



Biblical Missionaries 3Q 2015 Lesson 2

Abraham: The First Missionary

SABBATH

What do you think about the title? Was Noah a missionary? Was Enoch a missionary?

Read memory text, Galatians 3:6-8:

Consider Abraham: “He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”
⁷ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. ⁸ The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”

The lesson chose to use the NIV – what do you hear when you hear this verse?

What law lens to you understand it through? Is God’s law like human law, rules imposed and we are in legal trouble with the ruling authority? If we view it through that lens what kind of theories do we come up with?

This is from the SDA Bible Commentary on this verse (which is not inspired, but just intelligent honest people sharing what they think it means):

Accounted. Or, “counted,” “reckoned.” Abraham’s faith was credited to his account in heaven, thus balancing the account. Accordingly, God considered Abraham a righteous man. [according to this why did God consider Abraham righteous? Because of an adjustment in a legal document in heaven, not because Abraham was actually righteous. In other words, it puts God in the position of dealing in fantasy not reality.] Works had nothing to do with his attainment of this favorable credit rating in the books of heaven. God simply offered it to him and he accepted it by faith, believing that God meant exactly what He said. His own efforts could never have purchased this blessed status. See on Rom. 4:9–13.

Faith does not satisfy the demands of the law, for the law requires perfect obedience. Therefore, if one is to be justified by faith, it must be on the basis of some other principle than the works of the law. [Do you see the difficulty this author has in trying to reconcile the issues? The problem is the author is trying to come up with a solution to justification based on the premise that God’s law operates like human law, rather than design law. Why does the law require perfect obedience? For the same reason the law of respiration require we breathe, it is how life is constructed. Yet, this view suggests if we find someone suffocating all they need to do is have faith in someone who is not and have their breathing credited to their account and they will be recognized to be breathing.] To be credited as righteous means being forgiven and admitted to the favor of God. [what is suggested as the



reason we are not in the favor of God? That God hasn't forgiven because we haven't received the proper legal payment for the heavenly court.] Man can do nothing to deserve the gift of Christ's righteousness; he cannot claim it on the basis of merit. Divine grace makes it possible for a just God to consider repentant sinners righteous. Vol 7, p. 954

So, was Abraham is actually righteous or only declared to be righteous? The typical position taken by those who teach God's government operates like a human government, is that God declares a person righteous based on the legal application of Jesus' perfect sacrifice in our behalf, even though we are not righteous. This puts God in the position of declaring falsehoods – God declaring Abraham righteous even though Abraham is not righteous.

This happens because they are operating in a fantasy world (and I mean that literally not pejoratively). They have a construct that is not real, a false reality – the idea that God's law is imposed rules.

This is from Enhances Strong's Lexicon, the word translated accounted or credited:

λογίζομαι [*logizomai* /log·id·zom·ahee/] v. Middle voice from 3056; TDNT 4:284; TDNTA 536; GK 3357; 41 occurrences; AV translates as “think” nine times, “impute” eight times, “reckon” six times, “count” five times, “account” four times, “suppose” twice, “reason” once, “number” once, and translated miscellaneously five times. **1** to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over. *1a* to take into account, to make an account of. *1a1* metaph. to pass to one's account, to impute. *1a2* a thing is reckoned as or to be something, i.e. as availing for or equivalent to something, as having the like force and weight. *1b* to number among, reckon with. *1c* to reckon or account. **2** to reckon inward, count up or weigh the reasons, to deliberate. **3** by reckoning up all the reasons, to gather or infer. *3a* to consider, take into account, weigh, meditate on. *3b* to suppose, deem, judge. *3c* to determine, purpose, decide. *Additional Information:* **This word deals with reality. If I “logizomai” or reckon that my bank book has \$25 in it, it has \$25 in it. Otherwise I am deceiving myself. This word refers to facts not suppositions.**¹

When we come back to worship the Creator, Him who made the heavens, earth, sea and realize God's laws are the protocols upon which reality functions, then we realize several key facts.

1. When Adam sinned humankind was changed (God and God's law were not changed)
2. This change in human kind altered what was right, i.e. the way God built it, to something that was wrong, or deviant from the design. Another way to say this, what was right-eous became un-right-eous
3. The natural state of the mind/heart/character of humans after Adam and Eve's fall is

¹ Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.



“enmity” toward God. In other words, we don’t trust God. Our inherited state of being is, not right or, unrighteous.

4. Abraham experienced a change in his heart attitude toward God, moving from distrust to trust—first. Thus, his heart attitude toward God was “set right.” And only AFTER this change IN Abraham did God recognize Abraham as being set right, or righteous. Why? Because Abraham actually was set right in his heart attitude and relationship with God and therefore, because of that change in heart attitude he was able to partake of the Remedy Christ achieved. Thus, the victory of Christ is NOT applied to record books in heaven, but into the hearts, minds, characters of those who trust in God, such that we become partakers of the divine nature, and it is no longer I that lives but Christ lives in me.

This is reality, a real, actual change in the believer in Christ. This is justification or righteousness by faith. And what this looks like is dying to selfishness and experiencing renewal of love as the driving motive in one’s character.

This Galatians 3:6-9 from *The Remedy*:

Consider Abraham: "He trusted God, and his trust was recognized as righteousness, because the distrust caused through Satan's lies had been removed, and through trust he was endowed with a new heart, right motives, and Christlike principles."⁷ Be clear on this: All those who trust God, as Abraham did, experience the same transformation of character and are considered children of Abraham.⁸ The Scriptures foretold that God would set the Gentiles right with him by trust - just like Abraham - and announced this incredible good news to Abraham: "All nations, peoples and ethnic groups will be blessed through you."⁹ So those who trust God experience healing of heart and mind just like Abraham - who trusted God.

SUNDAY

Read Genesis 12:1-3 at the top of the page, “The Lord...” What do you make of this portion of the passage, “I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse...”?

What law lens do you see it through? Is God a dictator or Designer?

Those who operate at level four and below hear these words and think: God has two faces. He has a kind and merciful side that blesses us if we do what he wants, but he also has a stern, vengeful side that will use power to torment and punish those who don’t do what he says.

Is this how you hear it? Can anyone bring in any Bible texts that might shed light on this?

Through whom is the Remedy for sin coming? Didn’t God just promise that it is through Abraham that all nations will be blessed, that it is through Abraham that the Messiah will come?



Then what does it mean, contextually, for someone to bless Abraham? It means they value, cherish, rejoice, celebrate and identify with Abraham and his mission and want to support the fulfillment of God's purpose. And what would such persons do when presented with the opportunity to partake of God's Remedy? And would that be a blessing?

What does it mean to curse Abraham? What attitude would one have toward Abraham and his descendants, including Jesus? And if one chooses to curse Jesus what happens? If one rejects the Remedy what happens? What does God do? He let's go – and if you have a terminal condition and the one with the Remedy grants you your choice to refuse the Remedy, what happens? You are cursed – remember Scripture, “cursed is the one who is hung on a tree.” Jesus was let go by the Father, abandoned, and that was God's curse.

To all those who curse Abraham and thereby curse God and God's Remedy, hardening their hearts and refusing to trust God as Abraham did, God let's them go and they die of their terminal condition – this is God's curse.

Here is a quote from one of the founders of the SDA church:

God pledges himself to bless those who will obey his commandments... With these words of light and truth before them, how dare men neglect so plain a duty? How dare they disobey God **when obedience to his requirements mean prosperity in temporal and spiritual things**, and disobedience means the curse of God? **Satan is the destroyer. God cannot bless those who refuse to be faithful stewards. All he can do is to permit Satan to do his destroying work.** We see calamities of every shape and in every degree coming upon the earth, and why?--**The Lord's restraining power is not exercised.** The world has disregarded the word of God. They live as though there were no God. Like the inhabitants of the Noachic world, they refuse to have any thought of God. Wickedness prevails to an alarming extent, and the earth is ripe for the harvest...
{Pamphlet 166 10.1}

Read last paragraph, “Many of us are tested...” What comes to mind when you hear the concept of being tested by God?

- Is God examining you like a schoolteacher in order to find out what you know?
- Is God testing you like a human government tests operatives, to see if you are loyal or treasonous?
- Is God testing you to see how much you can take?

Which law lens do you hear this through?

What design law applies? The law of exertion – if you want something to get stronger you must exercise it, if you don't use it you lose it.



What does God want for us? He wants us to grow, develop in ability in Christlike character, in trust in him, which requires what? That we exercise our trust in him!

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴ Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. Jas 1:2-4

What does this mean in the context of how reality works?

Consider going to a physical therapist after months in a cast. They start you out with two pound weights, and you struggle, but as you gain strength, and it becomes easy to lift two pounds, what does the therapist do? Add weight, and you struggle again, and when it becomes easy what does the therapist do? Add weight, why? Is the therapist trying to burden you, overwhelm you, discourage you? No, to strengthen you to recover your autonomy.

What is the last fruit of the Spirit – self-control – how do you think God gets us there?

Does this mean we are saved by works? Absolutely not! We get a new heart and right spirit by God's grace through trust/faith. But, with that new heart and spirit, we team up with God, via the Spirit and choose to exercise our abilities to mature, develop, and grow.

This is design law – we must exercise our trust in God in order for it to grow!

God cannot save a person against that person's will – but salvation is not a mere legal assent, or ritual performed, it is healing, it is a relationship with God that grows by experience each day. So a person who claims legal forgiveness, but chooses to live outside God's design law of love, is not healed/saved, they continue to be hardened and damaged by such deviations (sin). This is why Jesus said many will come to him in the last days claiming to be his but he never knew them. This is what Paul means about those who have a form of godliness but not power.

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, "Lot was..." Now think about Lot for a minute, where do we find Lot in the New Testament? Peter describes Lot as a righteous man whose conscience was tormented by the wickedness of Sodom. (2Pet 2:7)

Do you think righteousness and unrighteousness at Sodom was primarily about maintaining healthy sexual boundaries?

It is often taught this way, but let's consider some facts:



- When all the men of the city turned out and demanded the angels, who were in the form of men, to sexually abuse what did Lot do?
 - He offered his daughters to them to sexually abuse
 - “Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him ⁷ and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. ⁸ Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.” Gen 19:6-8
 - Remember lot is considered a righteous man—how is this an act of righteousness?
- After Lot leaves Sodom did he eventually have children? Who were the mothers of his children?
 - His daughter, Lot had incest with his daughters, yes they got him drunk, but consider that for a minute...
 - If someone gets drunk are they now excused for their choices?
 - Are they responsible for getting drunk in the first place?
 - Does this mean Lot had an alcohol problem? But he is still considered righteous?
 - Where were they living at the time? A cave in the mountains (Gen 19:30) So who do you think Lot, in his drunken state, thought was available for intimate physical relations?
- So what are the implications regarding Lot and him being considered righteous?

Was the issue of Sodom being a wicked city primarily an issue of sexual sin?

What was it that made the city so wicked?

‘Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. ⁵⁰ They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen. Ezek 16:49,50

What was it that made them wicked? Selfishness, greed, pride, arrogance, lack of compassion, no love!

Lot demonstrated hospitality to the strangers. Lot welcomed them to his home, used his resources to provide for them, and was willing to sacrifice his own family members to protect them – these are acts of love. The men of Sodom cared only for themselves and were willing to abuse others to gratify self.

Are we suggesting sexuality cannot be abused, exploited, and there are no acts of sexual sin – Absolutely not! Of course people can abuse themselves and others via the avenue of sexuality, but we are speaking of what is primary – the character and it is defect in character, being selfish, being exploitive of others, pride, arrogance, etc. which is the root.



War broke out on the plane, and some kings came along conquered Sodom and took Lot and his family captive. Abraham organizes a force and pursues them and defeats them freeing Lot and his family.

Read third paragraph, “To the kings...” What do you think about Abraham’s victory revealing the power of God?

Note what Paul says in Romans:

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

So when you think about power, what comes to mind? There is physical power, but there is another kind of power – the power of truth and love. Which is more powerful?

Does God use both types? Yes, why? Because of whom he is dealing with. Who needs physical power used? What level of development needs to see displays of physical power? Why?

And do displays of physical power win God what he wants? Why not?

- Can’t get love by force
- Can’t get trust by force
- Physical signs and wonders can be counterfeited
- Actions based on fear, because of power and might, inflame selfishness, they don’t cure it!

When Christ returns how is it described in Revelation returning with a sword coming out of his mouth that strikes down the nations – what does that sword represent? The Sword of Truth and Love and truth destroys lies and love destroys selfishness. So those who have solidified their beings upon lies and selfishness will be destroyed by the unveiling of infinite truth and love!

TUESDAY

Read second paragraph, “The Lord wanted...” Do we need to leave our past behind? In what ways?

- Leaving immaturity for maturity
 - When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. 1Cor 13:11
 - In what context is this passage found? In the chapter on love! Love is mature, selfishness is childlike. Think again of the seven levels of development and how the first four, including the legal model, are all selfish, childlike approaches, not love. The first four are based on fear – fear of getting punished, fear of not getting the deal, fear of rejection, fear of legal trouble. We must leave our immature way of



thinking behind, leave magical thinking behind, leave fantasy behind and come to understand how reality actually works.

- What are examples of magical thinking- magical thinking is the belief that a causal relationship exists between things that have no causal relationship in reality:
 - step on a crack break your mother's back
 - break a mirror get seven years bad luck
 - "my daddy moved out because I didn't eat all my peas. If I would have eaten all my peas daddy would still be here."
 - If I say this prayer every day for thirty days God will bless me
 - If I claim the blood of Jesus to my heavenly record then I am declared to be righteous, even though I am still unrighteous
- Leave our past mistakes behind
 - But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13:14
 - We must stop living in guilt over past shortcomings, stop beating ourselves up and accept and embrace our new hearts and lives in Jesus!
 - So you cheated on an exam in 7th grade, or had sex before marriage, or viewed porn, or lied, or committed adultery or whatever. History cannot be changed, what can change is your heart, mind, character. You can be reborn in Christ.
 - David through all eternity future will still *have* murdered Uriah and had adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. History doesn't change, what did change was David, he was recreated in the inner man and had a new heart and right spirit. We must move forward, in truth, in the reality of God's kingdom of love.
 - But the childish way of thinking is rules oriented, thinking God is mad and must punish, and we stay focused on legal accounting and getting our penalty paid, thus we never actually moved forward and live a life of love!
- Leave our losses behind and move forward
 - But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead." MT 8:22
 - When my father died I grieved. And there is an appropriate time for grieving – but I realized, I would not father by living in the past, the only way I would see my father again was by letting go the past and moving forward. As God brings about his plan, when Christ returns again, then we can be with our departed loved ones. Thus, we move forward, we don't let ourselves get stuck in the past.
 - Deep-Space 9 analogy
- Leave our destructive habits behind
 - Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Col 3:5
 - We must say no to the deviations from God's design
 - The Holy Spirit brings new desires, new motives, new wisdom and leads us to points of decision. We know the choices we must make, but we don't get the divine power over habits until we choose to do what we know is right for us. THEN we are



imbued with divine power sufficient to do what we have chosen.

- Leave our grudges and resentments behind
 - Love keeps no record of wrongs 1Cor 13:5
 - When we live in love we don't hold grudges, we grieve the destruction of character our enemies are inflicting upon themselves. We pray like Stephen as he was being stoned, Father don't lay this to their account.
- Leave our disappointments and unfulfilled desires behind—so may of my patients had problems in their childhood, parents who abused them, abandoned them and they live continually in the pain of that unfulfilled childhood.
 - We come, as citizens of heaven, to build upon the foundation of Jesus Christ, are members of his family, and have loyalty and purpose in seeking his kingdom fulfilled.

Read third paragraph, “Amazing, too, was...” What do you think of this definition of faith? In what is our faith, is it our destination or in the one who is leading?

If we know, if we can see it, does our faith get undermined? Well, when Christ returns again, and we meet him face to face, do we say: “Well before you returned and I couldn't see you I had real faith in you. But now that you are here I don't have faith in you anymore?”

Of course not! Our faith increases as we gain understanding and evidence!

WEDNESDAY

At the end of the first paragraph it states, “Despite his faults, Abraham was still used by the Lord because Abraham wanted to be used by Him; and thus, the Lord was able to mold His character.”

This really resonated with me. I remembered years ago, when I was around twenty, I heard a song by a Christian group called Petra that became a real prayer for me. It is called:

I Am Available

Words and music by Bob Hartman

Based on Matthews 9:37-38, Romans 12:1

I don't have much to offer you, I don't have much to give
There's so much I may never be as long as I may live
I may never be all I want to be although I'll always try
But if you choose me, to use me, there's just one reason why

(Chorus)

I am available, I am available

I will go when you say go



I am available, I am available
I will stop when you say no
My whole life was incomplete till I laid it at Your feet
So use me as You will
I am available

I'm not the most dependable - sometimes you can't rely
There's no excuse, there's no defense, there's only one reply

I know that my ability is not Your main concern
It's my availability and willingness to learn

I think this is so true – God wants people who are willing. He will provide what is necessary to do whatever he asks you to do!

THURSDAY

Read top dark section, “Abraham will surely...” Did Abraham’s descendants become a great nation? What nation? Who are the descendants of Abraham?

³⁹ “Abraham is our father,” they answered.
“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do the things Abraham did.
⁴⁰ As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹ You are doing the things your own father does.”
“We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”

Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me. ⁴³ Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. In 8:39-44

Here is *The Remedy*

John 8:39 “Abraham is our father,” they shouted. “If you were more than genetic descendants, if you were children of Abraham in values and character, then you would practice the methods Abraham did, and embrace the truth. ⁴⁰ But instead, you prefer lies, and are determined to kill me, the one who has brought you the truth—the only Remedy to heal you—which God himself gave me. Abraham did not reject truth or prefer lies. ⁴¹ But you don’t practice Abraham’s values. No! You are doing what your own father does.” “We were not born illegitimately!” they protested; “The only Father we have is God himself.”



John 8:42 With tears in his eyes, Jesus replied, “If God were really your Father, you would love me, for I came from the Father and am an exact representation of him. I have not come on my own account but as his ambassador to reveal him to the world. ⁴³ Why don’t you understand what I am saying to you? Because your minds are so darkened with your preconceived ideas and your preference for a god like yourselves, that you are unwilling to open your minds and receive the truth I bring. ⁴⁴ You belong to your father, the devil; you prefer his methods, share his motives, and carry out his desires.

Who is a descendant of Abraham? All those, who trust God like Abraham did!

FRIDAY

Questions 1-3

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

On July 4, Class **WILL** meet here at our usual time, however, we will not broadcast it live because our entire broadcast team will be at the GC. We will audio record it and the audio and notes will be available on our website. On July 11, we will be back to normal broadcast and recording.

The Remedy – Dr. Jennings’ New Testament Paraphrase– ALL GLITCHES NOW FIXED in the IOS Version! So please UPDATE to latest version.

The Journal of the Watcher is now available as a movie in itunes for everyone without ios or android, you can now get it in itunes.

July 1-12: GC session at San Antonio. Come and Reason will have a booth in the exhibit hall, booth A481. Please come by and see us if you are there. We will have class at our regular times here in Collegedale.

August 1: Dr. Jennings will be speaking to the Petaluma, CA SDA church.

September 9-10: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Baptist Boomer’s Conference in San Antonio, TX.

September 12: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Vallejo Dr., CA SDA church.

September 23-26: American Association of Christian Counselors World Convention at Gaylord Opryland Hotel, Nashville TN. Come and Reason will have a booth in the exhibit hall, and Dr. Jennings will be doing a preconference workshop and regular conference presentation, as well as commencement speaker for Light University graduation.

October 24: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Puyallup, WA.