verdict that the wicked are incurable. GC 542.3

Does God have to act to inflict death or is it when God let's go, stops exercising His power that the wicked die? If God were to act to keep them at His side, what would be the result? Why would keeping the wicked at His side be torture? Would God be inflicting it? What would such a state do to God? What is the only course love can take?

FRIDAY - Read first paragraph, "In the Bible..." thoughts?

Read and discuss questions 2 and 3.