

Jesus Wept The Bible and Human Emotions Lesson 13 1Q 2011

Partnership with Jesus

SABBATH

Read first two paragraphs – “In recent years...” thoughts?

What does it mean? Why is religion a safeguard to guilt for the committed believer? Does it mean they are living healthier and holier lives?

Or could it mean religiosity produces a false security to allow people to avoid guilt while indulging in sin?

What if one adheres to a system that instructs to partake mass regularly, confess sins to a priest, pay penance, recite our fathers and hail marys, light candles and one adheres to these rules and after every sin one confess it to the priest and receive absolution, might one avoid feeling guilty while running a crime syndicate or carrying our murder?

What if one adheres to a system that instructs to worship on the seventh day, eat certain foods, dress in a particular way, don't watch certain things, pay a regular tithe and one is committed to this and strongly complies, does this mean such a one is holy? Might one harbor resentment, selfishness, pride and elitism yet not feel guilt but instead judge someone who wears earrings or worships on a different day?

Can religion provide a FALSE security in which one feels secure, avoids guilt, believes one is eternally saved, yet in which they are not?

Christ said,

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons

and perform many miracles?’²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Matt 7:22,23

What does this mean? How can this happen?

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days.² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. 2Tim 3:1-5

Thoughts? What does this mean? Are these people irreligious? No, these are the religious, but they deny the power – what is the power?

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. Romans 1:16

What is the power? The gospel and what is the gospel? Is the gospel the good news that God is angry and wrathful over our sin and is forced, by holiness and justice to use His mighty power to torture and kill us, but Jesus loves us and pleads His blood to the Father and all those who accept this payment God won't have to kill? Would it be good news to spend eternity with a God who is as Satan alleges?

What did Satan allege?

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. DA 761

Would it be good news if this were true? The eternal gospel is the Good News, not only of eternity future, but eternity past and in eternity past Christ had not died for sinners. The eternal Good News is the Good News which has always been true and which will always be true and that is the Good News about God Himself!

The more sincerely a man believes falsehood, the more fatal it is to his own soul. He earnestly advocates this falsehood, and those who have not been sanctified through the truth accept it. **The more he advocates error, the more certain he becomes that it is truth,** and that truth is error, and must be exposed and denounced. He is imbued with a zeal that is in accordance with the zeal of his leader. {RH, May 3, 1898 par. 10}

A striking contrast is seen between those who practise the truth and those who have joined the ranks of the apostate. **Meek and lowly will those be who follow the Lamb of God.** Boastful, denunciatory, and lawless in word and deed will those be who war against the commandments of God. They are thus because they have the spirit and attributes of the dragon, who was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus. {RH, May 3, 1898 par. 11}

God's law is immutable and eternal; for it is the transcript of his character, and by it God designs to bring the family on earth into harmony with the family in heaven. God has made it possible for men to obey his requirements, by making it possible for them to be partakers of the divine nature. Thus our characters may be molded in accordance with the law of God. And by willing obedience to this law our characters are conformed to the character of God. {RH, May 3, 1898 par. 12}

What does the law require? Why? How do we become obedient to God's law? Through partaking of Christ, we are actually transformed to love God and others more than self.

What does religion do to those who have exchanged the truth of God for a lie? Paul tells us right after he tells us that the gospel is the power of God to save, that when we exchange the truth of God for a lie the mind becomes darkened, depraved and futile.

Is all religion of equal value? Will all religion result in healing of the mind/heart/character? Or can some religion cause one to feel secure while destroying the mind?

Read last paragraph, “Prayer and Bible...” thoughts? Does it matter which Jesus one is using as their example?

SUNDAY

Read third paragraph, “That must have...” thoughts? What does this mean? Doesn't it mean Jesus journeyed on earth as a human, with a human physiology, strength, brain and overcame as a human being relying solely on His Father in faith and not using His own divine power?

The lesson states prayer is a positive factor in our mental and spiritual health – does it matter to whom one prays? Weren't the prophets of Baal, who opposed Elijah, praying? Was it a positive factor in their mental and spiritual health?

What about the prayers of those who live in fear of God? “God please be merciful, please don't be mad at me, please don't punish me, please God....”

How about the prayer, “Please bless mommy, daddy, the missionaries in China...” the perfunctory, rote prayer?

What kind of prayer is helpful to mental health?

MONDAY

The lesson lists a long list of benefits from regular church attendance and is it true these benefits can be associated with church attendance?

- Does this mean if you experience these benefits you are attending the “right” church?
- Does it mean all church attendance is equally healthy?
- Are there any methods to determine whether a particular group is healthy or not?
 - How about if the group doesn’t focus on mining the truth from scripture but instead promotes emotional experiences? Can you experience positive emotional benefit from a community like this? Will it necessarily result in spiritual growth?
 - What about a community in which hierarchy determines the thinking for the parishioners? Can one experience a sense of emotional peace and security from following the directions of the leader? Will it necessarily result in spiritual growth?

Read bottom green section – thoughts?

What can we do to foster a healthier relationship with our local church? If there is a rift with another, individual or group, does it mean we have necessarily done something wrong? What happened to Lucifer’s relationship with God? Did God do something wrong?

But given we are not God, it is a good chance there are things we can do better than we have done thus far. Any suggestions on how we can have a healthier relationship with our local church?

TUESDAY

Forgiveness – what happens if one refuses to forgive? What does it say about the one who refuses to forgive? What happens to the person who refuses to forgive?

Unforgiveness hardens the heart, and physiologically causes activation of the stress pathways, increases physical and mental health problems.

Is this avoidable? Can a person refuse to forgive and not be damaged by this refusal? What if a person held out for some payment, some appeasement, some abasement on the part of the other before they forgave? What would that attitude do to the one refusing to forgive?

What about God? Does God forgive outright or does God withhold forgiveness until some appeasement, abasement, payment? Did God need some payment to be given to Him in order to forgive?

If He did would it be forgiveness? Can you collect a debt and forgive it also? If some owes you \$100 and you collect it after collecting the debt do you say, now that you have paid your debt I forgive your debt? Do you notice the legal model has God being paid our debt by the blood of the Son, but Jesus said the Father forgives us our debts, which is it?

Consider the parable of Jesus: Mt 18:21-35,

Thoughts? Did the king require some payment in order to forgive? Why do we say God couldn't forgive without a legal payment?

The lesson states the idea that if we do not forgive God will not forgive us, "the thought is terrifying." Why is this thought terrifying?

How do we understand the idea that God will not forgive us if we don't forgive others?

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." Psalm 51:10. And again he says, "As far as the east is from the west,

so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12. {MB 114.1}

Can we experience this transformation of heart if we refuse to forgive and instead hold grudges? So is God unforgiving toward us if we refuse to forgive, or is our unforgiving heart and obstacle to experience the healing that God's free forgiveness would bring?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, "The SDA..." thoughts? Should these two branches be separate or should they be integrated? Why?

The medical missionary work is to be to the work of the church as the right arm to the body. The third angel goes forth proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. **The medical missionary work is the gospel in practice.** All lines of work are to be harmoniously blended in giving the invitation: "Come; for all things are now ready." {8T 77.2}

Again and again I have been instructed that the medical missionary work is to bear the same relation to the work of the third angel's message that the arm and hand bear to the body. Under the direction of the divine Head they are to work unitedly in preparing the way for the coming of Christ. The right arm of the body of truth is to be constantly active, constantly at work, and God will strengthen it. **But it is not to be made the body.** At the same time the body is not to say to the arm, "I have no need of thee." The body has need of the arm in order to do active, aggressive work. Both have their appointed work, and each will suffer great loss if worked independently of the other.--Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 288. {ChS 134.4}

The health message is to be the right arm of our work because it not only opens doors, but models most powerfully the plan of salvation as God's plan to heal us from sin and restore His law of love in our minds. It is "the gospel in practice." Why? Because the

practice of medicine operates upon the law of love. Only in cooperation with God's design template are physical ailments cured and that means leading people to understand the law of love. As they see this law in nature, through the health message, their minds can be elevated to see the reality of God's character. The reason it is the "right arm" and not the "body," is that we need mental/spiritual healing, not just physical healing. We need heart/mind renewal with fear and selfishness removed and love restored within. So if we made the medical missionary work the "body," we would merely help people live longer in sin, rather than helping them experience, through the Holy Spirit, renewal of mind, heart and character.

Thoughts?

Last sentence of second paragraph states, "There's something wired in us, something not totally eradicated by six thousand years of sin, that makes us feel good, even whole, when we serve others."

Thoughts?

Is there something wired in us, or is it something else working in us?

The Lord says, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." **The enmity does not exist as a natural fact.** As soon as Adam sinned, he was in harmony with the first great apostate, and at war with God; and **if God had not interfered** in man's behalf, Satan and man would have formed a confederacy against heaven, and carried on united opposition against the God of hosts. **There is no natural enmity between evil angels and evil men;** both are evil through transgression of the law of God, and evil will always league against good. Fallen men and fallen angels enter into a desperate companionship. {ST, July 11, 1895 par. 5}

Is there something wired in us, or is there a power outside of us working to deliver us from our wiring?

Why do we get healthier when we minister to others?

THURSDAY

Top question, I love this question, “What reasons do we have for putting our hope in the Lord?”

- God intercedes to hold at bay the damage which unremedied sin would bring – he intercedes in our minds/hearts, with Satanic powers, and Christ interceded in the course sin would have done to the human race and overcame.
- God revealed Himself as perfectly selfless in Christ. What does it mean that Christ had all power but wouldn't use it to save Himself? Can you trust a God like that? What happens to the evidence when people undermine the divinity of Christ?
- What about in your own life?

FRIDAY

Read second paragraph,

Every ray of light shed upon others will be reflected upon our own hearts. Every kind and sympathizing word spoken to the sorrowful, every act to relieve the oppressed, and every gift to supply the necessities of our fellow beings, given or done with an eye to God's glory, will result in blessings to the giver.

Those who are thus working are obeying a law of heaven and will receive the approval of God. The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood, and induces mental and physical health. {4T 56.2}

Thoughts? Why?

Read and discuss questions 2 and 4