

Growing in Christ Lesson 11 4Q 2012

The Christian Life

Read Memory Text: “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1Jn 3:16 NKJV)

Thoughts about the memory text? What does it tell us about love?

God is love, so does it tell us anything about God?

Do you know anyone who loves you enough to lay down their life for you?

What is your attitude toward that person? If you know someone loves you that much, does it increase trust or decrease trust?

Do we know God and his love for us?

Why do many adolescents fail to trust their parents, despite the fact their parents would lay down their life for them?

Guilt, engaging in activities for which they feel guilt and shame, and this results in fear – fear of what the parents will say or do.

Just as Adam and Eve ran as soon as they sinned, because they were afraid, so too when we sin we often run not only from God, but from those closest to us because we are afraid, afraid of what they will think, of seeing disappointment in their eyes, of being rejected, or perhaps of being punished.

What is your reaction when it is suggested to lay down your life for others?

Do you get a cognitive dissonance? Do you get your brain going, “that is a beautiful ideal,” but your gut going, “no way”?

From where is that gut reaction coming?

How do we overcome such a gut reaction that we are willing to give for others?

Just after midnight on Feb. 3, 1943, when the Army ship *Dorchester* was torpedoed by the Germans just south of Greenland, its passengers and crew had 25 minutes to get off the boat. As 902 people went for the life jackets, it quickly was discovered there weren't nearly enough. Of the 13 lifeboats, only two functioned.

In the ship's final minutes, Methodist senior chaplain George Lansing Fox, Rabbi Alexander Goode, Dutch Reformed minister Clark V. Poling and Roman Catholic priest John P. Washington, were helping passengers leave the vessel. Then four men appeared, all of them without life jackets.

The chaplains quickly gave up their own vests and went down with the ship, perishing in the freezing water. Survivors saw them, locked arm in arm, praying and singing the Navy hymn, “Eternal Father, Strong to Save” just before the ship dove beneath the waves.)Read more: [DUIN: Self-sacrifice tale one for the ages - Washington Times](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/feb/01/self-sacrifice-tale-one-for-the-ages/#ixzz2DLDSMe1D) <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/feb/01/self-sacrifice-tale-one-for-the-ages/#ixzz2DLDSMe1D>)

How could these men so calmly make this choice?

What brings a person to, as Revelation 12:11 says, “Not love their own life so much as to shrink from death?”

Was it easier for those men to make the choice together rather than alone?

Are those who have surrendered to Christ ever truly alone?

But what is we worship a God who is arbitrary and severe and seeking primarily to punish?

Naturalists argue that it is normal to seek to save self, even kill to save self, how can people go against their own nature?

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Gal 2:20

What does this mean? This is really the rubber on the road, the root issue, the bottom line, have we had a fundamental change in heart motive such that we would give our lives for others? Have we entered into the joy of living a love-life?

It is Christmas season, a time when we have opportunity to give of self to bless and help others. Have you found a place to give?

Read second paragraph, “The Bible emphasizes...” thoughts?

While knowing the truth, the reality of how the universe works, what some might call right doctrine, is important, aren't they suggesting that it is more important to “live right”? Aren't they suggesting one could even live right while not knowing right doctrine, and conversely, one could know right doctrine and not live right?

Could someone who isn't a Christian, i.e. they haven't accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, still live a Christian life?

For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be

declared righteous. ¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, ¹⁵ since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) Rom 2:13-15

Thoughts?

Do we have any concerns about what Paul is saying? Can someone be saved without Jesus Christ? Absolutely not!

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

Then what is Paul talking about?

Is there a difference between being saved by Christ, and knowing one is being saved by Christ?

How many people on earth is God trying to save?

This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1Tim 2:3,4)

Then, isn't God working to save people before they even know it is him? Isn't the Holy Spirit striving in the hearts of men, even if those men have not had the blessing of Scripture to inform them it is the Holy Spirit?

And if those men respond to the Holy Spirit, and love God's methods, principles, and laws, even if they haven't heard about Christ – will the Holy Spirit still write the law into their hearts and minds? And, will they still benefit from all Christ has done for them?

If someone asks him, ‘What are these wounds on your body?’ he will answer, ‘The wounds I was given at the house of my friends.’(Zech 13:6)

What is the implication of this passage? Is it that some might not know what happened Jesus was wounded?

What are the implications for evangelism? What is the central most important truth to bring people to know? The truth about God!

What about the Sabbath, the state of the dead, baptism, and all the other doctrines? One can believe the right thing about all of this and still hold to Satan’s view of God and thus be God’s enemy. The most basic truth that evangelism must start with is, the truth about God in the setting of the Great Controversy and all doctrines must connect to the truth about God and make it more visible to see and understand.

Read next paragraph, “The Christian is saved...” thoughts?

Can we reveal the truth about God, if we focus only on the right doctrines? Have many with right doctrine actual obscured the truth about God? To whom are we to reveal the truth about God?

SUNDAY

Read last paragraph, “The Bible teaches...” thoughts?

What does it mean to glorify God? Does it mean singing praise songs, waving palm branches, shouting hosannas?

Why does God want us to glorify him? Does he need our praise? For whose need is it? Who benefits from our glorifying God with our lives?

It is for our good, and the good of other created beings, for us to glorify God – why?

Any Bible texts come to mind when we think about glorifying God?

“Fear God and give glory to him for the hour of his judgment has come.” Rev 14:7

Is there any connection between this message in Revelation and God’s original purpose in the creation of man?

In whose image was humanity created? Was there any special purpose for this?

What has Satan sought to do in regard to the image of God in man?

The Bible describes demoniacs, those who have been taken over by demons, what kind of character do they reveal?

God is working to restore his image in us, is there a last day purpose for this? Does it have anything to do with fulfilling the gospel commission?

Is God’s purpose of restoring his image in us impaired by distorted God constructs?

How could Satan take Revelation 14:7, the call to glorify God and turn it into an action that fosters his agenda?

What if we misconstrue God as a God who imposes law, and as the imposer of law he must sit in judgment over his subjects in order to mete out just punishments upon him? What would such a construct do? What impact does such an action have on intelligent beings?

What method does the beast system of revelation utilize to achieve its end? Threat, coercion, force and punishment. What method is attributed to God by one type of interpretation of

Revelation 14:7, the same as the beast – is there something wrong?

MONDAY

Speaks of tithes and offerings, if the cattle on a 1000 hills are God's, why does he instruct us to give tithes and offerings?

Does God need our money? Do we need to give?

Consider the analogy of the water pipes in your home – connected to a municipal source, fresh and clean abundant water – but what if you walk away and don't come back for 20 years, what is the quality of the water as you turn on the tap?

God's love is abundant and pure and it only flows into our hearts as we give it away. Tithes and offerings are prescriptions from God to teach us how to give and how to trust him with outcomes.

Read question 2 in Friday's lesson: "Dwell more on the whole..." thoughts?

What is the purpose of the tithe? It is for the purpose of spreading the gospel, to win souls to God's kingdom.

To whom should the tithe be paid? Here is one view from one of the founders of our church:

"There are ministers' wives--Sisters Starr, Haskell, Wilson, and Robinson--who have been devoted, earnest, whole-souled workers, giving Bible readings and praying with families, helping along by personal efforts just as successfully as their husbands. These women give their whole time, and are told that they receive nothing for their labors because their husbands receive wages. I tell them to go forward and all such decisions will be revised. The Word says, "The labourer is worthy of his hire." Luke 10:7. When any such decision as this is made, I will, in

the name of the Lord, protest. **I will feel it my duty to create a fund from my tithe money to pay these women** who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and **this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls.**{DG 106.1}

It has been presented to me for years that my tithe was to be appropriated by myself to aid the white and colored ministers who were neglected and did not receive sufficient properly to support their families. When my attention was called to aged ministers, white or black, it was my special duty to investigate into their necessities and supply their needs. This was to be my special work, and I have done this in a number of cases. No man should give notoriety to the fact that in special cases the tithe is used in that way... {2MR 99.3}

I have myself appropriated my tithe to the most needy cases brought to my notice. I have been instructed to do this, and as the money is not withheld from the Lord's treasury, it is not a matter that should be commented upon, for it will necessitate my making known these matters, which I do not desire to do, because it is not best. {2MR 99.5}

Some cases have been kept before me for years, and I have supplied their needs from the tithe, as God has instructed me to do. And if any person shall say to me, Sister White, will you appropriate my tithe where you know it is most needed, I shall say, Yes, I will; and I have done so. I commend those sisters who have placed their tithe where it is most needed to help to do a work that is being left undone. If this matter is given publicity, it will create a knowledge which would better be left as it is. I do not care to give publicity to this work which the Lord has appointed me to do, and others to do. {2MR 100.1}

I send this matter to you so that you shall not make a mistake. Circumstances alter cases. I would not advise that anyone should make a practice of gathering up tithe

money. **But for years there have now and then been persons who have lost confidence in the appropriation of the tithe, who have placed their tithe in my hands, and said that if I did not take it they would themselves appropriate it to the families of the most needy ministers they could find. I have taken the money, given a receipt for it, and told them how it was appropriated.** {2MR 100.2}

Thoughts?

What is the purpose of the tithe? It is to promote the gospel message.

According to EG White when she didn't give her tithe to the organized church, but used it to help those promoting the gospel, did the money get put into the "Lord's treasury"?

Why does she say she didn't want to broadcast this around? Because the church organization would falter if everyone felt free to do anything with the tithe.

What is the point? That each person has their own relationship with God, the tithe is God's and he can direct its use and some persons may come under conviction, as EGW and others she worked with did, to direct their tithe toward other laborers who are not funded by the church, and we should not condemn them or judge them for it.

I also think this is another great example of how God doesn't set up cookie cutter rules that apply to all people, in all circumstances, but operates upon principles, and those principles can be applied differently depending on situation.

But far too many people don't like to think, and get confused, and feel more secure if they are simply given a "rule" do this, they do it and feel good about doing "right". No work on Sabbath, great, sorry can't heal on Sabbath, the rule says don't do it. "I fell so good that I am doing what is right..." The

rule says, give your tithe to a systemized organization, great, give blindly, never question what message, what picture of God the organization is spreading with the tithe, but we can feel good we are keeping the rule.

Does God want more from us than mere rule keeping? Does he want us to enter into an intelligent relationship with him, in which we understand who he is, what he is trying to accomplish and use our energies to work along with him?

Just to be clear, lest someone take this discussion and suggest things I have not said. I have not soliciting for anyone to send their tithe to our ministry. I am advocating for each person to become an intelligent friend of God, to stop blindly following rules without thinking, to use all your resources to promote the spread of the truth about God that will lighten the world, in the places you know God would have you use those resources.

WEDNESDAY

Read second paragraph, “To define something...” thoughts?

I agree with this, but had several questions – has it been your experience that within Christianity genuine equality between husbands and wives, men and women is promoted?

Does this mean that if Christianity fails to promote genuine equality between husband and wife they are violating God’s plan for marriage?

What is the purpose of emphasizing these truths about marriage? Could it be some feel marriage is under attack? From where?

Read fourth paragraph, “Together with issues...” thoughts?

The lesson asks what biblically based counsel can we bring to these issues?

How many of these issues are confused because of how the church and local culture interact?

For instance, polygamy – culture practiced this and so did God's children for centuries. What about cohabitation? What is the difference between cohabitation and marriage? Does culture make a difference?

According to Wikipedia, in ancient Greece, no special civil ceremony was required for marriage, only mutual agreement and the fact the couple regarded each other as husband and wife. In other words, they cohabitated. Greek men married in their late 20's and women late teens.

In ancient Roman there were several types of marriages. The traditional form called *conventio in manum* required a ceremony with witnesses and was also dissolved with a ceremony.^[44] In this type of marriage, a woman lost her family rights of inheritance of her old family and gained them with her new one. She now was subject to the authority of her husband. There was the free marriage known as *sine manu*. In this arrangement, the wife remained a member of her original family; she stayed under the authority of her father, kept her family rights of inheritance with her old family and did not gain any with the new family.^[45] The minimum age of marriage for girls was 12.^[46]

From the early Christian era (30 to 325 CE), marriage was thought of as primarily a private matter, with no uniform religious or other ceremony being required.^[48] However, bishop Ignatius of Antioch writing around 110 to bishop Polycarp of Smyrna exhorts, "[I]t becomes both men and women who marry, to form their union with the approval of the bishop, that their marriage may be according to God, and not after their own lust."^[49]

In the 12th century, women were obligated to take the name of their husbands and starting in the second half of the 16th century parental consent along with the church's consent was required for marriage.^[50]

With few local exceptions, until 1545, Christian marriages in Europe were by mutual consent, declaration of intention to marry and upon the subsequent physical union of the parties.^{[51][52]} The couple would promise verbally to each other that they would be married to each other; the presence of a priest or witnesses was not required.^[53] This promise was known as the "verbum." If freely given and made in the present tense (e.g., "I marry you"), it was unquestionably binding;^[51] if made in the future tense ("I will marry you"), it would constitute a betrothal. One of the functions of churches from the Middle Ages was to register marriages. There was no state involvement in marriage and personal status, with these issues being adjudicated in ecclesiastical courts. During the Middle Ages marriages were arranged, sometimes as early as birth, and these early pledges to marry were often used to ensure treaties between different royal families, nobles, and heirs of fiefdoms. The church resisted these imposed unions, and increased the number of causes for nullification of these arrangements.^[50] As Christianity spread during the Roman period and the Middle Ages, the idea of free choice in selecting marriage partners increased and spread with it.^[50]

The average age of marriage for most Northwestern Europeans from the late 14th century into the 19th century was around 25 years of age;^{[54][55][56]} as the Church dictated that both parties had to be at least 21 years of age to marry without the consent of their parents, the bride and groom were roughly the same age, with most brides in their early twenties and most grooms two or three years older,^[56] and a substantial number of women married for the first time in their thirties and forties, particularly in urban areas,^[57] with the average age at first marriage rising and falling as circumstances

dictated. In better times, more people could afford to marry earlier and thus fertility rose and conversely marriages were delayed or foregone when times were bad, thus restricting family size;^[58] after the Black Death, the greater availability of profitable jobs allowed more people to marry young and have more children,^[59] but the stabilization of the population in the 16th century meant less job opportunities and thus more people delaying marriages.^[60]

Thus far marriage through western society has been primarily a church institution, without any state involvement. Divorce, annulment was not done by the state, but by the church. Something changed, what?

As part of the Protestant Reformation, the role of recording marriages and setting the rules for marriage passed to the state, reflecting Martin Luther's view that marriage was a "worldly thing".^[61] By the 17th century, many of the Protestant European countries had a state involvement in marriage.

As part of the Counter-Reformation, in 1563 the Council of Trent decreed that a Roman Catholic marriage would be recognized only if the marriage ceremony was officiated by a priest with two witnesses. The Council also authorized a Catechism, issued in 1566, which defined marriage as, "The conjugal union of man and woman, contracted between two qualified persons, which obliges them to live together throughout life."^[63]

In the early modern period, John Calvin, and his Protestant colleagues reformulated Christian marriage by enacting the Marriage Ordinance of Geneva, which imposed "The dual requirements of state registration and church consecration to constitute marriage"^[63] for recognition.

Thoughts? Do you find it interesting that marriage was a strictly religious institution until the Reformation, and it was the Reformers who merged church and state on this issue?

Are we now finding that the merger of church and state is causing problems? Christians invited the state into the marriage institution, and now the state is redefining it, and many Christians are unhappy about this. Should this be another lesson in church/state relations?

Does it trouble you that this is an example of church/state union orchestrated by Protestantism? What is the lesson?

How should we deal with this issue today?

Is there a difference between what you choose to do in your personal life, and what one should seek government to do in regard to marriage?

Is there a difference between Biblical marriage and marriage as sanctioned by a human government, i.e. legal marriage?

- Should the church seek to get the state to enforce the church's view of marriage?
- Would you be happy Muslims became a majority and legalized polygamy?
- What about in the days past when in Utah polygamy was legal?

- Is there a difference in spiritual union, marriage blessed by God, and legal marriage?
- Do the state and the church serve the same master?
- Do the state and the church have the same agenda?
- Do the state and the church concern themselves with the same elements of marriage?
- Church is concerned with God's blessing, unity of two individuals in a holy covenant, spiritual wholeness, honoring God with one's life, revealing the truth of God's character as he designed marriage to do, family integrity, raising children in Godly ways, etc.
- Is the state concerned about any of these? With what is the state concerned? Legal contracts, who inherits whose

- property, who is the legal guardian, who makes legal health care decisions, not who is united by God.
- Should, adults, in our society be allowed to enter into legal contracts regarding the disposition of their property, guardianship, medical decision-making etc.? What if those adults are homosexual?
 - Can we live in peace with those who enter into such contracts, even if they call in marriage?
 - But, is every “marriage” blessed by God?
 - Can people get legally married, but not experience the marital union as God designed?
 - Read third paragraph, “Of course....”
 - Is every marriage a marriage that has been united by God?
 - Are some marriages actually traps of Satan?
 - Can two people get married legally, and not be married in God’s eyes?
 - What about homosexual marriage?
 - What about some heterosexual marriages?

So, is there a difference between a church sanctioning an action, and the state sanctioning it?

What system do you prefer – the one in which such matters are decided by the church – as in the Middle Ages, the one we have in which these matters are decided by the state, or a mixed system in which one has to get both the state and church to agree?

What about divorce? Last week the lesson stated that a judge who broke the Sabbath commandment was guilty of breaking all 10 because if you break in one point you break in all points. Does that mean a spouse who steals from their spouse to support a drug habit is guilty of adultery?

Yes or no? What is adultery? Betrayal, selfishness, giving your heart to another, a break down of love.

Is this another issue where we are to think for ourselves?

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Jesus tells us...” thoughts?

What does it mean to love someone as we love ourselves?

- To love automatically?
- To do unto others as we want done to us?
- Other insights?

I read this in Derek Flood’s book, *Healing the Gospel*, and found it gave a particular insight:

“C.S. Lewis once commented that he found the distinction of ‘loving the sinner but hating the sin’ to be absurd. How can you separate the two? How can you hate what someone does, but not hate them? Until it occurred to him that there was one man who he had been doing this with his entire life- himself. Loving our enemies simply means loving others the way we love ourselves.” (Flood, D. *Healing the Gospel: A Radical Vision for Grace, Justice, and the Cross*).

Thoughts? Do we love self by recognizing who we are is not defined by the mistakes we make, not defined by the struggles we battle, or the sinful nature with which we are encumbered, but we know, we are God’s creation, made in his image, and when he we see ourselves past the difficulties, and love ourselves in spite of our shortcomings?

Does it mean to love others for who they were designed to be, and when we see someone who is “evil” that we don’t hate them, we experience compassion, pity, sadness for them as they don’t know the joy of God’s kingdom? And does that lead us to treat them with love, with kindness, and thus heap burning coals on their head?

But are there some, who rather than loving their selves, they hate their own selves? They spend years in self-flagellation

and self-punishment, guilt ridden, with self-loathing and self-disgust?

What would you say to someone like this?

Read last paragraph, "The redemption that the sinner..." thoughts?

THURSDAY

Read fourth paragraph, "Parents cannot..." thoughts?

Do you agree, disagree? Why or why not?

Read next paragraph, "2. Civic Duties..." thoughts?


If we model ourselves after Christ and the Apostles, how did they go about fulfilling their civic duty? How did they go about opposing discrimination? What about slavery? Didn't they go about it by working to change the hearts of men so that people loved others more than self?

FRIDAY

Question 1, any further discussion?

44. [^ "Magnus Hirschfeld Archive of Sexology"](#). .hu-berlin.de. Retrieved 2010-08-27.
45. [^ "Roman empire.net marriage"](#). Roman-empire.net. Retrieved 2010-08-27.
46. [^ Treggiari, Susan. *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*. p. 39.](#)
47. [^ Herlihy, David. 1985. *Medieval Households*. Harvard University Press. 73-75](#)
48. [^ McSheffrey, Shannon \(2006\). *Marriage, sex, and civic culture in late medieval London*. University of](#)

- Pennsylvania Press. p. 21. [ISBN 978-0-8122-3938-6](#). Retrieved April 16, 2012.
49. ^ ["St. Ignatius of Antioch to Polycarp \(Roberts-Donaldson translation\)"](#). Earlychristianwritings.com. 2006-02-02. Retrieved 2010-08-27.
50. ^ [a b c](#) Pernoud, Régine (2000). *Those terrible Middle Ages: debunking the myths*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press. p. 102. [ISBN 978-0-89870-781-6](#).
51. ^ [a b](#) [upenn.edu Excerpt from Marriage, Sex, and Civic Culture in Late Medieval London](#) "*the sacramental bond of marriage could be made only through the freely given consent of both parties*"
52. ^ ["marriage.about.com"](#). marriage.about.com. 2010-06-16. Retrieved 2010-08-27.
53. ^ ["Marriage Records"](#). Exploregenealogy.co.uk. 2007-10-29. Retrieved 2010-08-27.
54. ^ Stone, Linda. 2010. Kinship and Gender. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. 231-236
55. ^ Schofield, Phillip R. 2003. Peasant and community in Medieval England, 1200–1500. *Medieval culture and society*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan. p 98.
56. ^ [a b](#) Laslett, Peter. 1965. *The World We Have Lost*. New York, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. p 82
57. ^ Coontz, Stephanie. 2005. *Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage*. New York, New York: Viking Press, Penguin Group Inc. p 125-129.
58. ^ Kertzer, David I and Marzio Barbagli. 2001. *The history of the European family*. New Haven: Yale University Press. p xxii
59. ^ Lehmberg, Stanford E. and Samantha A. Meigs. 2008. *The Peoples of the British Isles: A New History: From Prehistoric Times to 1688*. Lyceum Books. p 117
60. ^ De Moor, Tine and Jan Luiten van Zanden. 2009. [Girl power: the European marriage pattern and](#)

- labour markets in the North Sea region in the late medieval and early modern period. Wiley Online Library. p 17
61. [^]  "History of Marriage". *Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. 1913.
 62. [^] West's Encyclopedia of American Law, 2nd Edition. Thomson Gale, 2005. ISBN 0-7876-6367-0
 63. [^] a b c d e Witte Jr., John (1997). *From Sacrament to Contract: Marriage, Religion, and Law in the Western Tradition*. Westminster John Knox Press. pp. 39–40. ISBN 0-664-25543-4.