



Christ and His Law Lesson 7 2Q 2014

Christ, the End of the Law

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 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.**

July 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/>

Before we start the lesson I wanted to share a few emails I have received over the last couple of weeks.

I post your [Bible Study] classes on my facebook page and I got a message from an SDA Pastor in Northern Minnesota, today, [he said] there are some concerns about Tim Jennings' beliefs on the atonement and he sent me a website to try and give me better understanding on it!

I smiled to myself because I see people in the [church] that I [have] known for years [that] are thinking I'm misguided! For the first time in my life, I finally have found peace. Not only in Jesus, but in His Abba, too! Thank you for your Ministry. MN

Thanks for the ministry you're providing. My heart is glad every day as I continue to learn about this actuality of the character of God. It's my heart's desire to be available to God, every moment of every day, to adequately impart this life-changing truth to others. WA

Someone recently shared a copy of God and Your Brain with me, I found it a very enlightening presentation and want to share it with others.

That led me to your web sight where I have watched the April 19th, then April 5th [Bible Study] class. I cannot wait to go back and watch the 4th quarter on the Sanctuary and get caught up on this quarter. You have inspired me to an awakened interest in the lessons. The quarterlies have had an excellent subject matter for a time such as this; but have been biased in opinions that I don't believe correctly reveal my GOD the way He intended them to.



Thank you for showing me that there are Adventist People that believe as I do about the Love of GOD and not the demanding and punishing god. You are proof to me of the nearness of Christ's soon return: for, when Christ's character shall be revealed in His people He shall return. NE

From Simon Harrison our Distribution Manager in Australia:

*Perth had it's annual SDA "Big Camp" over the Easter weekend. Yesterday we were able to set up a stall outside the ABC bookstore with C&R materials. We gave away over two hundred of each DVD set, a box of each study guide, countless Fundamental Focus and brochures etc! We were able to sell *Could it Be This Simple?* and *The God-Shaped Brain* books through the ABC. Not sure of the final numbers as the ABC Manager also purchased some for the ABC stock.*

We had many positive comments, with many people saying they had heard good things from your visit. Made some good contacts and overall pleased with the response. I heard that today people were going into the ABC asking for more and bought all of your books that were in stock. Of all the people that came we only had one negative response. I know there were some of my very active opposers there, but they just walked past and tried not to make eye contact. But the message is going forward! Praise God!

For some time we have been teaching the truth about God's law of love, the design protocols upon which life is made to operate, and exposing how Christianity became infected with an imposed law idea, like a dictator uses his power to create arbitrary laws, laws with no reason other than the one in power said so. This infection of thought has deeply penetrated Christianity.

An online listener, Curtis Wiltse, in follow-up from our lesson on the Sabbath a couple of weeks ago, emailed me the following, which documents how this infection has penetrated our church. This is from a book entitled *The Sabbath in Scripture and History* published by the Review and Herald 1982:

In an arbitrary manner God appointed that on the seventh day we should come to rest with His creation in a particular way. He filled this day with a content that is "uncontaminated" by anything related to the cyclical changes of nature or the movements of the heavenly bodies. **That content is the idea of the absolute sovereignty of God,** sovereignty unqualified even by an indirect cognizance of the natural movements of time and rhythms of life. As the Christian takes heed of the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, he does so purely in answer to God's command, and simply because God is his Creator. Thus, the Sabbath command comes nearer to being a true measure of spirituality than any other of the commandments, and, as in the days of Israel of old, it is often more of a test of loyalty to God than is any of the others. (Raoul Dederen, The chapter is titled, "Reflections on a Theology of the Sabbath".)



Thoughts? This paragraph describes a dictator. This paragraph describes Satan's view of God. This paragraph is evidence of how deeply the infection has penetrated to our church, our church leaders, publications, institutions and why it is so important that each person think for themselves.

Listen to the position our church founders took, and notice the clear difference:

Again **the people were reminded of the sacred obligation of the Sabbath**. Yearly feasts were appointed, at which all the men of the nation were to assemble before the Lord, bringing to Him their offerings of gratitude and the first fruits of His bounties. **The object of all these regulations was stated: they proceeded from no exercise of mere arbitrary sovereignty; all were given for the good of Israel**. The Lord said, "Ye shall be holy men unto Me"--worthy to be acknowledged by a holy God. PP 311

As the Jews departed from God, and failed to make the righteousness of Christ their own by faith, the Sabbath lost its significance to them. **Satan** was seeking to exalt himself and to draw men away from Christ, and **he worked to pervert the Sabbath**, because it is the sign of the power of Christ. The Jewish leaders accomplished the will of Satan by surrounding God's rest day with burdensome requirements. **In the days of Christ the Sabbath had become so perverted that its observance reflected the character of selfish and arbitrary men rather than the character of the loving heavenly Father**. The rabbis virtually represented God as giving laws which it was impossible for men to obey. They led the people to look upon God as a tyrant, and to think that the observance of the Sabbath, as He required it, made men hard-hearted and cruel. **It was the work of Christ to clear away these misconceptions**. Although the rabbis followed Him with merciless hostility, He did not even appear to conform to their requirements, but went straight forward, keeping the Sabbath according to the law of God. DA 283,284

Another online listener, Dell Topel, emailed me a quotation from George Knight's new book, *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*, Review & Herald Publishing, 2013. Remember, George Knight wrote the book *The Cross of Christ*, which was used a few years ago by our opponents in an attempt to refute our views about God. It would appear that George Knight is having a change of views and moving in our direction on these things. Listen to this from page 122:

I Am My Own Judge

The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son. John 5:22 RSV

Now there is a thought pregnant with meaning: Jesus as our judge. Many of us have seen pictures of the judgment in which a somewhat apathetic (if not fearsome) Father sits upon the judgment throne with Jesus prostrate before Him pleading for salvation of His followers.

Wrong on both counts. First, the Father is not indifferent, let alone fearsome. He is not someone who has to be persuaded by Jesus or anyone else. The plain fact of the case is that He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him



should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” (John 3:16,17).

Banish all thought of God as a stern judge who needs to be convinced by a soft-hearted Christ. No! It was the Father Himself who out of a warm and caring heart initiated the plan of salvation.

Not only did the Father begin the plan, but, according to Jesus, the Father has even handed the responsibility for judgment over to Him. And that is just the beginning of an interesting part of the story. Because Jesus tells us in John 12 that He is turning over our judgment to us.

Do you find that one hard to believe? Well, listen to Him: “If any one hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him: for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day” (John12:47, 48 RSV).

Now, I know that Jesus said that it will be His words that finally judge. But think about the implications of that statement. It is you and I as individuals who make decisions about accepting or rejecting that judgmental word. We have the final decision-making authority as to where we will spend eternity. The hinge is how we relate to Him through His Word. In that sense we are our own judges.

He is describing natural law, design law, sowing and reaping, that it is our decisions which change us and result in our salvation and loss. Rev 14 “Fear God and give glory to him for the hour of *his* judgment has come.”

But notice what this same author wrote in his 2008 book *The Cross of Christ*, page 39:

“God, as the Bible pictures Him, cannot and will not stand idly by while His creation suffers. His reaction is judgment on sin, and we should see this judgment as the real meaning of biblical wrath. God condemns sin in judgment and will eventually move to destroy it completely... Once sin fully matures so that all creation recognizes that God is right in His judgments on sin and sinners, He will react to annihilate both (Rev. 20:13-15...)”

God did react to sin – by doing what? Judging it? No, not in a legal sense, but diagnosing it certainly. Diagnosing it as being out of harmony with how He constructed life to operate, and then by overcoming and curing it in the person of Jesus Christ.

Judging it as described here is based on the imposed law lie, which leads to the inevitable lie, that God is the source of death, and death is inflicted upon people by God

Curing it, overcoming it, is based on the truth of God’s law of love, the design protocol upon which life is constructed, and those who refuse the Remedy provided by God, die as the result of uncured sin,



just as the Bible teaches, “the wages of sin is death” Rom 6:23, “sin when full grown brings forth death” James 1:15.

So, the good news is that perhaps, truth about God is penetrating the church and the infection of the false legal view is losing hold on people’s minds. The gates of hell cannot stand against the truth about God!

SABBATH

Read first three paragraphs, “A well-known magazine...” thoughts?

What does this mean, “we have been shown the only way to achieve immortality, and that is through faith in Jesus as opposed to the keeping of the law—even though we are to keep it.”

What does it mean, “though faith in Jesus?”

- We claim the legal payment of His blood to pay our sin debt?
- We are won to genuine trust, open our hearts, surrender our entire selves, lives, future, etc to Him and the Holy Spirit enters and transforms us to be like Him? We partake of the divine nature, as Peter says?

These two views of faith and salvation lead down two different paths:

- The first – a path in which people claim salvation, based on a legal payment, but with no power to change the life, because God is still misrepresented and people continue to live in fear. Thus Christianity has suffered for millennia under this view, with infant Christians, sick, abusing others in the name of Christ, including their own families.
- The second – a path in which people actually die to self, are renewed in the inner man and live victorious Christlike lives empowered by the Holy Spirit

SUNDAY

First sentence is fairly well said, “Though it points out sins, the law is powerless to save us from them.”

How could you say it better?

“Though it points out sin, the law is powerless to save us from it.”

What is the difference?

The way they state it emphasizes acts, behaviors, deeds, which is all based on an imposed law construct, which generally leads to payment theologies.



The way I said it, emphasizes our condition, being deviant or out of harmony with God's design, which is based on design law, which leads to the truth, God's plan of healing, or salvation.

Read the first paragraph, which is in reaction to Romans 5:12-20, "Notice in this passage..." thoughts?

Why is there an association between sin and death? Either because sin actually does something to the sinner which causes death, or sin breaks a heavenly rule God and God responds to the break in the rule by using His power to inflict death as a punishment. Which is it?

Notice the second paragraph, "Now read Romans..." thoughts? Did you notice how the paragraph said, "However, instead of bringing in the natural result of sin..." The lesson acknowledges here that death is the result of sin, not the infliction of God.

But then the lesson seems to struggle a bit with this, "no matter how bad sin is, God's grace is sufficient to cover it for those who claim His promises by faith."

What does this sound like? How can this be misunderstood? What is a healthy and correct way to understand this?

Here is how it was understood by Christians over 100 years ago, from a book called *Christ's Object Lessons*:

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. **Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us.** "All our righteousness are as filthy rags." Isaiah 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin..." By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. **When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. {COL 311.4}

What, according to this view, does it mean to be covered by Christ's robe of righteousness? Notice, it is actual transformation of the believer, not a covering over of deformity and sin. So a covering over could be more accurately stated as a writing over, as we do with our computers we write over defective software with new software, thus the old is not merely covered, but destroyed. Or how we record over a VCR tape, not a mere covering over, a overwriting of a new character received from Jesus, when we trust Him.

This is the true Gospel, the power of the Creator God to heal and recreate His people back into His image.



Read the fourth paragraph, “Influenced by the translation...” Do you notice how the lesson focuses on behavior, but is this the primary issue of sin, or is sin a condition of heart and mind that leads to destructive behaviors? Which comes first sin or bad behavior?

According to Jesus, in MT 5, the behavior is the outgrowth of a sinful heart.

Here is an historic view:

Eve believed the words of Satan, and **the belief of that falsehood in regard to God's character, changed the condition and character of both herself and husband. They were changed from good and obedient children into transgressors...** {RH, January 5, 1886 par. 8}

- Lies believed break the circle of love and trust
- Broken love and trust result in fear and selfishness
- Fear and selfishness result in acts of sin

Here is my paraphrase of Romans 5:12-21:

^{5:12} Therefore, the infection of distrust of God, which deformed man’s heart and mind with selfishness and fear and results only in death, infected the human race when Adam accepted Satan’s lies about God and broke trust with him. This infection of fear and selfishness is inherited by all human beings, because all are born infected – ¹³ this is revealed by the fact that before the written law was given, the infection of distrust, fear and selfishness was already in the world. But this infection of distrust, fear and selfishness is not diagnosable without the law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, even without being diagnosed as infected with this terminal condition, humans still died from the time of Adam to Moses, even those who did not break a specific command, like Adam did – revealing that the problem is the infected state of our minds not a legal issue with God.

Adam, the first man, being the conduit through which the infection entered humanity, represents the one man who is the conduit of the antidote which cures the many who accept it.

^{5:15} But the gift of the antidote is not like the infection. For if everyone is born infected with a terminal condition because of the choice of Adam, how incredibly effective must the antidote, brought by Christ, be, since it cures all who take it! ¹⁶ Again the gift of the antidote is not like the result of the breach of trust. Adam’s breach of trust infected all humanity and all humanity is diagnosed as sick and dying. This occurred without each individual choosing to be infected, but the antidote came after humankind had been severely damaged and deformed by selfishness and sin and brought cleansing, purification, health and complete restoration. ¹⁷ If by the choice of one man’s distrust, selfishness and death permeated all humanity, how much more will those who accept the Remedy that Christ has achieved, experience restored trust and complete healing to live forever with God.



^{5:18} Therefore, just as Adam's distrust infected humanity with the fatal condition of fear and selfishness, so too Christ's choice to sacrifice self achieved the life-giving Remedy for all mankind. ¹⁹ Just as Adam's choice infected the human race with a terminal condition, so too Christ's perfect life has brought the Remedy to heal all who accept it.

^{5:20} The written law was added so that the infection of distrust and selfishness could be more easily seen and diagnosed. And where the exposure of sin and selfishness increased, God's willingness to heal increased all the more, ²¹ so that, just as distrust and selfishness brought deformity and death, even more importantly God's gracious Remedy, brought by Jesus Christ, results in complete healing and life eternal.

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, "One of the most difficult..." Do you find this concept difficult? It is only difficult for those who have accepted Satan's version of God's law, that it is a set of imposed rules. Notice how they use speed limit law as an example? What type of law is this? Imposed, which requires imposed penalties, which misrepresents God. When we understand God's law is the design protocol for life, it isn't hard to understand why we should live in harmony with it.

The paralytic healed by Christ – first Christ forgave him, then physically healed him, why? Because his physical illness was a result of breaking God's law. (DA 267) After healing, would he be free from destruction if he went out and broke the law of God again?

A person who contracted HIV from promiscuous behavior receives a miraculous healing from God – are they free from destruction and reinfection if they resume their promiscuity?

The lesson asks us to read Romans 6:15-23, this is from my paraphrase:

^{6:15} What then? Shall we indulge selfish desires because God has provided a gracious cure for our terminal condition? Absolutely not! ¹⁶ Don't you realize that when you gratify the selfish desires, you are slowly transformed and become more and more selfish destroying the very faculties that recognize and respond to God's healing truth – thus over time you lose your freedom to choose and become a slave to selfishness and lust, which leads only to self-destruction and death? Conversely if you accept God's gracious Remedy and choose his methods you are transformed and become Christlike in character. ¹⁷ Thanks be to God, that even though you used to be slaves to selfishness, you wholeheartedly accepted the truth revealed by Jesus, trusted God and practice his methods of love, truth and freedom, which you were taught. ¹⁸ Therefore, you have been freed from distrust, fear and selfishness and have been bonded to love, truth and liberty, doing what is right because it is right.

^{6:19} I state this as simply as possible, using human terms because it is easier to understand and learn that way. Just as you used to choose to use your bodies in lewd, vile and debasing ways, so now choose to use your bodies doing what is right, reasonable and healthy, which leads to purity and holiness. ²⁰ When you slavishly indulged the selfish desires you avoided what was



healthy, right and good.²¹ But what good did that do you? It only caused pain, heartache and ultimately death.²² But now you have accepted the truth about God, been restored to trust and been set free from fear and selfishness. You are wholeheartedly committed to God and receive complete recreation of heart and mind resulting in eternal life.²³ For the infection of selfishness leads only to death, but the gift of God is eternal life through the healing Remedy brought by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Read last paragraph, “Paul had ever exalted...” How do you understand this passage? First define the pertinent terms from Scripture:

- Divine law is what? The law of love, which is the template upon which life is constructed and an expression of God’s character.
 - Where do the 10 Commandment fit? Are they the eternal law or a distilled version, a codification for humans in sin?
 - In Sunday’s lesson it stated that in Eden “the 10 commandments had not yet been formally revealed.” Why? Because they weren’t even in existence anywhere in the universe in that codified form.
 - “By lips that will not lie, God's law is declared to be holy, just, and good. **Our duty to obey this law is to be the burden of the last message of mercy to the world.¹ God's law is not a new thing. It is not holiness created, but holiness made known. It is a code of principles expressing mercy, goodness, and love. It presents to fallen humanity the character of God, and states plainly the whole duty of man.** {RH, April 27, 1911 par. 4}
 - The 10 Commandments were added because of human sin to diagnose and reveal our condition and help us understand God’s character of love
- What is the penalty for disobedience? Death, why?
 - What is the penalty for breaking the law of respiration by jumping in the ocean with 100 pounds of concrete tied to your legs? Why? Can the law of respiration save you from breaking it?
 - So, does God’s law have any power to save someone who is out of harmony with it?
- What does repent mean? Turning away from, not confession, but actual desire to be changed, sick and disgusted with the selfishness which infects us.
- What is just or justice? Doing what is right, based upon the law of love
- What is wrath? Letting go to reap what one has chosen
- What is faith? Trusting God with everything, our lives, outcomes...
- What does the blood represent? According to Scripture, “the life is in the blood”
- What about pardon? Forgiveness, escape from the consequences

¹ It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth... The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them. {COL 415}



So what does it all mean?

Paul promoted the truth about God, His law and character of love. He revealed that the written law was a diagnostic instrument our gracious God provided to expose sin and lead us to Christ for healing. He taught that those out of harmony with God's design (wrongdoers) must have a fundamental transformation of the heart motives (repentance) and die to self (humble themselves). God's right or just action to those who choose to remain outside His design it to ultimately set them free to reap the result, (His wrath). And the only way to be restored back to God's design is by trusting Jesus and partaking of His character represented by His blood. Thus, once restored back into harmony with the law, there is reconciliation with God or pardon.

Do you like the language used in the paragraph from the lesson? Why do you think such language is used? Because different people understand in different ways, are at different levels of development, have different abilities to comprehend, speak different languages, within the same language, and God loves them all so presents the message in a variety of ways in order to reach all people. Such descriptions are intended to reach people whose minds are operating upon certain preconceived ideas or premises in order to give them hope and restore them to trust in God. Then as they walk with God, the Holy Spirit will lead them into ever increasing light and truth of His character.

TUESDAY

The lesson asks us to read Romans 7:13-25, it asks, is the passage talking about a converted our unconverted person. This is from my paraphrase and my view is obvious:

^{7:13} Did the law, which did good by diagnosing what was wrong with me, become the source of my terminal condition? Of course not! It only exposed what was already in me so that I could recognize how totally decayed, putrid and near death I was, so that through the lens of the commandment I might become utterly disgusted with evil and selfishness and long for a cure.

^{7:14} We know that the law is consistent, reliable and reasonable; but I am inconsistent, unreliable and unreasonable, because the infection of distrust, fear and selfishness has warped my mind and damaged my thinking. ¹⁵ I am frustrated with what I do. For having been restored to trust, I want to do what is in harmony with God and his methods and principles; but I find that even though I trust God, old habits, conditioned responses, preconceived ideas and other remnants of the devastation caused by distrust and selfishness are not yet fully removed. ¹⁶ And if I find an old habit causing me to behave in ways that I now find detestable, I affirm that the law is a very helpful tool revealing residual damage in need of healing. ¹⁷ What is happening is this: I have come to trust God and desire to do his will, but old habits and conditioned responses, which present almost reflexively in certain situations, have not yet been totally eliminated and thus cause me do to things I do not want to do. ¹⁸ I know that my mind was completely infected with distrust, fear and selfishness which totally perverted all my desires and faculties, so that even when distrust has been eradicated and trust has been restored, the damage cause by years of distrustful and selfish behavior has not yet been fully healed. So I



find, at times, I have the desire to do what is right, but do not yet have the ability to carry out the desire. ¹⁹ For the old habits and conditioned responses are not the good I want to do; no, they are remnants of my selfish unconverted mind. ²⁰ So, if I find myself doing what I no longer desire to do, it is not I, but vestiges of old habits and conditioned responses that have yet to be removed, and through God's grace will soon be removed.

^{7:21} So, I find this reality at work: When I want to do good, old selfish habits and residual feelings of fear are right there with me. ²² For in my mind I rejoice in God's methods and principles; ²³ but I recognize I remain damaged from years of being infected with distrust and practicing Satan's methods, so that even though the infection of distrust has been removed, the old habits of fear and self-promotion tempt me from within. ²⁴ What a damaged and corrupt man I am! Who will deliver and heal me from a brain and body so diseased and deformed? ²⁵ Praise be to God – for he has provided the healing solution through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I find that in my mind I am now renewed with trust for God and love of his methods, but my brain and body remain damaged by years of self-indulgent behavior.

Read second paragraph, "No matter..." Any concerns with this paragraph? "sin often starts before and act..." do you see how this reveals the false belief that sin is primarily behavioral. No, it always starts in the mind, with a breach of trust, fear, and *can* eventually behavior acts, but doesn't have to.

Then what about the next sentence, "Consequently, a person is in violation of the law simply by thinking something sinful."

This is a dangerous way to express it, because it is so easily misunderstood. Is it sin to have a thought of sinful things? Some patients come to me tormented because of this idea; if you think the wrong thought, you have sinned. This is not Biblical.

Here is what the Bible says:

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, **after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin**; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. James 1:13-15

It isn't sin until the desire is conceived, which is choosing it with the will, saying "yes" with the heart, not merely having the thought.

Examples:

- Joseph when Potiphar's wife tempts him – did Joseph have to think about the sinful act, what she was asking him to do, in order to choose to say no? Was it sin to think the thought?
- Did the three worthies on the plane of Dura have to think about bowing to the idol in order to choose not to? Was the thought of doing it sin?



- Jesus, when tempted to avoid the cross, agonized and prayed to His Father, but chose the Father's will – thus no sin.

It is about character, motive, principles of the heart, not mere behavior, act, or thought.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson asks us to read Romans 9:30-10:4, this is from the NIV:

³⁰ What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but Israel, who pursued a law of righteousness, has not attained it. ³² Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “stumbling stone.” ³³ As it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

10 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. ² For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ⁴ Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

How do you understand it?

This is from my paraphrase:

^{9:30} How then do we understand this? It is very simple – the Gentiles who had no idea they were infected with selfishness and were therefore dying, and certainly didn't have a clue that a Remedy to heal them was available, therefore, didn't pursue God's healing cure. But when they became aware of their condition and that a cure existed obtained it by trust in him who heals and restores; ³¹ but Israel, who knew their condition and knew a cure was available, who had been given the teaching tools designed to lead them back to trust did not attain it. ³² Why not? Instead of trusting God and accepting his free Remedy, they attempted to cure themselves by their own efforts. Thus they stumbled over the “stumbling stone” refusing to trust in him. ³³ As it is written:

“See, I have placed in Zion a stone of truth that reveals the stumbling and shortcoming of men, and a rock of righteousness that exposes how far short they fall, but the one who trusts in him will be completely healed and never stumble or fall again.”

Romans 10:1 Brothers, my heart's great desire and constant request to God is that the Israelites – the genetic descendants of Abraham – will accept the truth and be healed. ² I can assure you from my own experience that they are zealous to serve God, but their zeal is based on the wrong concept of God, for they don't really know him. ³ And because they do not know him -



his goodness, mercy, forgiveness, kindness, love and free gift to heal and restore, they have sought to please him by working to create their own Remedy, and thus have refused God's free healing plan already provided by him. ⁴ Christ is the total fulfillment of the law so that there may be perfection of character and healing of mind and heart for all who trust him.

Read bottom pink section, "People who take..." Is the problem of legalism that people take the law seriously? Or that people don't actually understand God's law – the law of love, the design protocols, and have instead accepted a false view of the law, as an imposed set of rules?

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, "In harmony..." thoughts? This is well said.

Read Gal 3:19,21:

What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator...²¹ Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.

Do you notice Paul says the law was added? What law was added? Some argue it was just the ceremonial law, but not so, Paul is stating that all written law, including, and especially the 10 Commandments were added after sin, because humans needed the help of the diagnostic instrument known as the 10 Commandments. Before sin the written law was not needed.

Our founders saw it this way:

If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall, preserved by Noah, and observed by Abraham, there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign, they would never have been seduced into idolatry, nor would it have been necessary for them to suffer a life of bondage in Egypt; they would have kept God's law in mind, and there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses. {PP 364.2}

I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments... "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24). In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. {ISM 233, 234}

What is the danger to believing the 10 Commandments were always in existence?



- Misrepresents God as a dictator
- Misrepresents God's law as rules rather than design protocols
- Incites fear and leads to rebellion against God
- Leads to legalism
- Obstructs the gospel

FRIDAY

Read question #2, “Godly living...” What is the healthy way to understand this? What is the dangerous and false way?

Healthy – we live in mortal bodies with, physical defects, and will be subject to temptation, and mistakes until Christ returns. Yet our characters are capable of constant growth, maturing, advancement, development and purification; we do experience regeneration of motive, desire, thought, and ability to love, losing our fearful self focused drive to protect self, until we are like Jesus in character, yet still subject to human weakness. Thus the quote we read earlier, that the covering of the robe of righteousness is actually a regeneration of heart and mind.

False and Dangerous: There is no victory here, we continue to live sinfully, and are only covered with Christ's record, obstructing the reality of our wicked, selfish, sinful heart and character. Don't expect victory until the second coming. This is a lie!