



2021 2Q The Promise: Lesson 8 Covenant Law

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Online listener John Gross, after hearing our description of the atonement models and the ransom price being what was needed to free us from bondage of sin, the truth to free us from lies and a new sinless human nature developed by Christ which we partake by faith, thus the price was paid to us—he sent this quote from EGW:

“The Lord requires of every Christian, growth in efficiency and in capability in every sense. **He has paid us our wages, even his own blood and suffering to secure our obedience...** For our sakes Christ became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He descended in humiliation from depth to depth in our behalf until he reached the cross. He could go no farther in self-denial and self-sacrifice. It was impossible for divine condescension to reach a lower depth. **This wonderful sacrifice moved all heaven, and can we look upon it without our hearts breaking at the sight?** May the Lord have pity upon us in our hardness of heart, and **may he give us a new heart to honor and glorify his name.**” The Home Missionary, June 1, 1897

Read first paragraph, “One of the important...” What does it mean? What does the path of righteousness look like? What does it feel like? It is the path that leads through the valley of the shadow of death—why?

What is required for the sinner to experience in order to be righteous? Conversion, being reborn, or another way to say that is, we must die to the old self and be resurrected with Jesus with a new heart and right spirit. This conversion experience is the “valley of the shadow of death”—in which we feel like we are dying on the inside, but in which, when we trust Jesus and follow our Shepherd, we only die to sin and selfishness.

What does it mean “for His name’s sake?” What is symbolized by God’s name? His character—how does our going down the path of righteousness connect to God’s name? Where does God want to write His name or place His character? In us, we were created by God to be living temples in which God dwells by His Spirit and thus those who follow our Shepherd through the valley of the shadow of death are following Him in the path of righteousness where He restores in us His true character or name!

Which takes us to the next paragraph in the lesson, “What are the safe...” When you read about the commandments of the Lord, or when you read about God’s law—what comes to mind?



Do you ask, “what law lens”? Does it matter when we think of the law of God whether we are thinking of design law or imposed law?

If the people read “God’s commandments and law” through the human law lens, where does that path lead? It leads to all forms of legalism:

- the legalism of the Jews at Sinai, “all the Lord says we will do”
- the legalism of the Pharisees in Jesus’ day, who crucified Jesus as a law breaker
- the legalism of the Dark Ages church who enforced its law on people even burning people at the stake
- the legalism of penal substitution theology which promotes the lie that God’s law functions like human law, imposed rules and that sin is a legal problem from which we need a legal solution so the imperial cosmic judge wont kill us.
- Thus legalism is the focus on legal standing and legal solutions that always results from believing the lie that God’s law functions like human law and thus sin is legal trouble requiring a legal solution.

That doesn’t mean we undermine or discount God’s law—quite the contrary. The design law view uplifts, sustains, upholds, magnifies and validates God’s laws as the protocols that life and reality are built upon and they are beyond any change or abrogation. We either die from being out of harmony with them, or we are restored by the power of God to live in harmony with them.

So comparing the referenced Psalms from different versions:

Psalms 119:35:

- Make me to go in the path of thy commandments;
For therein do I delight. (KJV)
- Keep me obedient to your commandments,
because in them I find happiness. (GNT)
- Guide me in the path of your commands,
for I delight to walk in it. (NET)
- Lead me to live according to your ways,
because it brings me health and happiness. (REM)

Psalms 119:172:

- My tongue shall speak of thy word:
For all thy commandments are righteousness. (KJV)
- I will sing about your law,



because your commands are just. (GNT)

- My tongue will sing of your promise,
for all your commandments are right. (NRSV)
- Let my tongue sing of your revelations of truth,
for all your laws are perfect — the protocols for life and health. (REM)

The lesson says, “God’s law is a safe, firm path through the treacherous swamp of human existence.” Absolutely true—as long as one understands God’s law is design law. But as soon as one believes God’s laws are like human law, rules imposed requiring legal enforcement, then one leaves safety and will ultimately cause injury to themselves and others:

- Jesus was accused of being a law breaker and rejected and crucified
- The disciples were accused of being law breakers, of harvesting grain on the Sabbath, of not washing their hands properly before eating
- Jesus told them that when they convert people to their religion—which was converting them to Judaism, God’s chosen people the true Sabbath, the inspired Word given through God’s prophets, yet because they substituted human imposed law, Jesus told them they make people twice the sons of hell.
- Look through history all the problems that religions have caused always have their root in legal enforcement of their religious code on others. Whenever people return to design law, love, truth, freedom healing occurs.

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “Jewish tradition...” “For whatever reasons...” What is your understanding of God’s reasons for choosing Israel?

To me it is very simple—God foreknew that in this branch of the human family enough people would choose to stay faithful to Him, that despite Satan’s worst attacks and attempts to try and destroy them, He would succeed in fulfilling His promise to Adam and Eve, to bring our Messiah.

What do you think of this sentence, “They had no merit of their own that would make them worthy of God’s love and His choice of them as His people”?

What about Gabriel or Adam and Eve in Eden before sin—did they have merit of their own that made them worthy of God’s love and God’s choice of them to fulfill the roles given to them? Did Lucifer before his fall?

In other words, are we saying that when we are good—perhaps sinless like Gabriel we merit God’s love, but when we are sinners (being born in sin without any choice of our own to be born this way) we do not merit God’s love? If this is true, is it actually love or is it what some call “conditional love”?



What kind of god would that god be if only the righteous merit his love?

But the Bible says, “For God so loved the world that He sent His only Son...” “While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

Love based on merit is not love!

The lesson asks a very pertinent question regarding God’s election of Israel, “What did God choose Israel for?”

Was Israel chosen for exclusive salvation? No, what were they chosen for? To be God’s helpers in spreading the truth about God, the problem of sin, God’s solution of the coming Messiah, preparing the world for the first Advent of the Messiah.

The lesson states in the second paragraph, “As Seventh-day Adventists, we like to view ourselves as the modern-day counterpart to Israel, called by the Lord, not to be the only ones redeemed but to proclaim the message of redemption to the world, in the context of the three angels’ messages. In short, we believe we have something to say that no one else is saying.”

What are the parallels between the Jews of Christ’s day and the SDA church?

- Both observe the same weekly Sabbath
- Both believe God is Creator of earth and life on it is six literal days resting on the 7th day
- Both have a sanctuary message
- Both have a dietary or health message
- Both promote the importance of tithes and offerings
- Both were called to prepare the world for the Advent of the Messiah
- Both believe they were blessed by God with individuals with special inspiration and have writings of dead prophets

Is that where the similarities end?

Do we believe that ancient Israel was called by God to be His people to prepare the world for His coming? Do we believe that being called by God for this purpose would have elevated their value as a military target in Satan’s estimation? In other words, because they were called by God would Satan have put them at the top of his hit list to seek to infiltrate, divert, pervert and destroy?

What about the SDA church—if their view is correct and they are the end-time counterpart with a special message to call the world to prepare to meet Jesus, would they also be targeted by Satan for infiltration, infection, perversion and destruction?

Ancient Israel was attacked literally, by warring nations—but those nations failed to destroy Israel, they were attacked by paganism but that also eventually failed, but what didn’t fail, **what was the one**



strategy that succeeded in getting the nation to reject Jesus as their Messiah and to crucify Him? Infecting their minds with the lie that God's law functions like human law and thus they became legalists and rejected the Creator.

Do we see any parallels in Christianity and the SDA church to what caused Israel to fail? Specifically, to we see in Christianity and the SDA church the embracing of human law as God's law and what has that done to the message that is to prepare the world for Christ's return?

What is the unique message to be given to the world today—the 3 angels' messages? How would you describe it?

Let's examine the third angel's message—in it is the gospel, the righteousness by faith message—but let's read it and ask, what is the good news? Do you hear it in this message?

A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name." This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus. (Re 14:9–12 NIV84).

What is the good news?

A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, **[God's law of worship is revealed here and upheld and sustained by God. The law of by beholding we become changed or in psychiatry we know as modeling.**

Paul describes these same events about how things will be just before the coming of the Lord:

"Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that **he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.**" (2Thes 2:1-4 NIV84)

This is describing the church of the Dark Ages arising and rejecting God's design laws and infecting the Spirit Temple, the minds of human beings with the anti-Christ, anti-God, anti-love, anti-design law message of human law, that God's law works like human law, imposed rules requiring God to inflict punishment for rule-breaking. And the Spirit temple became defiled requiring our heavenly High



Priest to cleanse our temples before He returns to get us. This is the message of the 3 angels—the message of worshipping God as Creator and rejecting the dictator views of God.

Paul goes on describe the results of believing the lawless one, the one who denies God’s design laws and promote justice through legislation, enforcement, punishment which only causes more division and hostility, notice why the wicked perish:

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. **They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.** For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. (2 Th 2:9–12 NIV84).

The mark is the counterpart to the seal of God—God’s people are sealed in their foreheads, which is where we reason, think, choose, it is symbolic of character, love, loyalty. The lost are marked in their foreheads or hands, because there are two groups of lost, the believers in Satan’s ways, and the practitioners of Satan’s ways.

These lost people marked in the forehead are marked in their minds as rejecting truth, they develop characters of selfishness, control, fear, anti-love.

The mark of the beast in the forehead symbolizes people who believe the lies of Satan the methods of the beast are right and have formed characters like Satan. The mark in the hand are those who don’t agree with the practices, actions of the beast and wouldn’t initiate the abuses themselves, but also do not have God’s character reproduced within, thus they still live to protect self, so they go along with the beast in practice (the work of their hand) and enforce the methods of the beast in their lives and others in their community. From Nazi Germany Hitler, Goebbels, Mengele would examples of be people who would be marked in their foreheads—their characters, beliefs, mindsets were corrupt. They believed in what they were doing. The Nazi soldiers and German citizens who cooperated, who willingly went along to protect self would be the ones marked in their hands.

The message of this angel is saying that God gives each person freedom to worship the God they prefer, but if they reject the truth, reject the remedy provided by Jesus, then they reap what they have sown into their own lives and will be marked in character to be beastly, or in conduct to be beastly.

he, too, will drink of the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath.

God’s law of liberty is revealed here. God truly let’s go all who insist on rejecting Him and refusing the remedy provided by Jesus. As painful as it is for God and for the lost, God is love and love only exists in freedom. So God lets them go to reap what they have sown—and this in Scripture is known as God’s wrath (Romans 1:18-32). Again, good news that God never forces any to comply or do what He says.



He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.

This is the revelation of God's laws of love and truth—God's life-giving presence is described in Scripture as a consuming fire, but it is the same fire seen at Pentecost. It is infinite love and infinite truth unveiled and flowing over the earth and its inhabitants again. Notice where this place of torment occurs, "in the presence of the holy angels and the Lamb." This is good news because to the righteous this same fire invigorates, brings joy, brings peace, happiness, health and eternal life. But to the wicked it is a place where they suffer terrible torment—but why? The good news is revealed that the torment doesn't come from God, it comes from sin when God let's go His protection and stops shielding the wicked from what sin does to them.

And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever.

The good news that the lessons of what happened, that sin causes pain, sin causes suffering, sin causes death, and refusing God's healing results in the torment and death—those lessons will never be forgotten. Just as smoke remains after something is consumed in fire, these lessons will remain in the minds of the saved for all eternity **so that sin will never arise again**. And that is good news.

There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

There is no rest because they have embraced the lie about God's law functioning like human law, a system of imposed rules that requires imposed penalties. This false earthly sinful legal system is symbolized by a mark or sign of imperial rule and that is the church's legislative change of worship from Sabbath to Sunday. But God gave the Sabbath at the end of Creation week as a sign of His methods and design laws for governing. Therefore, those who embrace God's design law methods and have the law written on their hearts enter God's rest as symbolized by the Sabbath. The first thing Adam and Eve did after coming to life on Creation Friday was to enter Sabbath rest with God. Likewise, when the new Christian is truly converted they enter into a state of rest with God, rest from fear, guilt, shame, sin, selfishness and all the legal penal lies and they Remember the Sabbath all week long as they practice God's methods of truth, love and freedom in how they live. But for those who reject God's design laws as symbolized by the Sabbath, and who insist God's law is imposed and God is the punisher of rule breakers, they never experience rest with God, they remain alienated and disconnected just like the Pharisees, because such beliefs about God's laws actually interfere with trust—they need someone to protect them or hide them from the god they really don't trust.

This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus. (Re 14:9–12 NIV84).

More good news, that the patient saints, those who have God's law written on their hearts and minds, are sealed, healed and restored to unity with God and thus live in harmony with God's laws and are faithful in telling the truth about God and His design laws of life. They reject the imposed penal/legal



lies told by the beast and its various agents and don't seek justice through legislation and governmental enforcement but by living justly in how they treat others.

Do we have a special message at this time in earth's history?

MONDAY

Read Deuteronomy 4:13:

“He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets.” (Dt 4:13 NIV84).

Why did God write the 10 Commandments in stone?

Are the 10 Commandments eternal—meaning they have always existed?

Are the 10 Commandments written in stone in heaven for the angels?

Did God have a law written in stone or some other substance in heaven posted for the inhabitants to obey before Lucifer rebelled?

Consider this quotation from the book *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings* as the author describes her view of how the angels in heaven obeyed God and their views on law—what do you think?

The will of God is expressed in the precepts of His holy law, and the principles of this law are the principles of heaven. [What does this mean? Are the expressions of God's law in precepts the same as the principles or are they referring to two different things? And if so, what are the differences? Expressed precepts would be referring to the written law, the 10 Commandments. But are principles the same as expressed precepts? So, which is described here as the law of heaven? The principles, what are the principles of God that is the law of heaven that are expressed in the precepts—love for God and others!] The angels of heaven attain unto no higher knowledge than to know the will of God, and to do His will is the highest service that can engage their powers. MB 109.1

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. [Why not? Because the heavenly beings do not consider law as imposed man-made rules, but as design protocols, how things work. It isn't a spirit of legality that causes you to not jump off a bridge, or not to smoke, it is love for life. Likewise all righteousness is love for God and others.] **When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of.** [What kind of law can be in force and people are obeying it but they have not thought about it; they haven't been told about it; they don't even realize there is a law? Only design law can function this way. Consider Isaac Newton telling his friends his discovery about the law of gravity—don't you think they might



have said, “Law—hmmm...I never thought it was a law, it just how things work”? Have you considered that Satan’s rebellion against God was a rebellion against God’s law? Now do you think Satan came right out and said “I am rebelling against God! I want to overthrow God! I am a better god than God?” No, what did he likely do to rebel against God? He would have made it appear he was seeking a better way, that there was something wrong with how God was doing things—and in this case it was by alleging God is a rule-maker and if you break His rules God will punish.] In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. So in every soul wherein Christ, the hope of glory, dwells, His words are re-echoed, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. MB 109.2

So, in heaven no law written on stone, it wouldn’t make any sense, but there is a law that is in operation and disobedience cannot be ignored—why? Because all disobedience to God’s law damages, it must be addressed in order to stop the damage and heal the injury.

Read first paragraph, “However much we have been stressing...” Why is grace not a license to sin?

Read Romans 3:5-8:

But if our unrighteousness brings out God’s righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? Someone might argue, “If my falsehood enhances God’s truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?” Why not say—as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say—“Let us do evil that good may result”? Their condemnation is deserved. (Ro 3:5–8 NIV84).

What do you understand is being taught here?

From *The Remedy*:

But if our sickness and selfishness make God's enduring, healing love easier to see and understand, how do we interpret that? Do we say that since our wickedness makes God's goodness easier to see, since our selfishness makes God's love easier to comprehend, since our sickness makes God's Remedy easier to understand, that we are therefore helping God win his case? Is God unjust if he doesn't give us a free pass? (I am using a human argument that fails to understand the basic principles upon which the universe operates.) Absolutely not! If that were the case, how could God allow anyone to experience the consequences of the persistent refusal of his life-giving Remedy? Some who see sin as a legal problem might argue, "If I were to lie in order to help God reveal what truthfulness is and thus increase his glory, I am actually on his side helping him, so why should I suffer the fate of a sinner?" They might as well try claiming—as we are being falsely accused of saying—"It is by doing wrong that the right occurs. It is by doing evil that good results. It is by acting selfishly that love grows." Those who teach such



things deserve the consequence of a depraved and destroyed mind, which is the only result of practicing methods at variance with God's. They fail to understand that violations of God's law of love actually damage the sinner and destroy God's image, methods and principles within them. (Ro 3:5–8 REM).

This is why disobedience cannot help God's cause, it only causes more injury, even though our sin has brought to light God's grace and love more fully.

Read second paragraph, "When you think about what a covenant..." My reaction was—this is sick! Its twisted, is gross, its perverse—and is exactly what the legal lie has done to God's universe and the church.

This is so sad—but let's bring truth to bear. What is the essential elements for a marriage to be healthy? Love and Trust!

What kind of law can you legislate, or rule can you pass or boundary can you enforce upon another that will cause them to love you and make them more trustworthy?

What happens in a marriage when it is based on rules and laws?

So what is the purpose of the written law, who is it for?

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. (1 Ti 1:8–11 NIV84).

Who is the written law given for? The wicked, the immature, the rebellious, in other words, not for those who are reconciled to Christ—it serves no function for them.

For the lesson to suggest that our relationship with God requires rules and rule-enforcement is one of the grossest perversions of God's character possible, it perverts the gospel and obstructs God's healing plan.

Does that mean the righteous are lawless—absolutely not—it means they are living the law of God as it is written in their hearts but it is something not even thought of.

When you give your spouse or child a hug, do you think? Well, the law requires that I hug them, I want to be obedient, I don't want to get punished, I don't want to get in legal trouble so, I will do my duty and obey the law and give my spouse a hug?



Or, as the lesson states, do righteous husbands and wives think, “Well I sure would like to commit adultery, but I don’t want to get in legal trouble, so I won’t cheat on my spouse because the rules say not to; but if it wasn’t for those pesky rules I sure would.”

It is foolish to teach such things. Just as Paul says, only perverts—those who have perverted God’s law—think this way.

How do you explain:

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, **punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation** of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Ex 20:4–6 NIV84).

Does God inflict punishment on the descendants of sinners? Then what do you do with Ezekiel 18?

The word of the Lord came to me: ²“What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel:

“ ‘The fathers eat sour grapes,
and the children’s teeth are set on edge’?”

³“As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel...

⁵ “Suppose there is a righteous man
who does what is just and right...

⁹ He follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my laws. That man is righteous; he will surely live, declares the Sovereign Lord.

¹⁰“Suppose he has a violent son, who sheds blood or does any of these other things ¹¹(though the father has done none of them)...

¹³ Will such a man live? He will not! Because he has done all these detestable things, he will surely be put to death and his blood will be on his own head.

¹⁴“But suppose this son has a son who sees all the sins his father commits, and though he sees them, he does not do such things...

¹⁷ He withholds his hand from sin... He keeps my laws and follows my decrees. He will not die for his father’s sin; he will surely live...

¹⁹“Yet you ask, ‘Why does the son not share the guilt of his father?’ Since the son has done what is just and right and has been careful to keep all my decrees, he will surely live. ²⁰The soul who sins is the one who will die. **The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son.** The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.

²¹“But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die. ²²**None of the**



offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. **Because of the righteous things he has done**, he will live. ²³ Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign Lord. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?

²⁴ “But if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked man does, will he live? **None of the righteous things he has done will be remembered.** Because of the unfaithfulness he is guilty of and because of the sins he has committed, he will die.

²⁵ “**Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear, O house of Israel: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust?** ²⁶ If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin, he will die for it; because of the sin he has committed he will die. ²⁷ But if a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will save his life. ²⁸ Because he considers all the offenses he has committed and turns away from them, he will surely live; he will not die. ²⁹ **Yet the house of Israel says, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’** Are my ways unjust, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust?

³⁰ “Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall.

³¹ Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³² For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. Repent and live! (Ezekiel 18:1-32 NIV84)

How do we harmonize these verses? Design law! When we sin we change ourselves, we cause epigenetic alterations in our DNA expression that passes to our children 3-4 generations down making them more vulnerable to sin, addiction, selfishness, etc. Further, our sins are passed along through our examples, teaching, education, and practices to our children, thus their characters are molded by ours. So if a child chooses to reject wickedness that the parent passed along and choose loyalty to God then they don't suffer any guilt, but if they choose to agree and embrace wickedness either from what was passed along or by rejecting the righteousness taught by the parent, they they reap destruction.

So, God's punishing of the descendants in the Commandment is about God's design laws being sustained. You having freedom to make choices in governance of yourselves and those choices change you and you then have the ability to procreate beings in your image and you pass along to your children advantages or disadvantages based on both your own inheritance and choices before you had children and what you teach your children. God's design created us this way and God's laws sustain these abilities thus God takes ownership over His design and laws, but it is still our choices that make the changes and only character is what matters when it comes to

TUESDAY

Great question to open the lesson, “What are your first thoughts when you think of law?” Yes, this is the key question to almost all issues of theology—if your concept of law is wrong almost every conclusion from the Bible will be wrong.



Read fifth paragraph, “The part played by the law...” If the lesson means by natural law—the natural law of sin and death, i.e. survival of the fittest, the strong dominating the weak, then yes, they are correct. But if the lesson means by natural law that they couldn’t live by the design laws of God, then they are wrong.

Consider Romans 1:20 and then 2:12-16:

For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—**his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made**, so that men are without excuse....**[What is Paul saying? What is revealed in nature? Why are men without excused? So Paul establishes that God’s divine nature is seen in what He has made then goes on to describe something incredible]** All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. For **it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God’s sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)** This will take place on the day when God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares. (Ro 1:20; 2:12–16 NIV84).

What is described?

What kind of law is this? They don’t have Torah, they don’t have rules, a code, but something is written upon their heart? What?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “God’s law is...” What does a transcript of His character mean to you? What are the strengths of this analogy where does it break down?

Consider DNA—a transcript of a person—it is the hidden code that codes for their life. God’s law is like this, it is the hidden foundation of life, the building blocks of life. But, can we understand the fullness of a person by studying the code written on paper?

Can we know the person’s laugh, love, heart, motives, smile, ingenuity by studying the code?

Can we know the fullness of God’s character by studying any written law? No! It is a transcript not the fullness—God’s law is living just like DNA is supposed to be living. We only truly understand in living beings.

The universe is under unvarying moral and physical laws—absolutely true—well said, which means they cannot be imposed, legislated or function like human law.



The lesson asks in the middle “If God’s law cannot save a person from sin, why did He make it a part of the covenant? (Hint: see Amos 3:3)”

Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? (Am 3:3 NIV84).

So, if God’s law cannot save why is it part of the covenant?

What is the basis of life? God and how did God construct life to operate? In harmony with Himself, His character of love. Thus, God’s laws are the basis of life. So, harmony with God is harmony with God’s laws and is harmony with life.

So, while God’s laws are not the source of life, they are the structure, protocol, basis upon which God extends His life-giving energy to flow out to the universe and thus harmony with God’s laws is harmony with God reconnecting to the source of life.

Once Adam sinned, humans were disconnected and put on artificial life support to allow Jesus to come and reestablish the sinless perfect connection back into the species human, putting God’s design law back into humanity. Thus, the law isn’t the source of our salvation Jesus is, the law isn’t the source of life God is (and Jesus is as a member of the Godhead He has life original unborrowed underived), but the law is the expression and outflow of God’s person whereby God built, sustains and governs life. So we are saved by Jesus who becomes the connecting link back to God and the Spirit working to write God’s law, the character of Christ which is a transcript of God’s law into our hearts.

The lesson states that, “Because God is not only the Creator of the world but also its moral Governor, law is essential for the happiness of His created, intelligent beings to live in harmony with Him.”

thoughts? What type of law? How do you understand it? What happens if we get created intelligent beings to change their view of law from design law to imposed law?

Consider this commentary on sin’s origin in heaven from the book *The Desire of Ages*:

In the opening of the great controversy, Satan had declared that the law of God could not be obeyed, that justice was inconsistent with mercy, and that, should the law be broken, it would be impossible for the sinner to be pardoned. **Every sin must meet its punishment, urged Satan;** and if God should remit the punishment of sin, He would not be a God of truth and justice. When men broke the law of God, and defied His will, Satan exulted. It was proved, he declared, that the law could not be obeyed; man could not be forgiven. Because he, after his rebellion, had been banished from heaven, Satan claimed that the human race must be forever shut out from God's favor. God could not be just, he urged, and yet show mercy to the sinner.
DA 761.4



What kind of law is Satan promoting? Imposed, human like law, which requires the infliction of punishment. And what happened when heavenly intelligences accepted this idea? Rebellion, division, destruction of love!

THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “God openly...” Why is obedience a basic part of the covenant with God?

If you went to the doctor with a terminal condition and were given a treatment that would cure you, what would be a basic part of that covenant with the doctor—if you wanted to get well? Would it not be obedience, compliance, following the instructions? Why?

And what happens if a patient doesn’t follow the instructions? What does the doctor do? Does the doctor kill them?

And does following the instructions and taking the medicine mean the patient produced their own cure or saved themselves?

In the second paragraph the lesson states, “The people could reject the gift, deny the grace, and turn away from the promises. The covenant, as with salvation, never negates free will. The Lord does not force people into a saving relationship with Him; He doesn’t impose a covenant upon them.”

So true, well said—yet, if most Christians believed this, why do most Christians teach that God will kill those who don’t let Him save them?



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Vision for Come and Reason: In February Come and Reason Ministries board met and prayerfully considered our vision, how to reach more people with this life changing message. We decided that our ability to do more is limited by our lack of space and facilities and we have decided to begin looking for a permanent facility for our Ministry—whether renovating a property or building on. The goal will be to build a professional recording studio with auditorium for our weekly class and other events, where we can begin producing more materials—possibly more live programming and live call in or interactive programming.

It is not our way to do fundraisers and we will not do a fundraiser or send out donation requests, however, several people have recently approached us and asked if our ministry has any needs and recommended that we make our vision and plan to have our own facility public so that anyone who want to support us in this endeavor can do so. We also are resistant to going into debt, so we are quite cautious and have already turned down a couple of options because the cost would have required significant debt.

So, please keep us in your prayers that the Lord will lead us to find the right property and bless the process that any resources we use will be spent wisely and most economically.

New Member's Section is now open: This is FREE but will require a sign in and will contain member's only content.

The Remedy Audio and *Could It Be This Simple?* Audio are both available in the members section to stream or download and listen.

Our goal, as a ministry, is to continue to enhance your growth and experience with the wonderful, life-changing message of God's design and healing plan.

SHARING campaign for May: *Fundamental Focus: A Closer Look At God*
BE SURE TO USE OUR WEBSITE STORE TO PLACE YOUR ORDER—DON'T SEND AN EMAIL.