



Christ and His Law Lesson 3 2Q 2014

Christ and Religious Tradition

Recent Email feedback:

I want to thank you for the case of God and Your Brain that was sent to me. I have distributed them and have four left. I have given them to pastors of other churches, and the resounding affirmation has been incredible. I want more. I will be sending you a hundred dollar donation within the next week. I know it is nothing in comparison to the value, or investment you have made, but it is the most I have at the moment. I would that every Christian had this set of DVD's. Thank you so much. CA

*Hi Dr. J and Come and Reason Ministries,
Your seminar was presented as a sermon in my local church today. Many lives were touched. People are requesting more copies of your God and Your Brain DVD to share with families and friends. I gave your business card out to some people but some suggested a collective request. I am wondering if you could send more copies (a box perhaps). Thanks. Canada*

I am getting quite a response to your DVDs. I have friends in Denver and St. Petersburg that I have shared your DVDs and both places are telling me they are getting a great response to your material. It's generating conversation and people are examining their thought processes and actions more closely. There are so many churches here in the Washington DC beltway area, and just as great a need for closer self-examination. Please send 25 copies of the DVDs. VA

I saw this series on YouTube and they absolutely have changed my life! I want to help change the lives of others who are also suffering with depression, sense of worthlessness and fear of abandonment, insecurities etc. WA

Got the DVDs, thank you, will give you a Great Report in Class > Its a like the Latter Rain in a Berry Colored Box. HI

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

May 16/17: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Auburn SDA Church, in Auburn CA. Friday Evening – The Model of the Mind; and Saturday – The God and Your Brain Seminar

June 11-13: Dr. Jennings will be presenting at the *Rethinking Hell Conference: The Legacy of Edward Fudge and the Future of Conditionalism* in Houston, TX To find our more visit: <http://www.rethinkinghellconference.com/2014/>

June 21 Saturday – Jfest: Come and Reason Ministries will have a booth at J103's Jfest at Camp Jordan. We will give away our materials. We will still have class on June 21 at our regular time.



Oct 2-4: Dr. Jennings will be at the American Association of Christian Counselors National Convention in Branson, MO. He and Dr. Curt Thomson, Christian Psychiatrist and author of *Anatomy of the Soul*, will be conducting an 8-hour workshop entitled, **Neurobiology and the Treatment of Mood and Anxiety Disorders**. Dr. Jennings will also be a plenary speaker and Come and Reason Ministries will have a booth to give away our materials.

Oct 24/25: Dr. Jennings will be at Loma Linda University presenting a Spiritual Emphasis Weekend for the psychiatry residents and students.

There are several other discussions underway with interested parties in South Africa and Australia – we would appreciate your prayers that the Lord will enable us to go and speak where He would have us go.

AMAZON Smile: Amazon now has a program that you can select a charity and a percent of all your purchases will be donated to support that charity. Come and Reason Ministries is a registered Charity. So, you can select that, and whenever you shop in their smile.amazon.com site a portion of your purchase will benefit this ministry.

NOTE: WARNING: There is another ministry with a similar name called “Come Reason Ministries” and they are located in California. Please be sure and select **Come AND Reason Ministries Located in Collegedale TN**.

SABBATH

Read memory text:

“ “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.
They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.” MT 15:8,9

Read first paragraph, “John Wesley...” thoughts?

If our ability to understand Scripture is impacted by our own intelligence and ability to comprehend, then, who’s clear teaching of Scripture is the lesson talking about?

In other words, they suggest that many people value their reason over the clear teachings of Scripture – but isn’t that just the problem, those they accuse of valuing reason over the “clear teachings of Scripture” could turn around and say back, you value your opinion over the clear teaching of Scripture, because we understand the Scripture teaches something different, and it is so clear to us that you are wrong.

How can we tell?

This past weekend I was in a church in California presenting the *God and Your Brain Seminar*. During



the question time a question came in challenging the idea that the Bible does *not* teach penal substitution. They asked about the legal language in Romans and Paul's writings.

What would you say?

Ask, when you read the Bible, what language do you read it in? If English, then there is a translation bias toward legal language.

When Constantine converted, Christianity accepted a change in the way it viewed God's law, away from the construction protocols for life and accepted the idea that God's law is like Imperial Rome. Thus Christianity began seeing God as a legal dictator.

ALL BIBLE TRANSLATIONS have been done AFTER Constantine converted. This means the translators, while sincere, all had preconceived ideas about the law being imposed and therefore when they translated projected legal language that was not in the original text.

A classic example is one of the favorite texts of the penal proponents, Romans 3:21-26:

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— ²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. (NIV)

Verse 25 in the NKJV:

whom God set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed

Do you hear how this could sound like a legal problem and solution, with words like justification, atonement, justice, propitiation etc?

This is because of the fact that the translations occurred after the infection of imposed law into Christianity, and also because in English our legal language has a Latin basis.

But the Bible doesn't actually present a legal problem with a legal solution, it presents a problem of our actual condition with a healing solution.

The Greek translated as either "sacrifice of atonement" or "propitiation" is the word *hilasterion*, which is the word for the lid to the ark of the covenant.



Notice, this is no a legal word, it is a noun. So when the translators interpreted the word they projected onto it what they *believed* happened at the mercy seat. And what did they believe happened? A legal process of expiation of sin by the sprinkling of blood.

In other words, they already had false ideas about God's law and what the plan of salvation is; believing in an imposed law, they falsely believed the plan was to take care of legal requirements, thus when they interpreted the word they added legal ideas not actually in the text.

When one realizes God's law is not imperial, not imposed, but the protocols upon which life is built, then one realizes that humankind is not in legal trouble, but suffering from a condition, a state of being, that is terminal, out of harmony with God's design. In this light one realizes God's plan of salvation is to heal and restore. Thus, the sprinkling of blood was not for the purpose of taking care of legal penalties, but for the purpose of cleansing and restoring, regenerating and recreating in righteousness.

The lesson couldn't be more obvious – according to Leviticus the life is in the blood– and thus in sprinkling the blood the priests were symbolically sharing the LIFE of Christ. The application of the blood is the pure life, or character of Christ, partaken of by the believer, which regenerates and transforms us.

But Satan has so infected our minds with his lies about God that many Christians teach the blood is not the healing life of Christ, but instead is the contaminating defilement of sin or the death. How utterly twisted and wrong could one be!

Here is my paraphrase of Romans 3:21-26:

^{3:21} But now God has revealed, a healthy state of being – a character that is right and perfect in every way, that did not come from the written code, but is exactly what the Scriptures and the 10 Commandments were pointing your minds toward. ²² This perfect state of being comes from Christ and is created within us by God when we trust him. Our trust in him is established by the evidence given through Jesus Christ of his supreme trustworthiness. There is no difference amongst any ethnic group, ²³ for all humanity is infected with the same disease of distrust, fear and selfishness, and are deformed in character and fall far short of God's glorious ideal for mankind. ²⁴ Yet all, who are willing, are healed freely by God's gracious Remedy that has been provided by Jesus Christ. ²⁵ God presented Jesus as the way and means of restoration. Now, through trust established by the evidence of God's character revealed when Christ died, we may partake of the Remedy procured by Christ. God did this to demonstrate he is right and good, because in his forbearance he suspended, for a time, the ultimate consequence of being out of harmony with how he designed life to exist and has been falsely accused of being unfair. ²⁶ So, he did it to demonstrate how right and good he is at the present time, so he would be seen as being right when he heals those who trust in Jesus.

Here is a view of this very process, quoting Romans 3:26 in summation by one of the founders of our



church, demonstrating that the historic view in our church is what I am presenting, but sadly our church has embraced the infection of penal substitution:

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." Romans 3:26. {DA 762.2}

Did you notice this description is not a "legal" process but a healing regenerating process that is just or right and good!

How can we tell the difference between clear Bible teaching and the teachings of men?

Manmade teaching always are infected with self, infected with imposed rules, incite fear, incite insecurity, lead away from God's design, fail to actually transform and heal. Man's teachings are inconsistent, irrational, and often make no sense to anyone who thinks.

Examples:

- It is sin to walk so many feet on Sabbath
- It is sin to carry a handkerchief on Sabbath, but okay to pin it to your clothing
- It is sin to help a person on Sabbath but not sin to lift your donkey of the ditch
- What one eats makes one righteous or unrighteous
- It doesn't matter what one eats because all things are ceremonially clean
- People are saved or lost based on which day they worship
- One can't be saved unless one has the right words spoken during their baptism
- One can't be saved unless a Priest does some ritual
- One can't be saved unless one partakes communion
- One can't be saved unless one is a member of a particular organization

Do you notice how all of these ideas are not based in design protocols, but upon manmade rules, or taking a God given teaching tool and making it into a rule.

For instance, baptism by water is a God given teaching tool, designed to help us understand and experience what genuine baptism is. Genuine baptism is immersion of the entire being, mind, soul, spirit, into the Holy Spirit, where the old ways, methods, motives die and one lives a new life with a new heart and right spirit. But water baptism doesn't provide any of that, and people have been renewed and saved without water baptism, but no one is saved without baptism by the Holy Spirit, the rebirth, renewal experience. Yet, some teach that without water baptism, in the right ritualistic way,



one cannot be saved. The place the teaching tool, before the reality, the shadow before the substance. This is what the Jews did with the sacrificial system.

God's truth actually heals, brings peace, leads one to live in harmony with the design. God's truth is always sensible, rational, reasonable.

Examples:

- Sabbath is evidence of God's character given at the time in history when His character and methods were called into question
 - Sabbath therefore becomes a sign – and what do signs do? Are signs the reality or do signs direct, educate, illuminate, reveal, point toward the reality?
 - What happens if one makes the sign the ultimate test of reality?
 - What happens if one suggests the Sabbath is an arbitrary test of obedience? Then one has just taken a sign, which reveals God's character of love, truth and freedom, and turned it around to it points in the opposite direction, to an arbitrary God who makes imposed rules. And then, with that way of thinking, one can kill the Creator of the Sabbath and want Him down by sunset in order to keep the Sabbath.
- God's health laws were not rules or tests of obedience but protections to promote our better health. Just like a parent's rule for a child to brush their teeth.
 - But what if the children took the rule to brush teeth as a test of obedience and required all members of the organization to be teeth brushers? Then they reject and accuse as rebellious those who use a water pick instead of a toothbrush. Why? Because they miss the point that the brushing is a helpful tool, but not a legal requirement.
- All the religious directions were teaching tools to stimulate thinking to help people break out of false understanding, just like the felt board or sandbox. The benefit was in helping one to think and learn the truth of reality, to lead people back to harmony with God and His design for life.

SUNDAY

Read third paragraph, "In saying..." thoughts?

What do you think about the idea that the Pharisees took the responsibility to ensure the people were instructed in the way of the law? Does it sound like the lesson is suggesting this was a good thing? Was it?

What did Jesus say was the result of their instruction in the law? Look at Matthew 23, starting at verse 13:

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are.



Note they are teaching the law, and what was the result? Damaging the minds and characters of the people who accepted their teaching and making them more deeply entrapped into Satan's kingdom. Why?

What kind of law did they teach? They taught imposed law, rules without inherent consequence, legal restrictions, penal substitution ideas. This makes people more trapped into the hell of satanic lies. If you doubt, keep reading Jesus' words in MT 23 and you will discover Jesus is describing an arbitrary, imposed legal system, with irrational rules that ignore the reality upon which the cosmos is built. He points them to what matters, which is healing the mind, heart, character, inner transformation, but they are only focused on behavioral performance and external appearance.

I would like to share with you this section of Matthew from my paraphrase:

MT 23:13 "Misery is yours, you who teach a legal religion, you penal theologians, you counterfeits! Your false teachings obstruct people from being healed and entering God's kingdom of love. You certainly are not healed and do not enter into salvation, but worse, you actively work to prevent others who want to be saved from being healed.

MT 23:15 "Misery is yours, you who teach a legal religion, you penal theologians, you counterfeits! You go around the world trying to convert one person, and when you do, you indoctrinate them so deeply into your false penal system they become twice the child of lies and selfishness as you are.

MT 23:16 "Misery is yours, you irrational and unthinking teachers! Unbelievably, you say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it doesn't count; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, then they are bound by the oath.' 17 You make no sense at all! Think about it, which is truly most important, the gold, or the temple that makes the gold holy? 18 Another of your sayings is, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it doesn't count; but if anyone swears by the gift on the altar then they are bound by the oath.' 19 You don't understand the simplest truths! Think about it, which is truly most important: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift holy? 20 Don't you get it, the one who swears by the altar swears by it and everything on it. 21 And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by the one whose dwelling place it is. 22 It is about integrity, honesty, fidelity, such that oaths are sworn before heaven, God's throne, and the one who sits on it knows the heart.

MT 23:23 "Misery is yours, you who teach a legal religion, you penal theologians, you counterfeits! You keep rules, like proudly paying a pre-tax tithe and even give a tenth of the herbs in your garden. But you fail to do what actually matters, live in harmony with God's law, his design for life. You fail to do what is right because it is right. You are not merciful, but judgmental, and you cannot be trusted to protect those struggling with sin. You should have lived lives of love for others, without neglecting the simple instructions of God. 24 You are truly irrational and unthinking teachers! You are so focused on keeping the rules, like dietary laws, that you fail to understand their purpose is to promote health. You're so confused you actually think it would be a virtue to die of starvation than to eat something not on the



approved list.

MT 23:25 “Misery is yours, you who teach a legal religion, you penal theologians, you counterfeits! You work so hard to make yourselves look good on the outside, but the inside, the heart, is full of selfishness, arrogance, and greed. 26 You truly don’t understand anything about God’s kingdom! The mind, the character, the heart must be cleansed first, and then the outside will also be clean.

MT 23:27 “Misery is yours, you who teach a legal religion, you penal theologians, you counterfeits! You are like highly polished burial vaults; they look beautiful on the outside but inside are nothing but the bones of the dead and everything that defiles. 28 You are just like that. On the outside you appear to people as good and righteous, but on the inside you are full of lies, selfishness and evil. You are great counterfeits.

MT 23:29 “Misery is yours, you who teach a legal religion, you penal theologians, you counterfeits! You go to great lengths to give praise and honor to the prophets and church leaders of the past. 30 You say, ‘If we would have lived back then, we would never have rejected the prophets or joined those who killed them.’ 31 By such claims you condemn yourselves, because you acknowledge such actions are wrong, yet by your actions today you reveal you are the true descendants of those who murdered the prophets. You’re just like them 32 and your sins pile on top of the sin of your forefathers!

MT 23:33 “You slippery serpents! You brood of venomous vipers! You think you can cure yourselves with your own snake-oil? 34 It’s because of your false remedy, your penal legal trickery, that I am sending my spokespersons, instructors and Bible scholars. You will attack, kill and crucify some of them; others you will beat, some physically, some verbally, right in church, running them out of town with beatings and the most viscous gossip. 35 The pure and holy lives that have been sacrificed through history, from Abel all the way through to Zechariah son of Berekiah, who was murdered right in church, at the altar, testify the truth to you. 36 But, the sad truth is, this generation will reject all this evidence.

MT 23:37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you sick and hard-hearted people who have rejected the Remedy, killed God’s spokespersons and stoned those sent to you with the cure, how my heart has longed to pull you to safety, like a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not let me. 38 Look around, I leave your house to you, abandoned without Remedy, infected without cure. 39 For I tell you plainly, when you see me next you will say, “He is the one sent by God to reveal God’s true character and provide the Remedy.”

Read last paragraph, “Most of the references...” thoughts?

Was their core problem that they taught one thing and did another? No, their core problem was accepting a false idea about God’s law and therefore viewing God as a cosmic dictator.

Here is a quote from historic Adventism:



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}

Wow – what insight? When we believe the law is a set of rules we must keep, then we focus on behavior and begin adding rules upon rules. And when we work so hard to keep the rules we get angry at those who are not keeping the rules, we begin to judge, criticize, belittle, demean those who don't eat like we do etc.

But that is only because we view the law as restrictive rather than protective. When you see someone smoking to you get angry, or sad, compassionate, understanding how they are hurting themselves? Likewise, any deviation from God's design should be seen in this way.

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, "Although the scribes..." thoughts?

Do we have our own list of added rules? Any examples?

- Jewelry?
- Music?
- Food?
- Others?

Read fourth paragraph, "It does not appear..." thoughts?

What about the sentence, "No human has the authority to create religious restrictions and elevate them to the level of divine mandate."

Any concerns about this statement? This is a dangerous idea. This is so subtly the poison is so deeply hidden that most will accept it and not even notice.

This is a perfect example of a lie hidden beneath a truth. Can anyone see the truth and then the lie beneath it?

Is it true that humans cannot make divine decrees? This is the truth – what is the lie? That God is restrictive, He undermines liberty and makes mandates – it is the idea that God imposes laws, rules and restrictions upon us to curtail our liberty, to control behavior.



This is Satan's first lie in Eden, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"
Gen 3:1

Note, the lie, God is restrictive, you can't eat from any tree in this entire garden. Rather than the truth that God is liberal – You can eat of the entire garden, everything on the entire planet is yours save only one tree.

This same idea is woven into religion, the Sabbath. The Jews presented the Sabbath as the day of greatest restrictions, and sadly many SDAs do also. But, is the Sabbath the day of restriction or should it be the day of greatest liberty?

Now does God actually give us restrictions? Yes, are they designed to restrict or liberate? Here is one statement from one of the founders of our church:

The time will come when we may have to discard some of the articles of diet we now use, such as milk and cream and eggs; **but it is not necessary to bring upon ourselves perplexity by premature and extreme restrictions. Wait until the circumstances demand it and the Lord prepares the way for it.** {CCh 237.6}

What is the purpose of the restriction? Why? To protect? When is it necessary to apply? When is it damaging to partake? And does the restriction not to partake of the contaminated food result in loss of liberty or retention of liberty?

What happens when one is sick? One loses freedom. So, rightly understood, God's restrictions are always to promote freedom, not hinder it, by keeping us in harmony with His design for life.

In Eden, God's restriction of the Tree of Knowledge, was it to restrict them or to promote their eternal liberty and freedom?

But Satan, and false religion, misrepresent God and make it appear He places mandates, demands, and restrictions to test our obedience and loyalty, with no reason, just because He can.

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, "As we saw..." What of this idea "people thought they were as binding as Scripture?" Are the Scriptures binding? When you bind something or someone what are you doing?

Does this language suggest a system of rules?

What do you understand is the purpose of Scripture? Is it a code book?

Which is more binding, a medical textbook, or the laws of health?



Do you see Scripture as a revelation – a description of God’s interactions to save mankind and man’s struggle in sin?

If it is a revelation, what is it revealing? Is it revealing a list of rules or reality, who God actually is, how He constructed the universe to operate, what deviation from the design is, how deviations from the design damage, His plan to heal and restore?

If we read Scripture this way do we read it as a rule books to bind us? Or a truth book to free us from misunderstand and lies, thus freeing us from fear and selfishness and the destruction that comes from living outside the design?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “The substitution...” thoughts?

Classic examples:

- Holy relics
- Priest to hear confessions and grant absolution
- Sabbath/Sunday
- Form of baptism
- Righteousness through sacraments

But are there any that are actually more damaging and dangerous that penetrate all church groups?

The substitution of God who is our Father, who is in character like Jesus, kind, merciful, benevolent, with a god who is severe, unforgiving, who is the source of inflicted pain and suffering. This is the most egregious lie told and it is a manmade idea of a god who runs his government like humans run theirs.

This leads to the replacement of the true Remedy, Jesus, His victory and development of perfect character, which we receive when we trust Him and experience a new heart and right spirit within, with a false remedy, one of legal payment, legal pardon, and declaration of righteous, even though one is not.

THURSDAY

The second paragraph states, “The Pharisees were so focused on the laws of human origin that they blatantly broke the law of God. Their righteousness was based on their own efforts, and as such, was defective.”

First question, what is the problem in breaking the law of God? Why is it bad to break the law of God? Is it bad because God said don’t do it, or did God say don’t do it because it, in some way, is bad – i.e. destructive to the breaker of the law?



What is righteousness? It is a state of being in harmony with God's character and design. We are inherently out of harmony, we cannot do anything to remove or fear and selfishness, thus our efforts to make us right, to restore our own selves to God's ideal fail. We can only experience righteousness, restoration to the design, as we receive it from Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart and mind.

Read last paragraph, "Jesus calls for a righteousness..."

The false view suggest our righteousness come by faith from Jesus and is legally credited to our record book, our legal ledger in heaven and is a visual barrier that prohibits the Father from seeing our true condition of unrighteousness so the Father declares us righteous based on the record of Jesus, even though we are not.

True righteousness is when, having seen the truth about God as revealed in Christ, we are won to trust. In trust we open our hearts, surrendering ourselves in love and admiration to our Creator and the Spirit comes and actually reproduces in us the righteousness of Christ.

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1 and 3