



2020 2Q How to Interpret Scripture: Lesson 13 Living by the Word of God

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

I received this email this week:

Dear Dr. Jennings

I would like to share a recent experience with you with regard to your Power of Love study series. A group from our church (SDA) started the series 8 weeks ago. Once we were no longer able to meet in person, we continued with zoom. Let me first say that with the exception of myself and the couple hosting the study series, the rest of the group are mostly unfamiliar with your ministry. Last week we studied the Seven Levels of Moral Decision Making. I have wondered with each passing week what the class reaction might be as this is a very conservative group. We began to go through the seven levels and when we reached number four, one of the gentlemen from the group began to cry. He said, " That has been me for 40 years and I don't want to live like this anymore"! It was such a powerful moment Dr. Jennings. I have read all of your books, listened to podcasts and watched your Sabbath School class, but never was I so grateful to know of your beautiful message as I was in that moment, because just a few years ago, that was me as well. I will continue to pray for your ministry, especially that somehow you are able to reach our youth.

I remember you once said that as a child you remembered a children's story about how the angels would follow you around and right down all of the bad things you did. That was my life as well. I believe that picture is one that our church continues to impress upon our youth. No wonder they leave the church. I wouldn't want that God in my life either.

SABBATH

Read first paragraph, "The best method..." Now this is a good point—the law of exertion, if we don't use it we lose it, but if we exercise we get stronger. So, if we want to get stronger in God's truth, methods, principles, we not only must study the concepts but practice God's methods and principles in how we live. This is so true—but what is the danger with this law?

Does the law of exertion only work on godly practices? No! It is a law of how reality works, thus if we embrace ungodly methods and practice, those then they get stronger and we become more like the evil one.

This would be what the Pharisees did in Christ's day—they were students of the Bible and devoted long hours to becoming experts on Scripture, yet they accepted the wrong interpretations, primarily of



God's law—the lie it is imposed—and practiced the methods of this world and became hardened against God.

Think about Saul of Tarsus and what methods he practiced before Damascus Road and after—did his methods change? What happened that caused a change in methods for Paul? He had a change of understanding when he met Jesus.

Did Paul, instantly, or even within a week or month, after meeting Jesus have all his methods changed? Or did it take several years for Paul to rework his own mind, understanding and practices?

So the paragraph talks about obedience that is life-transforming. It is absolutely true that obedience to God's methods, principles, design laws—to God—is life transforming. When we harmonize with truth, the laws upon which God built reality to operate, we cannot avoid the blessings, the healing, the restoration that comes from God.

But, disobeying God, obeying a system of religious rules or observances that are not in harmony with God, that are based upon this world's methods is also transforming—but in a negative way. Just as one cannot avoid the positive transforming of character that come from harmonizing with God, one cannot avoid the negative when one harmonizes with the world.

So, the lesson title, Living by the Word of God, it all depends on how one understands the Word of God. If one understands it as a list of rules to be enforced by the imperial magistrate under threat of punishment then such obedience harms rather than heals.

Consider these historic quotes:

The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely--because he is required to do so--will never enter into the joy of obedience. **He does not obey.** When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. **True obedience is the outworking of a principle within.** [what kind of law is this? where is the action occurring? -in a book in heaven or in the heart/mind of the believer?] **It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God.** The essence of all **righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer.** This will lead us to do right because it is right--because right doing is pleasing to God. {COL 97.3} [Can love and loyalty be achieved by threatening to punish people who don't love and are not loyal?]

So what happens in the heart and mind of a person who obeys out of threat of punishment? It is a violation of the law of liberty, and when you threaten people love is damaged and eventually destroyed and a desire to rebel is instilled in the heart.

Consider this quote:

A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. By such a one service is looked upon as drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully, and in the love of God.



It is a mere mechanical performance. **If he dared, such a one would disobey.** His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {ST, July 22, 1897} **[This is the obedience of the penal/legal system, the threat of punishment, which destroys love and incites rebellion. Just like the person who emailed us said, the youth leave when they are taught this way. Such an approach is a violation of the law of liberty.]**

The real issue is the condition of the heart and mind. Do we as individuals love truth, love liberty, love God and others? Or do we fear for ourselves and are angry that things don't go our way and believe that when we see wrong it is right and proper to use power to punish rule-breakers and to force our way?

Or, do we realize the truth that we are infected with principles of fear and selfishness and God gives us every opportunity to choose truth, love, liberty—not as a mere concept but as the principles we practice? But Satan hates these principles so he constantly stirs up injustices in order to incite outrage in people to get them to seek to destroy the injustice by the practice of Satan's coercive principles.

One of Satan's tricks is to do evil and then get people to try and snuff out the evil by his methods of force and coercion, which only perpetuates more evil. Understand the purpose of the Bible—it is not giving to set up human governments. Jesus said, His kingdom is not of this world. The Bible is given to save people, meaning to free hearts and minds from fear and selfishness and restore individuals to loyalty to God. To transform people from sinners to saints.

Satan tricks Christians by seeking social reform through government and law rather than through transforming hearts of people. Whenever you try and advance God's kingdom through government coercion will be used.

Worse is the false justification of violence, rioting, intimidation, beatings, mobs taking over property, burning buildings and injuring people and claiming it is because they love others and want to help others.

Jesus and the Apostles never used such methods in a culture of rampant human rights abuses and systemic slavery. They didn't seek to change the government, they didn't have riots—in fact if you read Acts you will see it was the Jews who opposed God's message that stirred up riots over and over again and used methods of violence. They did this with Jesus before He died; they did it with the stoning of Stephen; they did it with Peter; they did it with Paul and the violence was so bad Roman soldiers had to come in and rescue Paul.

Don't be deceived these mobs that are rioting and claiming they are doing so because they love others are frauds and do not represent God's kingdom. They are agents of the evil one whether they know it or not.



Living by the Word of God—doesn't mean living by a written rule-list, it means living by the power of the living Word of God abiding in the heart. Jesus is the Word made flesh. We must have Jesus living in our hearts by the Holy Spirit or no real change happens, no obedience happens.

Consider this historic quote, written in 1889, right after the 1888 GC when church leaders rejected the righteousness by faith message and God's design law, and chose imposed law and the penal/legal lie. Notice what EGW wrote:

God grants men a probation in this world, that their principles may become firmly established in the right, thus precluding the possibility of sin in the future life, and so assuring the happiness and security of all. Through the atonement of the Son of God alone could power be given to man to establish him in righteousness, and make him a fit subject for heaven. [The atonement of Jesus would do what? Pay a legal debt? No! give power to human beings to establish in human beings righteousness, which eradicates fear and selfishness, writes God's design law upon the heart and heals us, makes us fit subjects for heaven. Why are we unfit now? Because God can't stand us? No! Because we can't stand the purity, holiness, and infinite love and truth of God and we would flee His presence. So, notice the next sentence:] **The blood of Christ is the eternal antidote for sin...**[What do antidotes do? They cure, they heal, they eradicate infection, purge disease. And the disease of sin is rooted in lies about God that breaks trust resulting in fear and selfishness in the heart. So where must the antidote be applied—in a record book in heaven? To God? To God's law? Or in the hearts of sinners? Thus the blood is a metaphor of the truth and life of Jesus, the truth destroys lies, wins to trust and in trust we invite God in and the Spirit takes the perfection of Christ and reproduces it in us, love casts out fear and thus instead of living to protect self, we trust God with our lives, our families, our futures and we love others] {ST, December 30, 1889 par. 3}

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; **the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God.** The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, **provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds**, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not



comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in his beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. **It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of his law, and still save the transgressor.** [what does this mean? Why? Because God's law is design law. It was the only way to restore God's methods operationally into a human being—a human being had to choose to reject fear and selfishness and live out God's law of love perfectly. Jesus did this for us and now becomes our remedy.] Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, **their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of his shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin.** [Appropriate the merits—what does this mean? Merits are what Christ accomplished or merits—which is His righteousness, His perfection, His character. We appropriate it by faith or trust, opening the heart and the Spirit comes in and “it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me.” We are reborn, have new hearts and right spirits. This is what appropriate means—the actual real righteousness by faith, we become the righteousness of God. But when this was rejected for the penal legal lie, theologians teach that appropriate the merits of Christ is claiming His blood as a legal payment in a court in heaven so God declares us to be righteous even though we are not. Listen to the next sentence] **There are many who will be lost, because they depend on legal religion, or mere repentance for sin. But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul.** Man cannot be saved by his own works. **Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience;** for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion... {ST, December 30, 1889 par. 4}

Those who will be saved in the kingdom of God will be those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The image of Christ will be perfected in every soul who accepts the gift of his grace, and those who are perfected through his grace, will stand before God equal in elevation, in power and purity, to the angels, and will be honored with them before the eternal throne. The angels of heaven will love those whom Christ has loved, and has bought with his own precious blood. {ST, December 30, 1889 par. 7}

The plan of salvation, the message of the Bible, the gospel message has its impact upon individual hearts and minds. It is not a message for establishing human governments—all human governments operate on Satan's methods and mixing God's methods with Satan's methods does not purify it corrupts. We must be circumcised in heart, i.e. have Satan's methods cut out, we don't mix God's methods with the methods of the world.

SUNDAY

At the end of the first paragraph it says, “in the end, there are only two sides from which to pick.”



What are those two sides? God and Satan—of course—but what is the difference between those two sides?

Are these the two sides:

- The Eucharist versus communion—in which in the Eucharist Jesus goes to His Father and presents His sacrifice to the Father to pay for our sins at that time, versus the communion which is just a memorial of Jesus having already paid the Father for our sins at the time of His death and when we confess our sins Jesus doesn't present His *sacrifice* to the Father but Jesus presents His *merits* to the Father to remind the Father He already paid for our sins at the time of the cross?
- Worship on Sunday the Lord's day and keep it holy or God will punish you for your sin versus worship on the Sabbath and keep it holy or God will punish you for your sin?
- Do penance to pay for your sin or God will punish you versus claim the blood of Jesus to pay for your sin or God will punish you?
- Have Mary and the saints intercede for you with God to assuage His wrath and obtain mercy lest God punish you for your sins versus have Jesus intercede for you with God to assuage wrath and obtain mercy lest God punish you for your sins?
- The catechism is the authority we should use to interpret Scripture and know what God would have us believe and do, versus our denominational creed or list of fundamental beliefs voted in official church conference is the authority we should use to interpret Scripture and know what God would have us believe and do?
- Those who don't believe in God versus those who do believe in God?
- Those who believe in the Bible versus those who don't believe in the Bible?

Are any of these the two sides?

According to Scripture what are the two sides?

- Wheat and tares
- Fruitful vine and withered vine
- Sheep and goats
- Righteous and wicked
- Saved and lost
- Living and dead
- Christlike and Satan-like

What will separate these two groups in the end? Will it be:

- Denominational affiliation?
- Version of the Bible?
- Participation in the Jewish feast days?
- Weekly rest from labor on a particular day of the week?
- Bible reading?
- How they were baptized?
- Foods they ate?



- Claiming to believe in Jesus?

What will separate them? Notice, in all the examples of the two groups from the Bible the division is made from the *actual inherent qualities of groups themselves*.

- Wheat and tares may appear the same superficially, but they are not the same in reality
- Vines may appear the same superficially—but a fruitful and withered vine are not the same functionally—one is alive the other dead
- Sheep and goats are not the same
- So too with the righteous and the wicked, the difference is in them, in their hearts, minds, characters, in what they have chosen to love, who to trust, what methods and principles they prefer and practice and thus in who they are in heart, mind and character. This is the difference.

The plan of salvation is always about what happens inside the heart, mind, character of the sinner and never a legal process in a court off in some distant galaxy.

This is what one of the founders of the SDA church said:

Satan is trying to lead men and women away from right principles. The enemy of all good, he desires to see human beings so trained that they will exert their influence on the side of error, instead of using their talents to bless their fellow men. **And multitudes who profess to belong to God's true church are falling under his deceptions.** They are being led to turn away from their allegiance to the King of heaven. {Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students 494.1}

How can this be? Because they turn away from right principles—what does this mean? What are principles?

During the COVID crisis there is the principle of love, seeking to do no harm, and understanding how the virus spreads and that led to social distancing recommendations in order to seek to protect others.

But this principle of seeking to protect, of seeking to love, of seeking to not harm, and therefore seeking to prevent the spread of disease can be implemented in many different ways.

Rule-keepers will want to create a list of obligations and restrictive rules to apply across the board to all people and enforce those rules, even when enforcing the rules violates the principles.

Consider, people who want to attend a church service go to their church, remain in their own car and have a service piped in through their radio or via loudspeaker—but a police officer goes from car to car and gives tickets because there is a rule that people are not to gather for church.



Consider all the ways this same process happens in religion—rules meant to be helpful in leading people to live by God’s principles, but which actually supplant the principles and end up causing harm.

Examples—rules on Sabbath keeping which make the day a burden and a dread.

The second paragraph points out that God works in us through the Holy Spirit—what are the methods of the Holy Spirit? Truth and love—how does this work?

The Spirit of truth brings truth to our minds in ways we can comprehend but then leaves us free to choose whether to accept or reject it, to say yes and apply it or say no and not apply it.

When we say yes and choose the truth *then* the Holy Spirit gives us divine power sufficient for the task, for the victory, and enables us to grow in character with that truth. **But we don’t get the power until we actually choose the truth.**

This is a cooperative effort. God cannot heal a heart and mind without the willing choice and cooperation of the person; but the person cannot heal their own mind by exercising their own abilities independent of God. It is a cooperative effort in which we humbly surrender ourselves in trust to God and the choose to follow where He leads apply the truth that He reveals.

Why? Because God cannot heal our hearts and minds against our wills and retain our individuality. The only way for us, as individuals to be saved is to be fully persuaded in our own minds and choose the truth and choose to trust God. In this way, we open our hearts and minds for God to cleanse and heal in perfect harmony with His methods. Thus our individuality is retained.

MONDAY

The lesson points us again to Jesus’ use of Scripture to respond to Satan’s temptations in the wilderness. The lesson points out that it is not enough to be able to quote Scripture, that the devil did this.

This is a very good point—how many sins and evils are supported through quoting Scripture?

How is it possible that Scripture can be used to support evil? Because it is misunderstood and misapplied—primarily and almost always through the imposed law lens—rules that must be enforced. Through the thinking that the Bible is a rule book we are to follow.

Examples:

- Slavery—some slave owners used the Bible to support the practice
- War
- The lie that justice is inflicting punishment on wrong doers



- All the religious rituals that obstruct people from genuine transformation of heart

What do you think the lesson means by this: “If He [Jesus] had not known the exact words of Scripture and the context in which they appear, He could easily have been deceived by the devil.”

Does this have the ring of truth to it or does it sound like it is off in some way?

Was the only reason that Jesus was not be deceived by the devil because He knew the exact words of Scripture and their context? If He had the words out of order, if He didn't know them exactly then He would He have be deceived?

Where is the safety coming from in this idea? In knowing the exact words—not knowing God, not knowing truth, not knowing God's laws and methods, but knowing the exact words of Scripture. What is the underlying belief in this idea? What level of decision-making is this?

Does it remind you of this?

“The great men who built up the Western Church were almost all trained Roman lawyers. Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, Gregory the Great (whose writings form the bridge between the Latin Fathers and the Schoolmen) were all men whose early training had been that of a Roman lawyer,—a training which moulded and shaped all their thinking, whether theological or ecclesiastical. They instinctively regarded all questions as a great Roman lawyer would. They had the lawyer's craving for exact definitions. They had the lawyer's idea that the primary duty laid upon them was to enforce obedience to authority, whether that authority expressed itself in external institutions or in the precise definitions of the correct ways of thinking about spiritual truths. NO BRANCH OF WESTERN CHRISTENDOM HAS BEEN ABLE TO FREE ITSELF FROM THE SPELL CAST UPON IT BY THESE ROMAN LAWYERS OF THE EARLY CENTURIES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.” Thomas Lindsay in his book *A History of the Reformation* page 168

It sounds like our safety is in the precise words, the exact definition, the correct doctrine, the right theology—which is all level four rules-oriented thinking or below. If I know the right rules, I can stay on base and not be tricked into getting tagged out.

It could even lead to magical thinking with incantations and believing there is some power in the actual words spoken.

Is the Bible a code-book, a rule-book, like Major League Baseball's rulebook?

I want to suggest that Jesus did quote Scripture not because He knew the exact words—but because He knew the true *meaning* of Scripture. He knew the truth about God's character, God's methods, God's design law, and He quoted the Scripture that supported God's methods and principles that He lived by.



Consider this story from the book of Acts:

Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, “In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.” Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. One day the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?” Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding. (Acts 19:13-16 NIV84)

But weren't they using the right words?

Read bottom pink section, “What has been your own experience in using the Scripture in your battle with temptations?” thoughts?

I can see my use of Scripture has changed as I have matured and grown in moral development. Paul wrote:

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. (1Co 13:11 NIV84)

What was the context of this? The love chapter—how love works. He is saying, when I was a child, immature, not understanding God's character and methods of love I acted like a child—and what did Saul of Tarsus focus on then? Rules, law-keeping, do's and don'ts—this is childishness. But when he grew up he left his childishness and rule-keeping behind and instead focused on love and living in harmony with God's design for life.

So, too when I was immature I was all about the rules. I diligently searched the Bible for my proof texts to prove my doctrines legally and biblically correct so I could be morally superior to my other Christian friends because I was right and they were wrong. It didn't matter if I was selfish in heart as long as I kept the right rules. As a child, I used the Bible as a weapon to attack others who believed differently than me.

But, when I grew up, I put such things behind me and instead have focused on God's character, methods, principles, design laws for life—in loving others. I focus on teaching people about God, and how reality works, the only path to actual healing and salvation—the restoration of God's design in hearts and minds. This puts the rules in their proper place—a necessary tool for children, but not how reality actually works.



TUESDAY

The lesson points out that Jesus did not come to change the law but to fulfill it. They take issue with those who claim Jesus did away with the law.

The problem with many is that when they read Jesus' statement that He didn't come to change the law but fulfill it is that they read it through the imposed law lie, thus they read it as Jesus keeping the rules and coming to pay the legal penalty the law demanded. Thus, they misunderstand the Scripture and misrepresent what Jesus actually did.

Let's examine the Matthew texts that the lesson points to and identify what Jesus actually taught about the law.

- “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell. Mt 5:21-22 NIV84
 - What did Jesus do? He moved it from behavior to the condition of the heart—it isn't just the act, it is the motive for the act. This elevates it from imposed law, to design law—actual healing of hearts and minds. Thus, Jesus didn't come to pay a legal penalty but to provide remedy that heals the heart.
- “You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Mt 5:27-28 NIV84
 - What did Jesus do? Again moves it from behavior to the condition of the heart—regardless of whether the act was actually committed or not. God's law is design law!
- “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery. Mt 5:31-32 NIV84
 - What did Jesus do? Again focuses on the condition of the heart, not legality. The writ of divorcement was about legality, but Jesus says, if there hasn't been betrayal, breach of trust in the relationship, then the heart remain loyal and to divorce a loyal spouse whose heart is faithful forces that spouse into a severed relationship, and if they marry again they are being unfaithful to their heart loyalties—i.e. adultery. So, again, Jesus elevates this from rule keeping to design law.



- “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Mt 5:38-39 NIV84
 - What did Jesus do? Again moves away from imposed rules to design law and healing of heart. Love the other person, don’t seek to punish the other person—seek their redemption. But even this can be practiced as a rule and then it would become harmful. It is about the principle of seeking to reach the other person’s heart for God’s kingdom.
- “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. Mt 5:43-48 NIV84
 - What did Jesus do? Again focuses on heart change not rule enforcement and then gives specific examples from nature of how God and His laws work, sunshine and rain, and that if we are to children of God, part of God’s family, members of God’s kingdom we must stop being rule enforcers and instead grow up to love people.

So what did Jesus do with Scripture? He took the Scripture and pulled it out of the false legal setting the Jews had put it in, and reset it in God’s design law setting. That is the message we have for people today, the 3 Angels Messages, to worship Him who made the heavens.... to stop worshipping the imperial dictator.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson reminds us of the importance of spending quiet time with God. No question about it—the law of worship—by beholding we are changed; and the law of exertion—if you want something to get stronger you must exercise it. If we are to grow in godliness we must spend time with God.

The first sentence of the third paragraph reads, “If you love someone, you enjoy spending time alone with that beloved person.”

Hmmm... there is an assumption in this text that needs exposing.

What if you have a child who is rebellious, hostile, hateful, drug addicted, deceitful, steals from you, would you still love your child? Would you enjoy spending time with that child as long as they remain so ugly in character?



What if you have a parent who is critical, negative, always finds fault with you when you are around—might you still love your parent and long for a close relationship—but, not enjoy spending time with them because of how they treat you?

So, what if people are taught that God is intolerant of sin, in fact gets angry, wrathful when He sees sin. That His holiness requires Him to lash out with punishment whenever He sees sin and that we need a mediator to stand between us and God to protect us from His wrath. If this is the view a person has of God, do you think they want to spend time with Him—even if they say they love Him?

This is one of the reasons Jesus came—to show us the Father is not like this at all. The Father is just like Jesus! So we do want to spend time with someone we love when we experience they genuinely love us.

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “Memorizing Scripture...” This is an excellent point. I know many people who believe in God, but have essentially no knowledge of Scripture so they don’t have truth to fall back on to help them in times of crisis. They get overwhelmed and discouraged and have a hard time seeing God’s hand in their lives.

The Bible is God’s revelation of Himself to us—and is filled with encouraging stories to help us in our time of need. But if we don’t know it, life is often much harder.

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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.

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/>