



2019 Q3 The Least of These: Lesson 10 Living the Gospel

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SABBATH

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8–10, NKJV).

Which “Gospel” are we to live? How many different “gospels” are there? What are some of the fundamental differences between “gospels”?

From the lesson:

“As soon as we talk about God’s commands, requirements, or instructions, we run the risk—or even face the temptation—of thinking that somehow what we do can earn or contribute to our salvation or otherwise gain favor with God. But the Bible tells us repeatedly that we are sinners saved by God’s grace through Jesus and His substitutionary death for us on the cross.”

From SDA 28 fundamental beliefs:

“The great principles of God’s law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God’s love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God’s covenant with His people and the standard in God’s judgment. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit they point out sin and awaken a sense of need for a Saviour. Salvation is all of grace and not of works, and its fruit is obedience to the Commandments. This obedience develops Christian character and results in a sense of well-being. It is evidence of our love for the Lord and our concern for our fellow human beings. The obedience of faith demonstrates the power of Christ to transform lives, and therefore strengthens Christian witness. (Exod. 20:1-17; Deut. 28:1-14; Ps. 19:7-14; 40:7, 8; Matt. 5:17-20; 22:36-40; John 14:15; 15:7-10; Rom. 8:3, 4; Eph. 2:8-10; Heb. 8:8-10; 1 John 2:3; 5:3; Rev. 12:17; 14:12.)”

SUNDAY

For God so Loved

The lesson points out that the Greek word “kosmos” is used for “the world” in John 3: 16. “Kosmos”? Cosmos? Universe?

Does the text read any differently if it says, “For God so loved the Cosmos, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes should not perish, but have eternal life.” ?



Any other texts coming to mind to support this hypothesis?

For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. 1 Cor 4: 9. ESV.

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” John 12: 32. ESV. [ed: We understand the word “people” to have been added by the original transcribers of Scripture].

The lesson asks us to consider John 3: 17 along with its more famous predecessor.

“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

How have Christians historically lived out this text? Have we presented Jesus as one who tries his best to heal and save or as one who condemns? How have we presented His Father?

MONDAY

Compassion and Repentance.

From the lesson:

“Our world is not what it was created to be, and though we still bear the image of the God who created us, we are part of the world’s brokenness. The sin in our lives is of the same nature as the evil that causes so much pain, oppression, and exploitation all over the world.”

Well said.

Have you ever passed a homeless person or, perhaps, someone with a physical or mental deformity and thought “there, but for the grace of God, go I”?

Have you ever thought that about a murderer, rapist, embezzler, slave trader, or child molester?

Guess what? Without God’s restraining grace we could **all** be capable of these evils and many more.

Again from the lesson:

“Thus, it is right for us to feel the hurt, discomfort, sorrow, and tragedy of the world and of the lives around us. We would have to be robots not to feel the pain of life here. The laments in the book of Psalms, the sorrows of Jeremiah and the other prophets, and the tears and compassion of Jesus demonstrate the appropriateness of this kind of response to the world and its evil, and particularly to those who are so often hurt by that evil.”



I want to suggest that as our characters are molded and shaped to that like Christ's, this will be our new natural reaction to pain and suffering. We will become more empathetic to the pains and needs of others.

“Selfishness, greed, meanness, prejudice, ignorance, and carelessness are at the root of all the world's evil, injustice, poverty, and oppression. **And confessing our sinfulness is a first step** in addressing this evil, as well as a first step toward allowing the love of God to take its rightful place in our hearts: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9, NIV).” Emphasis mine.

I would submit that knowing a God of Love is the first step in addressing this evil . . .

What good does it do to confess sin to a God who wants to kill you for it? This is where we develop doctrines having one member of the Godhead protecting us from another one.

TUESDAY

Grace and Good Works

I used to think that works came before grace. Grace had to be earned, and the better and more numerous the works the more the grace. Now I understand that the works result from the Grace.

“Those who receive are to impart to others. From every direction are coming calls for help. God calls upon men to minister gladly to their fellow men.”—Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 103.

Which law is being described here?

WEDNESDAY

Our Common Humanity.

Man / woman / black / white / rich / poor / Christian / atheist / young / old / genius / imbecile / father / mother / slave / free / brother / sister all came from common parents and share nearly the same DNA.

We are all bound up together in that we all have sinned and “come short of the glory of God” and ALL need a savior and healing. We can experience loss and forgiveness and pain and joy and are connected by quantum bonds and common experiences and the umbrella of God's infinite love.

THURSDAY

The Everlasting Gospel

“Everlasting” e.g. Eternal. Past, Present, Future Eternal. From the lesson:

“The transforming invitation and appeal of the gospel “to every nation, tribe, language and people” (Rev. 14:6, NIV) has continued throughout Christian history. However, Revelation



describes a renewed proclamation of this message—the good news about Jesus and all that entails—at the end of time.”

Has the “Everlasting Gospel” gone to every nation, tribe, language, and people throughout Christian history? I don’t think so. I believe Christ would have come long ago had this been the case.

Revelation speaks of a need to “come out” of Babylon [symbolic of religious confusion]

Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues; for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Revelation 18: 4 ESV.

Malachi also speaks of an “Elijah” message before the end of time.

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. ⁶ And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.” [Malachi 4: 5, 6 ESV].

The lesson focuses on Judgment, Worship, and Creation themes from Revelation 14. Are these linked? How?

What do you hear when you hear the word “Judgment”? Do you hear a legal proclamation? A verdict with sentencing? Or do you hear discernment? Diagnosis and treatment recommendations?

	Imposed Law [Levels 1-4]	Design Law [Levels 5-7]
Judgment	God’s coming with fire and brimstone to execute judgment on the wicked because He’s angry they broke his holy Law. Punishment is nigh. His anger must be appeased.	God’s coming to correctly diagnose human characters and He will diagnose some as healed and some as terminally ill. His diagnosis will be in harmony with human choices.
Worship	We need to worship God because He said so, and He will be angry if we worship idols or, worse, if we become atheists. And we have to worship Him in my way, not yours. His ego must be appeased.	One of God’s design laws is the Law of Worship. Our characters are transformed in to the likeness of our object of worship. Worship a God of Love because it’s how life is designed to operate.
Creation	God is powerful enough to speak the universe in to existence. He brought us in to the world and He will take us out if we don’t comply with His mandates. His power must be appeased.	God designed life to operate around a set of protocols. Any deviation from these protocols bring sickness and eventually death. Learn and follow these protocols and live – forever.