



The Teachings of Jesus Lesson 1 3rd Q 2014

Lesson 1: Our Loving Heavenly Father

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

June 21 TODAY – Jfest: Come and Reason Ministries will have a booth at J103's Jfest at Camp Jordan. We will give away our materials.

June 27, 28: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Lakeport, CA Community Church, at 1111 Park Way, Park Way & Hill Road, Lakeport, CA 95453. Friday Evening – The Model of the Mind; and Saturday – The God and Your Brain Seminar.

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 out more visit: <http://www.rethinkinghellconference.com/2014/>
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. The Friday evening meeting will be open to the public

Nov 16: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the First Baptist Church in Frisco Texas. Speaking for the three church services Sunday morning and then a seminar Sunday afternoon.

AMAZON Smile: Amazon now has a program that a percent of all your purchases will be donated to support a charity. Come and Reason Ministries is a registered Charity. So, you can select us, 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.**

Here are two emails I received recently:

I hope all is well with you. I continue to enjoy and share resources from C&M whenever I can, either by giving away the books to friends, or creating my own presentations for Sabbath School, here where I now live, in North Carolina, and also for my previous church's teen VBS program in Florida. I've only received positive responses to all the presentations. This message is so liberating and transformational! I truly pray that it will span the globe. This is the true gospel and the 3rd angel's message! What's even more awesome, the more I study the Bible and the testimonies, the more evidence I find to reinforce what you are teaching. Not to mention in nature, and in my own experience. I'm truly thankful that I see clearly now, without the traditional distortions. May God continue to bless you and the C&M family! I love you all.

I have been introducing your DVDs at church and using your Bible Study outlines- Shared them with other instructors and now out of our Lesson Study three out of four instructors are using your outline. We initially got resistance, but with this inductive approach members are beginning to see a picture of GOD that is a friendly. Would it be possible to have additional DVDs as I now have given out my last one to one of my patient. I would prefer all the three seminars- A case would be nice. Thank- you so much for your ministry- So freeing... CA



How many read their lesson for this week? I was very encouraged. Russell mentioned last week he thought he noticed a trend in the study guides of moving more toward the true picture of God's character of love. In this week's lesson I noticed much to be commended in what is said about God.

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, "Father was not..." I loved how they emphasized Christ's mission was to complete the revelation of God that was initiated in the OT.

Who was the member of the Godhead who interacted with humans in the OT? Was it the Father or was it the Son? Any evidence for your answer?

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. ² They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³ They all ate the same spiritual food ⁴ and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. 1Cor 10:1-4

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds. Jn 8:58, 59

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² **There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush.** Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ³ So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up." ⁴ When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, **God called to him from within the bush,** "Moses! Moses!" Exodus 3:1-4

For the **Lord himself** will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the **voice of the archangel** and with the trumpet call of God, and the **dead in Christ will rise first.** 1Thes 4:16

Don't be afraid! I am the First and the Last. I am the living one. **I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.** Rev 1:17,18

Do you see the same picture of God in the OT as in the New? Have you considered that it was Jesus in the OT as well as the New?



Why is there such difficulty for some in seeing the God of the OT as the same as Jesus revealed when on earth?

Several reasons:

- In the New Testament you have people recording Jesus' own testimony about God, and recording Jesus' actions. Thus a clearer manifestation occurred in the life of Jesus.
- The condition of the people was different in OT times than when Jesus came in person. Thus what they needed was different. In OT times they were constantly thinking other gods were better, more desirable, generally more powerful than the Creator God. Thus, God had to repeatedly demonstrate to them the impotence of the false gods, so we see:
 - The plagues of Egypt
 - The 3.5 years of drought followed by Mt. Carmel confrontation
 - The confrontation with Dagon
 - The prophets repeatedly threatening God's abandonment and the reaping of destruction
 - The 70 years captivity
 - The shriveling of the king's hand
 - The she bears
- Additionally, because they were constantly thinking other gods were real and more powerful or desirable than God, God spoke to them as causing things which He permitted.
 - The message from Micaiah to Ahab about lying spirits in the mouth of his false prophets
 - The threats of sending various punishments if they rebelled, yet always tempered with His leaving them to the consequences of their own choices
- But when Jesus came they had given up believing the gods of the various nations were better than Yahweh and they were finally following the script, yet with a distortion of God's character as a cruel being of legal exaction. Thus Jesus came to throw off the lies about God infecting their system. Jesus didn't spend His time trying to turn them away from Baal, or Dagon or Molech etc. He spent His time trying to enlighten them to the truth that God is their loving Father, their forgiving Creator, their compassionate friend. He wanted them to see they were sin-sick and needed healing and God had sent Him to be their Remedy.

Read second paragraph, "Jesus made..."

We absolutely believe in a loving Father God who is personally concerned with the needs, problems, concerns of His earthbound children. While we also believe that God's law is the design protocol upon which life is constructed, we do NOT promote naturalism, which is the philosophy or religion of a distant unconcerned god, who created natural laws and now lets everything run on its own. No way. We believe in a God who personally intervenes in human history for the purpose of saving, healing and restoring His creation back to perfection. Yet, He always works in harmony with His own character of love i.e. His design (laws) not in violation of them.



Why do millions of angels worship God? It is absolutely true that God is sovereign and all powerful – but are these the primary reason God is to be worshipped?

This is from *Could It Be This Simple?*

Many people conceive of God’s glory as great displays of might, power, and fire, but the Bible teaches that His greatest glory reveals itself in His character. Because we are finite beings, many humans frequently react in fear to our all-powerful God. Unfortunately, this fear often leads to rebellion. Once Satan had made his allegations, God could not win His case through the display of power, which would inevitably result in sub- mission based on terror.

God will never utilize coercive tactics, because they are contrary to His benevolent character. The use of might and power to pressure conformity violates the law of liberty and would result in further rebellion. Such methods belong to Satan. If God employed them, He would ultimately lose His case. Although He has immense power, it is not the source of His glory, because power alone would intimidate, leading us to fear Him and subsequently to destroy our love for Him.

Nineteenth-century theologian George MacDonald made this same point: “What is the deepest in God? His power? No, for power could not make him what we mean when we say God. . . . A being whose essence was only power would be such a negation of the divine that no righteous worship could be offered him: his service must be fear, and fear only.” “The Creation in Christ,” Unspoken Sermons, Third Series (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889).

The power isn’t what is most important. Instead, it is the trustworthiness of the One who possesses all the power. It is the demonstration of His character—the character of the One who holds the power—that is the real source of divine glory. For example, although God is all-powerful, He can never be provoked—even in the most abusive and horrendous circumstance—to use His power for self-interest. When humanity fully recognizes this, it will restore trust and regenerate love, and we will then open our hearts and minds to Him for healing and restoration.

The Bible is clear on this issue. The book of Haggai declares that the glory of the second Jewish Temple would be greater than that of Solomon’s Temple (Haggai 2:7-9). The prophecy refers to the structure the Jews rebuilt after returning from Babylonian captivity. But in the book of Ezra we read that the older Levites and family heads who saw the second Temple mourned because it was so small when compared to Solomon’s (Ezra 3:12). If the second Temple was smaller than the first, how could it be more glorious? Most Bible students immediately explain that because Jesus walked in the courts of the second Temple His presence made it more glorious.



But in 2 Chronicles we read that when Solomon's Temple was dedicated, the priests could not enter because the brightness of God's glory was too great (2 Chron. 5:13, 14). In other words, God came to both Temples—one in His unveiled splendor; the other in human form—yet Haggai states that the second was the more glorious. Why? Because it was at the second Temple that Christ revealed the character of God. Because it was at the second Temple that Christ showed that He preferred to permit His creatures to abuse Him rather than use His power in selfish ways. At the second Temple Christ demonstrated that we can trust the One who has the power. (p. 126-7)

Why do we worship God? Because of who He is in character, not merely because of His abilities – but we are so thankful for His abilities, for if He were the same in character but had no power it wouldn't really be good for us. But if He were all-powerful but like Satan in character, worse for us.

What of the idea “The fact that He is our Father invites us to approach Him with the confidence of a child”?

What ideas come to you with this description?

Doesn't it depend on how the child conceives of or views the father? If a child views the father as a judge, a dictator, an enforcer of the rules will they go to their father with confidence? Especially after doing wrong?

What enables us to go confidently before God?

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Heb 4:14-16

What gives us confidence? Knowing Jesus is in heaven and that God knows our needs and sympathizes with us. Why does this give us confidence? What was undermining confidence that this addresses?

Here is a description taught over 100 years ago:

In Christ dwelt all the fulness of the God-head. **But the only way in which He could reach men was to veil His glory by a garb of humanity.** The angels beheld the hiding of His glory, that divinity might touch humanity. Christ ever retained the utmost hatred for sin, but He loved



the purchase of His blood. He suffered in the place of sinful men, taking them into union with Himself. This is the mystery into which angels desire to look. **They desire to know how Christ could live and work in a fallen world, how He could mingle with sinful humanity.** It was a mystery to them that He who hated sin with intense hatred felt the most tender, compassionate sympathy for the beings that committed sin. {ST, January 20, 1898 par. 3}

Satan had worked long to efface the true impression of God, and to represent Him as a God having no love. This is Satan's character. He is destitute of mercy and compassion. Overbearing and revengeful, he delights in the misery that he brings on the human family. **With these attributes he attempted to clothe the God of heaven.** {ST, January 20, 1898 par. 4}

Christ came to remove these unjust impressions. He came to assure men that they need not fear to approach God because of His greatness and majesty. He constantly sought to carry the attention of His hearers to God. He presented the greatness of the Father's love, declaring that He had so great a care for His children that even the hairs of their head are numbered. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of the heavenly Father. He sympathizes with all the creatures He has made, and if the heart is given into His hands, and attuned by His power, it will respond by strains of melody and thanksgiving. {ST, January 20, 1898 par. 5}

In His wisdom the Saviour teaches us to approach God with the confidence of a child. He instructs us to call Jehovah by the endearing name of "Father," that we may not separate from Him in awe and coldness. **Constantly He points us to the emblems of fatherly love, seeking to encourage faith and confidence in God. He pleads with us to have a correct idea of the Father.** He throws back the accusation of the enemy, declaring, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." **He would have the memorials of redeeming grace arrest our attention, that we may know that all the goodness, mercy, patience, forbearance, seen in Him, belong to God.** {ST, January 20, 1898 par. 6}

What does it mean to come to God as a child? Does it mean with childish thinking? Paul said, we are to put away childish thinking? Jesus said He wants us to understand His business, what He is doing and why. He wants us to be friends.

So, how are we to be like children coming to our Father? In love, in trust, in confidence, but not in childish, magical, unintelligent thinking.

Read last two paragraphs, "Not everyone..." The lesson points out that for some children, if they have abusive fathers it might be hard for them to appreciate God as our heavenly Father.

Do you think the type of father a person is, is impacted by the view of God they hold? What happens



when fathers have dictator views of God? Could this be a source of mistreatment of their children?

Studies show that those with authoritarian views of God abuse their children more than those with a loving God concept.

MAY 27, 2014: A woman was stoned to death by her own family in front of a Pakistani high court on Tuesday for marrying the man she loved, police and a defense lawyer said.

Nearly 20 members of the woman's family, including her father and brothers, attacked her and her husband with batons and bricks in broad daylight before a crowd of onlookers in front of the high court of Lahore, said police official Naseem Butt. He said Farzana Parveen, 25, had married Mohammad Iqbal, with whom she had been engaged for years in opposition to her family.

Arranged marriages are the norm among conservative Pakistanis, who view marriage for love as a transgression.

Butt, the police official, said Parveen's father surrendered after the incident and called the murder an "honor killing."

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, a private organization, said in a report last month that some 869 women were murdered in so-called honor killings in 2013. <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/pakistani-woman-stoned-death-family-article-1.1806700>

What type of heavenly father do you think this family believes in?

I think it is unlikely they did this thinking they were sinning against God, what do you think?

MONDAY

Read second paragraph, "In the great controversy..." This is well said, yes Jesus came to refute the false views of God Satan has infected humanity with.

Any other attack? He attacks God's creation perhaps for dual purposes – to have God misrepresented and blamed, and to hurt God by hurting His creation.

What is the importance to us in understanding the devil's attack is against God's character?

2Cor 10:3-5 – we war against everything that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. It goes to help clarify so much theology.



Christ's mission was never one of legal battles, rights, ownership, physical power, etc. The battle was always about revealing truth, exposing lies and fixing the human condition.

Thus God battles to free minds, not territories, not win court cases, but to win hearts!

The last paragraph points out that even the disciples, who spent 3.5 years with Jesus failed to fully comprehend that Jesus reveals perfectly who God is.

Satan's power is lies – as he gets us to believe lies he gains power over us. Think of the ugliness done in God's name because people believe lies about God, that their actions are actually what God would want?

TUESDAY

Read paragraphs 3-5, "Christ was not..." This is well said! So glad to see this truth being taught in the study guide, but what does "propitiation" mean? Jesus is our "propitiation" what is that?

Here is the KJV of Romans 3:21-26, which uses propitiation:

²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²² Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: ²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; ²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: ²⁵ Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; ²⁶ To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Here is my paraphrase:

^{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.

Propitiation in this passage is *hilasterion* which is the word for the lid to the Ark of the Covenant – which is the place of reconciliation. So, Jesus is the means and place of reconciliation or restoration to unity with God.

What does mediation entail? How do we understand mediation?

Mediation is the process of being a “go-between” between two parties at odds, in opposition, at war even, for the purpose of bringing reconciliation.

Once humanity sinned, humankind was opposed to God in motive, heart attitude, method, principle, belief about God, etc.

Mediation involves the mediator trying to bridge the gap between the two parties to bring them to agreement and even reconciliation. Typically, this means both parties are called upon to “meet in the middle.” Is this true in regard to Jesus mediation? NO!

God doesn't change; all change in the mediation is in sinful humans – why? Because it is the only way for us to live – we must be brought back into harmony with God's design for life.

WEDNESDAY

Read second paragraph, “There is no chapter...” How have you known God's presence and love in the midst of suffering?

What is suffering?

- To experience pain, illness, injury
- To experience something unpleasant

What are the sources of suffering?

- Deviation from God's design (sin)
- Our own choices
- Evil people
- Satan and his fallen angels
- Randomness of events in a sinful world
- Degeneration of nature that is not fully connected to God



- What about healing therapies, discipline, exercise needed for growth, do they cause suffering?
- What about crucifixion of the carnal nature? Does this cause suffering? Is this bad? Is such suffering from God?

Consider what Peter said:

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because **he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.** ² As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. 1Pet 4:1,2

What is this suffering? Must persons suffer in this way if they want to experience healing from sin? Why?

- If an addict has cravings but chooses to say no, do they suffer in their flesh?
- If an arrogant person chooses not to take the seat of preeminence, do they suffer?
- If a greedy person chooses to give, genuinely, do they suffer?
- If a controlling person chooses to surrender control do they suffer?
- If a perfectionist chooses to allow visitors to their home to ruffle the pillows, leave dirty dishes on the counter, do they suffer?

Is such suffering harmful to us? Such suffering is a result of sin, of being infected with it and partaking the cure. This type of suffering results in freedom from sin and ultimate peace and healing. This is in contrast to the suffering that comes from participating in sin, from deviating from God's design. Suffering from sin only damages, cripples, weakens, injures and causes further suffering and if not remedied, eventual death.

Here is 1Peter 4:1,2 from my paraphrase:

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore model yourself after Christ, who when tempted to save himself chose instead to sacrifice himself thus suffering in his human nature. So be like Jesus, love other first and say no to temptations to act selfishly. Your selfish nature will suffer but you will be done with sin. 2 As a result, right now on earth, such a person no longer lives his life with feelings, passions and desires controlling him, but rather lives intelligently choosing to follow God's will living in harmony with the law of love.

As we view suffering in this way, can we see God's love never changes? He is always seeking to heal and restore, and even for those who choose to destroy themselves, God's love never stops!

What is the danger of suffering? Misunderstanding it and classifying it wrongly, i.e. sin as from God, or discipline as sin so one stops to avoid the suffering.



THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “In different ways...” Why is it important to recognize God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit?

What do we jeopardize if we attempt to deny one or more members of the Godhead? First and foremost we undermine God’s character of love.

Love, as we understand it, being other-centered, outward moving etc. requires an object to sacrifice self for, to love more than self. Eliminating the Trinity means at some point in time God was a singularity not a plurality, which means God was something other than love, something different than “other-centered” because there was no “other” to center upon – i.e. it means that at the core God would not be love. This is Satan’s position against God all along, that God is not love.

This is out of the book *Education* and I think it says it so powerfully:

Unselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies. From the beginning of the great controversy he has endeavored to prove God's principles of action to be selfish, and he deals in the same way with all who serve God. To disprove Satan's claim is the work of Christ and of all who bear His name. {Ed 154.3}

When one understands love, how it functions, then one realizes to argue against the Trinity is to sustain Satan’s charge that God is not love.

Some, then attempt to argue against the Holy Spirit and suggest the Father and the Son are God, but not the Spirit – again it undermines God’s character of love, because three is the minimum number one can have to be able to genuinely have selfless love. Why?

Because two narcissistic people can spend all their time being the center of the attention of the object of their love, without ever having to deny self. But when a third is involved it presents the opportunity to step back and allow another to be the center of your loved one’s attention.

I have seen it in my patients, when a couple get together, date, marry, and get along great, happy, love each other and no apparent problems for years until... the first child – and then the wife/mother must spend time with the child and she is less available to the husband/father. Sometimes a selfish man will be jealous, will be angry, hurt, frustrated and even accuse the wife of not loving him. Why? Because he is unwilling to sacrifice himself for his own child. He wants the attention of the wife for himself. Thus, three exposes the true character of love, or not.

Issue number one when we deny the Trinity we obscure the truth of God’s character of love.



What other problems arise?

- If we deny the full divinity of Christ then His life and sacrificial death don't tell us about God they tell us about a lesser being. The answers needed to refute the Satan's lies about God remain unanswered if Jesus is not fully God.
- The argument against the Trinity diminishes Christ, which is another of Satan's goals, to diminish Christ to someone not equal with God, thus not deserving of our worship. Lucifer alleged equality with Christ, not with the Father, thus it would be essential that Lucifer make the case that Jesus is not fully equal to the Father. Those who argue against the full divinity of Christ are supporting Satan's allegations against Christ.
- John wrote:
 - But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. ²¹ I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because **no lie comes from the truth.** ²² **Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ.** Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. ²³ **No one who denies the Son has the Father;** whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also. 1JN 2:20-23
 - And notice what John says about the Son: “**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** He was with God in the beginning. **Through him all things were made;** without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men... **The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.** We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1-4, 14
- It undermines the creatorship of Jesus to do away with the Trinity.
- It undermines the need for Christ as our Savior
- It undermines our ability to participate in Christ's victory because it is through the effectual work of the Holy Spirit that we experience what Christ achieved. If the Holy Spirit isn't fully God then the Holy Spirit doesn't possess creative power to renew and transform us.

FRIDAY

Read second paragraph, “God regards...” Do you believe you are part of the royal family of heaven? How does this impact how you view yourself, how you feel about yourself, how you live and act?

If you found out you were part of the royal family of some earthly country, a prince or princess, and suddenly had some title, would it change how you felt about yourself? Do you have that same experience when you think about being a child of God, a member of the royal family of heaven? If not, why not?

Read and discuss questions 1, 2, 4