



2023 1Q Managing for the Master Till He Comes—Lesson 7 Unto the Least of These

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SABBATH

What do you think of the title “Unto the Least of These”? What does it mean?

Jesus gave a description of what it will be like when Jesus comes again:

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. [When Jesus comes He separates all the peoples of the world. This division of people is called here, the sheep and the goats, but is also called the wheat and the tares, the pure woman and the harlot, the fruitful vine and the withered vine, the righteous and the wicked, the saved and the lost.

Who determines into which group a person finds themselves? I was reading recently in a magazine from another organization that was presenting its views of the 3 angels of Revelation, and they take the position that God determines which group people are in during the judgment. Is that right? When Jesus separates into the two groups is He determining who ends up in the two groups?

If a shepherd separates sheep from goats, does the shepherd determine which animal IS a sheep and which IS a goat, or does the shepherd simply separate the animals based on what they actually are? So in this object lesson, Jesus is telling us that His judgment to separate into two camps does not determine who is a sheep and who is a goat, but merely confirms what is—some are sheep and some are goats and He separates them accordingly.

Then who does determine who is a sheep and who is a goat? We do, it is our choices that determines what type of people we become. And what are the decisions that we make that ultimately puts us into one camp or the other? To believe the truth Jesus revealed about Himself and His Father, to trust Jesus with our hearts and minds, to value Jesus’ methods, principles, design laws, practices, and choose to say yes to them and apply them ourselves. This means that the methods we choose to practice in HOW WE TREAT OTHERS determines what kind of character we develop, for how we choose to live and treat others is the fruit of who we trust and what principles we value.

So God divides people based upon whether they live in harmony with His character, methods, design laws—the principles He built life and health to operate upon or not. He separates what is healthy from what is harmful and destructive.

What is the underlying basis of God’s division—the law/principles that people choose to embrace and which become written in their hearts. The sheep, the people of God, have God’s law written in their heart, they love truth, they love God and others, they respect and protect



the liberty of others, whereas the unrighteous may believe the same list of doctrines, they may observe Sabbath, believe in baptism, claim Jesus as their Savior, tithe faithfully, believe in the Bible, in Creation, and so much more, yet accept the wrong law, the imposed law with its coercive method of pursuing righteousness such that the ends justify the means and they will use power over others to control, coerce, and punish—just like the religious leaders did to Jesus.

Does the world also divide society, people? Along what lines does the world divide? The root motive of worldly division is not love, it is about power and control. So the world always divides in a way that, if you look for it, you will find that a few elites are exploiting the masses through the divisions in society that they incite, inflame, and magnify. Examples:

- Religions used by the unrighteous to exploit the masses, keep groups divided, and empower a few elites—and these religions will always be some form of imposed rules with punishing gods, never do we see religions that live like Jesus seeking to exploit the masses
- Human legal systems that create legal castes or divisions in society that benefit the elites and put obstacles in the way of the masses in achieving true success and autonomy. This includes:
 - Historic state sponsored slavery, which has occurred in almost every society in human history
 - Jim Crow laws
 - Caste systems
 - Divine rights of kings, separating royals from commoners
 - Laws that divide aristocrats from commoners
 - Tax laws, property laws, zoning laws, etc.
 - Laws related to affirmative action and diversity and equity

Notice the difference between human laws and God’s law. Human laws divide by setting up all kinds of arbitrary divisions to “legally” cause and enforce various divisions in society that pit the masses against each other while a few ruling elites siphon off resources and are empowered by these divisions. Whereas, God’s laws are the design protocols upon which life is built. Human beings cannot change them, we only live in harmony with them or not. The laws of God treat every person the same regardless of tribe, language, nation, religion, or people group. Break God’s law and all people suffer the damaging consequences, return to harmony with God and His law and all people reap the benefits.

Satan and the elites do not like this, they want power, they want control, and therefore **they want a system that they can manipulate artificially by inserting rewards and punishments that require people to seek them, adore them, worship them**, conform to their demands in order to either reap a reward or avoid punishment. Satan tricks the masses into focusing on individual cases of abuse but miss the bigger picture of who is running the system and who is truly benefiting, and in earthly kingdoms it is rarely the people. The systems of this world are corrupt and exploit the masses for the benefit of the elites.



- So selfish elites exploit people by inflaming division along the lines of race, tribe, language—but wait, didn't God cause this division at the tower of Babel? Yes, why?
 - What happened in the world prior to the tower of Babel? The Flood—and why did the Flood occur? Because the entire world, every living human being other than Noah and his family, hardened their hearts against God in a worldwide confederacy of rebellion and sinfulness to such a point that no truth or love could reach them. And if God did not act, the human avenue through which the promised Messiah of Genesis 3:15 would be born was about to be snuffed out and the entire human species lost. So God acted to keep open the avenue for the Messiah. And shortly thereafter, what are the peoples of the world doing? They are uniting again in a worldwide rebellion against God seeking to build their own way into heaven. So God acts at Babel and introduces divisions into human society—language changes, scattering the people around the world, causing the various racial changes—not as punishment, but as a therapeutic intervention to slow the lies of Satan and prevent a worldwide rebellion against heaven in order to keep open the avenue for Jesus to come.

The divisions of society along race, language, and tribal lines have **NO** moral value—in other words, race, language, nationality, tribe of origin etc. has no bearing in determining who is righteous and who is wicked, who is a sheep and who is a goat. The value in introducing these divisions was to slow the spread of Satan's lies and false narratives.

And God reverses this division when Jesus comes: We read in Revelation that a great multitude from every nation, tribe, kindred, people and language are saved, gathered around the throne, all worshipping Jesus—meaning they have become one people group united in righteousness, in love for God and others, having God's law written upon their hearts, and they will all receive glorified heavenly bodies that will not carry the trace of sickness, disease, and various genetic and epigenetic differences that separate us into different racial groups—we will again be one human race descendants of Adam and Eve but reborn into the family of God with God as our Father and Jesus our Savior. And we will all speak the same language, and it won't be English, or Greek, or Hebrew, or German, or Spanish it will be the language of heaven.

- Wealth
- Politics and political party
- Fame
- Nationality
- Sports team fanatics
- Gender—God divided humankind into male and female with His intention that the two should become one. That the joining of the paired partners in the bonds of intimate and godlike love would result in an experience of mutual love and growth that cannot be experienced in isolation. And the marriage bond of love is a metaphor for the relationship the people of God are to have with God, an intimate union of heart, mind,



motive, method where individuality is retained but a cohesion of trust and love builds creating a greater unit of oneness than can be experienced as a singularity.

- But the world perverts the godly division of male and female in which our differences are intended to enhance, compliment, and support both parties. The world approaches the godly differences not from love, but from fear and selfishness, therefore differences are a threat, someone must have more power than the other in order to rule over the other, one must submit; or the more recent attacks on godly male and female divisions have been on gender itself, seeking to destroy human individuality, corrupt character, destroy minds, and make people into mindless bots controlled by various elites—they are doing this through a perverse and corrupt diversity, equity, and inclusion agenda along racial and gender lines.
- You can identify all of this evil if you watch the methods being employed. The methods evil uses include:
 - Lies—lies upon lies are told to advance all the various diversity, equity, and inclusion agendas—including the lies attached to these various words.
 - Arbitrary laws and made-up rules
 - Coercive pressures of various kinds, fines, loss of accreditations of institutes, loss of professional licenses, loss of job
 - Accusation—remember Satan is the accuser. Look at how frequently and quickly the DEI proponents are to accuse anyone who doesn't submit to their agenda of being a racist, sexist, misogynist, homophobe, anti-trans or any other label they can accuse a person or business or church of being in order to pressure them to conform to their agenda.

God divides and the world divides—but the divisions are not along the same lines. God divides based on character—those who are like Him and practice His methods because they have returned to love and trust in Him, and those who are like Satan and prefer his methods and practice his principles. But the world divides upon innocuous lines that have no moral importance, but always result in people, in either camp who fight along those lines, becoming more solidified into the satanic mold. Notice as Jesus continues where God divides:]

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’ [What is Jesus focusing upon that makes a person a sheep, one of the righteous? It is how we treat others—why? Because how we treat others reveals



what law, methods, principles we have chosen to accept and apply to ourselves. It reveals whose kingdom we prefer, the kingdom of God or Satan.

What is implied by their question “When did we see you...and do this?” Doesn’t the question indicate that they were not doing these good things to earn credit in heaven, or as a requirement from God, or as a rule, or a means of getting themselves off the naughty list and onto the good list, but this was at outworking from hearts that have been changed? We have choices in life, to trust or distrust God, and then in that trust to apply His methods in how we live, which means in how we treat others. And the methods we employ in how we treat others solidifies into our characters the law that we value.

Do we value the law of God or the laws of men. The Jews who crucified Christ valued the laws of men, even though they claimed they worshipped God, and they demanded Jesus be taken off the cross to keep the Sabbath law of God—the truth was that they valued and practiced coercive force over others, not love, truth, and liberty. They were not willing to leave people free to choose for themselves, but instead used their power and position to bring external pressures to bear to force their way upon others. This is the method of Satan.

And this is the method used during COVID and the forced business closures—please don’t buy into the lie that those closures were necessary to stop a virus or save lives, please be wise and discerning enough to realize that the virus was not stopped or slowed by these interventions—because the interventions were never intended to stop the virus. This was a division in society inflicted for the purpose of the elites exploiting the masses to empower the elites. Notice that the big businesses didn’t close, but the small businesses were forced to close—the businesses owned by a single mother struggling to support her family were closed, but the corporate businesses were not. I guess the virus new not to enter a national chain business. Realize that liquor stores were kept open while small businesses were forced to close—is alcohol a necessity for life? Does alcohol improve the immune system? No it makes one more vulnerable to infection. Or the arbitrary and completely ineffective mask mandates—including outdoor mask mandates—did this stop the spread? No, and multiple studies prior to this documented that such actions don’t stop community viral spread—again evidence that the action was not intended to stop the virus but for another reason—power, control, and condition people to accept arbitrary governmental, anti-constitutional, coercive authority. Or the forced injection with a substance that has no ability to prevent infection, reinfection or stop the spread—yet coercion was used. Understand, what happened with COVID was societal manipulation, behavioral and psychological conditioning of the masses, to justify ungodly methods in the pursuit of a claimed good cause so that people will be even more willing to coerce their neighbor and use ungodly methods on their own families the next time. And it is coming! And those who would use these ungodly methods on others... well Jesus describes them next.]

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ [I was a single parent working to support my family and you forced my business to close. I was a healthcare worker and you threatened my job if I didn’t violate my conscience in the care of my Spirit Temple.]



“They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

“He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” (Matthew 25:31-46 NIV84).

Understand, the methods we choose to practice in how we treat others determines the God we accept, the law we practice, and the kind of people we will become.

Satan is not deceiving the majority of the world into overt Satan worship. He didn’t trick the Pharisees in Jesus’ day with idol worship—he tricked them into embracing and practicing his evil methods in the pursuit of what they believed was right.

The lesson draws our attention to the Scriptures that focus on caring for the alien, fatherless, and widows.

What is the significance of this? Is it merely their status as aliens, fatherless and widows, or did those three groups signify something more?

In Bible times, how were strangers or aliens to be treated?

Do we have examples from how Abraham treated the angels that were appearing as men?

Is there some element of hospitality that is expected for a traveler in those days? Why?

Did they have:

- Rest stops?
- Convenience stores?
- Fast food restaurants?
- Travel lodges and hotels?

So for the stranger and alien what is God wanting people to do? To act in love, mercy, grace, kindness—to help others. And what does that do for the people of God? And what does that do for the kingdom of God?

What about the fatherless—what were the issues and what do they represent to us today?

- Certainly there were elements of financial security, having a home, food, and protection, and often times inheritance came through the father
- But in that society were fathers supposed to provide something more?
- The fathers were supposed to be the priests of the home, to lead the family into the knowledge of God, to instill into their children the love of God, teach the children the commandments of God, the purpose of their existence as individuals and as a people group, to lead them to honor



God in the methods they practiced in how they lived and dealt with others. Thus the father was a symbol of our heavenly Father, of Jesus, and the fatherless would be symbolic of those who don't know about God, are not a part of God's family.

- Caring for the fatherless was to both inspire them and us to act in love and help provide for the temporal needs of the orphans, but also inspire people to search out the spiritually fatherless and bring them to God and invite them into the family of God, to be adopted as sons and daughters of God.

What about the widows?

- Again, in that culture there was certainly the aspect of daily needs, home, clothing, food, work and providing for their sustenance.
- But was there something more represented in this instruction as well?
- There are the literal widows that need temporal assistance with sustenance and in providing that assistance people grow in love as they practice godly methods.
- But widows also serve as an object lesson. They represent people without a husband—a husband is the symbolic representative of Christ. We were created in Eden to be in a holy union with Christ, but because of sin we have been separated from that perfect union and are born into the world in the position of the widow, one who doesn't have a husband. Christ is the groom and we who make up the church are the bride of Christ. The widow has no husband no one to provide a home, a name, a position and those who do not enter into the love/trust relationship with Jesus don't have a heavenly home, a new name, or a position in God's kingdom. It is only through being reconciled to Christ that we find our home, name, and place. So the widow represents those who are not saved, those who haven't accepted Jesus, they are alone, starving, homeless i.e. without a heavenly home. And we are to introduce them to Jesus and invite them into the family of God.

We should not neglect the literal physical needs of the less fortunate—but we should recognize that providing only for the physical needs and not ministering to their spiritual needs is ultimately meaningless. Our true goal is to introduce people to Jesus, to bring God's love, methods, principles into their lives—which will certainly work to reduce suffering and deprivation in this world and advance human health and thriving, but all for a higher purpose and that is to know God, honor God, live for God, advance God's purpose on this earth, which is to love God and others. In doing so real human suffering is reduced, but more importantly hearts and minds are transformed to receive eternal life.

SUNDAY

The lesson focuses our attention on the time Jesus went to the Synagogue and read from Isaiah 61:1,2 and applied it to Himself.

Let's compare what is recorded in Luke that Jesus read with what is written in Isaiah—see if you notice any significant differences:



The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:18–19 NIV84).

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn... (Isaiah 61:1–2 NIV84).

Did you notice that Luke records that Jesus left out “and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn”?

Why do you think Jesus left this out when He read it and then said, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21 NIV84)?

What were the Jews looking for? They were looking for a Savior who is like Satan in character. They were looking for a powerful being who will use physical might to destroy their enemies, to punish the Roman, to have the same earthly system of imposed laws and forced compliance, only with the Jews in charge to run that satanic system—and, of course, they only wanted to have such a system of power and control in order to save lives.

So Jesus left off the only line from Isaiah's prophecy that could be misconstrued to teach the false satanic version of God that they preferred. Jesus wanted to draw the distinct contrast between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world.

Some might ask, but why did Isaiah even have that line in there about God's vengeance if God wasn't going to, at some point, use His power to take vengeance?

Or, some argue that Jesus left that line out because that wasn't part of His earthly mission. He was here to take our sins and pay or legal sin debt by sacrificing His life, the vengeance part of Isaiah's prophecy comes at the end of time. So Jesus left it out back then because it didn't apply to the mission He was fulfilling at that time.

What do you say about this?



What law lens do you read and understand it through?

If we have the human law lens, then what is vengeance? It is using power to harm someone, to make them pay, to inflict some recompense upon them.

But what if we have design law, then what is vengeance?

We only have to let the Bible interpret itself, Isaiah interpret his own use of then term and we have our answer:

Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: “Ah, I will get relief from my foes and avenge myself on my enemies. I will turn my hand against you; I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities” (Isaiah 1:24-25 NIV84).

Doctors take vengeance upon disease, cancer, infections, not upon patients. God takes vengeance upon sin, not sinners. He seeks to destroy lies with truth, selfishness with love, rebellion with loyalty, cruelty with kindness, and coercion with freedom.

Notice what Malachi says, and this is describing the time in human history right before the second coming, the time when the sanctuary is cleansed or when the bride of Christ is cleansed and prepared to meet Jesus face to face:

“See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. [Who is this messenger? In Jesus’ day this was John the Baptist, who went before Jesus and prepared the way for Jesus. The Apostles asked Jesus wasn’t Elijah to come before the Messiah and Jesus said that John was the fulfillment of that coming in the spirit and mission of Elijah. This is from Malachi chapter 4, where the prophet says that the Lord will send the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord. Before the second coming a message goes forth like the one Elijah gave to prepare the people for the return of the Lord. And what is that message? What did Elijah famously confront and call the people to do? He confronted Baal worship. And who was Baal?

Baal was the son of El (i.e., El-ohim or El-Shaddai). He was the god of weather and was often called “Almighty” and “Lord of the Earth.” Baal was the god who brought rain, thunder, lightning, who fertilized the earth, controlled the sun, and brought the harvest. Baal fought the great serpent leviathan, as well as battled against Mot, the god of death. And most amazing of all, it was taught that Baal died in his battle with Mot and was resurrected to bring life to earth.

So what was the problem with worshipping a god who was the “husband and protector of Israel,” the son of El, who controlled the weather, who brought rain, sunshine, and fertility, who blessed with a full harvest, who warred against the great serpent and death, who died and was resurrected to bring life to the earth? What was wrong with this god? What was Elijah opposing? What made Baal worship false?



Baal required payment, appeasement, sacrifice be offered to him in order to receive blessing or benefit.

Baal become Zeus to the Greeks, Jupiter to the Romans, Thor to the Norse people, and Jesus Christ to all people who believe that God's law is like human law, imposed rules requiring imposed penalties, and requires the blood of a human sacrifice be offered to Him in order to pay Him not to kill us.

So today God has a people who have a message to the world that is to prepare the way for Christ to return. It is a message that God is the Creator and His laws are design laws, the protocols life is built upon. That sin is transgression of God's law, and sin causes pain, suffering, and death, and that God so loved the world that He sent His Son to take up our terminal condition and destroy the cause of death and restore the cause of life in humanity and thereby reconnect humanity to God. Thus the Bible says that Jesus "destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light" 2 Timothy 1:10, and that "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV84).

This is the message we are giving, to prepare the world for Christ's return! As this message is advancing, Malachi continues:]

Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. [What temple? Is this a building made of stones and wood? Is it a building in heaven made out of inanimate materials? Or is this speaking of the spirit temple, the corporate body of believers that are founded on the cornerstone of Jesus Christ and built upon the apostles? What does the text say next...]

But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; **he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver.** [So what is being purified when Jesus comes to His temple? The believers, who are represented as the Levites, the priesthood of believers. So, what temple does He come to? And this is God working to remove all our dross, the impurities in our lives that we have asked Him to remove, that we long for Him to remove, even the ones we haven't yet identified.] Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years. [What are the offerings we bring? Present yourselves as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to God this is your spiritual or acceptable or true worship (Romans 12:1). Or as David prayed, "You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise" (Psalm 51:16-17 NIV84). This is what God wants, to heal all the damage with in us. Malachi continues]

"So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty" (Malachi 3:1-5 NIV84). [What judgment? What law model? This is diagnosis, this is accurately diagnosing what is actually the condition of the heart and mind. Notice who he would testify against, those who oppress widows and the fatherless...He is separating sheep



from goats. And what determines who is a sheep and a goat? The actual condition of their characters. This is not a judicial process. This is God working to cleanse the hearts and minds, to take vengeance on sin, rebellion, lies, selfishness by removing it and restoring us to oneness and friendship with him. But, He leaves every single person free and in the end God respects the free choice of every person and separates them based on what they have chosen.]

So Jesus read to them that the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled to them and how did they receive Jesus' message? They hated Him and didn't want His kingdom.

How do you think we as Christians today would receive His message? Have we seen over the last several years the sheep and goats manifesting their characters in how they treat others? Have you seen many people, under the guise of righteousness, claiming only that they want to love others, advancing the methods and practices of Satan?

The lesson goes on to point out that Jesus overthrew their ideas about who was right with God and who wasn't. He rejected their false idea that poverty meant a person was cursed of God and that wealth meant a person was right with God. The lesson states in the last paragraph, "Jesus' love for the poor was one of the greatest evidences of His Messiahship..." thoughts about this?

We all agree that Jesus loves every human being regardless of race, tribe, language, social status, wealth or poverty, sickness or health—so we agree that Jesus loves the poor.

Questions:

- Did Jesus multiple a few loaves and fishes to feed multitudes on more than one occasion?
- Did Jesus have gold coins appear in a fish's mouth?
- Did Jesus have the nets of the disciples overflow to bursting with fish?
- Did Jesus have the **ability** to provide gold coins, or baskets of fish, or storehouses of grain to the entire nation? Then why didn't He?
- Couldn't Jesus have provided resources to every single human being in Palestine while He was here to lift them all out of poverty? Then why didn't He?

Was His primary mission to relieve poverty?

What would have happened if Jesus would have done this?

Can we, by giving wealth to people, make them righteous?

Can you save people from themselves, from sin, by giving wealth?

Does that mean we don't ever give to help the less fortunate? Of course not, but it does mean that we must recognize what Jesus said that we will have the poor with us until Jesus comes, that programs designed to eradicate poverty are misguided and will almost always cause more harm.



Our godly goals are to create opportunities for people to embrace and participate with Jesus and the things of God, to experience improvement in their lives—which means people have to make the choice to say yes to God and to embrace His methods into their lives.

Often times, it is the experience of the pain of our foolish or rebellious choices that breaks people out of their denial, their self-delusion, and they become open for the seeds of truth to be implanted into their hearts. In various 12-step programs this is called hitting rock bottom. We see this in the parable of the prodigal son, who squandered all his wealth, ended up homeless living with pigs and eating pig food. The father remained wealthy and could have hired a social worker to go to his son and buy him food from Pizza Hut, and put him up each night in a government paid hotel, and buy him a bus pass, and give him a cell phone—but if the father would have done that, do you think the boy would have, as the Bible says, “come to his senses” or would perhaps the boy thought “I am doing okay” and remained in his self-destructive lifestyle and never returned to his father?

Was the father being unkind, unloving, selfish, or cruel by refusing to reach out and help his son in his homelessness?

Has Satan tricked many empathetic and good hearted people into giving to people what they could legitimately provide for themselves and thereby becoming enablers that enable and collude with the self-destruction of these souls?

Most of the pro-social programs in our society do not help people from a godly perspective, they function to destroy godly character and ultimately keep people trapped in discouragement, dependency, and helplessness.

Consider the Bible method of helping the less fortunate in **MONDAY**'s lesson first paragraph:

In their writings, the Bible's authors included many of God's provisions for the poor, the strangers, the widows, and the fatherless. We have records of this all the way back to Mount Sinai. “Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove” (Exod. 23:10, 11, NKJV). (2023 1Q SDA Adult Bible Study Guide page 58).

Can you recall any people in Scripture who were benefited by this system to help the poor and the widows? Ruth and Naomi and while these poor women were allowed to get grain without paying for it, for free, how did they get it? They had to go out and glean it themselves, and then who had to thresh it, and then grind it to flour, and then cook it?

What are the lessons from this method and the benefits of it?

- What was provided? That which they could not provide for themselves. They did not have fields to sow, nor seed to sow, nor did they have money to buy, so God made provision that the food would be available as they had no means to grow it or buy it for themselves. But did they



have the means to glean, thresh, grind, and prepare it themselves? Yes! And this they were required and expected to do.

- And what did requiring them to do as much as they were capable of doing for themselves result in?
 - They would be physically active. This results in all kinds of physical health benefits to mind and body.
 - Their useful labor would give them a sense of accomplishment, purpose, worth, which would diminish the discouragement and hopelessness that can come from uselessness. It would help them build a sense of autonomy, a sense of achievement, to inspire them to do continue to develop themselves.
 - It would prevent them from burdening others with that which they could still do for themselves.
 - The work with minimal returns, enough to feed themselves, might motivate them to seek better employment that would not only allow them to buy as much food as they gleaned, but to improve their station.
- What happens when we provide for people that which they could legitimately accomplish for themselves, but through choice, through negligence, or laziness refuse to do?
- What happens if we give passing grades to children who do not actually learn the material or achieve passing grades—regardless of the reason? If a child comes from objective disadvantage such that they have no books to read, no teachers to teach, no environment to learn and they somehow end up in our classroom, would it be a benefit to such a child to give them a passing grade even though they cannot read? Why or why not?

In the second paragraph, the lesson tells us to defend the poor in addition to the fatherless—this identifies another group besides the fatherless and the widow—the poor. And the poor are the literal economic poor, but they are also representative as an object lesson to the poor in spirit, the discouraged, the down in heart, the exploited, those who don't know the joys of salvation in Jesus.

The lesson contrasts the godly ministry to the less fortunate, which seeks to relieve immediate needs while provide opportunities for individuals to become autonomous, mature, develop, and grow into the full stature of sons and daughters of God—not simply relieve immediate needs, with another worldly corruption. Read the last paragraph,

In contrast, even in more modern times, particularly in England, under the impact of what has been known as “Social Darwinism,” many thought that not only was there no moral imperative to help the poor but that it was, in fact, wrong to do so. Instead, following the forces of nature, in which the strong survive at the expense of the weak, “Social Darwinists” believed that it would be detrimental to society to help the poor, the sickly, the indigent because, if they multiplied, they would only weaken the social fabric of the nation as a whole. However cruel, this thinking was the logical outgrowth of belief in evolution and the false narrative it proclaims. (2023 1Q SDA Adult Bible Study Guide page 58).

What is the difference between “Social Darwinism” described above and what Paul describes “If a man will not work, he shall not eat” (2 Thessalonians 3:10 Niv84)?



The Darwinists believe that there is no God, that we are in the process of evolving to higher life forms through the stronger surviving to pass along their genes, therefore it is helpful to future generations for the weaker people with weaker genes to be removed from the gene pool and over time the species advances. In passive application it would mean not helping those struggling but allowing them to die. In active application, it would mean actively killing those who can't defend themselves—kill or be killed.

The Bible view is that we are made in the image of God and life and health only happen in harmony with God and His design laws for life. One of those laws is the law of exertion, if you want something to grow in strength you must exercise it, because if you don't use it you lose it.

Therefore, godly people provide opportunity for others to apply their God-given abilities in useful and productive ways which helps that person mature and develop, but we do not assist people in destructive activities for doing so helps the pathology grow stronger.

Providing subsistence for a person who could provide for themselves and are only hungry because they refuse to work, enables corrupt traits of character in that person. Providing them an opportunity to make a living, or earn a meal, is a godly way to provide for those who are capable.

THURSDAY

Has us consider Job—what are the lessons you value from the book of Job?

Read last paragraph,

Ellen G. White suggested, “Do not wait for them [the poor] to call your attention to their needs. Act as did Job. The thing that he knew not he searched out. Go on an inspecting tour and learn what is needed and how it can be best supplied.” — Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 151. This is a level of money management and stewardship of God's resources that is beyond the practice of many of God's children today. (2023 1Q SDA Adult Bible Study Guide page 60).

Does this Christian counsel harmonize with or contradict what we have been saying in class today?

The key to this statement and is differentiating what is “needed” from what is “wanted” or what the world sets up as a standard of need. And then to answer “how best it can be supplied,” “best” meaning what? Most economical? Easiest for the helper? Or best for helping the person in need recover the image of God within them and fulfill the purpose God has for them?

Might the best in one situation being giving money as a scholarship for a student who cannot pay for themselves? But does the scholarship donor attend the classes, read the books, do the studying, write and turn in the assignments, or does the scholarship recipient still have a lot of work to do in order to develop themselves?



Might the best thing in another situation be to provide an admittance to a university but not provide funding and allow the student to work their own way through?

Isn't it easier to just give money blindly than to investigate and determine what is actually needed and then decide what is the best way to provide it?

Wouldn't it be even easier if, because we care so much for others, if we could convince our government representatives to pass laws to tax our fellow citizens who are not as caring and godly as we are and take their money and create various social programs to help people, giving away vast sums of money to people who are poor but without inspection of the actual need and no pursuit of the best way to provide the need?