



2020 4Q Education: Lesson 11 The Christian and Work

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

The first paragraph points out that God gave Adam and Eve work to do in Eden before sin—why?

Human beings are created in God’s image, and God is the Creator. In the likeness of God, we have a built-in desire to be industrious, to engage in meaningful activity, and to use our energy, creativity, and ingenuity to build, construct, devise, make, or otherwise produce something of value, consequence, or purpose.

Such creativity is built into our being, and when we do engage in meaningful activity, whether it be work for the sake of making money to provide for one’s family, or gardening, because one loves flower, or drawing, painting, writing, playing music, caring for animals, being a homemaker, or any of a myriad of other industrious activities, we experience growth and a greater sense of wellbeing, meaning, and purpose as human beings. Our sense of wellbeing, of usefulness, of confidence, and even joy all increase.

Is work, doing, active engagement in meaningful activity a means of education?

Did God want Adam and Eve to learn through their tending of Eden?

Consider this description from the book *Patriarchs and Prophets*:

The holy pair [Adam and Eve] were not only children under the fatherly care of God but students receiving instruction from the all-wise Creator. They were visited by angels, and were granted communion with their Maker, with no obscuring veil between. They were full of the vigor imparted by the tree of life, and their intellectual power was but little less than that of the angels. The mysteries of the visible universe—“the wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge” (Job 37:16)—afforded them an exhaustless source of instruction and delight. **The laws and operations of nature**, which have engaged men's study for six thousand years, were opened to their minds by the infinite Framer and Upholder of all. **They held converse with leaf and flower and tree, gathering from each the secrets of its life.** With every living creature, from the mighty leviathan that plays among the waters to the insect mote that floats in the sunbeam, Adam was familiar. He had given to each its name, and he was acquainted with the nature and habits of all. God's glory in the heavens, the innumerable worlds in their orderly revolutions, “the balancings of the clouds,” the mysteries of light and sound, of day and night—all were open to the study of our first parents. **On every leaf of the forest or stone of the mountains, in every shining star, in earth and air and sky, God's name was written.** The order and harmony of creation spoke to them of infinite wisdom and power. They were



ever discovering some attraction that filled their hearts with deeper love and called forth fresh expressions of gratitude. PP 50.3

So long as they remained loyal to the divine law, their capacity to know, to enjoy, and to love would continually increase. They would be constantly gaining new treasures of knowledge, discovering fresh springs of happiness, and obtaining clearer and yet clearer conceptions of the immeasurable, unfailing love of God. PP 51.1

Was tending the garden a means of education? Would their tending of the garden require them to learn about all the various forms of life and discover more things as that life grew and interacted with other life around it?

Did you hear something we have to look forward to in an earth made new? Never ending discovery and learning!

Read second paragraph, “In this ‘in-between time’...” In this world of sin, does work have additional benefits that were not needed or seen in Eden?

Regular work has multiple benefits:

- **Improved self-esteem**, from actual accomplishment and achievement
- **Better physical health**, from increased physical activity and the reduced firing stress pathways as we experience satisfaction with completing tasks, or fulfilling our life goals, aspirations, and dreams. Additionally, physical activity produces factors in the brain that causes the neurons to stay healthy, improves the ability of neurons to make new connections, thus improving learning and reducing the risk of dementia as we age.
- **Development of our brain circuits** that control physical movement, which in turn improves our thinking and reasoning. When we engage in physical activity, the striatal pathways in our brain, that initiate motor movement, develop, but these pathways not only initiate physical movement, they also initiate thinking, so as we develop and use these pathways, we improve our ability to initiate thoughts. The cerebellum, which is involved in making our physical movements smooth and coordinated, also helps smooth and coordinate our thoughts. Thus, when we stay physically active, we ultimately improve our thinking processes.
- **Blesses and benefits those around us.** As we engage in useful activity, it results in blessings in our environment, whether we are creating works of art or music to brighten the heart, or are mopping, vacuuming, and picking up trash to create clean environments, or growing food, all useful activity blesses those around us.
- **Reduces burdens on others.** By staying active, we reduce the likelihood of our own disability and the need for others to care for us.
- **Harmonizes with the law of love**, which is the principle of giving. The more we give, the more we receive. In every living system, the various parts are active in giving support to the other parts. The lungs actively work to give oxygen to the blood, which the heart sends through the body, but the heart benefits from the oxygen provided by the lungs. The digestive organs fill the blood with nutrients, but receive oxygen from the lungs and circulation sent by the heart. In a community, active people are constantly blessing those around them, while



simultaneously being blessed from others. We receive benefits of electricity, clean air, water, emergency services, road crews that keep the roads clear, and so much more from people we will most likely never meet.

- **Reduces the opportunity for temptation.** This is perhaps one of the greatest benefits of useful work. Any time spent in usefulness not only produces all the blessings above, but is time unavailable for engagement in destructive and harmful activities. When we are not engaged in useful activities, we are more vulnerable to temptations that result in harm to ourselves and others.

When we are active, industrious, and engaged in meaningful employment (not necessarily for pay), we are healthier, happier, and experience greater peace.

Conversely, idleness, a failure to engage one's abilities in development or meaningful application, is damaging to one's wellbeing. It undermines a person's dignity, while increasing feelings of inadequacy, guilt, shame, and worthlessness, which leads to pleasure-seeking and other acting-out behaviors in an attempt to alleviate the sense of inadequacy. As the old saying goes, *idle hands are the devil's workshop*.

Doing nothing, refusing to engage in constructive activity, and not investing one's energies and abilities into meaningful employment (when one is capable), degrades the human being.

Understanding this, what action could people take if they wanted to demoralize others — to destroy other people's dignity and undermine their God-given individuality? Take away something God designed for their health and development:

- Take away their freedom—which stifles development and creates shadow people
- Take away nutritious food—which undermines physical health, impairs development and reduces autonomy
- Take away social connections—which undermines both mental and physical health and reduces development and growth
- Take away usefulness, meaningful employment and create programs or systems that free the capable from useful labor. They could promote public policies designed to give money, food, clothing, housing, cell phones, cars, and a variety of other resources to otherwise capable people who choose not to work—which undermines mental, physical and spiritual health and development.

I want to be clear: I am not concerned about politics; I am concerned about people — about their health, wellbeing, and integrity.

Throughout time, many others have recognized what I'm saying here:

- “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” — The apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 3:10



- “Working moms, and increasingly working dads, don’t want a government handout, but they do need a hand up.” — Madeleine Kunin, Democrat, Governor of Vermont and U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland
- “If we take the route of the permanent handout, the American character will itself be impoverished.” — Richard Nixon, Republican, 37th President of the USA
- “The desperately poor may accept handouts, because they feel they have to. For those who consider themselves at least middle class, however, anything that smacks of a handout is not desired. Instead, they want their economic power back.” — Robert Shiller, Nobel Laureate in Economics and Sterling Professor of Economics at Yale
- “At Year Up, our students — low income 18- to 24-year-olds — come to us having already faced substantial obstacles in life. They are not in search of a handout; what they want most of all is the ability to take ownership of their own futures.” — Gerald Chertavian, founder and CEO of Year Up; has worked with urban youth for more than 25 years.

I have seen the destruction of wellbeing, the demoralization that occurs when people are given things that they could otherwise earn — whether it be from well-meaning parents, family, friends, church members, or society.

When we receive handouts that we don’t believe we merit, we experience guilt, loss of esteem, a falling sense of worth, and often feel guilt and inadequacy. This leads to an unconscious need to alleviate the guilt with justification for the handout, contributing to either a sense of entitlement and identifying oneself as being downtrodden, mistreated, or wronged in the past and, thus, the handout is simply compensation and is deserved, or by experiencing physical or mental symptoms of illness that justifies the handout.

Let me be clear here as well: I am not saying that there are no people suffering from real physical and mental illness; there are, and they need our compassion and help. What I am saying is that when handouts are received by those who could otherwise provide for themselves, it causes in them a need to justify the handout, and this can take a variety of forms — either by seeing oneself as deserving, because of some perceived social injustice, or by experiencing some physical or mental problem.

When we divert our energy, our mind, and abilities away from useful work—activities that may or may not generate income, but are beneficial (housework, lawn care, gardening, sewing, painting, sculpting, building, writing, playing musical instruments, drawing, developing systems or programs of education, parenting, coaching, and so many more)—and instead use the majority of our energies on entertainments, diversions, and indulgences (video games, TV, amusement parks, playing games), we undermine our physical and mental well-being. We become internally restless, lose our sense of peace, and often look for actions to change our feeling state, too frequently in alcohol or other substances, or more entertainment and avoidance of real-life responsibilities.



So I think the Jews understood this and that to fail to teach our children a useful trade, to fail to educate them properly is to raise a criminal and this is what we have seen with failing school systems in America.

This also gives insight into what happened to the Antediluvians that so quickly degraded themselves into thugs and violent selfish exploiters of others, so hardened against God and love that there were only 8 people willing to get on the ark. And it gives insight into why God changed the climate so dramatically at the time of the flood—to make living on earth harder, meaning to survive it required more useful work to provide shelter, food, clothing, which reduced time for self-indulgence and thus reduced the corruption of human character.

Useful work is a huge blessing to us and, as we engage in it, we are not only healthier and happier, but we also grow and expand our abilities, while coming closer to the image of our Creator God!

The real trick is to find useful work that you enjoy, that fulfills your passions, desires, dreams, and aspirations—again, whether it results in monetary income or not. The happiest people are those who are productive people, so find your work and live life to its fullest!

Do you see again how a design law view of things brings reality into focus and makes things understandable and demonstrates God's ways are always reasonable and healthy?

SUNDAY

The Many Sides of Work: What is work?

According to the dictionary this word, work can be a noun, adjective or verb and has multiple meanings:

Noun:

- exertion or effort directed to produce or accomplish something; labor; toil.
- employment, as in some form of industry, especially as a means of earning one's livelihood: to look for work.
- one's place of employment: Don't phone him at work.
- something on which exertion or labor is expended; a task or undertaking: The students finished their work in class.
- materials, things, etc., on which one is working or is to work.
- a product of exertion, labor, or activity: musical works.
- works,
 - (used with a singular or plural verb) a place or establishment for manufacturing (often used in combination): ironworks.
 - the working parts of a machine: the works of a watch.
 - Theology: righteous deeds.



- Physics. force times the distance through which it acts; specifically, the transference of energy equal to the product of the component of a force that acts in the direction of the motion of the point of application of the force and the distance through which the point of application moves.

Adjective:

- of, for, or concerning work: work clothes.
- working (def. 18).

Verb:

- to do work; labor.
- to be employed, especially as a means of earning one's livelihood: He hasn't worked for six weeks.
- to act or operate effectively: We all agree that this plan works.
- to attain a specified condition, as by repeated movement: The nails worked loose.

What is work to you?

Studies have found that there are three types of workers and only one type of worker is happy—the other two are not.

The three types of workers are:

- Work is a job—these people work for the paycheck, working for the weekend, looking for the days off and do only what they have to do because they need the employment. And these type of workers are not happy. To them work is a drudgery and toil
- Work is a career—these people are working for the advancement, their ego is caught up in the work and they feel good when they get a raise, a bonus, a company car, vacation package, corner office, promotion to vice-president or front parking slot. These persons are generally not happy because no matter the advancement there is always another that they immediately set their sights on.
- Work is a calling—for these individuals work is what they were called to do and they feel they are fulfilling their purpose in life and these are the happiest workers

And studies have found that there are these three types of workers in every job: professionals like doctors, nurses, lawyers, engineers that are just working a job or on a career path and are unhappy, while there are janitors that feel called to their profession and are content and happy.

But what if your calling isn't able to actually meet the objective needs of your life and family? Say, you are called to do art or write music, but you can't make enough money to support yourself or your family doing this? What then?

Then, I recommend several strategies:



- Careers with approximations or associations with the calling, such as an artist being a graphic designer, or interior designer, or fashion designer, or advertising designer etc. A musician, if can't directly get employment as a musician then pursue music therapy, or music education, or sound engineering or work in the music industry in some other fashion.
- If strategies like this don't suffice, then another strategy would be to find a job that serves to fuel (provide time and resources to pursue your calling) such as a job where you work 2-3 days a week for income and have the other days off to pursue your calling. Jobs such as nursing, paramedic, or other jobs in which you have organized your living situation to be able to do so. Then the income producing job isn't drudgery it is valued because it gives you the ability to pursue your calling.

MONDAY

The lesson asks us to read Proverbs 21:25-26:

The sluggard's craving will be the death of him, because his hands refuse to work. All day long he craves for more, but the righteous give without sparing. NIV84

What do you hear in this passage?

What death is being described—is it primarily the first death or is the second death being described—or both?

Is there any wisdom here? Is it based on God's law? What law?

Should this wisdom be built into our public policies—i.e. work and achievement, receiving advancement, award, success based on one's application and investment of their energies in accomplishment?

Do you realize this is a conservative principle and a principle which is ridiculed and attacked by those on the left with policies and attitudes that suggest we should give every child a participation award because we don't want anyone getting their feelings hurt, or we shouldn't praise the A student's paper or the excellent musical performance in front of the other students because it might make those who are struggle feel bad? Or we pass to the next grade or graduate students who are not able to pass the classes because we don't want them to feel bad.

Such practices are corrosive and corrupting to everyone involved as they create lies. While all of us are equal in moral worth, we are not all equal in ability and therefore cannot all achieve the same levels of performance or succeed in the same line of activity. To suggest we can by giving everyone the same award, grade, or passing to the next level creates false expectations, undermines the drive to excellence and corrupts society.



This is not about politics—it is about godly principles and godly principles do not change by popular vote, nor by desire, nor by legislation. They are constants that don't change based on politics, they just are.

This is also part of a culture war we talked about a couple of weeks ago—how the Christian, who believes in the Bible and follows the gospel commission seeks to bring God's truth to bear which will destroy all lies and therefore cultures built upon lies by changing the hearts of people back into harmony with God's designs and methods.

I have written several blogs recently describing God's principles and how when they are applied to the lives of people or nations those people or nations experience greater health and success, but when God's principles are violated injury and damage always occurs. That is how design law works.

One of the founders of the SDA church wrote about the USA:

And he had two horns like a lamb." The lamblike horns indicate youth, innocence, and gentleness, fitly representing the character of the United States when presented to the prophet as "coming up" in 1798. Among the Christian exiles who first fled to America and sought an asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance were many who determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty. Their views found place in the Declaration of Independence, which sets forth the **great truth that "all men are created equal" and endowed with the inalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."** [this is describing equality of moral worth as human beings, not equality in ability, or equality in achievement or success in any endeavor.] And the Constitution guarantees to the people the right of self-government, providing that representatives elected by the popular vote shall enact and administer the laws. Freedom of religious faith was also granted, every man being permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. **Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity.** The oppressed and downtrodden throughout Christendom have turned to this land with interest and hope. Millions have sought its shores, and the United States has risen to a place among the most powerful nations of the earth (The Great Controversy, p. 441).

This author goes on to describe how these principles will be undermined from the political right when legislators will conform to pressure from a realignment between Protestants and Papal powers to restrict liberty. But, is that the only way for civil and religious liberty to be taken away? Do we get locked into one means of undermining liberty and fail to see other means of doing the same thing, or do we value the principles and methods of God such that we recognize violations of God's law from any direction?

Are these principles of Republicanism and Protestantism, which are conservative principles of civil and religious liberty, being attacked in America today?

And are the principles of hard work and individual application and achievement being attacked today?



A chart published this year at the Smithsonian Institute entitled:

“Aspects & Assumption of Whiteness and White Culture in the United States”

criticized several aspects of American culture as being racist and therefore something to be opposed. Here are bullets from that chart, that the chart labelled as whiteness and racist and thus needs to be opposed in our society:

“Protestant Work Ethic

- Hard work is the key to success
- Work before play
- ‘If you didn’t meet your goals you didn’t work hard enough.’”

The list is credited to a diversity consultant named Judith H. Katz, who has written about race for many years. In the late 1970s, she wrote *White Awareness: Handbook for Anti-Racism Training*. She later wrote *Inclusion Breakthrough: Unleashing the Real Power of Diversity*. (In the 1990s, the Boston Herald called her a “diversity doyenne.”) Today, the company where she is a top executive, Kaleel Jamison Consulting, counts among its clients FedEx, Merck, Toyota, and several others.” <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/byron-yorks-daily-memo-whiteness-and-the-national-museum-of-african-american-history-and-culture>

The principle of work is a Protestant principle—no doubt about that—but the question is: Is the principle of work a racist philosophy, is it white supremacy?

No—it is the design law of God built into reality. So, what is going on today that some people are labeling work as racist and therefore undermining the principle of hard work? A culture war in which Christianity and God’s principles for health are being attacked and undermined in order for Satan to gain greater control of people’s minds through his multiple lies and falsehoods.

What is the consequence to people when they are taught that hard work is racist? Will it uplift people to believe that lie?

Do you see how the God’s kingdom, His methods and principles for life and health are being attacked and undermined by the systems of this world, which run on Satan’s methods?

If we present the gospel will we present God’s design laws for life? And will that be popular message or will forces align that try and silence the voices that bring forth truth, including by ridicule and false allegations of being racist, or that the gospel of Jesus is hate speech, or that Christianity is intolerant, or that believing in God is for the ignorant and uneducated etc.?

But we cannot stop advancing the kingdom of God, which is built upon design laws, which means we will continually expose the fallacy of everything that violates God’s design and methods, whether in the church or in society.



Read second paragraph, “God has given...” This is well said, and the reason? Because it is the law of exertion, if you want something to get stronger you must exercise it. Because if you don’t use it you lose it.

TUESDAY

Read second paragraph, “The attention to detail...” What do you think about the last sentence, “With God, sloppy work is not accepted!”?

What is meant by “sloppy” work? What determines whether the work done is sloppy or not?

Is the primary measure the product itself?

Do we balance this idea of sloppy work with:

The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart. 1Samuel 16:7 NIV84

When we consider sloppy work, would the motive of the heart matter, or is it only about the quality of the work product?

I have many patients who grew up in Christian homes and there was a real emphasis on the work product, on performance, behavior, and perfection and these individuals really struggle with feeling inadequate, with feeling they not good enough. They struggle with recognizing a truth that no matter how good they perform a task that there is always room to do it better, and thus they always fall short and feel like a failure.

What would you say to such individuals and how do we bring address this idea that God doesn’t accept sloppiness?

Is God’s focus primarily about the work product or the motive of the heart—doing one’s best with one’s:

- abilities
- skill level
- education
- level of maturity
- level of experience
- time
- energy



Do we factor in what is actually desired or needed in the circumstance or do we lose the focus on the true goal for the perfection of the task? For instance, if we need to mail a letter to pay a bill, do we delay putting the letter in the mail because we are not satisfied with the quality of our handwriting addressing the envelope? We realize some of the letters are bigger than others, the lines run at a slant instead of being perfectly horizontal etc.? Do we take hours to readdress the letter over and over again in order to be sure that it is not sloppy or do we take the attitude that as long as it is readable and will be delivered properly it is good enough?

This is a metaphor for many tasks in life—do we recognize when it is good enough and move on or ruminate over improving the task itself?

What about making mistakes? Is it okay to make mistakes or are mistakes evil and therefore are to be avoided?

This is one of the lies that Satan slips into people's minds, the lie that mistakes are evil. No, mistakes are an inevitable part of finite beings learning, growth, development and education. But many people who have grown up in religious systems that are legal in nature have this lie in their mind. After all, in a legal view, if you are going 50 in a 30 zone it doesn't matter whether you meant to or not, whether you saw the speed limit sign or not, whether it was purposeful or not, it is still a crime and if caught you will be punished. This false legal view of God's government has led millions into a terrible behavioral-focused approach to life where they are burdened under all kinds of works and feelings of insecurity, guilt and a sense of imperfection and constantly try to be perfect but knowing they can't be.

But the truth is that mistakes are not sin, mistakes are not evil. Is there a difference between making a math error in your check registry and accidentally over-drafting a check and purposely writing fraudulent checks?

Everyone make mistakes, the question isn't about the mistake it is about learning and growth.

If you take decide to learn to play any instrument, say the piano and take lessons, will you hit some wrong notes? Is that evil? No! And with practice will you hit fewer wrong notes? Yes! This is life, whether piano, learning math, or learning anything.

Life is about learning, and we will make mistakes as we advance into anything new. But people who have come to believe that mistakes are evil then in addition to living under chronic false guilt and inadequacy end up:

- restricting new activities for fear of making mistakes, fear of failure, fear of not being good enough
- surrendering their thinking to others, someone in charge, some leader to tell them the answer, to get permission or direction from, so if it turns out to be wrong it won't be their fault as they were doing what the authority said was okay
- by rejecting authority and standards and becoming completely profligate and lawless, do what feels good it doesn't matter anyway



What is the solution? The truth, which is understood from the design law view, that we are finite and life is about growth, learning, developing, advancing in the truth, and God doesn't look primarily at the task performance, but at the attitude of the heart while carrying out the task. Is the heart motivated by love, a desire to honor God, to be a blessing to others, or is it motivated by a desire to advance self?

Consider a father who is out gardening and weeding in a tomato patch, and his two-year-old son comes up behind him and with a big smile, pulls up a tomato plant saying, "help daddy!" Compare that to the 14-year-old son sent out to weed the tomato patch and only pulls weeds but the entire time curses the father for not being able to play his computer game. Which child is the father most happy with? Is God primarily concerned with task performance?

WEDNESDAY

The lesson focuses our attention on being Spirit led in all aspects of life including in our work. What does this mean to you? How do you apply this?

Would being Spirit led mean:

- We don't choose to act (get a job) until the Spirit comes with some sign or miracle to tell us which job to apply for?
- That we don't work for companies that participate in activities that we view as being against the kingdom of God?
 - What about working for a company that makes alcohol?
 - What about working for a company that sells alcohol—supermarkets, restaurants?
 - What about working for a company that distributes or delivers alcohol—trucking companies, UPS, FedEx?
 - What about companies that supply electricity or water to companies that make alcohol?
 - What about vineyards that grow grapes they sell to wineries?
 - What about fertilizer companies that sell fertilizer to companies that grow grapes they sell to wineries?
 - What about investment companies that buy stocks in companies that produce, sell, distribute alcohol?
- That we conduct ourselves in harmony with God's principles of honesty, integrity, kindness, fulfilling our responsibilities, but we don't take responsibility for what the company does if we are not setting company policy?
- What if a company's primary agenda is evil—say a casino? Is working for them in keeping with being Spirit led? What if you worked as a janitor improving sanitation and reducing disease? What if you worked as a nurse in their onsite clinic?

What is the point? We can't know where the Spirit will lead another person to work and we are not responsible for their calling. We are responsible for following where the Spirit is calling us!

What does it mean to you to be Spirit filled in the work place?



There are men who are **careless in regard to the spirit** which they carry with them in their business. **They hide their light under a bushel. They say, Religion is religion, business is business. But all our work in this world, even in a business line, is God's work, and should be done with a heart full of his love, and of heavenly enlightenment.** But if we need the heavenly enlightenment in business employments in the world, how much more do we need his grace and help in the business especially connected with his precious cause. There must be no coldness, no formality, no deadness in his work. The hardness of heart that is manifest in business lines among us as a people, is an offense to God. RH January 24, 1893, par. 8

What do you hear? Does being Spirit led in business, in our employment, mean that we are to evangelize people in the workplace?

Where is the line between living for God and proselytizing?

What should mental health counselors do: treat their patients with respect and respect the patient's attitude about spiritual things and work within that framework, or use the professional office setting to evangelize and preach?

Is there a difference between "letting your light shine" in practicing godly principles in governance of self, in loving others, in being positive, cheerful, honest, concerned, and preaching?

What of a Christian baker who has a gay couple come in and ask for a wedding cake for their gay wedding what should he do if he wants to let his Christian light shine?

Should the Christian baker's primary concern be with:

- himself and his salvation?
- witnessing to this couple and ensuring they know they are living in sin?
- running his business and selling to people an honest cake for an honest wage?
- determining how his baking products are used once they are sold and only selling products to customers who will use them in ways he approves?
- honoring God and revealing God's character of love?
- What honors God in that situation? Is it the specific action or the motive in the heart? Would the maturity of the baker determine what he concludes God would have him do? Would the baker's understanding of God's law have anything to do with his response? Would the baker's love for the couple impact his decision? What if the baker thought that baking the cake and showing real interest in the couple could build a relationship with them, and over time he could introduce them to Jesus and they would one day give their hearts to Jesus and Jesus would lead them to wherever Jesus would have them be—so he bakes the cake for them?



THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, “When asked to comment...” And the lesson lists other resources such as money, time, energy, talent and others, which could include land, water and waterways, food, other materials.

So, what does it mean to be a good steward?

What about a steward of the earth in general? Is there a difference between being a good steward of the earth and being an Earth worshipper?

The best stewards are those who have Jesus in their hearts and understand God’s design for life and health and His purposes and realize we are here to care for those with less ability than we have, including the animals.

But if we have to decide, which is valued more, human beings or animals?

What is the problem to humans if we fail to value and protect animals?

“A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.” Proverbs 12:10. **Few realize as they should the sinfulness of abusing animals or leaving them to suffer from neglect. The animals were created to serve man, but he has no right to cause them pain by harsh treatment.** *From Eternity Past 313.2*

He who will abuse animals because he has them in his power is both a coward and a tyrant. Many do not realize that their cruelty will ever be known, because the poor dumb animals cannot reveal it. But could the eyes of these men be opened, they would see an angel of God standing as a witness to testify against them in the courts above. **A day is coming when judgment will be pronounced against those who abuse God's creatures.** EP 313.3

And what is that judgment referenced above? What happens in the hearts, minds, characters of those who abuse animals? And thus the judgment is the diagnosis that they are without love and out of harmony with heaven.

But is there a difference between cruelty to animals and eating animals?

Was Jesus being cruel and abusing animals when He participated in Passover while here on earth or when He fixed fish for His disciples after His resurrection, or when He ate fish in the upper room?

What about using animals in medical research to develop cures for human disease?

What is the balance between being good stewards and using the resources of earth for the welfare of humanity?



FRIDAY

Read first paragraph and discuss

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

“Healing the Mind in a Broken World” Seminar is now available on our website! This one-day event, held in Chattanooga on October 3 includes HD videos, mp3 podcasts, and presenters slides (power points and PDF formats)