



2022 1Q In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews Lesson 13: Let Brotherly Love Continue

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

SABBATH

Last week in answering questions about the Russian invasion of the Ukraine I said something that could easily be misunderstood and I want to clarify and expose why it could be misunderstood. But before I do, I want to ask some questions:

- What attitude are the followers of Jesus supposed to have to the enemies of God? We are to love our enemies and pray for those who abuse us and do injustice, why? What happens to us if we embrace hate, resentment, and worldly methods to retaliate and destroy our enemies? Can God heal us if we choose these methods? Do you understand the trap of Satan doing various injustices and then getting people outraged by them to choose to do justice by using his methods of inflicting punishment?
- So, what attitude should we have toward Vladimir Putin, Joe Biden, Donald Trump or any other person?
- Does having love in our hearts for every human being, including people like Putin, mean we support what they do, how they act, what policies they advance?
- Christians are to be concerned with souls—with the hearts and minds of people to bring them to truth and the love of God in order to deliver them from the power of lies, fear and selfishness. We are not to get caught up into nation building.
- All nations are Satan's—all of them. They all use his methods and all do injustice. When we get caught up into the politics of nations, we are operating inside Satan's domain and will end up using Satan's methods.
- God is permitting the events to happen that are happening for the purpose of revealing with evidence the activities of His enemy. Those who have eyes to see can discern the methods of God's enemy, the lies, the propaganda, the coercion, the compelling power, the violations of conscience, the trampling upon God given liberties all designed to destroy the image of God in people by either getting them to become mindless pawns, or angry rebels who will use the methods of God's enemy to war against those who are abusing them.
- But we are not of this world, our citizenship is heaven, and we surrender ourselves to Jesus and we grieve as we see people doing evil because we know they are destroying their own souls. And we pray the Spirit of God will work upon all receptive hearts to see the truth and not be drawn into the systems of this world.

So, last week I said something to the effect that the Russia's invasion of the Ukraine doesn't affect our lives here, or doesn't have direct effect on us in America etc. I meant military effect, of soldiers in the streets etc.

But the messaging in the media this week is a constant drumming that the war in Russia is **the cause**



of rising gas prices, and because much of the fertilizers our farmers use comes from the nitrates produced from those petroleum products, our food prices are increasing, along with everything that gets transported in our country—which is everything.

Thus, the messaging in the media and from the White House makes claims that Russia's invasion of the Ukraine is bad for the US and in order to do the morally right thing and oppose the evil empire of Russia, we must suffer financially here in America.

Have you heard this messaging?

But the question is: Is this, in fact, true? Or are we being scammed again by the lies of those who hate America and want to destroy your autonomy, the economic power of middle income America, and increase the power of the government and large corporations?

Well, let's ask some question and investigate the facts and see if we can discern the truth.

Two questions: Is the Russian invasion the cause of our increased energy and food prices? And, will no longer purchasing these products from Russia punish Russia as it is claimed it will do?

- When did our energy costs rise in this country, before or after the Russian invasion? Under the previous administration, gas prices were as low as \$1.60 per gallon, they doubled BEFORE the Russian invasion why? Because the Biden administration shut down the keystone pipeline and obstructed our at-home oil and gas production and began purchasing it from Russia and other countries.
- This had the immediate impact of raising prices on Americans, driving inflation, and sending billions of dollars away from American families to Russia companies and other places. Which enriched Russia and gave them more financial resources to conduct their war.
- The amount of oil and natural gas we have available in US lands for our country to continue to consume at 2018 rates is about 2000 year's worth.
- So the increased energy prices and all other prices is NOT from the Russian invasion on Ukraine it is from the Biden's administrations choices to shut down US gas and oil production.
- When the president says that there are 9000 permits for oil and gas drilling that are not being used suggesting that his administration is not holding back US oil production, this is another misdirection intended to deceive. Yes, they have granted such permits, *to lands that don't produce oil and gas* while refusing to give the permits to the lands rich in oil and gas and refusing to open the keystone pipeline. This gives them the ability to claim that the oil companies are simply not using the permits they have been given.
- What about our not purchasing oil and gas from Russia being morally right in order to punish Russia and cut off their income stream? Well, the only problem with that is that Russia still has full and open markets for its oil and gas to China, India and Turkey, so they won't suffer one wit. Who will suffer by the Biden policies? Middle income and low income Americans—just like what happened with COVID. The super wealthy and big corporations won't suffer, it is the masses who will suffer.



This is not accidental, it is purposeful, targeted, strategic on part of the current administration because this administration aligns itself with the globalists agenda and the World Economic Forum rather than the people of the United States. These globalist have an agenda to eliminate traditional national borders and sovereignty and to institute an elite group of people who own everything and we essentially function as their serfs.

These elites don't believe in God. They don't believe in a hereafter. They don't believe we were created, but evolved, there is no moral right and wrong, only survival of the strongest. They have a vision to pro-actively through genetic and cybernetic manipulation to evolve humans to transhuman, i.e. the next stage in human evolution where we homo-sapiens became like the Neanderthals. But the discerning Bible student knows this is Satan's strategy to destroy the image of God in human beings and place his image there, to cut people off from the influence of the Holy Spirit. These globalists value the earth more than the people and view the masses of people as threat to the planet and their future and therefore must cull the population in order to save both the planet and the species. But they really mean themselves. And the USA is in the way of it because of our constitution which interferes with a few ruling elites dictating to the masses. Thus, one of their stated goals is to remove the USA as the sole superpower, to make it no more powerful than any other nation, militarily and economically. This means they must weaken the dollar, drive up inflation, destroy your savings, basically everything you have been seeing under the policies of the left. So the USA is under assault, it must be weakened. This is a multiprong attack.

COVID was part of this attack. Notice the outcome of COVID and the various governmental responses:

- Low and middle income Americans were weakened, became poorer, lost businesses, increased debt, savings decreased, while government and big corporations got stronger
- A new monitoring system to track you and monitor your body was instituted
- Religious liberty was curtailed
- Free speech was curtailed and continues to be censored, we were censored again last week
- Millions were injured and/or died because of the governmental mandates and the body count is only increasing
- And now the Russian invasion of Ukraine which completely derails the world's focus away from the abuses under COVID

Think about that—has there been various wars, crimes against humanity, ongoing essentially every decade since the end of WWII? Somalia, Bosnia, Cambodia, Venezuela, China's genocides still ongoing, etc. etc. So far is Russia's actions far beyond any of these atrocities? This is not to endorse or support in any way Russia's invasion. We have already said, all human war is unjust. We do not support what Russia is doing. The point I am making is for you to notice how much media coverage it is getting—absolute blanketing of essentially every media headline wall to wall and worldwide? Why? Because the world must be distracted from realizing how we just got Ponzi-schemed in the most diabolical way by the COVID scam.

Did you notice the timing of the invasion? Right when the evidence was breaking about the complete



fraud and harm caused by COVID. And did you notice that suddenly all the mandates were just gone without any fanfare, no one really saying we were wrong etc. We don't have time to think about that because there is a horrible evil man invading the Ukraine.

But why would Russia invade so conveniently for the needs of these globalists? Because they were baited into doing it by the current US administration.

Consider the following scenario—30 years ago Texas secedes from the United States and becomes its own independent country. And now in Texas, it is conformed that China has opened multiple bioweapons labs to produce weapons of mass destruction. What would you as an American want to do?

Well, it was confirmed this week in a senate hearing by one of Biden's officials, that the USA has multiple bioweapons labs in Ukraine and has been developing bioweapons, and they have grave concerns that Russia will get access to those biological agents. Hmmm....

There is so much more to this, the CIA involvement, the corrupt US politicians and their family members getting rich in Ukrainian companies etc. but as I wrote in my blog last week, there are no just human wars. All human nations are Satan's all lie, all do evil and we as Christians are not to get caught up in these nation wars. We are to be battling for hearts, minds and souls.

Recognize what is happening are the movements of Satan's forces, and according to Bible prophecy, which nation is the end-time nation that speaks like a dragon—is it Russia? No, it is the United States! So don't be surprised to discover the lying, manipulating, and exploiting of people and nations that the US is doing.

As more of these lies, frauds, manipulations, and outrages come to light, we, who love God, will be sorely tempted to join the forces of the political right to engage and destroy these forces on the political left. But we must resist this. God's people are not in the political left or the political right. Our message is the Jesus is coming again. We will not save this planet, it is going to be destroyed. We will not, through human invention, technology, economic strategy, might, force or any other mechanism bring in a eutopia—things are going to get worse, much worse, and our responsibility is to uplift the kingdom of God, truth, love and liberty.

Now, in preparing the lesson for today I came across this quotation from EGW, consider what is described in light of what is happening in the world today:

The light of God has given us for the world... is not to be put under a bushel or under a bed. [What is that light? It is the light of the 3 angels, the truth about God's character of love and His methods, Him as Creator and His law as design law] The devil is far from being narrow and prescribed in his work. This is plainly revealed by the rapidly increasing darkness, the multitudinous **errors, heresies, misconceptions, and delusions of these last days.** [Do we see increasing delusions all around us in various forms where evil is called good and good is called evil?] **Creeds and false doctrines** are popular and all pervading to leave the minds of the



world with the drinking of **the wine of Babylon**, the most deadly heresy. [What is the wine of Babylon? At its root is the lie that God's law functions like human law, imposed rules, with inflicted punishments and sin is a legal problem requiring legal solutions of various kinds. It results in authoritarianism, a few ruling elites controlling and dictating to the submissive masses. This is how every earthly government has abused the masses and the church of the Dark Ages operated. Do we want our church to operate this way?] The neglect of plainest warnings will place us on the guilty list. [Meaning what? Neglect the remedy and you remain terminal in your sin condition.] Yes, we have plenty of evidence of Satan's might. We have evidence also that the **day of work is nearly ended**. [Do you see that that Christ's return is near?] Let every power that God has entrusted to His agencies be now employed. Restrict no one's labor in any line if they are established in the truth, but let all work who will. 12LtMs, Lt 31, 1897, par. 13

The **great apostasy** is working to a point, and will develop into **darkness deep as midnight**, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair. [What is the great apostasy? It is the great controversy over God's character, the lie about God's law which leads those who believe it to dominate and abuse others and results in people either becoming more like Satan who practice those methods, have their individualities destroyed if they submit to those methods, or rejecting the idea of God altogether and teaching godlessness, evolutionism, communism, socialism etc.] **This is the time to employ any system that can be devised to discover and counteract the leaven of error**. [Should we expose the lies, reveal the truth, even if it is upsetting to some, hurts some feelings?] Let there be light. There should be one hundred light bearers in our world where there is one today. **Darkness will become more dense in human minds after the truth has penetrated and been rejected**. But there are some minds where the darkness will be removed. They recognize the light. 12LtMs, Lt 31, 1897, par. 14

The apostasy will exist in this night of spiritual darkness. It will be destroyed by the brightness and exceeding glory of Christ's coming. O, what a day of gladness for the righteous that will be! What a breaking up of the spell of fanaticism and delusive sentiments when Christ shall shine forth before His ancients gloriously! **Then the system of satanic delusion, which souls have preferred to the truth** that involves a cross, will be broken up. 12LtMs, Lt 31, 1897, par. 15

Satan has come down with great power to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. The powers of deception are working upon minds in every country to gain a foothold. Satan is seeking to hedge up our way in this country. [Hedge up our way means to restrict our liberties, to have our churches closed, to restrict visitations, to close our schools, to interfere with free assembly and association and free speech and to censor ideas that disagree with the lies of Satan. Do we see that happening today? And have you seen many in the church supporting these dark movements of Satan?] **The night of trial, the night of weeping, the night of persecution for the truth's sake, is not far distant**. [Are we entering this time, is it about to break upon us?] It is through much tribulation that **we shall stand as faithful sentinels for God**, not swerving one hair from truth and righteousness. **Famines will increase; pestilences will sweep away thousands. Dangers are all around us from the**



powers without and Satanic workings within, but the restraining power of God is now being exercised. 12LtMs, Lt 31, 1897, par. 16 [The restraining power of God was being exercised in 1897, it is still being exercised, but the four winds are loosening, Satanic powers are gaining greater freedom to act. Do you recognize this?]

“Satan hath desired to have thee, that he might sift thee as wheat,” **is applicable to very many souls. Yet we are not left helpless. The Lord spreads his covering hand over us, saying, “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.”** [Luke 22:31, 32.] 12LtMs, Lt 31, 1897, par. 17 [Yes, the enemy is raging, but we have a Savior who will not leave us nor forsake us. We must keep our eyes fixed in Christ.]

The church militant is not the church triumphant. We are enjoined, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” [Ephesians 6:10-17.] 12LtMs, Lt 31, 1897, par. 18

The night of trial is nearly spent. Satan is bringing in his masterly power because he knoweth that his time is short. [Are you encouraged? The trial is nearing its conclusion. But Satan is bringing his final great masterful deception to fruition. Can you discern it? **The chastisement of God is upon the world to call all who know the truth to hide in the cleft of the Rock and view the glory of God.** [What is the chastisement of God? It is God letting go His protection and allowing more of the disasters and evil to occur, so that the people who have not hardened their hearts against God can see the difference between the methods of God and the methods of Satan. God’s people those who love truth, love and liberty, who do their own thinking, to present themselves to God as living sacrifices will not conform to the worldly methods of lies, coercion, control and blind submission. We will speak the truth in love, while leaving others free.] **The truth must not be muffled now. Plain statements must be made. Unvarnished truth must be spoken** in leaflets and pamphlets, and these must be scattered like the leaves of autumn. 12LtMs, Lt 31, 1897, par. 19

Read second paragraph, “Throughout the letter, brotherly love...” What does it mean to “exhort one another”?

The dictionary definition to exhort is: *to give urgent advice, recommendations, or warnings.*

But what if the advice, recommendations, warnings cause someone to feel uncomfortable? What if the exhortation identifies someone’s actions as sinful, destructive, harmful and they feel condemned, or



ridiculed, or unaccepted, or they feel unloved because you exhort them for their actions rather than tell them what they are doing is equally healthy to actual objective healthy living?

Do you understand the current world culture is antagonistic to truth, to love, to God's kingdom?

The political correct movement, the idea that if someone takes offense means you were wrong and that you should never say things that upset others or that could be *heard* as rude, that causes someone to feel condemned is a grand deception of Satan to get the truth speakers of the world to collude with lies and to destroy hearts, minds and souls.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and love. Satan prefers that we are both deceitful and unloving, but if he cannot get us to reject both principles of God, then he works to get us to divorce the two, to advance truth without love or love without truth.

Truth without love is seen when people use truths, facts, data to injure, harm, to expose, hurt and embarrass, and then turn around and say "I am only speaking the truth." Their concern is not in helping the other person, it is in making themselves feel good at the expense of the other person, albeit through speaking some factual truth to hurt another, or ruin another's reputation etc. This is not how those like Jesus in character operate.

Consider this instruction regarding the qualities one needs to possess in order to exhort, rebuke, correct another person:

I have seen the great sacrifice which Jesus made to redeem man. He did not consider His own life too dear to sacrifice. Said Jesus: "Love one another, as I have loved you." **Do you feel, when a brother errs, that you could give your life to save him? If you feel thus, you can approach him and affect his heart; you are just the one to visit that brother.** But it is a lamentable fact that many who profess to be brethren, **are not willing to sacrifice any of their opinions or their judgment to save a brother. There is but little love for one another. A selfish spirit is manifested.** {1T 166.2}

What is the principle espoused here? Does the motive matter? But does having the right loving motive mean that one can get a good outcome from the other? What about Jesus' motive when dealing with the leaders of His day? Did He get the outcome He wanted? Why not?

So the first error is to advance some truth without love—but there is the error on the other side, seeking to be loving without truth, which manifests as over empathy or sentimentalism or fear of hurting someone's feeling. The false idea that love is never uncomfortable or interventions of love don't cause pain. This is based on approaching life through feelings rather than reality. Failing to understand the actual situation and what is needed to remedy it.

Here is a truth that many fail to understand: **Once there is brokenness there is no pain-free option.**

The PC movement fails to understand this. Love seeks to save, to heal, to restore, and genuine, real



loving interventions will cause people to feel pain of various kinds. Of course we seek as best we can to minimize the discomfort, but there will still be pain, discomfort when healing brokenness.

Set a broken bone and the recovery process will involve pain.

Set a sin right and there will be the pain of disappointment in self, embarrassment, hurt pride, guilt, shame—Jesus confronted the leaders of His day multiple times in love exposing their hard hearts, their pride, their greed and selfishness and this offended them.

Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit” (Matthew 15:12-14 NIV84).

Should Jesus have changed what He said because of fear others would get offended?

We must have love in our hearts for people, but we must also speak the truth.

The wise rejoice when truth is presented, the wicked seek to destroy the truth and the truth speakers:

- Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (Proverbs 9:9, 10 NIV84).
- Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse. Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you (Proverbs 9:7, 8 NIV84).

Does this mean we don't speak the truth? No, it means we preach the truth personally to those who are willing to hear, and we present the truth in public forums, on our website, lectures, seminars, books, classes, but we don't go out into the community hunting for people who have no interest in the truth to correct them.

Jesus said, “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces” (Matthew 7:6 NKJV).

So the exhortation of Hebrews is to our brothers and sisters in Christ, those who are wise enough to long for correction, instruction, rebuke, training and who want to grow in godliness.

We do stand up to the false methods, principles, lies of the world, but don't go to individuals to correct them—we live just like Jesus. He preached the truth, exposed the lies of the false systems of belief that were being employed, and when they came to Him and asked Him questions, then He answered them, but He didn't go to those false teachers in order to correct them.



SUNDAY

The lesson is about ministering, supporting, caring for those who are imprisoned, incarcerated.

What does this mean?

Do those incarcerated for preaching the gospel need the same type of support and ministry as those incarcerated for murder, rape, drug trafficking or theft?

Can any imprisoned person benefit from Christian ministry? Absolutely, but do all incarcerated people need the same ministry? Why not?

Is there a lesson for us in dealing with people not in prison, perhaps in the church, community, or family?

Do the circumstances of the individual have any bearing upon what is the most loving action to take when dealing with others?

Does this give us any insight into God's actions in the Old Testament?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, "Paul warns the readers..." I like how they worded this—the reason they gave—"because they are two grave threats to brotherly love." They didn't say because it breaks a rule, or gets into legal trouble with God, or that God will be required to punish etc. They got this quite right, sin breaks God's design laws for life, and hardens the heart of the sinner. Sin increases fear, guilt, shame, selfishness and will divide all human relationships.

Adam and Eve in Eden were divided immediately after sin, Adam's fear, guilt, shame, and selfishness caused him to blame his wife.

Only in Christ, where we die to the old fear-ridden, selfish, guilt-ridden, shame-filled life and live a new life of holiness, righteousness, honesty, integrity and love do relationships heal and we experience unity, friendship, trust and the true bonds of brotherhood.

Do the motives for avoiding sin matter? If we avoid acts of sin for fear of getting caught and getting punished but in our heart we would like to commit the sin, what happens in us? We only become more rebellious, jealous, petty, frustrated and untrustworthy and will become discontented gossips, meddlers and legalists seeking to monitor and control other people's lives.

But if we avoid acts of sin because we love God, love others love His methods and it make sense as the best way to do things, what happens to us? We mature and experience peace and contentment and become peacemakers in our families and communities.



What do you think about the phrases “unwarranted divorces”? What would be a warranted divorce?

Does God hate divorce?

Did God, through Moses, give them terms and instructions on how and why to divorce? And did Jesus explain why God did this? Why?

So an analogy, doctors hate to amputate limbs, but do doctors have specific criteria in which amputating limbs is not only authorized, but recommended? Why? Because of gangrene—which occurs when the circulation is compromised, blood doesn’t flow. The life is in the blood, and this can occur through closing or hardening of the arteries. This is a great metaphor for sin. Sin harden the heart and when love no longer flows then characters, souls, minds, harden or turn gangrene. This is said in biblical language of hard hearts or stiff necks, or stony hearts. A person is married to such a gangrenous and destructive spouse, whose heart is hard and cannot be restored to love as Christ loves, then in some circumstances the action that love must take in order to reduce the decay, the damage, and create opportunity for healing is to sever the gangrenous appendage which is known as divorce—cutting away that which is dead.

So, when is divorce the most healthy and loving action to take? When hearts are hard and love cannot be restored into the inmost being and to maintain the marriage destroys souls and unfits the partners for usefulness in God’s cause.

What do you think about the idea of the double standard on sexual ethics throughout much of human history—the idea that it has been permissible for men could cheat but women had to remain chaste?

What law lens do you view this through?

If through the law and standards of this world—it is unfair, unjust to hold women to a standard of sexual chastity while men are permitted to cheat.

And what has modern, western society done, recognizing this unfair double-standard? Has western society sought to apply the principle of God, calling for men to become chaste, to become responsible, for sexual purity, or has western society applied the methods and principles of Satan and advanced a so-called sexual revolution in which it is taught that women should have no different standard of sexual purity than men, that women should be just as free as men to have as many sexual partners as they want and chastity is an antiquated concept from the Dark Ages to control and subjugate women.

And has much of western society accepted this worldly line of thinking? And what has been the result? Is the world become more like Jesus? Are families getting stronger?

But what if we view this through God’s design law. What happens to any person, male or female, who is sexually promiscuous? Does such activity have an impact upon their hearts, minds, bodies, and characters? Yes, the sinner is changed, harmed, damaged, injured by every act of sin.



From a godly perspective, who is in a better position, the man who has many sexual partners and cheats on his wife, or the woman who remains chaste until marriage and rather than cheating, divorces the disloyal spouse? While the wife can be heartbroken, emotionally hurt, experience betrayal from her cheating husband etc. Her soul remains pure, her character undamaged, her conscience remains clear. But what happens if she decides to be equal to her cheating spouse and also engages in promiscuous behavior?

The modern western thinking is not a movement of moral purity, it is a movement of equality built on earthly values and earthly principles and results in the debasing of women, not the redemption of any corrupt and untrustworthy man.

The godly approach is to love God first and seek to live by the standards of God's kingdom and then seek to bring those principles to bear in all spheres and avenues of life, so godly feminists stand for the purity of God in governing their own bodies, not subjecting themselves to the abuse and mistreatment of others, including abuse and domination from ungodly and unchristlike husbands, but they don't accept the morally depraved standards of the world and seek equality by becoming as untrustworthy and immoral as a cheating husband.

TUESDAY

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you” (Hebrews 13:17 NIV84).

What does this mean?

Is the Bible establishing a system of authoritarian rule like human governments in which the members are to submit to the rulings of those above them? Did God handle Satan's rebellion by using authority over his angels and ordering them to obey and submit?

What do we do with Acts 5:29?

Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than men!” (Acts 5:29 NIV84).

Should the apostles have submitted to the Jewish leaders? Why not?

What about the Reformers, should they have obeyed and submitted to the Roman Catholic church leaders? Why or why not?

What about in our church today? What about if the General Conference votes something, does that mean the member is to surrender their thinking and individuality to the GC? Or should the member still think for themselves and study and follow the truth humbly where the truth leads.



Consider these quotations from Ellen White and ask yourself, was she not following the Bible to obey and submit to the leaders of the church, and if what she wrote was true then, what about now?

- “The church is in the Laodicean state. The presence of God is not in her midst.” (Ms 156, 1898 – Notebook Leaflets from Elms haven Library, Vol.1, Need of Self- Sacrificing Effort, p. 99)
- “I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the (SDA) church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it, and be purified.” {CET 176.2}
- 1898 “It has been some years since I have considered the General Conference as the voice of God.” - Manuscript Releases 17, p. 216, 1898; Last Day Events, p. 50.3 1901
- 1901 "It is working upon wrong principles that has brought the cause of God into its present embarrassment. The people have lost confidence in those who have the management of the work. Yet we hear that the voice of the Conference is the Voice of God. Every time I have heard this, I have thought that it was almost blasphemy....We have reached the time when the work cannot advance while wrong principles are cherished." (Manuscript 37, 1901)
- 1902 Ellen White writes to her sons Edson and Willie, "I have but very little confidence that the Lord is giving these men in positions of responsibility, spiritual eyesight and heavenly discernment. I am thrown into perplexity over their course; and I desire now to attend to my special work, to have no part in any of their councils, and to attend no camp meetings, nigh or afar off. My mind shall not be dragged into confusion by the tendency they manifest to work directly contrary to the light that God has given me. I am done. I will preserve my God-given intelligence. My voice has been heard in the different conferences, and at camp meetings. I must now make a change... I shall therefore leave, leave them to receive word from the Bible... This is the light given me and I shall not depart from it." (Letter W-186, 2 Dec. 1902 to Edson and Willie White, p. 4, 5)
- 1904 “Rebellion and apostasy are in the very air we breathe.” (2SM 58)
- The apostasy will “develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair,” and will increase in strength until the coming of Jesus. (Ellen White, Manuscript Releases, vol. 7, p. 185.1)

There is one key factor that is assumed by the author of Hebrews that is often missed by those who read it. I have overtly stated it in the Remedy:

“Humbly follow **the Christlike leadership of those in authority**. They work to protect you from danger and assist you in growth, and they take their responsibilities seriously. Listen to



them and cooperate with them eagerly, so their work will be filled with success and joy; and don't burden them, for burdening them will only undermine their ability to help you" (Hebrews 13:17 REM).

They key is Christlikeness of leadership, the Christlike don't rule over, but lead like Jesus, truth presented in love, leaving free for every person to be fully persuaded in their own mind.

The last paragraph states, "The combination of care and faithfulness from the leaders and obedience or trust from the members will result in joy."

Thoughts about this?

It is only safe to trust the trustworthy—to trust the untrustworthy is harmful and destructive.

And trustworthiness requires three elements:

- The person loves you more than self
- The person is mature—have self governance—a 5 y/o child may love their parent but they still cannot be trusted to take the parent's paycheck to the bank or with giving certain information. Many in the church love others, but are immature, and don't have good self-control, and thus cannot be trusted with positions of responsibility or with certain information.
- The person must have wisdom, which means they must understand reality, God's design laws, character, methods, the problem of what sin actually is and God's solution for it. A person may love you, may have good self-control, but be unwise because they accept the lie that God's law functions like human law, and sin is rule breaking and righteousness is rule keeping and therefore they advise a woman who is being beaten by her husband to submit to such treatment.

So we can only trust those who are trustworthy—**and then we only trust them with what is appropriate to trust them with.**

If we have a person who loves us more than self, is mature, is wise, do we trust them with our thinking, with our decision-making, with our choices? Or if we are to grow, develop, mature ourselves, must we think for ourselves, choose for ourselves, learn for ourselves, act for ourselves? Thus we still cannot trust another with the choices we make, we must be fully persuaded in our own minds as to the actions we take.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson references Hebrews 13:9 tells us to beware of all kinds of diverse and strange teachings. But how can you determine what is diverse and strange?

When Jesus came and said, "unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you can have no part with me" might the leaders have alleged that He was teaching what is diverse and strange?



When Martin Luther came along and rejected indulgences, rejected purgatory, rejected the supremacy of tradition over Scripture, might the leadership of his church claim that his views were diverse and strange teachings?

My point, isn't anything that challenges tradition, orthodoxy, long held views often considered strange and diverse?

So, how can we tell what is strange and diverse?

The integrative evidenced-based approach—our teachings must be grounded in reality, a harmonized view of the entire inspired record, with God's revelations in nature and real-life experience.

It is when we pick a little here and a little there from the various evidentiary threads that we end up in confusion and can't discern right from wrong.

We need rock solid foundations that never waiver and never change, and those are God's design laws. When we understand them then we can utilize them as testing tools to differentiate strange and diverse ideas from rational and reasonable ones.

Read second paragraph, "First, Paul does..." Is clean and unclean referring to sanitation or ceremony, to laws of health or rituals?

To the degree they deal with laws of health, actual sanitation they are still binding, to the degree they deal with ritual and ceremony they are not.

God wrapped up some of the laws of health and sanitation principles into the ceremonies to help protect the people from diseases. Those disease protecting elements still apply today because the laws of health still apply. But the rituals don't apply nor do any ceremonial distinctions, particularly regarding to acceptance with God and issues of sin.

So, washing hands, cleansing utensils that touch dead animals or have blood on them are still valid and in fact regulated by the health department, i.e. codified by the state rather than the church for the same basic reasons. But the methods of washing, using an autoclave on utensils instead of washing by hand or through a particular ritual is irrelevant.

The lesson points out that the problem was partaking of foods in a magical or superstitious way such that one believed the foods either blessed in some spiritual way, had magical properties, sin cleansing properties, or condemned, cursed, gave gods power over them. Either way, such foods and eating should be avoided.

What about communion—can people participate in communion in such a way that it becomes superstitious rather than sanctifying?



THURSDAY

Read first paragraph, “The place outside the camp...” What do you think of this idea that anything impure was cast outside the camp because God was “unwilling to see anything unclean”?

If this is so, what do you make of David’s prayer:

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
And see if there is any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting (Ps 139:23–24 NKJV).

Was David asking God to look upon a clean or unclean heart? Was David asking God to look where God is unwilling to look?

Let’s read the two texts cited for this idea and see what they are saying:

The LORD said to Moses, “Command the Israelites to send away from the camp anyone who has an infectious skin disease or a discharge of any kind, or who is ceremonially unclean because of a dead body. Send away male and female alike; send them outside the camp so they will not defile their camp, **where I dwell among them**” (Nu 5:1–3 NIV84).

Designate a place outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself. As part of your equipment have something to dig with, and when you relieve yourself, dig a hole and cover up your excrement. For the LORD your God moves about in your camp to protect you and to deliver your enemies to you. Your camp must be holy, so that **he will not see among you anything indecent and turn away from you** (Dt 23:12–14 NIV84).

So what do you hear? First and foremost it is about sanitation, about health, about limiting disease, not sin. But it is couched in a context of religious obedience because we are integrated beings and we cannot fulfill God’s purposes to the fullest if we are sick. It is through our physical bodies that we live and breathe and exist and have life. So, we present ourselves to God as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to the Lord this is an act of spiritual worship.

So, God gives instructions on keeping the environment healthy, limit spread of diseases so people can be physically healthy to grow in godliness and serve Him.

But what about the defiling of the camp where God dwells. This isn’t just about physical health, it also teaches spiritual realities. God doesn’t want to dwell in buildings, He wants to dwell in hearts and minds. Thus, if we defile the city with refuse, we get sick and can’t function. Likewise, if we defile our spirit temples with fear, selfishness, gluttony, greed, pornography, sexual promiscuity, etc. we corrupt the our hearts and minds, the place where God wants to dwell, and drive Him out of our hearts.



The idea of God not seeing, does this say that God cannot look upon, that God is unwilling to see, or is it saying that God respects your choices, and if you choose to do these things God will see it and God will respect it and God will leave you to it. So don't do these things so God won't see them and God will in fact see the opposite and see that you love and respect Him and He will draw closer to you.

But there is a lesson here. Jesus was rejected by the Jews and was crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem, outside the camp. What is the lesson?

You will not find God inside Judaism today—that system is a dead and corrupt system of legalism that rejects Jesus as Messiah. Jesus is outside their system, outside their theology, and the nation of Israel is not the fulfillment of God's end-time people to evangelize the world, because Jesus is not in their camp.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Materials in Australia:

Simon and Maani Harrison have a Facebook group in Australia and have the following Come and Reason resources available in Australia:

- The Remedy New Testament
- The Remedy Psalms
- *Could It Be This Simple?*
- The Heavenly Sanctuary and Investigative Judgment for the Modern World
- First set of tracts

To order, email Simon at australia@comeandreason.com

Materials in South Africa:

Jacques van den Heever has materials available in South Africa. To order, email him at comeandreason.sa@gmail.com

New Release: The Final Message of Mercy to the World—The Three Angels, magazine.

You can read a digital version online at our website. Here is a link to the flip version <https://comeandreason.com/files/flipbooks/3Angels/>