



## 2023 4Q God's Mission My Mission Lesson 7 Mission to My Neighbor

by Tim Jennings

### SABBATH

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Read memory verse:

- He answered: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Luke 10:27 NIV84).

What does this text mean to you?

We are to love our neighbor, but as we love ourselves, what does that mean?

- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you?
- Does it mean we have a responsibility to love ourselves—a duty?
- Does it mean that if we don't love ourselves that we are breaking the law of God?
- Is loving self the same as being selfish? What is the difference?
- What is love?
- Love is the principle of giving—but not giving anything, only giving that which is in harmony with God's designs for life, giving what is right, good, noble, true, pure, holy—giving what heals, restores, recreates, builds up, refreshes, nurtures. In other words, giving what is necessary to fulfill God's purposes.
- So what does it mean to love oneself?
  - It means to love oneself enough that we do not poison our bodies with substances that damage the brain, impair thinking, destroy one's health, and enslaves one.
  - It means loving oneself enough to give self healthy foods, reasonable exercise, adequate sleep, hydration, mental and spiritual rest—keeping oneself in the best health and condition to be able to fulfill God's purpose in one's life
  - It means ingesting the word of God into one's mind and meditating on Him, His character, His blessings and seeking to worship (model) oneself to be like Him
  - It means to be true to yourself—i.e., don't betray yourself by choosing to do that which you **already know** is wrong for you to do, is harmful. It means you don't give in to peer pressure, or emotional manipulation from others who try to get you to do something in governance of self that you know is wrong for you to do. It might be a moral issue like taking drugs; it might be a non moral issue like someone asking you to adopt their dog so they can go off to college. But if you love yourself, you are true to yourself, you choose to do that which your judgment determines is best for you in harmony with God's will for your life, not what others think.

- What does it mean to love others like this? It means that we seek to use our abilities and resources to bless others, to present truth in love that others need, that will bless them if they choose to accept it; it means we model godly living and the application of God’s design laws to our own lives as a witness; it means we don’t participate in clearly unhealthy and destructive practices and we give warning to those who do. And it means we always leave people free to reject the truth and suffering the consequences, and then bring grace and healing options to them when they seek help from those consequences.
- What does it mean to love God with all one’s heart, soul, strength, and mind?
  - Doesn’t it mean we are dedicated to God completely, our entire selves and thus seek with all our abilities to glorify God and advance His kingdom?
  - Does that mean we don’t take a vacation because it would be selfish to do so? No—it means we **do** take a vacation because we want to love ourselves in a godly way—we want to have rest, time to rejuvenate, to keep ourselves healthy. But vacation means a break, time away, from our work, meaning we can’t take a vacation if we aren’t engaged in productive activity in the first place. So we are also actively engaged in productive living, whether for a paycheck, or volunteering, or running a household and homeschooling your children.

One of Satan’s traps, if he cannot get good people to choose evil, is to overwhelm them with so many worthy and good projects, responsibilities, duties that they forget to love themselves, they stop resting, overwork themselves on the good to the point that they burn out and are no longer useful in God’s cause.

Thus, we are to live lives of love for God and others, but that requires we love ourselves in a God-designed way. Which brings us to the first rule of caregiving.

If you are caregiver, whether a parent caring for a child, a nurse or doctor caring for a patient, a child caring for an elderly parent—the first rule is the health of the caregiver, because if you don’t maintain your health then you cannot provide care to others and will need others to care for you. Thus it is important to step back and establish the baseline requirements in your life to maintain your health—such as 7-8 hours of sleep per night, regular healthy meals, time for exercise, time for personal meditation and prayer, time for Sabbath rest, relaxation, recreation. And we only compromise these routines for true emergencies, and only for brief periods of time.

Even Jesus our Savior and model, regularly took time away from needy people to sleep, eat, spend time with His Father, and with His friends.

Read first paragraph,

- We all know the text: “ ‘ “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind” ’ ” (Luke 10:27, NIV). Yet, our love for God can become superficial if we say that we love God but do not obey Him. We think that we love God, but how is this love demonstrated in our day-to-day life? Loving God requires full commitment of our heart, soul, body, and mind—daily. Anyone can say that he or she loves

God; doing it, however, requires conscious effort. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 56).

How do you hear this sentence? “Yet, our love for God can become superficial if we say that we love God but do not obey Him”?

Have you ever heard this before? Jesus of course said that if we love Him we will obey His commandments—so this is quite a righteous idea; it is absolutely true. Yet, is it possible this truth, straight from Jesus, can be twisted to teach a lie, to discourage and tear down rather than encourage and build up? Can people who love God and seek to obey Him because they love Him actually have that love destroyed and end up leaving God because they sought to obey Him?

If this can happen how and what is the underlying problem, distortion, or lie that causes the one seeking to obey God because they love Him to leave Him?

How about this scenario—and you tell me if I am merely making up something that is complete fantasy, make-believe, has never happened, or is so remote it basically doesn't really occur, or is this something you have seen and heard of?

A young person goes to a Christian high school or college for the first time, and while there they meet Christian friends who share Jesus with them, and the Holy Spirit moves on their heart, and they experience the joy of salvation. They give their heart to Jesus and are thrilled with His love in their heart and they are on fire with love for Jesus and want to tell everyone they know about Him.

They eagerly want to get baptized, so they go to the local church pastor, with joy and happiness in their heart, telling of their love for Jesus and ask for baptism. But the pastor, instead of celebrating their conversion and scheduling a baptism, asks them if they have accepted the 28 fundamental beliefs and begun obeying God's law?

The young person looks confused and admits they haven't heard of the 28 fundamental beliefs. So the pastor goes on to tell them that if they love God they will obey His commandments and do all that God has instructed us to do. He then shows the Scripture where Jesus says “if you love me you will keep my commandments”, and then tells the young student that there are 28 fundamental beliefs that Jesus commands us to accept and follow. Well the new convert certainly doesn't want to disobey Jesus, so they eagerly agree to baptismal classes to learn how to obey.

In the classes they learn that before they can be baptized, they:

- Must, as at absolutely minimum, stop eating pork, shellfish, or other “unclean” meats, but it would be much better if they became a vegetarian and also gave up cheese.
- Must stop wearing jewelry, wedding rings are acceptable, but it would be better to not wear those either.
- Must stop having the occasional glass of wine with dinner or beer during a ball game.
- Must absolutely stop their smoking habit, for God would not allow such a filthy habit to go through the cleansing waters of baptism.

- Must, as a minimum, stop paid employment from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset—(unless of course they work in the healthcare industry for a corporation that makes billions of dollars, but if it is their own private practice they must close it down each week). They are also given a long list of traditional rules that must be followed during the Sabbath hours, like not eating out in restaurants on Sabbath, unless one has pre-purchased voucher to pay for the meal ahead of time, and many more similar rules that must be obeyed in order to love Jesus.
- They are told they must start paying a faithful tithe of 10% pretax dollars to the local church, and offerings on top of that.
- They are taught that sin is breaking God’s law and if we love God we don’t break his rules, that we obey. And whenever we do break God’s law, He records it in His heavenly record and if we don’t get Jesus’ blood applied to our account by repentance and confession and claiming His blood as our payment, then that sin remains and will come up against us in the judgment and God will be required to punish us for our sin, which means torture and execution. So, it is important to always, every single day obey, to not do anything wrong, and not get into any legal trouble with God, but if you do slip up it is imperative to confess it right away, for if you sin and suddenly get hit by a car before you have time to claim the blood of Jesus, then that sin will remain and God will find you guilty and you will not be saved.

And after weeks of working hard to obey, of going to indoctrination classes to be told what to think, of being scared out of their love and into fearful obedience, they are finally baptized, but the joy, the love, the passion for Jesus—the light has gone out. Instead, they live in fear of making a mistake, of not doing things right, of forgetting something that could be disobedience and getting them in legal trouble. They either live a miserable joyless legalistic Christianity, or they leave the church.

Is this scenario a complete fantasy or has it happened to far too many people? And what is the root cause to this false Christianity? The lie that God’s law functions like human law.

So, what does it actually mean to obey? It means we have in our heart the desire to listen, understand, and follow God’s instructions, directions, leadings, and design laws to the best of our ability.

It is like the little child who eagerly wants to please mommy or daddy.

Consider, a parent out weeding in their garden and behind them walks up their three-year-old and the three-year-old sees what they are doing and pulls up a tomato plant with a big smile and says, “help daddy?” Is this a rebellious and disobedient child? But how is their performance? They pulled up a tomato plant not a weed?

Alternatively, you send your fourteen-year-old son out to weed the garden and they pull up only weeds, yet while they do it they curse daddy because they can’t be inside playing on their game station.

Which child is the obedient child? Biblical obedience is having the heart right with God, a willingness to listen and do—to the best of our ability and understanding what God would have us do. It is not about how well we do something, or even if we are doing it right at all—the action of the child who

pulled up the tomato plant was completely wrong—but the heart attitude was completely right. And as soon as that child can comprehend the difference, that child will stop pulling tomato plants and joyfully pull only weeds.

The imposed law view, Satan’s view, focuses on the behavior, the outward appearance, but God focuses on the heart!

## **SUNDAY**

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Read first paragraph,

- Who are we? Why are we here? What happens when we die? What is our ultimate fate? These are, in many ways, the most important questions mortal beings, beings who know that they are mortal (oysters and chickens are, too, but don’t know it), can ask. And in the Gospel of Luke, someone comes to Jesus with what is, in fact, the most crucial question of all. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God’s Mission My Mission p. 57).

How do you answer these questions?

- Who are we?
  - Human beings—intelligent creatures, created by God in the image of God to be the living repository of God’s living law of love, His character, His methods, the primary operating code upon which God Himself functions—and we have been given godlike abilities—the ability to procreate beings in our image, dominion to govern a planet, intelligence, self-determination, capacity to think and to act. We are created to be God’s offspring, God’s children, God’s special creation.
- Why are we here?
  - Because God is love and God wanted a creation like ours to possess as many of His abilities as a creature could possess, to be able to pro-create, to make little beings in our image and to raise them and share in the joy of God when He creates beings and raises them—the joy of seeing them grow and learn. He wanted a creation that could share in some of His experiences, what it is like to govern in love, to dumb down your explanations in the treatment of children, or given none at all when lovingly caring for dogs, cats, goats, sheep. If Adam and Eve would have remained loyal. They would have had children in a world without sin, they would have governed over the entire planet, and they would have interacted with their children differently than the other creatures. God and humans would have grown in fellowship, intimacy as they shared their parenting and governing experiences together.
  - But we are here in this circumstance because of evil, because of Satan, because he was jealous of Jesus and because he began lying about God in heaven and lied about God to Adam and Eve. Those lies were believed and the circle of love and trust was broken. Adam and Eve infected themselves with fear and selfishness, known as sin, and their condition was no longer in harmony with God and God’s law of life. Thus they became

terminal, dead in trespass and sin. And because they still had the ability to procreate beings in their image, they had children born infected with fear and selfishness, born with a terminal sin condition. This is our state now. But God loved us too much to let us die of this condition, so He sent Jesus to take up our terminal condition and cure it, to eradicate from the humanity He partook the infecting death causing element and restore humanity to perfect sinlessness thus becoming the second Adam, the new head of humanity. And through trust we can participate in that victory and experience the indwelling Holy Spirit who takes what Christ achieved and reproduces it in us. We are reborn with new hearts and right spirits that again operate upon God's law of love and truth.

- What happens when we die?
  - The hardware degrades, the body turns to dust
  - The energy (breath of life) returns to God who gave it
  - The soul/psyche/individuality/software is stored safely with Jesus in heaven on the heavenly servers the Bible calls the Lamb's book of life, asleep, waiting for download into new hardware at the second coming.
- What is our ultimate fate?
  - It depends on whether we have accepted the remedy to our terminal condition—
    - For those who have taken the Remedy of Jesus their ultimate fate is eternal life
    - For those who have not their ultimate fate is eternal non-existence

These are my answers to the questions above—does the world offer different answers?

And what is the result of the world's answers?

What happens to a person if they believe that they are only a biological accident, the latest evolutionary change brought about by random forces, that they have no Creator, no purpose, no future, and that the principle of life is kill competitors in order to pass your genes along to another generation?

This godless philosophy is demonic, it is a hopeless discouraging worldview, that increases fear, despondency, discouragement, and people, seeking to avoid this demoralizing experience turn to all forms of distractions and entertainments—alcohol, drugs, gaming, movies, adventure seeking—all purposeless simply to divert their minds away to momentary pleasures, or they seek ever more power and control to make themselves feel safe.

## **MONDAY**

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Read third paragraph,

- Sometimes we want answers but do not put in the work ourselves to find them. Jesus said: “ ‘What is written in the Law? How do you read it?’ ” (Luke 10:26, ESV). Jesus pointed to a

very important aspect of learning. Instead of only listening to what others have to tell us, we need to read the Scriptures (the Word of God) for ourselves. The answers already are there, and the Holy Spirit works on our hearts to impress upon us what we need to do. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 58).

The lesson points out a very important truth, that all strength, all learning, is the result of personal effort, exertion, application. But often people who want answers, rather than studying for themselves they ask someone else to tell them the answer.

There is certainly a place for teachers, parents, professors to instruct students, to teach the facts, the principles, the methods, the protocols, reality—for without someone to tell us the basics we wouldn't know anything. A child wouldn't know the sky is blue and the grass is green if they are not told. But, teaching facts, design laws, reality, is not the same things as telling people how to problem solve, the answers to difficult questions, the explanations of life. Each person must study and know for themselves.

There is a difference between knowing the right answer and knowing why it is the right answer. For instance, if your child says—"2 plus 2 is 4" and you say, "How do you know that?" and they say, "because the teacher said so." They have the right answer, but they don't know how to math, they can't problem solve, they need someone else to tell them the answers. And if it isn't math, if it is a life problem, same concern—can they problem solve without someone telling them the answer. And if it is a spiritual issue, do they know the truth for themselves, or only the answers someone else has told them?

In relationships—can one person tell you ABOUT another person? Can one person KNOW another person FOR YOU?

Can other people tell you the facts, principles, science of buoyancy, and the mechanics of swimming?  
Can other people swim for you?

Can other people describe the nutritional facts of oranges? Can other people enjoy the taste of the orange and absorb the nutrients for you?

Understand design law—it is reality. Our God is the God of reality. And no other person can know God for you, can experience salvation for you, can mature and gain wisdom for you, can understand how reality works for you.

We can tell you how to swim, but you must get in the water, we can share the joy of what God's love and grace has done in our lives, but you must experience it for yourself.

The problem with the evil systems of the world—Satan's systems is that he doesn't want people to develop like this. He wants people to be mindless, thoughtless drones, serfs, slaves that allow another to do their thinking for them, who have accepted what another says, and obey because someone else has decided.

Consider these two historic quotes, what do you think?

Under the guidance and control of the Holy Spirit, the powers of the missionary of the Lord are to be put to their very highest use. It is thus that man may become a laborer together with God. **All whom God has endowed with reasoning powers may become intellectual Christians.** God has given abundant **evidence of the truth of his word**, and he requires that those who would be counted as the followers of Christ should **study the Scriptures**, that they may be able to give to every man a **reason** of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear. **He has not required any one to believe without evidence.** Let the inquirer after truth **put to the stretch his mental powers** in diligent study of the word of God. **To neglect this duty is to place the soul in peril of eternal death.** Each one is **required to understand the conditions upon which eternal life depends.** We must know what saith the Lord, that we may be able to live “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.” **We cannot afford to have another settle questions** of such momentous import as those concerning our soul's salvation. **We must open the Scriptures for ourselves**, searching the word of God prayerfully, that we may know the truth as it is in Jesus. **We cannot afford to trust to the ministers, to follow idle traditions, to subject our souls to human authority**, but we must know for ourselves what God has said. We are to be laborers together with God, and we must know, we must be determined to know, what are the conditions upon which we may become heirs of salvation. **If we neglect this important duty, we shall die in our sins.** (Medical Missionary May 1, 1892, par. 5).

What is being described? Is what is being described true? Why?

- Is there a difference in an external authority granting a legal declaration over someone and someone experiencing a change in their internal operational functions?
- Is there a difference in a doctor declaring someone cancer free and the person actually being cancer free?
- Is there a difference in a judge declaring someone free of guilt and the person actually being free of guilt?
- Is there a difference in a teacher declaring that a student knows how to do calculus and the student actually being able to do calculus?

God is the God of reality—of truth, of what is real. Satan is the father of fantasy, of pretend, of make believe, of declaring what is not true to be true. Thus, if we want salvation we must in reality experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who transforms us. We must know God and Jesus Christ for ourselves. Consider this quote:

**If we get the wisdom of man before us as the wisdom of God**, we are led astray by the foolishness of man's wisdom. [What is the wisdom of man? That God's law is imposed, that justice is holding people accountable for their crimes by the infliction of punishment. That we can have an orderly society by exercising more might, power, and force. That God is the source of inflicted death for sin. That authority comes from the one with the most power and therefore we are to surrender our thinking to those who make the rules and do what they say lest we be



punished. Thus, we let the pastor, pope, priest, rabbi, cleric, doctor, governor, president, head of the CDC tell us what to think.] Here is the great danger with many. **They have not an experience for themselves.** [They believe what they are told, they have not examined and tested things for themselves and come to their own conclusion based on objective reality.] They have not been in the habit of prayerfully **considering for themselves, with unprejudiced, unbiased judgment**, questions and subjects that are new, which are liable to arise. [They don't examine the questions, the issues, based on the merits, based on the facts, evidence, truths, and principles of God—the design law of how life operates. No! They answer questions through biases, assumptions, prejudices of what they have been previously taught, through traditions of the church or society, through the human imposed law lie.] **They wait to see what others will think.** If they dissent, that is all that is needed. The evidence in their own minds then is positive that it is all of no account whatever. [They surrender their thinking to others. They replace objective truth with the opinion of the scholar or theologian or some other subject matter expert, rather than examining the evidence for themselves and prayerfully coming to their own conclusion.] This class is not small; but although their numbers are large, it does not change the fact that they are **weak minded through long yielding to the enemy, inexperienced, and will always be as sickly as babes, walking by others' light, living on others' experience, feeling as others feel, acting as others act.** They act as though they had not an individuality. Their identity is submerged in others. They are merely **shadows of others** whom they think [are] right. [Having spent their lives surrendering their thinking to others, allowing others to tell them the answers, they don't know how to problem solve, they don't know how to differentiate objective facts for claims, opinions, and proclamations, they don't know the design laws of God. They only know what others have told them. They know doctrines, they know rules, they know what others will think, what the media tells them, but they don't have a clue for themselves of what is right and wrong.] **These will all fail of everlasting life unless they become sensible** of their wavering character, and correct it. They will be **unable to cope** with the perils of the last days. They will **possess no stamina** to resist the Devil; **for they do not know that it is he. Some one must be at their side to inform them whether it is a foe approaching, or a friend.** [They don't have the ability to discern, they have never developed by practice the ability to tell right from wrong (Hebrews 5:14. They have not exercised their God given ability to reason, think, weigh evidences—and if you don't use it you lose it.) They are not spiritual, therefore spiritual things are not discerned. They are **not wise** in those things which relate to the kingdom of God. [Which is reality, objective truth, design laws. They have accepted fantasy, imposed law, rules, made up consequences, the belief in a future in which the Creator is the source of death inflicted out of unpropitiated wrath.] None, young or old, are excusable in **trusting to another to have an experience for them.** Said the angel, “Cursed be man who trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm.” A **noble self-reliance** is needed in the Christian experience and warfare. (Review and Herald August 10, 1886).

So how do we have an experience for ourselves?

Consider this historical quote, do you agree or disagree?

Experience is said to be the best teacher. Genuine experience is indeed superior to mere theoretical knowledge, but many have an erroneous idea as to what constitutes experience. **Real experience is gained by a variety of careful experiments, made with the mind free from prejudice, uncontrolled by previously established opinions and habits.** The results are marked with careful solicitude, and an anxious **desire to learn, to improve, and to reform** on every point that is not in harmony with **physical and moral laws.** (Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene p. 109).

This is the integrative evidence-based approach, studying God’s word and comparing it with God’s laws built into nature and how life actually works, our experiences.

Fantasy is when we believe things that contradict objective reality—like there is no male and female, gender is a social construct etc. That is fantasy, falsehood, demonic.

And the goal of all of this is to decouple minds from reality, to get minds to live in a fantasy world a “reimagined” world, where lies are accepted as truth. This has been done throughout history through religions of all kinds, and is done in Christianity when we accept the fantasy that God functions like a human dictator making up rules and using power to inflict punishment for rule breaking—the penal legal punishment theory of atonement. And it is being done today by the godless left with their fantasies about essentially everything.

## **TUESDAY**

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Read first two paragraphs,

- The lawyer had asked the question, and he himself gave the answer: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart . . .’ ” and “ ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’ ” (Luke 10:27, NIV).  
What was the response of Jesus? He said, “ ‘You have answered rightly’ ” (Luke 10:28, NKJV). Jesus went on to challenge him to do something about it, by saying, “ ‘Do this and you will live’ ” (Luke 10:28, NKJV). (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God’s Mission My Mission p. 59).

Is Jesus’ instruction to “do this and you will live” a rule one must keep in order to avoid getting into legal trouble and executed by the rule-giving judge?

Why did Jesus say that if you love God and others you will have eternal life?

What is the basis of life? Life comes from God, and God is love—and God has built living organisms to operate upon certain design protocols. What are those protocols called? His laws, and what happens if we break the design protocols for life? Injury, suffering, and if not healed, death. Thus the plan of salvation is the plan of life, it is a rescue plan, a recovery plan, a redemption plan, a healing plan that restores those out of harmony with how life is built to operate to be back in harmony to how God constructed life to operate. It is restoring God’s living law into the heart and mind of the sinner:

- This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. (Hebrews 8:10 NIV84).

This is why the Bible says:

- The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. (Psalm 19:7 NIV84).

Jesus is simply saying if you live in harmony with the laws of life you have life.

It is sin, fear, selfishness, the breach in love that severs your connection with God that causes death. Restoration of trust/faith, based upon the truth, results in opening the heart to receive the indwelling Spirit who purges the fear and selfishness, strengthens our trust and love and solidifies our understanding in truth.

The lesson cites James 2:17-22:

- In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. (James 2:17-22 NIV84).

What does this mean?

Martin Luther rejected the book of James as inspired because of this passage. He considered this adding works to faith and Martin Luther while seeking to follow the truth created a new theological theory that moved away from old ideas, but sadly that idea itself was based upon imposed human law and thus was also false, but still a move in the right direction. And that made up theological construct is called penal substitution theology which Martin Luther invented in order to overthrow the false teaching about purgatory. But his penal/legal theory sadly was based on the human law lie and while moving away from some of the errors of the past, like purgatory, his theories did not complete the Reformation. More truth was needed for that—and the key truth, which many theologians in our own church have not accepted is the truth that God’s laws are design laws, not imposed rules like Rome makes.

If you understand the law as imposed rules then you teach various systems of works or vicarious legal theologies with law keeping done by Jesus that frees us of the responsibility to keep the law.

But if you come back to worship God as Creator and understand His law as design law, it makes perfect sense. It is simply saying that:

- believing that it is beneficial to eat a healthy diet does you no good if you eat only junk food
- believing that being faithful to one's spouse is right, builds trust, prevents guilt and shame does you no good if you cheat on your spouse
- believing that an antibiotic will cure your pneumonia does you no good if you don't take it
- believing that exercise will make you stronger does you no good if you don't exercise
- believing in Jesus and believing that salvation is through trust in Him, does you no good if you don't actually trust Him. And how do we trust Him? By putting into action what we know He would have us do with our lives—we do what is right in governance of ourselves and we trust Jesus with how things turn out, instead of calculating how to get every advantage for self or make things turn out the way we want. Abraham is an example, the three worthies on the plain of Durah are an example.

## WEDNESDAY

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Read second paragraph,

- “Love is the underlying principle of God’s government in heaven and earth, and it must be the foundation of the Christian’s character. This alone can make and keep him steadfast. This alone can enable him to withstand trial and temptation.”—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 49. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, *God’s Mission My Mission* p. 60).

What is another name for “principle”? Law, thus the underlying law of God’s government is love.

The same author in a variety of places makes this clear, here is one example:

- It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of **self-sacrificing love**. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that **the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven**; that the love which “seeketh not her own” has **its source in the heart of God**; and that in the meek and lowly **One is manifested the character of Him** who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto. (*The Desire of Ages* p. 19).

The law of love is the law of life—what does this mean? Is it a rule that God says you must do or He will kill you? Or is it operational, functional, a design protocol upon which life is actually built by God to operate?

It is the principle of giving upon which all life is constructed to operate—we have given many examples of this, such as the oxygen/CO2 cycle, the water cycle and more.

And this law, this principle, this motive to actions must be the basis of Christian character—why? For it is the only basis for life, it is the only possible way to be at-one with God who is love; any other basis takes us out of harmony with God and His kingdom.

How do we experience this love? By coming to know God:

- We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19 NIV84)
- God's kindness leads you toward repentance (Romans 2:4 NIV84).

It is only through experiencing, knowing, God for ourselves that our fears can be overcome by His goodness, mercy, love, kindness, grace and that we surrender our hearts to Him and invite Him and our hope for transformation is not disappointed because:

- God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. (Romans 5:5 NIV84)

## **THURSDAY**

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The lesson focuses on the story of the Good Samaritan, read the second and third paragraph,

- Are there people around us who have been unjustly treated by others? Have we done whatever we can to help them?

It is true that sometimes pastors, elders, and members do not help those who need help. Sometimes people of another faith may be kinder toward people in the community than we are. We may talk about being kind; yet, others may meet the needs of people that we don't address. If our faith means anything, we must reach out and help those in need. (Adult SS Guide 4th Q 2023, God's Mission My Mission p. 61).

When the lesson says, "Sometimes people of another faith may be kinder toward people in the community than we are" what do they mean? They are primarily meaning people of another Christian denomination, not people who don't believe in God and who have faith in Buddha, or godless science.

But if people actually have a different "faith" than you and I do not mean a different denomination than you, but a different faith—what would that mean?

In Revelation chapter 7 it described the company of the saved at the end of time in these words:

- a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb (Revelation 7:9 NIV84).

Do the people described in this verse have a different faith or the same faith? Don't they all have saving faith in Jesus as their Savior?

Does this describe people from one denomination?

So, how can people from more than one denominational or cultural group have the same saving faith?

Do we err when we change the definition of faith from what the saved experience in their relationship with Jesus, into a euphemism for a belief system, a creed, a list of fundamental beliefs, membership in a denomination?

The lesson rightly points out that if our faith means anything we are to help those in need, but that begs the question what does it mean to help those in need?

Consider this case of a man who came to Jesus seeking help to solve a family dispute—did Jesus help Him?

- Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” (Luke 12:13-14 NIV84)

Did Jesus help this man?

Was Paul refusing to help people who were hungry when he wrote:

- For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10 NIV84).

What does it mean to help people?

When we love others we do help—but we can only actually help if we understand reality, if we understand God’s design laws of how He built life and health to operate. We cannot help people by allowing empathy, compassion, sympathy to lead us to do for others that which is their responsibility to do for self. For instance,

- We do not help people by solving life’s problems for them, but by teaching them how to think and discern for themselves
- We do not help someone by doing their physical therapy exercises for them...even if they are crying because the exercises hurt
- We do not help someone by doing their psychotherapy for them, even if their psychological work is painful and causes them to cry
- We do not help people by insulating them from the consequences of destructive choices, but by opening avenues to heal and recover from those choices—but those avenues will always require their choice to actively engage and apply to their own lives—why? Because God’s healing is not about simple relief of pain, but of healing the underlying pathology that is causing the pain. And that is sin-sickness of heart and mind, fear and selfishness, and that can only be removed by the choice of the sinner to exercise their trust in God, to confront the fear, the same, the guilt, and choose to stop running from it and instead to stand and face it by

trusting God with their lives, stop trying to protect self, and instead choosing to live the truth that God has convicted them to live.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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### **New Free Time-Limited Give Away:**

As we enter this season of gratitude and thanksgiving Come and Reason Ministries would like to provide you with one of our special resources to share with someone else. We have just completed reprinting our popular resource *The Remedy of the Lord in Song The Psalms* with an embossed text and soft touch cover—beautiful for gift giving!

These books will be available 10/14/2023 until 11/17/2023 in quantities of 1, 2, or 5 per order. It's our way of showing our gratitude to you and hope you share with other the good news shared in the Psalms! The printed copy is available in the USA only. For our global audience you can access and share the Psalms through The Remedy app which is downloaded through your App Store.