



## 2020 2Q How to Interpret Scripture: Lesson 6 Why is Interpretation Needed

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### SABBATH

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Read Memory Text: “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6 NKJV)

What does this text mean?

Does it mean more than believing God exists and rewards those who seek Him?

James says: “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble.” vs. 2:19 NKJV

It sounds like the demons believe God is, but they live in fear of Him. So, having faith is more than merely believing God exists, having faith means trusting in Him.

And why do you think the demons live in fear of God? Has God stopped loving them? Does God have a desire to harm them? If it were possible for God to heal the hearts and minds of the demons and restore them to righteousness would God do it? So, is God a being whom they actually need to fear?

No! Their fear is the inevitable result of sin, just like Adam and Eve, as soon as they sinned they ran and hid because they were afraid. God was for Adam and Eve, but they feared Him—why? Because of what sin does in the hearts and minds of sinners.

God presents truth to win to trust, but sinners are still free to accept or reject the truth. If one rejects the truth what is left for the mind to operate upon? Lies, and what happens in the mind when one clings to lies? They become more fearful and more selfish. Thus, the demons are deluded; they believe lies that God is



the source of pain, suffer, torment, death and this is why they fear. Many humans do the same thing, they fear God who is trying to save them rather than fearing the sin in their own hearts and minds which is destroying them.

This is classic projection—project out of one's own heart one's own evil and blame it on another.

And when we conclude someone has it in for us, someone wants to punish us, or worse wants to torture and kill us, can we trust them?

This is the root of Satan's lie about God's law. Satan's lie that God's law is like human law, imposed rules, causes us to conceive of justice as inflicting just penalties for rule breaking; then we conceive of God as the one who inflicts those penalties; which ultimately means we can't trust God because God is violating the law of liberty. We create false theologies in which payments must be made to God to get Him not to kill us, to be protected from God—which is paganism.

The only way we can find harmony in Scripture in which the wages of sin is death, that there is a real penalty for sin, yet God is completely trustworthy and never the One from whom we need to be protected, is by returning to design law and worshipping the Creator God. When we realize that God's laws are the laws reality is built upon, we understand that life, health, happiness are only possible in harmony with those laws. Deviations are damaging and ultimately result in death unless healed by the Creator. In this reality we see God as the source of only good, health, life and we know that sin as the cause of pain, suffering and death. Thus, we can trust God completely because He is trustworthy.

We realize that Jesus's death was an absolute necessity for salvation, but not for legal reasons, but to win us to trust AND fix the damage done to this creation and procure the remedy to heal us.

Understanding design law gives insight into why human beings can be saved by Jesus and fallen angels cannot. Adam and Eve were deceived and their choice damaged them, but not beyond healing. Lucifer and the angels who fell with him persisted in their rebellion in heaven until they had destroyed the faculties



responsive to truth and love—they were beyond healing. Here is one such explanation, by one of the founders of the SDA church:

God in His great mercy bore long with Lucifer. **He was not immediately degraded from his exalted station when he first indulged the spirit of discontent, nor even when he began to present his false claims before the loyal angels.** [Why not immediately degraded? Because sin damages slowly, it isn't a legal removal by the authority in charge. There was still opportunity for Lucifer to be cured and healed. But notice, Lucifer in this context is already bearing false witness—this is transgression of the law. Consider what this author describes next.] Long was he retained in heaven. **Again and again he was offered pardon on condition of repentance and submission.** [Pardon on the condition of what? No blood payment, no death penalty, no payment or appeasement or propitiation of any kind—what was required? That Lucifer's heart change and be restored to truth and love—healing was required.] **Such efforts as only infinite love and wisdom could devise were made to convince him of his error.** [Truth and love were waging with lies and selfishness] The spirit of discontent had never before been known in heaven. Lucifer himself did not at first see whither he was drifting; he did not understand the real nature of his feelings. **But as his dissatisfaction was proved to be without cause, Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong, that the divine claims were just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven. Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at this time fully cast off his allegiance to God.** [He knew the truth, and his heart was not fully hardened against God yet. He could have chosen to repent and submit. But he didn't] Though he had forsaken his position as covering cherub, yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been reinstated in his office. [Notice God wouldn't have even required him to be removed from office, no punishment of any kind would have been inflicted upon Lucifer—why? Because God's laws are design laws it is all about healing, no punishment is required. It is Satan's lie that sin must be punished. God's truth is that sin must be eradicated, removed, purged, healed, cured.] **But pride forbade him to submit. He persistently defended his own course, maintained that he had no need of repentance, and fully committed**



**himself, in the great controversy, against his Maker. [And what happens in the mind of those who reject truth and cling to lies? This is why Satan cannot be saved. Consider the following quote.] GC 495.3**

**But even as a sinner, man was in a different position from that of Satan. [What was different between the two? Was this about geography? No it was about the position of enlightenment and understanding of the truth about God.] Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being was given a revelation of God's love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. [Why was there no more? Was Jesus unwilling to give His life to save Lucifer? No, that was not the problem—Jesus would have, but it would have done no good as Lucifer already rejected the truth about God's character and methods of love and such truth would have no impact. Satan had changed himself, destroying within himself the very faculties that respond to love and truth. Notice how mankind was in a different position than Lucifer.] But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan's sophistry. The height and depth of the love of God he did not know. For him there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character he might be drawn back to God. [Where is our hope? Being drawn back to God by beholding His character of love. This is why Jesus said the truth will set you free—free from fear of God, free to trust Him, and why Jesus said if we have seen Him we have seen the Father. The lies of Satan are refuted and in trust we open the heart and experience the victory of Christ, such that we receive new hearts and motives—becoming partaker of the divine nature as Jesus shares His perfect human character with us.] DA 761.5**

So, why is it impossible to please God without trust? Because trust is what opens our hearts to His Spirit, to be healed, to be transformed. God is not pleased with good task performance while His children die of their terminal condition; God is pleased when we trust Him such that He can heal us from our terminal sin-condition.



## SUNDAY

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The lesson title is Presuppositions, and points out that all of us have our biases, histories, assumptions, life experiences that impact how we see the world including how we read Scripture. Learning how to examine our own biases and change them is one of the signs of the mature.

Graham Maxwell used to use the acronym FOTAP—the Fallacy Of The Assumed Premise. Assuming something to be true that is not true deceives and we draw the wrong conclusions.

During the current COVID pandemic I have pointed this out many time. If you have listened carefully to Drs. Fauci and Birx as they have given their projections of potential deaths, they have repeatedly said. “The models are only as good as the *assumptions* they are based upon.”

What this means is that the models and projections are not based on facts, but are based on assumptions drawn from facts.

Here are the facts:

- The virus, SARS-CoV-2, that causes COVID-19 exists
- SARS-CoV-2 is contagious
- COVID-19 does cause some to become gravely ill and die

But the rate of transmission, the virulence—how lethal it actually is— and what percent of people in a population will die if not treated are all assumptions. There has been no hard data to base the models upon, that is why the models at one point suggested over 2 million people in the USA may die, then 1 million, then 200,000, then 100,000 and now less than that.

Situations like the current COVID pandemic are also perfect ground for good and evil to manifest:

Good—people who willingly put themselves in harm’s way to help others such as healthcare workers, and people who willingly sacrifice to help others from being willing to socially distance, to not working, not hoarding, and sharing what



they have, even giving up life-saving treatments so others can be saved. We have seen love being manifested.

Evil—hoarding, exploiting, price-gouging, not caring for anyone but themselves and seeking to take advantage. Including using the situation to advance unrelated causes. Seeking to take away liberties—remember freedom is one of God’s design laws and encroachment of liberty always incites rebellion. Using the situation to vilify or malign others. We have seen evil being manifested.

Such situations as this have no absolute right or wrong answer—decision making is a risk-benefit analysis that has consequences regardless of which course one takes:

- If the economy closes or remains closed a certain period there are consequences and some people will be harmed
- If the economy never closes or opens at a certain date there are consequences and some people will be harmed.

Because of this reality—it is the perfect ground for those who want to divide, who want to incite anger, hostility, and conflict. People who are uniters will seek to validate the difficulty in making such decisions and support those making decisions identifying their good motives, but dividers will use the situation to incite division.

This also goes back to level of maturity—the mature have grown to be able to make difficult decisions, like physicians in an ER, weighing risks and benefits. But the immature get overwhelmed with complex decision-making and want someone else to tell them what to do, but then if the outcome isn’t just what they wanted they will often become angry and attack the one who made the decision.

Assumptions make a big difference in any field of study and in all our decision-making.

In science, assumptions cause faulty conclusions, particularly when it comes to origin of life science, the science of how life began on planet earth.



Here is a **partial list of assumptions** that corrupt the conclusions that lead scientists to teach the godless theory that life began on earth over billions of years all on its own:

- There is no God
- It is possible for physical matter to organize itself without intelligent input
- Carbon 14 in the atmosphere is at the same concentration today as it was thousands of years ago
- There was no worldwide flood
- There was no water layer above the earth
- Radio decay of isotopes is constant and doesn't change (we now have evidence that solar flares change the rate of radio decay, so if the Bible account of the Sun shining brighter before the flood is true it potentially could impact radio decay rates impacting how we date things)
- Advancement of species occurs through mutation of the genetic code

Every one of these assumptions are not proven facts and are not supported by the evidence, thus when people who hold them view facts, such as a fossil with a certain measurable amount of carbon 14, they interpret the meaning through a false premises and come to false conclusions.

This happens all the time in the godless origin sciences.

What about in theology, what are some of the false premises in Christianity that have corrupted the truth about God?

- #1 is God's law functions like human law, many others are a direct consequence of this assumption
- Justice requires God to punish sin
- Since sin must be punished and someone has to pay the penalty therefore Jesus came to take our punishment
- God in order to be just punished Jesus in our place, therefore God killed Jesus on the cross
- God created human beings in Eden with immortality so that no matter what happens, saved or lost they cannot die
- Jesus is not fully God
- There is no Holy Spirit



All of these premises or assumptions, when accepted, undermine our ability to trust God because they undermine the truth of God's character and trustworthiness. They also, undermine our intelligent understanding of God and what He is trying to accomplish and thus limit our ability to participate with Him.

Recently, I have again received emails from people who are being confronted by those who advance the position that there is no Trinity, that there is no Holy Spirit as a separate individuality, that the Holy Spirit is merely the Father's presence.

Understand this is an attack on the character of God. If you would like a full exploration of the Bible texts and evidences for the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit all with their own unique identity and individuality and all being fully God, then go to our website [comeandreason.com](http://comeandreason.com) and type [TRINITY](#) into the search engine. I am not going to go over the many Bible texts that evidence this truth, it is on the website.

To me the most important truth is understanding God's design law and nature. The Bible says, "God is love." 1John 4:8. Further the Bible teaches that this love is "not self-seeking." 1Corinthians 13:5. Love is outward moving, other-centered.

Therefore, God, being love, could not be love in isolation because love requires an object to pour itself upon. Love is other-centered! If we make the argument that at some point in eternity past there was a time in which God existed as a singularity then at that point in time God is something other than love.

God's nature and character of love, rightly understood, is the most powerful argument for the plurality of God. We see this in the creation of humankind, "let US make man in OUR image..." He created "them male and female" and the "two shall become one" united in a triune relationship – husband, wife and God indwelling their hearts via His Spirit!

The least number we can have and still have truly other-centered love is three. With two we can have narcissistic self-reinforcement. I have seen this in couples when they both adore each other and everything is fine, until the first child comes along and the mother gives more time and attention to the child and the husband becomes jealous and begins to complain. He didn't really love, he loved what he got from her, not what he could give to her or his child.



Satan seeks to destroy the truth about the plurality of the Godhead because it undermines the truth about God's character of love and, in so doing, places an obstacle to the only healing remedy for sin: God's "perfect love [that] casts out all fear." As we see the truth about God, as revealed in Jesus, the lies about Him are removed and we are won to trust and in that trust He pours His love (Himself) into our hearts (Romans 5:5) and we are transformed to be like Him! And it is the Holy Spirit that is the agency which operates in our hearts to achieve this healing—thus to deny the Spirit obstructs the healing agency of God.

One of the founders of the SDA church, who understood design law and God's character and methods of love wrote the following:

In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. **The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail.** [Why? Because our problem is not a legal one. If it was a legal one then Jesus's perfect sacrifice was made and we could claim it to pay our debt in the courts of heaven without the Holy Spirit. But this wasn't the problem, the problem with sin is how it changes and destroys us. We must be won to trust so that we will open the heart to God and allow the Spirit in to change and heal us.] The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the **Third Person of the Godhead**, [this author identifies the Holy Spirit as the Third Person of the Godhead—I agree] who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. **It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer.** [Why? Because what Jesus wrought out, a perfect human character is only effectual in living beings, and we cannot make our hearts renewed, it is the Spirit of God indwelling us that renews us, makes Christ's victory ours—we become partakers of the divine nature.] It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. **Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the**



**divine nature.** Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church. {DA 671.2}

**There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--** those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.-- Evangelism, p. 615. {7ABC 441.9}

The lesson points out that the disciples had a wrong understanding of the coming Messiah. They were looking for someone to throw off the Romans and rule from an earthly throne.

Where did the disciples get these wrong ideas about the coming Messiah? Did the wrong ideas come from Scripture?

Well this leads to another premise, which the lesson pointed out last week as false, but many still operate under:

- Spiritual enlightenment requires a theological education
- Or, we must be told by a church leader what the Bible means
- Or, the Bible can only be rightly understood on its own divorced from science and real-life experiences

I have had certain church leaders reject what we teach for the reason that they have a degree in theology and I do not, therefore their degree in theology makes them the authority.

Notice that such an argument is not based on truth, or evidence, or facts, or reason, or Scripture, but upon authority of office—such a conclusion is to be rejected. But this way of thinking has been around for a long time and it was part of the problem with the disciples. They thought that the Scribes and Pharisees were the authority on church matters and thus deferred their conclusions to what the church leaders taught and believed what they said.

How many Christians do the same thing today?



In the Old Testament, who were the ones at the forefront of leading the people away from God?

The **priests** did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord?’ **Those who deal with the law did not know me**; the leaders rebelled against me. **The prophets prophesied by Baal**, following worthless idols. (Jeremiah 2:8).

Jesus as a child did not get his education at the church schools—the schools of the prophets—why not? One Bible commentator gives insight:

In the days of Christ the Jews gave much care to the education of their children. Their schools were connected with the synagogues, or places of worship, and the teachers were called rabbis, men who were supposed to be very learned. {The Story of Jesus 30.3}

Jesus did not go to these schools, **for they taught many things that were not true. Instead of God's Word, the sayings of men were studied**, and often these were contrary to that which God had taught through His prophets. {SJ 30.4}

As an adult Christ said to the theologians of His day:

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are. (Matthew 23:15).

When Christ selected His twelve Apostles, upon which He built the church, how many had formal theological training? None, they were fisherman, and a tax collector—regular people. Why didn’t Christ pick at least one person with a seminary degree to be among the original twelve? Here is one Bible commentary explanation:

The work of Jesus was to reveal the character of the Father, and to unfold the truth which He Himself had spoken through prophets and apostles; **but there was found no place for the truth in those wise and prudent men**. Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, had to pass by the self-righteous Pharisees, and take his disciples from unlearned fishers and men of humble rank. **These who had never been to the rabbis, who**



**had never sat in the schools of the prophets, who had not been members of the Sanhedrin, whose hearts were not bound about with their own ideas,--these He took and educated for His own use.** He could make them as new bottles for the new wine of His kingdom. These were the babes to whom the Father could reveal spiritual things; **but the priests and rulers, the scribes and Pharisees, who claimed to be the depositaries of knowledge, could give no room for the principles of Christianity,** afterward taught by the apostles of Christ. The chain of truth, link after link, was given to those who realized their own ignorance, and were willing to learn of the great Teacher. {5BC 1088.9}

And through the Dark Ages it was the same; theologians opposed the advancing light of heavenly truth, and worked to keep the traditions and teachings that darkened minds and obstructed the work of God's kingdom.

Now, let's be very clear: **It is also true that God has had His great theologians** throughout history, but almost always they had to unlearn the conclusions their theological training taught them in order to move God's cause forward. Paul, the only theologian of the Apostles, had to undo his formal training with a three-year personal study program with God in the desert. Martin Luther, the great reformer, likewise had to cast off his formal theological indoctrination in order to become a beacon of God's truth. And, in every successive reformation and advancement in truth the advancement rarely if ever starts with those holding theology degrees, but with humble people who love God and honestly study His word.

Does this mean those with theological education cannot be men and women of God – absolutely not. We must remember, Paul, Luther, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and many other good, godly men and women throughout history. The point is similar to my experience during my psychiatric residency. Education changes a person; the mind can be shaped by the education one receives. Psychiatric residency is highly biased toward agnostic or godless understandings of humanity and thus many an individual who enters residency believing in God leave no longer a believer. I had to study two hours in God's word for every hour I studied psychiatric theory to remain grounded in God's truth.



Most theology programs are highly biased to imposed law views of God and many church traditions. Thus theological education can bias those who get the degree into legal views of God and His government.

## MONDAY

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Read second paragraph, “But, as any good...” This is exactly correct, all translations paraphrase because there is no word for word exact translation. Some do it more than others, but they all do it. The real question is whether the meaning is accurate and the truth comes through.

The lesson points out that we don’t need to know the original languages to understand essential Bible truths—this is also true.

The key is understanding God’s law, once you understand God’s law as design law, these laws become lines of protection that your interpretations stay within.

As I said last week, the most important aspect to understand in Bible translation, given the lexicons available today, is the truth about God’s character of love, His design laws and the Great Controversy. Without this, just relying on the Bible text people weave in all kinds of wrong ideas based on imposed law.

Consider Psalms 137:8,9:

O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction,  
happy is he who repays you  
for what you have done to us—  
he who seizes your infants  
and dashes them against the rocks. **NIV84**

Babylon, you will be destroyed.  
Happy are those who pay you back  
for what you have done to us-  
who take your babies  
and smash them against a rock. **GNT**



O people of Babylon, who cling to selfishness, you are doomed to destruction!

Happy are those who are finished with you, just as you deserve; who have weaned themselves from you.

Happy are they who take your children to fall upon the Rock and be broken. ***The Remedy***

The first two don't have in mind the Great Controversy over God's character of love and don't seem to understand the nature of sin, and don't have in mind design law. When those elements come into our understanding—with the belief that the Holy Spirit was inspiring the Bible writers, then we understand a deeper truth is being communicated.

## TUESDAY

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The lesson points out that if we try to understand the Bible with today's cultural norms we will likely draw false conclusions.

Read first paragraph, "A background..." This is well said, and so true, sadly though, it is very rare for me to hear this truth put into application in sermons and Bible teachings. All too often, I hear people taking Bible stories and texts in which God is described as doing something He permitted as proof that God is the source of inflicted punishment.

This happens because of multiple false assumptions:

- God's law works like human law
- Our culture and Bible culture are the same so if the Bible describes God doing it then God is doing it

Read second paragraph, "Culture also raises..." If one has a rules-approach to the Bible then this is very difficult, but if one has a design law approach this is quite easy.

Rules approach means the Bible is a guidebook of the right rules, listing the deeds to be done and sins to be shunned. We must study to find the right rules



and the right way to keep the rules. This method of thinking and approaching the Bible is one of the reasons there are so many divisions.

Some believe it is important to keep all the directives found in the OT, including the Levitical law. Others believe those rules were replaced with new rules. Some believe that the church has the authority to determine the rules, others believe the Bible sets its rules and we can only discover those rules, we can't change them.

Those who operate upon principles—the protocols upon which God built reality to operate—understand any rules given were tools to help the immature by protecting, teaching, and leading, but the rules are not needed for the mature.

We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me. (1Timothy 1:8-11 NIV84)

The written law was not given as a means of salvation, but merely as a tool to expose spiritual disease, convict or diagnose us and lead us to Jesus for healing.

From *The Remedy*

We know that the written law is a diagnostic instrument for the soul, and it is good if used properly. We also know that this diagnostic tool was not made for the spiritually healthy, but for those who are selfish in character, those who are spiritually diseased, who don't know God, who don't love others but kill their fathers and mothers, the ill at heart, murderers, sexual perverts and adulterers, human traffickers, liars, deceivers, and for everyone and everything else that is out of harmony with God's design for life or doesn't harmonize with the incredible truth about God's character of love that he has entrusted me to share.



Read the last three paragraphs, “Though God spoke to specific...” What did you hear? “The same *principle* applies...” A principle is a design law, not a rule.

They use the example of algebra—algebra is governed by mathematical laws that do not change.

So, the point the lesson is making is that we can only rightly understand Scripture when we reject the rules-oriented approach and understand it through design law!

## WEDNESDAY

What is meant by our sinful and fallen nature?

Are we to blame, is it our individual fault that we have a sinful fallen nature?

Did we have a choice at any time to never have a sinful fallen nature?

What are the core attributes of a sinful fallen nature? Fear and selfishness—when did these attributes enter humanity? When did you first experience these drives?

How do we come into possession of a sinful fallen nature? By birth—Ps 51:5 born in sin conceived in iniquity.

Why are we born with a sinful fallen nature rather than being born without one?

Is this a legal issue or a state of being?

Were Adam and Eve capable of having children with natures different from what they possessed? When we understand reality, we realize that Adam and Eve could only pass on what they possessed—once they corrupted themselves they could only pass on corruption. This is why Jesus became human—to fix the damage Adam did to this creation.

If God doesn't hold us accountable for having a fallen nature, what are we held accountable for? For rejecting the remedy Jesus procured that will cure us. Oswald Chambers put it this way:



**The Bible does not say that God punished the human race for one man's sin**, but that the nature of sin, namely, my claim to my right to myself, [selfishness] entered into the human race through one man. But it also says that another **Man took upon Himself the sin of the human race and put it away** — an infinitely more profound revelation...

**Sin is something I am born with** and cannot touch— only God touches sin through redemption. It is through the Cross of Christ that God redeemed the entire human race from the possibility of damnation through the heredity of sin. **God nowhere holds a person responsible for having the heredity of sin, and does not condemn anyone because of it.** Condemnation comes when I realize that Jesus Christ came to deliver me from this heredity of sin, and **yet I refuse to let Him do so.** From that moment I begin to get the seal of damnation. **“This is the condemnation [and the critical moment], that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light . . . ” (John 3:19)** Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, <http://utmost.org>

We are held accountable for refusing the remedy to our condition, not having the condition.

How does our condition impact our understanding of Scripture? By causing us to view it in ways that keep fear and selfishness alive—and nothing does that more effectively than the penal legal substitution theology.

The imposed law lie inflames fear and teaches the grossest of lies about God and our situation. It teaches that we get legal adjustment of our status in books of heaven where God will declare us to be righteous *even though we are not*. It teaches us to accept that our fallen state is corrupt and there is nothing to do except claim legal adjustment while we continue to sin. Thus, this false legal theology keeps distrust of God alive and keeps selfishness alive in the hearts of so-called believers.

The last paragraph states, “we should approach the Bible in faith and submission and not with an attitude of criticism and doubt. Pride, self-deception, and doubt lead to an attitude of distance toward God and the Bible that surely will lead to disobedience, that is, an unwillingness to follow God's revealed will.”



Faith in what? Faith in God? Faith in the Bible? Faith in the church's teaching about the Bible? Faith in what the pastor tells you the Bible means? Faith in what?

What is our faith in God to be based upon? Does God want us to believe and have faith in Him because He says so?

Does Satan want us to have faith in Satan—in false gods? Upon what does Satan want us to base our faith? How is what Satan wants different than what God wants?

- Who wants us to believe based on claims and who wants us to base our faith on truth?
- Who wants us to believe without reasoning and who wants us to reason and think for ourselves?
- Who wants us to claim we have faith so we don't need evidence and wants us to look for evidence?
- Who wants us to trust in emotions and powerful feelings, and who wants us to choose truth, evidence, facts and reality despite the powerful feelings—consider Gethsemane as an example.
- Who wants us to believe or have faith based on what someone else in authority says and who wants us to have faith because we are fully persuaded in our own minds? (Romans 14:5)
- Who wants us to simply follow what we are told—the Bible said it I believe it that settles it, and who wants us to grow up to think for ourselves? (Heb 5:14)

## THURSDAY

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Read first paragraph, “The most important question in the Bible...” No doubt this is a very important question, but where does it fit in regard to the questions about God Himself? Is the central issue in the war about my salvation, or is it about the knowledge of God?



Is there any concern about making the most important question to us about our salvation? Is there any danger in making salvation another way of promoting selfishness?

How much of Christianity is focused on what we must do to be sure we get what we want—eternal life and rewards? How much of Christianity teaches that we can do all kinds of sins as long as we get them properly legally dealt with, or get the church to absolve us—after all the most important question is about our salvation?

But what about Moses when God spoke about starting over with Moses's family—was Moses's primary concern with his own salvation or was Moses willing to sacrifice his eternal life for another cause? What was that cause?

Did Moses love the people more than God loved them? Was Moses wrong to be not think of his own salvation first?

What about Paul when he said he would gladly give his life that his fellow Jews might be saved, was Paul's primary concern with his own salvation? Was Paul wrong not to make his own salvation the most important question?

Shouldn't the most important question be, "Do we know God?" When we genuinely know God, not about Him, but know Him in trusting relationship—this does result in eternal life (John 17:3), but our primary concern is not about our eternal life. When we really know God, we stop worrying about our eternal life, because we trust God with our life. We know Him and know how trustworthy He is, and appreciate His character, methods, government, kingdom so much, we can say like Jesus on the cross, "Father into your hands I commit my spirit." In other words, we can say, "God, while I love you and want to be in heaven, I trust you with my life and if you know that the universe will be better without me, it's okay, don't bring me, just let me be useful to your cause."

Read last paragraph, "The issue of interpretation..." this is classic level four misunderstanding of reality and the false assumption that causes so much lack of unity in the church.

Their position is that we must study the Bible to get the correct doctrines so we can all come to a unity of cognitive understanding of the right ways to interpret



Scripture, the right rules that we are required to obey and the right way to obey those rules. This is a grand falsehood from level four thinking and trying to read Scripture through the lie that God's law functions like human law.

When we come to the truth of design law then we experience unity of heart, motive, love for God and each other, thus we live to bless others, we are trustworthy, we don't exploit, don't deceive, don't harm others, we celebrate the successes of others and we have unity of heart motive and God's principles even if we are baptized in different ways, go to church on different days, and sing different songs.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

***The Journal of the Watcher*** Video is available for FREE streaming at comeandreason.com

**Power of Love Training and Equipping Course** is now available online at comeandreason.com All presentations are available video and also in MP3, the power point slides are available with and without the Come and Reason Branding logos and the Syllabus, with its reference guide and study questions is available for download. We encourage you to use this material in small group Bible studies or use the slides and present the series at your church.

**September 17-19 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the AACC National Conference in Dallas, TX

**October 3, 2020:** Come and Reason will have a one day seminar in Chattanooga TN on Healing the Mind, Recovering from Sexual Abuse, the Impact of Digital Media on Kids and more. Details coming soon.

**October 9-10, 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Lakewood SDA church in Lakewood OH

**November 6-7, 2020:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at an AACC River Conference at Plano, TX. More info at <http://theriverconference.com/>