

Jesus Wept the Bible and Human Emotions Lesson 4 1Q 2011

Relationships

SABBATH

Read Memory Text:

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. Matt 7:12

Thoughts?

This simple principle sums up the Law and the Prophets – what is the law and the prophets? It is a way of referring to the Old Testament. The Law refers to the first five books of Moses and the Prophets refers to the rest of the Old Testament.

Sometimes the Old Testament is referred to as the Law, Prophets and Psalms, a further division. But generally, when the phrase Law and Prophets is used it is referring to the Old Testament Scriptures.

So, how is the entire Old Testament summed up in this principle?

Is there a law being summed up in this text? What law? The law of love. What does this law look like in action?

If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. Rom 12:20

If you have done someone wrong how would you like to be treated? With grace, compassion, loving accountability to help you overcome your own weakness of character?

How important is this law? Where does it rank say in regard to the Sabbath?

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

⁴⁰ “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’

⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

⁴⁴ “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

⁴⁵ “He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ Matt 25:31-45

Isn't this law of doing unto other as we would have them do to us the very outworking of God's character of love? And it is this law which is to be written upon the heart?

One other example from Scripture of this law in action – when the woman was caught in adultery – how did Jesus treat her? How did He treat those who brought her? Did He protect their reputations?

How do we want others to treat us when they know secrets about us, when they know our weaknesses, our ugly character warts?

Then how should we treat others? Should we protect them?

What helps? If we view the sin problem as legal is it easier to report what we know? If we view the sin problem as medical – they are sick in heart and mind and are struggling with symptoms, is it easier to keep confidential what we know?

What happens if this law of doing to others as you would have them do to you is broken? What happens? What is the consequence?

In a relationship do we want people to maintain their loyalty and be trustworthy, to continue to show they genuinely care about our health and welfare? What happens if this is broken, someone betrays our trust, someone is disloyal, someone lives for self instead of others?

Will the relationship suffer? How? Will the individual suffer? How?

What is the remedy for breaking such a law? If people no longer seek to do good to others, but instead have had the law of love replaced by the law of selfishness (sin and death) then what fixes it?

Will paying a legal penalty fix selfishness in a heart? Will replacing selfishness with love fix the problem?

What did this law look like in Eden? When God made Adam it wasn't good – why? Why was Eve created as his helper – to help with what?

How have marriages been affected since sin and why?

How have women been treated since sin entered the world? Is it God's plan that woman should be subordinated?

God Himself gave Adam a companion. He provided "an help meet for him"--a helper corresponding to him--one who was fitted to be his companion, and who could be **one with him in love and sympathy**. Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was **not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal**, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was **his second self**; showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation. "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it." Eph. 5:29. . . . {FLB 251.3}

What do you hear described? Has God's ideal or design for marriage changed since sin entered? How has sin marred God's design?

Why do so many religions argue for a subordinate place for women?

The classic argument is taken from the fact Eve was deceived and Adam was not – and this fact is globalized to women will always have less spiritual light than men – is this credible?

Why do women get blamed so often? Because of selfishness in the heart so men who are seeking to find someone to blame for their lack of spiritual maturity – "It wasn't me it was that woman you gave me..." Men are still throwing that lie out and acting as if it is true.

What would you expect to happen in our marriage relationships, our church relationships, as God's law of love is reproduced within? Will self seek its way, or will we become more humble, kind, patient and seek to uplift others?

How will we treat each other when love is written in the heart? As we grow closer to Christ will our marriages grow such that there is greater and greater equality of the marriage partners?

What about in the church? As love is written in the heart will we find greater and greater equality among the sexes or will women continue to be relegated to second class citizens?

Are there spiritual lessons that we can learn from the marriage relationship?

- Life is the outgrowth of love or love is the basis of life
 - As God designed it marital love culminates in procreation
- Intimacy is more than physical
- Love is a genuine selfless regard for the wellbeing of the other

What role does trust play in a relationship? Can a healthy marriage exist without trust?

How is trust broken in a marriage?

- Adultery, sexual infidelity – the most obvious
 - Does this always mean sex with another person?
 - What about pornography?
 - \$57 billion worldwide (\$12 billion US)
 - Porn revenue is larger than all combined revenues of all professional football, baseball and basketball franchises.
 - US porn revenue exceeds the combined revenues of ABC, CBS, and NBC (\$6.2 billion)
 - Child pornography generates \$3 billion annually
 - 4.2 million pornographic websites (12%)
 - 68 million daily porn web searches (25%)
 - 20% of men visit porn sites at work
 - 47% Christians say porn is a major problem in their home
 - Visitors to porn sites 72% male 28% female
 - 1996 Promise Keepers survey at a stadium event revealed that over 50% of the men in attendance were involved with pornography within one week of attending the event.

- 51% of pastors say cyber-porn is a temptation. 37% say it is a current struggle (Christianity Today, Leadership Survey, 12/2001).
- Over half of evangelical pastors admit viewing pornography last year.
- 2000 Christianity Today survey
 - 33% of clergy admitted to visiting a sexually explicit Web site.
 - 53% had visited such sites “a few times” in the past year, and
 - 18% visit sexually explicit sites a couple of times a month or more
- 29% of born again adults in the U.S. feel it is morally acceptable to view movies with explicit sexual behavior (The Barna Group).
- 57% of pastors say that addiction to pornography is the most sexually damaging issue to their congregation (Christians and Sex Leadership Journal Survey, March 2005).

Why does Satan attack us sexually? In whose image are we made? What does sexuality say about God? How does sexual deviation change us?

Sexuality outside a loving marriage alters neural circuits such that it impairs bonding and genuine love and increases limbic system activity ultimately increasing fear, anxiety, insecurity with subsequent self-centeredness.

What other ways can trust be broken in a marriage?

- Sharing personal secrets with others
- Having loyalty to other family members before spouse
- Having someone other than your spouse as your primary emotional confidant – especially if it is someone of the opposite sex
- Scapegoating your spouse for your mistakes
- Diverting money behind the back into gambling, addictions etc

- Treat with unkindness, rudeness, cruelty, anywhere but especially in public

If trust has been broken how can it be reestablished?

- In general healing requires both repentance on part of the wrongdoer and forgiveness on part of the one wronged
- But, more specifically, requires the wrongdoer to, as far as possible, seek to heal any damage they have inflicted. They not only need to demonstrate a change in heart attitude and behavior, but to actually humble themselves and inconvenience themselves in order to promote the wellbeing of the other.
 - Examples- husband cheats on wife, is repentant but wife doesn't trust him. What can husband do to help heal the damage other than the obvious maintenance of loyalty? What about actions to reduce wife's fears? Give her access to his emails, phones, computer. What if the infidelity was with coworker – what about changing jobs?
 - If history of gambling then give spouse complete control of family assets
 - If having been unkind, seeking to lift burdens, without being asked, clean kitchen, mop floor, put things away, think actively about the burdens of the other and seek to relieve them

How can you tell the difference between confession, tearful, crying confession and genuine repentance?

- Confession lasts as long as the person who was offended remains on guard, upset, vigilant and monitors – as soon as the offended party is satisfied and no longer monitors, then the old behaviors will slowly resurface
- Repentance is a change of heart in which the person has died to self and genuinely seeks to uplift the other. Such a person will put others first across the board, will seek to give to bless others, volunteer to help without being asked, will have an overall change in attitude and demeanor across the board,

which will persist even when the offended person no longer “monitors.

SUNDAY

Asks us to review the story of David, Nabal and Abigail...

Read second-fourth paragraphs, “David sent...” thoughts?

“A gentle answer turns away wrath” Prov 15:1

What if we do kindness and it doesn’t result in reconciliation? Does that mean we somehow handled things poorly?

Does love and kindness work on everyone?

God in His great mercy bore long with Lucifer. He was not immediately degraded from his exalted station when he first indulged the spirit of discontent, nor even when he began to present his false claims before the loyal angels. Long was he retained in heaven. **Again and again he was offered pardon on condition of repentance and submission. Such efforts as only infinite love and wisdom could devise were made to convince him of his error.** The spirit of discontent had never before been known in heaven. Lucifer himself did not at first see whither he was drifting; he did not understand the real nature of his feelings. But as his dissatisfaction was proved to be without cause, Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong, that the divine claims were just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven. Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at this time fully cast off his allegiance to God. Though he had forsaken his position as covering cherub, yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been reinstated in his office. But pride forbade him to submit. He persistently defended his own course, maintained that he had no need of repentance, and fully committed himself, in the great controversy, against his Maker. {GC 495.3}

Thoughts?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, “Jesus upgraded...” thoughts? What does it mean “upgraded”? Did God start with one method and discover it didn’t work so well so came out with a new version, like upgraded windows 7, now He got the glitches out?

Were Christ’s instructions new?

‘Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD. Lev 19:18

Why was eye for an eye given in the first place? Was it because God wanted it that way, or that was as much light as the people of that generation could absorb and apply?

What does it mean to “return good for evil”? What is the principle involved? Is it not doing what is in the best interest of the other party?

Read second paragraph, “A couple...” thoughts? This often is an excellent action – but does it always work?

What happens when you give to someone who is entitled and believes they deserve it? What if the neighbors had said, “well its about time you brought us some pies. What, no crust on top? Next time please make mine with crust on top. And you will have them here by the weekend won’t you?”

If they were dealing with such neighbors, then how should they respond?

The example of David is given where Saul kept attacking, but David would attack the Lord’s anointed. Did David’s refusal to attack Saul, result in any lasting change in Saul?

Did Saul initially get convicted by David's actions? What happened?

Are there some people who refuse to allow truth to heal them? Are there some who refuse to repent and humble themselves? Who do they hurt most?

TUESDAY

Forgiveness –

What is forgiveness?

- The offender relinquishing demand for revenge or repayment?
- Legal pardon
- Reconciliation with transformation of the offender such that they are now a friend?

God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness for sin but reclaiming from sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart. David had the true conception of forgiveness when he prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51:10. {FLB 129.2}

What we speak of God's forgiveness of the sinner it entails the entire process of healing from sin.

Does Jesus have to implore the Father to forgive? Is the Father unforgiving except for the pleadings of the Son? Did Jesus need to die in order to get God's attitude or position to be one of forgiveness?

What are the obstacles we have to forgiving those who do us wrong?

Various myths:

- I can't forgive until they say they are sorry
- Forgiveness means restored trust
- Forgiveness means forgetting

- Forgiveness increases vulnerability
- Forgiveness means what they did was okay
- Forgiveness means they get away with it

Thoughts about these?

Read bottom green section – thoughts?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Sins against...” thoughts? What do you think it means “secure forgiveness” from who? Do you agree? Is it always necessary, or usually necessary?

What benefit does it have to do this? Why is such confession a vital part of experiencing Biblical forgiveness?

What is Biblical forgiveness? It is heart change – does it result in a change of the offender’s heart to confess his/her sins and experience forgiveness and grace?

Can this be done without a change in the offender? Can people learn to say, “I’m sorry. I said I was sorry.” And then expect everything to be the same but no heart change has occurred? How would you handle that situation?

Read second paragraph, “There is an...” thoughts? This is so true – we live in fear, part of the infection of sin. When we have done wrong we fear if others knew they would hate us, reject us, that we would be outcast, so we hide in fear. This aspect of confessing sin to a trusted friend, and experiencing acceptance and love is part of the healing the church is to do. But, there is a warning:

Read third paragraph, “A word of caution...” thoughts?

THURSDAY

The lesson speaks about building each other up, rather than tearing each other down.

Thoughts on how we can build each other up in our community?
 What things have you done that are beneficial?

FRIDAY

Read question 1 – thoughts? What constitutes gossip?

We think with horror of the cannibal who feasts on the still warm and trembling flesh of his victim; but are the results of even this practice more terrible than are the agony and ruin caused by misrepresenting motive, blackening reputation, dissecting character? Let the children, and the youth as well, learn what God says about these things: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." {AH 440.5}

The spirit of gossip and talebearing is one of Satan's special agencies to sow discord and strife, to separate friends, and to undermine the faith of many in the truthfulness of our positions. {AH 441.1}

When I am reading my eye will often catch upon passages that give clues as to why we haven't yet finished the work and seen the coming of the Lord. This week I came across such a passage for the first time:

We have had seasons for fasting and prayer, beseeching that the Lord would raise up laborers to go into his harvest-field, and yet, when laborers have been raised up, and sent to different fields, many of them have not been appreciated, even those who have given full proof of their devotion to, and interest in, the work. **Envious tongues have spoken against them, evil surmisings have been cherished**, and tares have been sown by those who would not like to reap the bitter harvest that will result. Before we appoint another day for fasting and prayer that the Lord shall raise up laborers, let us see to it that we treat those who have already been sent, with respect and love, as God would have them treated. Let us not treat them in such a distrustful manner that their prayers will ascend to God for deliverance from the evil surmisings and evil reports of their

brethren. **As long as those who are doing a good work for the Master, are not appreciated, but accused, condemned, and oppressed by the false tongue, how can we consistently ask God to raise up more laborers? There needs to be a turning away from talebearing and talebearers,** and a drawing toward our brethren,--a coming near, even heart to heart, that the grace of Christ may be manifested in large measure through his people. The church should be bound together with the golden chain of love, and then it would be terrible as an army with banners. {RH, October 31, 1893 par. 4}

Thoughts?

Read Question 2 – 4 and discuss.