



## Family Seasons Lesson 7 2Q 2019 Keys to Family Unity

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

Marissa Johnson, an online listener, sent in this:

*I did quite enjoy your comments about functioning in a healthy family and its impact on both the person and community. I wanted to share one description of what taking personal responsibility for the impact of damaging parental behavior on the person that I heard one time and that I have in turn shared with my kids and my nieces and nephews. For me it has been helpful and I suspect could offer some help to others.*

*Imagine one's life is characterized by a car. On vacation, you visit San Francisco. And while parked on one of the hilly streets of San Francisco, while you are out sightseeing, a car parked uphill from yours suffers a loss of control (parking brake failure). What is the impact on your car? How much damage could occur? And then, the owner of the car whose brake system failed comes along, finds the two cars collided with each other. Instead of being responsible, they take away their car without leaving any kind of notification to the owner (you) of your own car. This is done out of fear of reprisal, loss of insurance, loss of money, fear of the hassle, etc. So then they leave the site. It is a hit and run type event. Later in the day you return and find your car smashed and not able to be driven. At that point: whose responsibility is it to get the car moved and returned to drivable condition? The other guy? Or yours? Since you own it, it is yours. NO you did not cause the damage, but repair of it, in the face of hit and run damage, is your responsibility. Both for your own benefit to be able to drive and for that of your family and community so that you can still report for duty in your job, get the kids to school, etc.*

*This simple illustration, though not perfect, has been helpful in dealing with others (parents, teachers, friends or other family members.) who cause hurt and damage.*

*Thank you for your good work and for showing us all another way to consider and apply grace.*

What lessons are there in this metaphor?

We are not responsible for the choices of others, for things done to us, either good or bad—but we are responsible—when we grow to the age of comprehension and ability to discern and decide—for the choices we make.

- Do we reject healthy avenues and options when they are available or do we participate in them?
- Do we have a mindset of personal responsibility that we have the responsibility to be the healthiest, most mature individuals we are capable of becoming regardless of our histories—or



do we have the mindset that others owe us something—that we either cannot or will not grow, mature, develop until some other person or group or government apologizes, shows us love, pays reparations or some other action?

I have many patients who have been abused by their own families while children, or have been bullied in school, or have been treated unfairly or cruelly by society—yet they all don't end up with the same outcomes. Some of these persons have taken the approach of healing and developing themselves, others have taken the approach of trying to get the offender to change to show them love, remorse, sorrow, to in some way acknowledge their wrong and try to make amends OR the person tries to make the wrongdoer pay them some recompense. Which approach do you think results in the best outcome for the person who was abused? Why?

If a person takes the approach of focusing on healing their wounds, becoming the healthiest most Christlike person in governance of themselves they are capable of becoming through God's grace—does that mean:

- the wrong done to them was a good thing?
- the wrong wasn't wrong?
- the person who did the wrong to them gets away with it?
- Why not? Because of design law—the person who does wrong damages themselves, sears their conscience, warps their character, hardens their heart.

## SABBATH

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Read memory text: “that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (John 17:21 NKJV)

What is Jesus talking about? Is there a theological term for this? Atonement!

If Jesus is describing atonement—what must happen in order to achieve what Jesus is describing?

Where is the action happening in order for us to be one with God and each other?

Where then is the work of Christ and God occurring?

Then, on the Day of Atonement, what is Christ doing? He is healing His people, restoring in them His character of love—there is nothing legal going on, there is healing and restoration.

We must reject the imperial law lie and rise up as a people to give the final message of mercy to the world—the truth of God's character of love, that His government operates on design law of love—which means we must be healed to live in His presence.



Read second paragraph, “Yet, whether as parents...” If we all struggle with the same sinful fallen nature—what then is the solution that brings salvation? A new nature—can we create that new nature?

Does a legal blood payment of a sinless sacrifice to an offended God to pay a legal penalty create a new nature?

So, if we need a new nature, and we can't create it and a payment to God doesn't create it—how do we get a new nature?

Jesus became human and as a human being, using His human abilities, He was tempted in every way just as we are yet without sin (Heb 4:15). And in His humanity, He loved perfectly and refused to use His abilities to save self. Thus, when He died on the Cross, He, in His humanity, destroyed the infection of selfishness and developed a perfect, sinless human character. As Hebrews says, “once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him” (Heb 5:9 NIV84).

Bible perfection is not mere sinlessness it is maturity of character. Character cannot be created it must be developed; Jesus had to develop a perfect sinless human character in order to be our Savior. He had to actually fix the damage Adam did to the species.

Thus, in Jesus, the species human was saved and Jesus simultaneously developed a perfect human character that becomes the template for all who trust Him.

Jesus did what we could not do and now He offers to give us a new heart and right spirit to transform us by the application of His perfection if we trust Him.

EGW puts it this way:

**The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give.** [why does the law require righteousness? for the same reason the law of respiration require we breathe—it is the law upon which life is built. This is no arbitrary rule, it is simple how life works] He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But **Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character.** [Didn't Christ have a perfect character before coming to earth? Why would He need to develop one? Christ had a perfect divine character, but what He did on earth was to develop a perfect HUMAN character. Did Christ develop a perfect HUMAN character by exercising divine abilities or human abilities? Human—He was tempted in every way JUST AS WE ARE, yet without sin.] **These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them.** [where to we receive this gift in a ledger or in our hearts and minds?] His life stands for the life of men. [Where does his life stand for ours? As the new head of a renewed humanity. He represents the human race in God's heavenly counsel taking the place Adam would have had] Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. [Our past sins are not counted against us in some legal ledger, what matters is the condition of our hearts and minds. It would be like a patient who had Ebola and had bloody diarrhea that ruined clothing and furniture, there is no concern



over past symptoms the only concern is are they infected and dying today or are they healed] More than this, **Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character**, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:26. {DA 762.2} [So, for those who trust God, the Holy Spirit takes the perfection of Christ and imbues it into our hearts. We get new desires, motives, attitudes, insights—all the goodness we experience is a gift of God but we must simultaneously choose to TRUST God and identify with these new motives and principles by putting them into practice in how we live.]

What is justice and justification? The healing, fixing, restoring, regenerating, recreating sinners back to sinlessness by the infusing of Christ's character into the hearts of all who trust Him. This is atonement! **It is NOT legal; It is actual.**

So, in families: can there be healthy families if each person is looking to get for self? Is there a difference in taking responsibility for oneself and looking to get for self?

Can we have healthy families if family members refuse to take responsibility for themselves?

Healthy relationships REQUIRE healthy people AND healthy people are in governance of themselves—thus healthy people take ownership of their own issues, problems, and responsibilities and choose to cooperate with God for their healing, maturing, and decision-making.

Healthy families REQUIRE health parents and healthy parents are in governance of themselves.

What are the core principles that result in healthy families?

- **Love**—love for others such that one is willing to sacrifice self for others. The mindset of looking out for the eternal best-interest of the other, of making decisions and using one's ability to bless the other. This often requires the practice of the next principle...
- **Willingness to tolerate the pain** that a loved one will experience as they make choices on their own—i.e. not being overly protective or overly rescuing when mistakes are made, or apply appropriate discipline to educate and teach, or healing interventions when necessary that might be painful.
  - Love will risk being misunderstood, even hated, to do what is right.
  - Health parents are willing to allow their children to be mad at them in order to do what is best for the children.
- **Freedom**—balancing our actions with the principle of liberty not destroying the individuality of children and not dominating or controlling an adult. Within this principle of freedom love sets boundaries and limits freedom of those who do not have the ability to understand or make decisions for themselves until they are old enough or competent enough to make their own decisions
  - So, in love, parents will limit the freedoms of children to protect them, but parenting them to the point that one day they are set completely free to govern themselves



- Doctors will limit the freedom of psychotic patients treating them in such a way as to restore them to sanity so they can be set free
- Families limit the freedom of persons with dementia but would love to heal them and restore their freedom
- Such limitations on freedom are not violations of love, but the actions of love to protect those who cannot protect themselves
- EGW wrote:
  - **The training of children must be conducted on a different principle from that which governs the training of irrational animals.** The brute has only to be accustomed to submit to its master, **but the child must be taught to control himself. The will must be trained to obey the dictates of reason and conscience.** A child may be so disciplined as to have, like the beast, no will of its own, his individuality being lost in that of his teacher. **Such training is unwise, and its effect disastrous.** Children thus educated will be deficient in firmness and decision. They are not taught to act from principle; the reasoning powers are not strengthened by exercise. **So far as possible, every child should be trained to self-reliance.** By calling into exercise the various faculties, he will learn where he is strongest, and in what he is deficient. A wise instructor will give special attention to the development of the weaker traits, that the child may form a well-balanced, harmonious character. {CG 39.2}
- **Trust**—which requires trustworthiness and what is required to be trustworthy?
  - love the other more than self
  - maturity of self-governance
  - wisdom on how reality works
  - ability to trust
- **Truthfulness**—honesty in communication is key, because dishonesty undermines trust and without trust relationship breakdown. But truthfulness doesn't mean one discloses everything. Jesus said He had much to tell His disciples but they couldn't bear it. Jesus is being honest, truthful in saying this, but He is holding back information. We can hold back information in all truthfulness. But we shouldn't purposely lie or deceive people—it undermines trust.
- **Setting and maintaining healthy boundaries**
  - Never set a boundary you don't enforce—why? It undermines trust because you are not keeping your word.

In the last paragraph, “Yes, in the body of Jesus Christ on the cross all humanity has been reconciled to God and to one another.”

What does this mean? Colossians says that “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself **all things**, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” (1:19,10 NIV84)

Does this text say all humanity has been reconciled to God? No, all things have been reconciled to God, humanity, in the person of Jesus Christ has been reconciled to God, angels who had questions



had them answered and the angels in heaven are settled now in loyalty to God, any beings on any other planets are solidified into loyalty to God, the earth is reclaimed by Christ and will be fully perfected at the second coming. So all *things* are reconciled to God...

But does that mean all humanity been reconciled to God?

If so, then why are we still in a world of sin? Why are there wars, racism, sexism, and all the hostilities we see every day?

I think it would have been more accurate to say that the species human was reconciled to God in the person of Jesus Christ—but the rest of humanity remains in a state of conflict with some individuals being reconciled through what Christ has achieved, but many others refusing to be reconciled and thus the war for hearts and minds goes on. thoughts?

## SUNDAY

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The lesson points us to Ephesians 2:11-22:

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men)—  
12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (NIV 84)

What do you hear? What did Christ accomplish? What did Christ do with the law? What are the two that He made one?

What law lens do you understand this through?



See if this helps, the same passage from *The Remedy*:

Therefore remember that you, who were born into the dark superstitions of the world, were considered "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcised" (as they experienced bodily circumcision by human hands).<sup>12</sup> That was before your minds were enlightened about Christ—and therefore you were separate from him—and you were not members of Israel (who was God's spiritual health-care team), and therefore were unacquainted with God's plan to heal and restore. Your condition was terminal, because you were without God—and therefore without hope—and in the darkness of the world.<sup>13</sup> But now, you—whose minds were once far away, and who were practicing the principles of selfishness and survival-of-the-fittest—have been enlightened and brought near to God, and are in unity with Christ through the truth revealed when he died.

<sup>14</sup> For Christ himself is the Remedy that heals the species and brings peace. He has removed fear and selfishness that cause division, mistrust, prejudice, and hostility.<sup>15</sup> He did this by partaking of our human condition, and—via the exercise of his human brain—he loved perfectly, thereby destroying in his flesh (in the humanity he partook) the selfish survival-of-the-fittest drive along with the lies of Satan. In this way, he destroyed the need for the law (with all its regulations) to expose Satan's lies and methods. His purpose was to be the template of a new humanity born out of the unification of the two—our selfish, infected condition merged with his sinless state—thereby purging selfishness from the human heart, and transforming, healing, renewing, regenerating and recreating humanity back to God's original ideal;<sup>16</sup> and in this new being, to reconcile the human race—regardless of ethnic background—into loving unity with God and each other through the revelation of truth at the cross, by which he destroyed the lies of Satan, reestablished trust, and removed fear, selfishness, and hostility.<sup>17</sup> He came and demonstrated the truth of God's character and the offer of peace available to all humanity—to those far away in darkness and those blessed with the truth of God's word.<sup>18</sup> For Jesus reveals the truth about God to all, and—through what Jesus has done—all have access to the Father by one Spirit.

<sup>19</sup> Therefore your minds are no longer confused, and you are no longer in darkness and are no longer foreigners, aliens or outcasts, but members of God's house and citizens with God's people—living components of God's heavenly sanctuary<sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone—the source of all truth.<sup>21</sup> In Christ, the entire structure is unified and grows to become a holy temple filled with God's Spirit, revealing God's character.<sup>22</sup> And with your minds in harmony with Christ, you too are being healed and transformed—rebuilt to become a dwelling in whom God lives by his Spirit.

Do you see that the plan of salvation is the plan to heal, restore, recreate humanity back to God's original ideal that He intended for Adam and Eve? Thus, God is working through Christ to reveal truth that destroys the lies of Satan and provide us a new sinless character that operates in harmony with Him—this requires we come to genuinely trust God and open our hearts to Him.



Read second and third paragraph, “Picture a large circle...” Do you see the key in finding unity? It is **not** by focusing on our differences; it is **not** by focusing on our similarities; it is **not** by focusing on doctrinal conformity or a list of right rules; it is **not** by focusing on proper government or legislation; it is **not** by focusing on human rights; **it is by focusing on Jesus**—this is the key!

Satan knows that if we focus on Jesus, make Him the center of our hearts, lives, desires, longings, and intentions then we will be transformed and we will come into unity of heart with others. This is a function of the Law of Worship—a design law—the Bible describes as by beholding we become changed. So, Satan wants to take our minds off Jesus—how?

- By substituting a false Jesus for the true Jesus—getting us to conceive of Jesus and God as beings who impose laws and then inflict penalties—this is modern Baal worship, of which the Bible warns. Thus, many will come to Jesus in the end and claim to be His followers but Jesus said He never knew them.
- Business of life’s responsibilities (paying bills, schoolwork, jobs, kids, chores)
- Entertainment (games, internet, TV, books)
- Drugs and alcohol
- Unhealthy relationships
- Focusing on sin, the fear of committing it and the obsession with avoiding it, so one formulates long lists of right rules and lives in fear of breaking them. In other words, we are not focusing on Jesus but ourselves.
- Focusing on doctrinal correctness i.e. a form a Gnosticism of studying to get all the facts, doctrines or rules right but not focusing on Jesus
- Religiosity focusing on performing all the right rituals or being very religious in our lifestyle
- Traumas, diseases, losses, suffering, pain, illness, cruelty, unfairness which can cause doubt and rejection of God
- False philosophies that replace God with either false gods or no God
- others?

Read last paragraph, “Between father and son...” Do you agree?

Would we say that when genuine healthy, loving and trusting relationships occur, that it is only possible because of the work of Jesus through the agency of the Holy Spirit working in those people’s hearts?

What about if we see healthy love in people who claim that they either don’t believe in God or reject Jesus as Savior?

What law lens do you answer this question through?



- Imperial/imposed human law lens: to fail to accept Jesus means one has failed to accept His legal payment, which means that they remain outside God's grace legally and therefore cannot have the benefits of God in their life—they remain lost
- Design law: one realizes that the problem is not legal but a state of being and that God works via the Holy Spirit to bring His principles (character of Christ) into the heart of everyone who values His principles and chooses them wherever they cognitively know about God or not. Thus, people who haven't understood the reality of Jesus and what He has accomplished, but value the principles of God the Holy Spirit still works in them to heal and restore them. (Romans 2:12)

Another way to say this is that wherever we see the principles of God being lived out it is evidence of the Spirit of God at work because humans unaided by God's Spirit are not able to live out God's methods or principles.

## **TUESDAY**

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The lesson focuses on selfishness and how it destroys families—how would you describe selfishness? What motivates or increases or drives selfishness?

Fear increases selfishness—fear of not being loved, liked, good enough, getting enough, having enough, getting hurt, being rejected, betrayed etc.

What reduces or combats selfishness? Love and trust—being loved first and then loving others—actually loving the other more than self so one is willing to sacrifice self for the good of another, and experience trust in a trustworthy other.

Most of us recognize the obvious manifestations of selfishness—cruel words, ugly attitudes, stealing from another, etc. but what are some of the more hidden ways selfishness occurs in families—ways we may not recognize as selfish?

- How about a child disobeys and a parent, and the parent, rather than disciplining and enforcing a boundary, tells them not to do it again but lets them off—is this love or could this be a parent who doesn't like the distress it causes them when they discipline so to avoid their own emotional discomfort they don't discipline the child but allow themselves to think they are showing mercy?
- A parent is shopping with their young child and the child sees some candy and wants it, but the parent doesn't want the child to have it. The child makes a scene so the parent buys the candy and the child quiets down. Is this love or selfishness on the parent's part?
- A husband is frustrated because his wife discloses to friends that he recently had a demotion at work. He wasn't yet ready to disclose this information, and his wife has a long pattern of sharing such information before he is ready. But, rather than confront his wife with his frustration and hurt, he keeps silent to avoid an argument that he knows will ensue.
  - Was the action of the wife an act of love?



- Is the action of the husband to not discuss the issue an act of love or selfishness?
- A husband loves his wife so much and finds her so beautiful that he is certain he isn't good enough for her and it is only a matter of time until she finds another man better than him; so he constantly monitors her, questions her fidelity, accuses her of looking at other men, checks up on her, interrogates her on where she has been, who she has talked to, whether she really loves him and wants to be with him. He claims he only does this because he loves her so much—is this love?
- A wife had an affair with a coworker 10 years ago. She repented of it and has reconciled to her husband and has been loyal since. The husband states he has forgiven her, but frequently reminds her that he has been faithful to her and she cheated, or she was unfaithful, or she disobeyed and sinned and he did not. He is the good and faithful husband, while she is the sinful harlot wife. Is he being loving to his wife or selfish?

Do we recognize selfishness when it isn't taking an action to directly hurt another, but is primarily about protecting ourselves from feeling something uncomfortable?

If we love others are we willing to take actions that are objectively right, healthy, reasonable and good, even if others will be mad at us? Do we love others enough to let them be mad at us to do what is best for them? Remember the slogan "Friends don't let friends drive drunk." This is an example of the principle of love overruling feelings.

## WEDNESDAY

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Read Ephesians 5:21:

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (NIV84)

Who is to submit to whom?

Read first paragraph, "The word submit..." What is submission? To whom are we to submit? Are we to submit our thinking and individuality to others?

Are wives to submit to their husbands in some way different than the husband is to submit to the wife?

What do you think of these insights from EGW:

**A woman that will submit to be ever dictated to in the smallest matters of domestic life, who will yield up her identity, will never be of much use or blessing in the world, and will not answer the purpose of God in her existence. She is a mere machine to be guided by another's will and another's mind. God has given each one, men and women, an identity, an individuality, that they must act in the fear of God for themselves.--TSB 25 (1885). {DG 183.2}**



**Your course since your marriage, in taking possession of and controlling the means of her [whom] you had made your wife, shows your motives to be wrong.** All these things are against you and show on **your part very deep selfishness and a dictatorial spirit which God would not have her submit to. Her marriage does not make null and void her stewardship. It does not destroy her identity. Her individuality should be preserved** if she would glorify God with her body and spirit, which are His. **Her individuality cannot be submerged in you.** She has duties she owes to God which **you have no right to interfere with.** God has claims upon her which you cannot meet. In the providence of God she has become His steward, and this she should refuse to yield to you or any other one. {TSB 29.1}

I beseech you by the mercies of God that you take your position for the right **without reference to the will or judgment of your wife. You have allowed her mind to be a controlling power in your life.** Yet you do not see this or many other things you ought to see because you are not prepared to see them in the light of the Spirit of God. **For years your wife has refused to submit herself to the influence of the Holy Spirit. She has never been transformed in character. She has a strong mind and a powerful influence over you which confuses your judgment, making you in some respects a weak man.** While you allow her to lead you on, while you consent to merge your individuality in hers, anything I may say to you or write to you will be as idle tales. {18MR 263.1}

So, what is a healthy submission?

What do you think of the principle the lesson highlights of “mutuality in self-giving” as a unique Christian principle?

Would relationships of dominance, control, forced submission be in harmony with God’s design? Might the Bible condemn such relationships?

Some believe this type of relationship is exactly what the Bible condemns when it condemns homosexuality. Homosexuality in the Roman world was not loving, mutual self-giving in a committed other-centered relationship.

From an article in the Huffington post, reposted on Yahoo, Evangelical Rev. Canon Steve Chalke, examining archeological artwork from Pompei, which was preserved in volcanic ash in AD 79, about the time Paul was writing his New Testament letters, concludes:

Chalke explains that the Apostle Paul was writing during a time when it was perfectly acceptable for people on the lower rungs of society — slaves, prostitutes, gladiators, refugees — to be sexually exploited and abused by rich and powerful Roman citizens.

The minister claims it was normal and even expected for Roman men to have sexual playthings apart from their wives. This meant having sex with concubines and young boys. Some Roman



women also used people of lower status for their own sexual pleasure, Chalke said. But one thing Romans couldn't do was abuse another Roman citizen.

“Roman boys were protected in a way that slave boys weren't. For a Roman man, sex was a legitimate part of life, but you had to have sex with an inferior and you had to penetrate them, you weren't allowed to be penetrated,” Chalke said in his talk...

It was this kind of exploitation of fellow human beings that Chalke believes Paul and other New Testament writers were speaking out against when they wrote these ancient scriptures. When 1 Timothy and 1 Corinthians make references to men who have sex with other men, it's part of a much longer list of people who are exploitative — murderers, slave traders, liars, perjurers, thieves, the greedy, slanderers, swindlers. Chalke believes Paul is warning the early Christian church against engaging in human relationships that are based on exploitation, abuse, and corruption.

On the other hand, he claims, the New Testament has nothing to say about genuine, compassionate love between people of the same gender, as it is understood in today's world. <https://www.yahoo.com/news/could-ancient-porn-change-way-192620480.html>

What do you think about these conclusions?

Here is what the prophet Ezekiel said about the sins of Sodom, see if it fits with what Chalke proposes:

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. <sup>50</sup> They were haughty and did detestable things before me... 16:49.50 NIV84

## **THURSDAY**

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What is the Bible plan for marriage?

The lesson points out the plan of committed and loyal love to the other. No doubt this is God's plan for people.

They cite the example of Hosea who married Gomer the prostitute, who was unfaithful on many occasions and how Hosea sought her out to bring her back over and over again.

Is this an example for us in how we should handle the unfaithful spouse?

Or, is this another example of how Israel and the stories in the Bible are not only historic but metaphoric? Was Hosea demonstrating how God wants every person to handle every case of adultery or was Hosea demonstrating how God handles our unfaithfulness to Him?



Why is it wrong to tell Christians that in all cases of adultery the loyal spouse must seek to reconcile the marriage and take the cheating spouse back, even if the spouse has not repented and remains untrustworthy?

Because the goal of true Christianity and love is the ultimate healing of the person in sin. Thus, if a husband or wife loves a cheating spouse they want to see them have the selfishness in their heart eliminated and for them to become like Jesus in character. If the cheating spouse refuses to repent, and the healthy spouse loves the cheating spouse, the healthy spouse must say this is unacceptable and that they will not cooperate with the destruction of the soul of their partner. A divorce, in some situations, may be the only means to effectively communicate this to the cheating spouse. In some circumstance, staying with a cheating spouse can send the message that the cheating is okay and collude with the self-destruction of their character.

This principle is true in all relationships, love seeks to heal and restore, not collude with destruction.

## FRIDAY

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Read third paragraph, “The secret of family unity...” But what happens in the family if you move closer to Christ but other family members do not?

Here is Matthew 10:34-38 from *The Remedy*:

Jesus said:

"Don't think that I have come to make peace with a selfish world. I have not come to bring peace with selfishness, but a sword to cut selfishness out of the hearts of people.<sup>35</sup> I have come to cut dysfunctional family ties: to free a son from selfish loyalty to his father's ambitions and feuds, to sever a daughter from the control of an oppressive and manipulative mother, to cut through the fear and hostility a daughter-in-law has toward her mother-in-law.<sup>36</sup> A person's worst enemies are often members of their own family.

<sup>37</sup> "Those who love parental approval more than they love me are untrustworthy of me and the Remedy I bring; and those who love the approval of their children more than me are untrustworthy of me and the Remedy I bring.<sup>38</sup> Anyone who refuses to die to selfishness and follow me—loving others more than self—cannot be trusted by me to distribute the Remedy I bring.

## MONDAY

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The lesson focuses again on becoming one through love—what do you understand love to be?

Do you love your house or car? This is not the love that heals, this is the value and appreciation and desire or liking you have for things.



Do people have erotic love? Again, this is not the love that heals and is arousal and physical pleasure.

Do you love your families? This can be Godly love as it is other-centered and really focused on the family member's eternal good. But this can also be ungodly as we can love our family members in a selfish way—for what they do for us, for making us look good, or feel safe, or riding their coattails of achievement etc. which isn't Godly love but love for self and what we get.

The love that heals is Agape—it is the principle of beneficence, of goodwill toward others, of valuing others for who they are, not for what they do, of longing to see the other experience the best, develop themselves to the highest pinnacles of Godliness possible.

Thus, the lesson points us to 1Cor 13:4-8:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup> It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup> Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. <sup>8</sup> Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. (NIV84)

What do you hear in this? Do you see God revealed in this description?

Do you see anything in this description that doesn't fit with most Christian theologies?

How about love keeps no record of wrongs? How many Christian theologies teaches that God does keep a very detailed list of all the wrongs every person has committed and will use that on judgment day to inflict proper punishment for each and every wrong?

How to we reconcile this passage of love keeps no record of wrongs with the passages in Scripture that talk about record books and judgment?

What law lens do you look through? What is actually kept or recorded in the record books?

If we use the human law lie—then what is recorded is deeds, acts, behaviors, which contradicts 1Cor 13—because love doesn't keep such records.

If we use design law we realize that individualities are stored, recorded in the record books thus if people retain in their hearts evil, selfishness, deceitfulness, etc. the record of sin is not a wrong done to God or others that God retains in some legal book, but an actual attribute, state of being retained in the heart/mind/character of the one who refuses God's healing.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**Thank you to all of our supporters!!! We appreciate your prayers and financial support.**

**To let you know what is IN THE WORKS in addition to our weekly class:**

- Audio version of the Remedy is in production, we have them recorded and now doing final editing
- A weekly 15-minute radio show/podcast started in April

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!** January 17-19, 2020, in Allen Texas (30 miles north of DFW airport) we will have a Come and Reason Ministries: The Power of Love Training and Equipping Course.

**Go to [events.comeandreason.com](http://events.comeandreason.com) for more**

The event is structured to have short 15-30 minute presentations followed by 15 minute round table discussions. Some of the talks include:

- In the Beginning—An Accurate Diagnosis: God’s Design and What Went Wrong
- The Impact of Sin—Fear, Shame, and Isolation
- God’s Law & Government vs. Human Law & Government
- Explaining the Old Testament Through Design Law
- What Jesus Accomplished at the Cross
- Atonement—The Reality and Satan’s Mass Fraud
- Handling the Critic
- The Truth About Hell
- The Judgment
- The Final Message—Preparing People to Meet Jesus
- Effective Public-Speaking Techniques

Some of the goals include:

- Understand, apply, and be equipped to effectively communicate the core differences between God’s kingdom (“design law”) and the kingdoms of the world (“imposed law”)
- Apply design law, the 7 levels of moral development and the great controversy lens to interpreting the Bible and God’s actions through human history
- Effectively explain difficult Bible passages that are used by some to make God appear to be the source of punishment and inflicted pain for sin
- Increase your understanding of the laws upon which God constructed reality to operate and equip you with the ability to expose distortions and misunderstandings that have crept into Christianity
- Improve your ability to effectively communicate truth and draw discussions to decision points

**May 10,11, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Barrie SDA Church, 140 Mapleton Ave Barrie, ON L4N 9N7 Canada

**May 18, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be a speaker at the Love and Transformation Institute: The Epidemic Rise of Anxiety, Depression and Suicide at the Phoenix Seminary, in Scottsdale, AZ.

**June 8, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will present The Aging Brain Seminar at Mid Columbia Medical Center, in The Dalles, OR.

**June 28, 29, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Windsor SDA church in Windsor, Ontario Canada

**July 10, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the 3rd Global Health Conference, sponsored by the General Conference of SDA and held at Loma Linda University.



**July 19,20, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Living Truth SDA Church in London, Ontario Canada.

**September 13,14, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Gentlebrook Intermediary Care Facility, Hartville, OH.

**September 21, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Crossroads Community Church in Georgetown Delaware.

**October 9-12, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the American Association of Christian Counselors World Conference at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville. Come and Reason Ministries will have a booth in the exhibit hall sharing our material with the attendees.

**November 15, 16, 2019:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the SDA Health Worker's Association meeting in Oslo Norway.