



The Book of Revelation 2Q 2019 Among the Lampstands

By Dr. Tim Jennings

Before we get into today's lesson, I wanted to follow up with where we ended last week's lesson. The question:

Is there an overarching key for rightly interpreting Bible symbolism?

What about this idea?

The significance of the Jewish economy is not yet fully comprehended. [another system of symbols, which in the next paragraph is connected to Revelation] Truths vast and profound are shadowed forth in its rites and symbols. **The gospel is the key that unlocks its mysteries. [What is the key?]** Through a knowledge of the plan of redemption, its truths are opened to the understanding. Far more than we do, it is our privilege to understand these wonderful themes. We are to comprehend the deep things of God. Angels desire to look into the truths that are revealed to the people who with contrite hearts are searching the word of God, and praying for greater lengths and breadths and depths and heights of the knowledge which He alone can give. {COL 133.1}

As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study. But Christ through His servant John has here declared what shall be in the last days, and He says, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." Revelation 1:3. {COL 133.2}

What is the key to unlock Bible mysteries? The gospel, if we misunderstand the gospel we will misunderstand the Bible symbols, so what is the gospel?

Consider this quote—do you agree?

No man can rightly present the law of God without the gospel, or the gospel without the law. **The law is the gospel embodied, and the gospel is the law unfolded. The law is the root, the gospel is the fragrant blossom and fruit which it bears.** {COL 128.2}

What does this mean?

- Does it mean that the legal penal proponents are right, that God imposes a law and only by getting the right set of rules with right obedience can we understand the gospel?
- Or does this mean that when we correctly understand the gospel, that we understand correctly



the law—all law, the design law upon which life is built, but also God's use of written law and if we fail to correctly understand the gospel we will misunderstand God's law?

And, can you see how important it will be to decide what is the gospel and what is the law?

"To fulfil the law." In His own life the Saviour gave the children of men an example of perfect obedience. In His teachings He made clear and distinct every precept of the divine law; He swept away the rubbish of erroneous tradition with which the Jews had encumbered it; **He illustrated and enforced its principles**, and showed in all its particulars the length and breadth and height and depth of **the righteousness required by the law of God.** {BEcho, April 16, 1894 par. 5} [why does the law require righteousness? For the same reason the law of respiration require we breathe, it is how life is built to exist]

The Pharisees were dissatisfied with the teachings of Christ. The practical godliness which He enjoined condemned them. They desired Him to dwell upon the external observances of the ceremonial law, and the customs and traditions of the fathers. **But Jesus taught the spiritual nature of the law, and made clear its far reaching claims. Love to God and to men must live in the heart and control the life, as the spring of every thought and every action.** {BEcho, April 16, 1894 par. 6} [What kind of law can do this? Can this be achieved by imperial rules enforced by threats of punishment?]

There is perfect harmony between the law of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. "I and My Father are one," says the great Teacher. **The gospel is the good news of grace, or favour, by which man may be released from the condemnation of sin, and enabled to render acceptable obedience to the law.** [What does this sound like to you? Think it through—does it sound penal legal or healing restorative? How are we released from condemnation, by a legal payment or by healing and recreation? Does a legal payment enable us to obey the law? Does restoring Godliness within us enable us to obey the law, so which is it? If Godliness is resorted within use and sinfulness removed, then will the law condemn us? So, this is healing and restoration not legal payment.] The gospel points to the moral code as a rule of life. That law, by its demands for undeviating obedience, is continually pointing the sinner to the gospel for pardon and peace. {BEcho, April 16, 1894 par. 7} [Does this sound legal? How do we understand it?]

As penitent sinners, contrite before God, [heart change takes place first] discern Christ's atonement in their behalf, **and accept this atonement** as their only hope in this life and the future life, **their sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith.** ... (CTr 150.3)

Justification is the opposite of condemnation. ... (CTr 150.4)

David was pardoned of his transgression because he humbled his heart before God in repentance and contrition of soul and believed that God's promise to forgive would be



fulfilled. [Heart change happens first.] (Manuscript 21, 1891; Manuscript Releases, vol. 9, pp. 300, 301; CTr 150.5)

But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practicing known sins or neglecting known duties. *God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; [again, heart change before justification]* and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul. (FW 100.1)

The only way this makes sense is design law and we are talking about surrender to allow healing of heart and mind. Healing of heart and mind does not happen without our trust in God. We must be won to trust in God first and invite Him in and this sets the heart right with God and He dwells in us and we follow the leading of God in our daily lives growing in godliness.

So how do you describe God's law?

Consider this quote:

The same power that upholds nature, is working also in man. **The same great laws that guide alike the star and the atom control human life. The laws that govern the heart's action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds.** Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same--**a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator's will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one's self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin.** {Ed 99.2}

What kind of law is this?

Can you see what will happen if we replace God's design law with Satan's imperial/imposed law? **Then the gospel is perverted and we take a false gospel to the world—which is exactly what has happened to all of Christianity.**

This is the primary reason Christ has not returned because He is waiting for the gospel to go to the world and we have yet to take it. Further, within the SDA church much of what the Bible has to teach us has been misunderstood because it has been filtered through the false law lens.

So, why is the law the root and the gospel the fruit?

Keep in mind the quote just read and consider these quotes:



Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the **glory of self-sacrificing love**. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that **the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God**; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto. {DA 19.2}

But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that **it is the glory of our God to give**. "I do nothing of Myself," said Christ; "the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." "I seek not Mine own glory," but the glory of Him that sent Me. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18. In these words is set forth **the great principle which is the law of life for the universe**. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the **Father's life flows out to all**; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the **circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life**. {DA 21.2}

In heaven itself this law was broken. Sin originated in self-seeking. Lucifer, the covering cherub, desired to be first in heaven. He sought to gain control of heavenly beings, to draw them away from their Creator, and to win their homage to himself. **Therefore he misrepresented God, attributing to Him the desire for self-exaltation. With his own evil characteristics he sought to invest the loving Creator. Thus he deceived angels. Thus he deceived men.** He led them to doubt the word of God, and to distrust His goodness. Because God is a God of justice and terrible majesty, Satan caused them to look upon Him as severe and unforgiving. Thus he drew men to join him in rebellion against God, and the night of woe settled down upon the world. {DA 21.3}

How did Satan do this specifically? He lied about God's law:

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. **Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan**; and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. {DA 761.4}

Why is the law the root and the gospel the fruit?

The law of God is the principle of love upon which life is built, and the gospel is the good news that God is love and love is the outward movement of God toward the healing and saving of His creation. Thus, we see manifest in Christ the character of God, the movement of love toward a fallen race, to bring the truth about God back to our awareness while simultaneously taking up the sickness of sin in order to cure the condition and provide remedy to our terminal state.



The gospel is what love does, how love acts, the way love functions—which is the law of life in operation!

But Satan has worked to replace God's design law with imposed law and to get humans to misinterpret God as a being of stern justice, who must inflict punishment for breaking the law, and the cross is perverted as a means of legal payment and propitiation of divine wrath.

Thus, the world languishes, darkness covers the people a gross and disgusting darkness and this darkness constantly spews forth from pulpits and religious publications, including those of the SDA church.

If we want to see Christ return, then we must reject the false law with its penal substitution theology and start promoting the truth about Our Creator God and His design law and the true gospel of His kingdom of love!

SABBATH

The Title for this week's lesson is *Among the Lampstands*: Read second paragraph, "Centuries later..."

The lesson points out that John was given a vision of the resurrected Christ in the heavenly sanctuary—I find this very interesting for a couple of reasons.

Why do the author's say John was given a vision of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary? Because He is walking among the lampstands. Okay, in last week's lesson the lesson said we should take Revelation as symbolic unless specific reasons to take it literal.

Is the sanctuary imagery of a literal physical building, or is it symbolic of something else?

Hmmm... what about the lampstands that Christ is walking amongst, are they literal pieces of gold with combustion flames, or are they symbolic?

Read Revelation 1:20:

This is the secret meaning of the seven stars that you see in my right hand, and of the seven gold lamp-stands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lamp-stands are the seven churches. (GNB)

In **TUESDAY's** lesson we read, "In Revelation, the lampstands represent the seven churches in Asia to which Revelation was originally sent and the lampstands also symbolize God's church throughout history."



So, should we take the lampstands as literal pieces of gold, or as symbolic of the seven churches? And are the seven churches seven buildings made of brick and mortar or the saints of God?

So, if the lampstands are symbolic of the people of God, and the image was that of Christ walking in the heavenly sanctuary, what would that say about the heavenly sanctuary? From what is the sanctuary in heaven constructed if we accept Jesus's words here?

And then if this is the heavenly sanctuary, constructed of the seven churches, which means the people of God through all time, then what would Christ be cleansing in the heavenly sanctuary?

Why do you think there is so much resistance in the SDA church to accepting what Jesus revealed in Revelation about the heavenly sanctuary?

Because the church is infected with a false law lens and with that false law lens they misinterpret the meaning to be legal and penal rather than healing and restorative. With the design law lens of love we realize that Jesus is working in human beings to heal and restore us to righteousness!

We must stop going along with the legal lie.

MONDAY

The Lord's day, which is what day of the week? Why is the seventh-day Sabbath the Lord's day?

Is the most important aspect of the Sabbath to realize which day in the seven-day cycle it is? Or, is it to realize its purpose, what it was created for?

What happens if we defined accurately which of the week is the Sabbath day, but we then understand its significance through the imposed law lens? Then we have the right day but the wrong meaning, and get the wrong god, and could end up killing the God of the Sabbath and want Him off the cross to worship on the Sabbath.

Sadly, the fourth commandment has been translated through the lens of imposed law causing the commandment to sound like some prohibition.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping **it** holy (Exodus 20:8)

The key word in this verse is "it" the Hebrew translate "it" is: **הוא, היא** [*huw' , beyond, Pentateuch*), *hiy' /hoo/* pron 3p s. A primitive word; TWOT 480; GK 2085 and 2115; 38 occurrences; AV translates as "that", "him", "same", "this", "he", "which", "who", "such", and "wherein". **1** he, she, it.



1a himself (with emphasis).¹

This allows for a completely different interpretation: *Remember the Sabbath day keeping yourself holy. Or, Remember the Sabbath day in order to stay holy.*

Think about it, if we were to build a golden calf and have an orgy of pagan worship during the Sabbath hours have we made the Sabbath less holy? If we spent the Sabbath hours in total righteous living, would we make the Sabbath more holy? We cannot keep the Sabbath holy for we didn't make it holy and we can't make it unholy—we can only keep ourselves holy. And can a person keep themselves holy only one day in seven?

The Sabbath was made for man—for what reason? To aide humankind in holiness, in keeping themselves holy!

And what is holiness? Holiness is the state of being holy—which is what? I would like to suggest being holy is being in harmony with God in all aspects of our being. Thus, being holy is living in harmony with God's character, protocols, methods—His design laws!

And how is the Sabbath related to this?

When was the Sabbath created (remember the Sabbath was *made* for man)?

At the end of creation of planet earth and this solar system.

What was happening in the rest of the universe during that week?

War—what kind of war and over what?

And there was **war** in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Revelation 12:7-9

The Greek translated “war” is **πόλεμος** [*polemos* /**pol**-em-os/], from which we get polemic—it is a war of words, a war of ideas. And Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44).

And what has been the focus or target of Satan's lies and where is this war fought?

For though we live in the world, we do not **wage war** as the world does.⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to

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



demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up **against the knowledge of God**, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.
2Corinthians 10:3-5.

The war is over the truth about God—whether we can trust God, whether God is worthy of our love, devotion, loyalty.

God wants our love, trust, loyalty and devotion—can any being get this from another by threat, by coercion, by infliction of punishment? In fact, what happens to love, trust, loyalty and devotion when one threatens and coerces another? Love and trust are broken and rebellion ensues.

So, if Satan could get intelligent beings to believe God is coercive, threatening, the source of inflicted pain, suffering, torture and death then love and trust would break down and rebellion against God ensue.

How could Satan get intelligent beings to conclude this about God? By alleging God's laws are not the design protocols the Creator built life to operate upon, but instead function no differently than the rules enacted by human beings—imperial laws that require the ruling authority to inflict punishment for disobedience.

Then how does the Sabbath fit in?

What does it say about God, that in the context of an assault on His right to rule, rather than using His power to force all beings to bow to Him, He instead creates a day of freedom to think?

And after six days of overwhelming display of creative power, the Godhead says to all the watching beings, "You have heard the allegations against us, you have seen the evidence we have just given, now universe—We rest our case! Take 24 hours aside and think for yourselves, come to your own conclusions and decide who you are going to trust."

Days one through six of creation week we learn God has incredible power, but God doesn't want His intelligent creatures to be intimidated, to be afraid, to follow Him because of power. God wants His creatures to love Him, trust Him, and be devoted to Him in loyal admiration. Thus, after six days of creation, God created a day of freedom, **a day where God stops using power** and steps back giving His creatures space and time to consider and think. Day seven reveals the character of the One who wields the power: God presented evidence (truth), in love, while leaving His creatures free to decide for themselves. No coercion, to intimidation, no pressure—freedom!

Then what is the Sabbath commandment about? It is about how one lives their life—in harmony with God and His design for life—do we present truth in love and leave others free or do we use imperial rules and coerce others with threats of punishment?

All week long we are to *Remember the Sabbath to keep ourselves holy*. We are to be beings who



present truth in love while leaving others free. Only those who practice these principles of God in their lives are true Sabbath keepers. Those who crucified Christ had the right day of the week, but did not have God's principles written into their characters. They were not Sabbath keepers.

With this in mind we realize God is Creator and His laws are the protocols upon which all life is built to operate. As the Creator of time God built into time a day for human health, holiness, growth, development; a day of evidence to reveal truth about how God governs. Every seven days every human being passes through this day, this reminder, this piece of evidence, this opportunity for healing, growth, renewal, transformation, contemplation, and freedom from the lies about God.

We can only experience these blessings if we throw off the lies about God and His law and accept His design protocols for life. But, if we insist on viewing the Sabbath as a "test of obedience" as a rule enacted by a powerful potentate who is watching to see if we break his rule, then the Sabbath becomes, not a sign of godliness, but a mark of beastliness.

The historic two days of worship within Christianity—Sabbath and Sunday—stand as two banners, signs, flags, marks, pennants that represent two divergent systems of governing.

Just as the US Flag, the grand old Stars and Stripes, is a symbol or sign of the United States of America so these two days of worship are signs of two different systems of governing. However, the flag is not the reality for which it stands. The US flag is only a symbol of the USA. And a person can wave the flag of America while being an enemy of the US. During WWII German soldiers donned American uniforms with the US flag and infiltrated American lines to sow discord and disrupt the US war effort. Just because someone waves the flag doesn't mean they support what the flag actually stands for.

Likewise, with Sabbath and Sunday, these two days are signs of two different systems of governing. The Sabbath is a day of rest by its creation; it was *made* by God for this purpose at the end of creation week. The Sabbath is an evidence of design law—truth, presented in love while leaving others free—and is a sign of God's method of governing.

Sunday, however, became a day of rest by legislative action, by human authorities making rules. Therefore, Sunday is a mark of imperialism, of law and government that functions like sinful humans—imposed rules that require infliction of punishment for disobedience.

But these days of worship, with their origins establishing their significance, are just like the US flag—symbols, signs, marks—they are not the governments they represent. So, a person could be a Sabbath keeper, but practice the imposed law model and teach that Sabbath breaking requires God to inflict punishment on the violator; that person would be like the German soldiers described above, infiltrating God's church to sow discord and confusion. They would not be on God's team, but actually promoting the methods of the beast. These religious traitors to God's kingdom would be most powerfully exemplified by the Sabbath keepers who crucified the Lord of the Sabbath.



Conversely, a person who worships on Sunday, but promotes truth in love while leaving others free is promoting the principles of the Sabbath and is on God's team.

TUESDAY

Read second paragraph, "Moreover, the picture..." Where does Jesus intercede?

If the lamps represent the church, and the High Priest represents Jesus and the High Priest trims the wick of the lamp so it burns more brightly, and we are the light of God in this dark world, then where is Jesus interceding?

When you think of Jesus's intercessions in the heavenly sanctuary do you think of your heart and mind, cutting away the lies, bad habits, misunderstandings, unhealthy longings, so that we will burn more brightly for God's kingdom? If we do not think this way why not?

Because we have been lied to and told God's law is like human law, imposed rules that require judicial oversight. Therefore, our heavenly High Priest is NOT interceding in our hearts and minds, but in a heavenly courtroom with God in order to protect us from the heavenly judge. What does such an idea do in OUR minds and hearts? It incites fear, doubt, insecurity, and obstructs the growth of love and goodness. Thus the light within us, the light of heavenly truth and love is hidden or extinguished in this false legal system.

One of God's laws is the law of worship, by beholding we are changed. When we accept lies about God and view Him in Satan's mold we become more authoritarian, less compassionate and more willing to use beastly methods of coercion.

With whom is our High Priest interceding?

When we reject the imposed law lie and return to design law—God intercedes in three places:

- Gen 3, intercedes in our hearts to break up the unity sinful humans would have with Satan and fallen angels. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman..."
- He intercedes with the principalities and powers of darkness, protective hedge (Elisha, Job etc.)
- He interceded in the natural course of what sin would do to humanity, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 2Cor 5:21

Then what do we do with statements like this one, because those who prefer the human imposed law view and falsely believe Jesus must plead to his Father for us, will throw statements like this at you:

In the sacrificial offering on every altar was seen a Redeemer. With the cloud of incense arose from every contrite heart the prayer that God would accept their offerings as showing faith in



the coming Saviour. **Our Saviour has come and shed his blood as a sacrifice, and now he pleads that blood before his Father in the sanctuary in heaven. It is now, as anciently, only through the merits of that blood that the transgressor of God's law can find pardon.** It is by exercising repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. {RH, March 2, 1886 par. 11}

What do we believe the sanctuary in heaven is constructed out of? Do we believe Jesus's words in Revelation that the lampstands are the churches? Then He pleads His blood before His Father in the churches?

If the Holy Spirit leads a person to promote a message, will that message disagree with Jesus and what Jesus taught?

Jesus said:

In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf.
²⁷ No, the Father himself loves you... John 16:26,27

Do we believe Jesus? Are there more texts to support what Jesus said here?

- Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. Jn 14:9
- I and the Father are one." John 10:30
- For God so loved the world...John 3:16

Does Jesus need to plead with the Father? Does the Father need some convincing in order to save us?

Who needs to be convinced? We do!

Jesus said:

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. **He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears,** and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me **by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.** Jn 16:12-14

What is being described?

To whom is the Holy Spirit listening? If the Holy Spirit is not speaking on His own, then for whom is He speaking? Jesus! And what is another metaphor for the Holy Spirit? Oil and where do we find the oil? In the lampstands, which represent what?

Then, if Jesus is in heavenly sanctuary before God pleading—to whom is He pleading? To you and me! The Holy Spirit takes the pleas of Christ and brings them to your heart and mind—Jesus, via the Holy Spirit, knocks on the door to your heart, pleading to you for you to let Him in to heal and restore

you to righteousness.

Biblical evidence?

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. 2 The Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?”

3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. 4 The angel said to those who were standing before him, “Take off his filthy clothes.”

Then he said to Joshua, “See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you.”

5 Then I said, “Put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the Lord stood by. Zech 3:1-5

Notice, Satan accuses—to whom is Satan accusing?

Does God listen to what Satan says? Does God get confused by Satan’s arguments and need Jesus there to present the truth in order to get it right? Does God say to Jesus, “Wow thank you Son, I almost believed what Satan was saying, if you hadn’t been here to present the truth I wouldn’t have been able to know it?”

Who does get confused by Satan’s arguments, allegations, lies? Who listens to the devil and gets discouraged, guilt ridden, overcome with shame such that they think they are beyond salvation, beyond healing, too sinful, too awful for God to love and for God to save? Human beings! We are the ones to whom Satan makes allegations—then to whom is Christ pleading the power of His blood, the power of His grace, the power of His goodness, the power of the gospel? To you and to me!

So, one of the founders of the SDA church:

Through the plan of salvation, **Jesus is breaking Satan's hold upon the human family and rescuing souls from his power.** All the hatred and malignity of the archrebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ's supremacy, and with fiendish power and cunning he works to wrest from Him the remnant of the children of men who have accepted His salvation. {LHU 234.2}

He leads men into skepticism, causing them to lose confidence in God and to separate from His love; he tempts them to break His law, and then he claims them as his captives and contests the right of Christ to take them from him. He knows that those who seek God earnestly for pardon and grace will obtain it; **therefore he presents their sins *before them to discourage them.*** He is constantly seeking occasion against those who are trying to obey God.



Even their best and most acceptable services he seeks to make appear corrupt. **By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he endeavors to secure their condemnation.** [by whom? Whom does Satan seek to get us condemned? Is it not in our own minds, that we conclude we are beyond salvation, too sinful to be loved?] Man cannot meet these charges himself. In his sin-stained garments, confessing his guilt, he stands before God. **But Jesus our Advocate presents an effectual plea in behalf of all who by repentance and faith have committed the keeping of their souls to Him. He pleads their cause and vanquishes their accuser by the mighty arguments of Calvary.** [To whom is Jesus pleading? Who needs to have the allegations of Satan refuted? Who needs to believe that God loves them and Jesus' righteousness is sufficient for them? Does God need to be persuaded that Jesus' righteousness is sufficient to save a sinner? Who doubts? It is you and me that need to hear Jesus' plea!] His perfect obedience to God's law, even unto the death of the cross, has given Him all power in heaven and in earth, and He claims of His Father mercy and reconciliation for guilty man. [notice now to whom Jesus speaks] **To the accuser of His people He declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.' These are the purchase of My blood, brands plucked from the burning."** Those who rely upon Him in faith receive the comforting assurance: "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." [to whom is Jesus pleading? He rebukes the accuser and pleads for us not to listen to his lies and to trust in Him!] All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ. . . . **We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but on His own** (Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 470-472). [To whom does Christ's plea need to effect? you and me!]

Jesus pleads before the Father, carrying out the Father's purpose to save sinners, the Holy Spirit listens to Christ and works in you and me communicating the love, grace and pleas of Christ to you and me to win us back to trust, so we will open the door to our hearts and let Him save us from fear and selfishness!

Read last paragraph, "Jesus identified Himself..." What are the keys to death and the grave? Why does Jesus's death and resurrection hold the power over death and the grave?

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. Heb 2:14,15 NIV84

What does this mean and how is it related to Christ's victory and the keys to death and the grave?

- What is life eternal? John 17:3: live eternal = knowing God
- Then what is eternal death? Not knowing God
- Then what is Satan's power of death? Lies about God that we believe, which results in broken love/trust and inciting fear and selfishness-the carnal drives, also known as the law of sin and death



- Then how does Christ's death and resurrection gain the keys to death and the grave and have the authority to overrule death?
 - Christ revealed truth to destroy lies, thus destroying Satan's power and winning all who accept the truth about God He reveals back to trust and
 - Christ developed a perfect sinless human character restoring God's design law of love back into humanity while simultaneously destroying, in His humanity, the infection of fear and selfishness. Thus, He arises with a perfect humanity that becomes the source of salvation for all who obey Him. Those won to trust experience the infusion of Christ's perfection and have the infection of fear and selfishness removed.

The keys are the actual elements that are required by the reality of God's character and how He built life to operate. It isn't a legal achievement, but an actual accomplishing of what is necessary for death to be defeated—destroying the cause of death—lies, fear and selfishness—in all who trust Him.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson points out the literal and symbolic nature of the seven churches in Revelation that there is a:

- Historical application to the churches in John's day
- Prophetic application to periods of time corresponding to each church
- Universal application that some people will identify with one of each of these messages no matter what time they exist

THURSDAY

Read the message to the church of Ephesus, from *The Remedy*:

¹"Write to the messenger to my recovering children in the church in Ephesus: This message comes from Jesus, who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven lampstands.² I know you—your choices, actions, works, determination, and commitment. I know that your hearts are repulsed by wickedness in humanity, and that you have examined those who claim to be my ambassadors but are not; and you rightly determined them to be false.³ I know that you have stayed true, revealing my character of love despite persecution, and have not given up.

⁴"Yet I have diagnosed you with one serious problem: You have let go of your first love.⁵ I implore you, remember the pinnacle of purity from which you have fallen! Turn back to your first love and practice again the methods you did then. If you do not turn back, the light of truth will be lost to you and your minds will be darkened.⁶ To your advantage, you have hated the hedonistic practices of the Nicolaitans that so damage the mind—which I also hate.



⁷ "Those whose minds are open to truth will understand what the Spirit reveals to the churches. Those who overcome—complete the treatment and are renewed in love—will eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

thoughts?

What contributes to love waning?

Read story beginning page 77 in *The God-Shaped Heart*

Linda was eager to be married, to have someone special to spend her life with, but there were not many prospects on the horizon. Then one day she met Herman. He treated her so nicely. He opened the door for her, held her hand as they walked, and pulled her chair out as she sat down. After months of courtship, Herman proposed. Joyfully, she immediately said yes, and they were married.

For the honeymoon Herman took her to a very nice place. They had a wonderful time, but all too quickly the honeymoon was over. Their first morning home Linda was awakened early at 5 a.m. by a bright light. She opened her eyes and there stood Herman saying, "Rise and shine. The honeymoon is over, and we need to get down to real life."

She noticed he was holding a piece of paper in his hand, and he presented to her the first of many lists to come. He had spelled out in great detail her responsibilities in two-week segments.

March 1–14:

5:30 rise and shower

6:00 begin breakfast; see attached menu

6:15 awaken Hermie-cuddles with a gentle kiss and turn on his shower

6:45 serve breakfast (do not forget grapefruit)

7:15 begin breakfast cleanup while husband brushes teeth

7:25 meet Hermie-cuddles at the door with appropriate jacket (be sure to pay attention to the weather), and say good-bye with a smile and a kiss

7:30 finish breakfast cleanup

8:00 free time

8:15 housecleaning; see attached cleaning supply list and detailed instructions

M—north rooms

T—east rooms

W—south rooms

TH—west rooms

F—the garage



11:00 balance checkbook
12:00 lunch, whatever you like except marked items; check list
12:30 miscellaneous duties

M—car maintenance and wash car
T—dry cleaning and banking
W—shopping
TH—wash windows
F—yard work

3:30 dinner prep; see attached menu
4:30 meet husband at door with kiss and hang up his coat
5:00 serve dinner
5:45 dinner cleanup
6:15 free time; see list of suggestions
6:45 draw Hermie-cuddles's bath
7:00 do next day's ironing
7:45 hand husband towel as he exits bath
8:00 neck and back massage for the man of your dreams
9:00 lights out, pleasant dreams sweetheart

Linda was given a new list with slight variations every two weeks without fail. As the years dragged on—and they were dragging—ten years into the relationship Hermie-cuddles dropped dead of an unknown cause. Linda's first reaction was to praise God! She didn't know whether to rejoice or grieve.

She made a vow that she would never, ever, get married again. But after three years of being single, she met a guy named Michael. He was like Herman in some ways. He opened the door for a lady to walk through. He was polite and courteous. He pulled out her chair as she sat and enjoyed holding her hand. And she kept telling herself, "No way, no way, no way." Then one day Michael popped the question, and she said yes.

They had a wonderful honeymoon. The first day back she woke up with a start at 5:30 a.m. and saw Michael standing at the end of the bed with a piece of paper in his hand. Immediately, she jumped into a karate stance, yelled "no way," and yanked the paper from him ripping it in two. Michael, with a sad and surprised look, said, "Linda that was a poem I wrote for you after you fell asleep last night."

As his words sank in, she felt bad about her reaction. She picked up the pieces and read his beautiful expression of love, and it broke her heart. While she was reading, Michael came in and served her breakfast in bed. And no list was forthcoming. Ten years passed being married



to this wonderful man. One spring day while cleaning in the attic she came across an old shoebox filled with lists given to her by Herman the horrible.

She pulled out one of the lists and began to read. The strangest realization came over her. She said quietly to herself, “Wow, I do all of these things for Michael, and I never think about it.”

What happened to Linda’s love? Is there a lesson for us in the history of Christianity? What happens when we replace design law with a list of rules?

FRIDAY

read and discuss questions

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

February 2-3, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking Christ’s Church of Oronogo, MO.

February 22-March 9, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be in Australia speaking in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Adelaide, Avondale, Sydney, Livingston, Perth, and Melbourne.

April 3-6, 2019: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Sophia Bulgaria.