



2025 God's Love and Justice Lesson 4 God is Passionate and Compassionate

by Tim Jennings

SABBATH

Read second paragraph,

- Unbridled emotions can be problematic, yes. However, God created people with the capacity for emotions, and God Himself is displayed throughout Scripture as experiencing profound emotions. If God can experience deep emotions, as the Bible consistently portrays, then emotions cannot be intrinsically bad or irrational—for the God of the Bible is perfectly good and possesses perfect wisdom. *Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2025, God's Love and Justice p. 28.*

I always have to think about things like this. The general point they are trying to make is that experiencing emotions doesn't make one bad or good, that if God has emotions then it is okay for us to have emotions, but our emotions are not to be unbridled—meaning our emotions are not to govern us, control us, make choices for us, but our emotions are to be processed through our good judgment and our choices are to be based on truth not emotion. That is what they are trying to say and that is absolutely correct.

However, I am struggling with the phrase, “emotions cannot be intrinsically bad or irrational.”

I am struggling with this and at best the quarterly is unclear, but depending on how one understands the meaning, this is not true.

Let's break the two elements up, emotions are not inherently irrational:

Irrational means, according to dictionary.com:

- without the faculty of reason; deprived of reason.
- without or deprived of normal mental clarity or sound judgment.
- not in accordance with reason; utterly illogical:

Emotions are, as I understand it, not generated from reason, not based on good judgment, but are in fact without reason or judgment, and are processed in a different part of the brain from where our reason and judgment operate. And the mature person must learn to understand their own emotions—what the emotions are trying to convey. Because emotions *can* lie, can misinform, mislead, and the stronger the emotions one has of any kind the less effective is our reasoning ability and the more impaired is our good judgment.

So, emotions are inherently, without reason, they are not reasonable thought through facts, comprehensions, understandings, logical conclusions, they are reactions and experiences generated by a wide variety of life experiences both internal and external. And our emotions are to be processed through our good judgment and as we process them with truth we can change our emotions.

In fact, James tells us it is through powerful emotions that the devil tempts us.

Does this mean God did not make us to experience and have emotions? No, of course He did, but our faculties in this world of sin are often imbalanced and our emotions cannot be trusted as a guide to lead us. But at the same time, we are not to ignore our emotions, run from our emotions, suppress our emotions, we are to bring our emotions into the light of truth, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to act and choose in harmony with truth despite the emotions.

Look at Jesus in Gethsemane—He experienced powerful human emotions that tempted Him to avoid the cross, but He did not merely accept them and act on them, He wrestled through them in prayerful submission to His Father and chose to follow the truth despite His emotions and ultimately His unhealthy tempting emotions were overcome and He left Gethsemane in internal emotional peace with His Father and with Himself. He had chosen and accepted the path of sacrifice and pain.

But what about emotions not being inherently bad—in general I think this is true that emotions are not inherently bad, but my question is: is there one or more emotions that are inherently bad, that are in fact only experienced because of sin and are a part of the sin condition and which God does not experience and Adam and Eve did not experience in Eden?

When God called to Adam in Eden after their sin, this is the response:

- He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was **afraid** because I was naked; so I hid.” Genesis 3:10 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Do you think, God experiences fear? Do you think Adam and Eve experienced fear before sin? And fear here does not mean the old King James use of fear, where the Bible says “Fear God and give glory to Him...” that use of fear means, awe, respect, revere, admire, esteem and of course that is an emotion we are to have and will have.

The fear I am talking about is dread, terror, panic, anxiety, worry.

Notice, awe, admiration, reverence and esteem lead the mind and heart to be drawn to the one revered, such emotions turn our attention away from self to the one revered.

Whereas, terror, dread, anxiety turn our attention toward self and lead to acts of selfishness, what we must do to protect self and that is why Adam ran and hid and blamed Eve and Eve in turn also hid and blamed the serpent and God and in fact the fear caused them to have less reverence, admiration, awe, and love for God, but increased doubt, uncertainty, and distrust of God.

So, do you think Adam and Eve experienced the terror, panic, dread, and anxiety fear before sin?

If so, what about this text?

- **There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear**, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:18 NIV84, emphasis mine.

Does God have perfect love—of course, so does God experience fear? And what about us when God finishes His work in us, will we still be have fear?

Then the question, is fear inherently bad? I think it is. I think that fear is an emotion that is only experienced in sin, when the bonds of love and trust have been broken, and the emotion of fear turns the heart and mind to self, resulting in acts of selfishness, causing more guilt, shame, and fear, which leads to more acts to protect self, denial, distortion, blame, which leads to more self-deception, fear of being exposed, found out, rejected, abandoned, punished, which leads to the need to protect self more to take away one's fear, which leads to willingness to use power over others to control one's environment so one can feel safe, including, making up the laws and punishments to control others and excuse oneself—all human governments.

The remnant of God will be so changed that they will not allow fear to control them:

- They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Revelation 12:11 NIV84.

The blood of the Lamb is symbolic of the life of Jesus, for the life is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11), thus the Bible is saying they overcome by the life of Jesus—how? They died to self and were reborn with a new life, a new spirit, a new animating energy, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, and can say like Paul, “It is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me. Galatians 2:20. Or as Peter wrote, they become partakers of the divine nature 2 Peter 1:4. This is being so settled spiritually, in their motives, desires, affections that they cannot be moved. And the word of their testimony is the truth that they speak about God, His kingdom, His design laws; they know God and know His methods and principles. This is being so settled intellectually that they cannot be moved.

And being settled spiritually and intellectually that one cannot be moved is being sealed of God. And when we are sealed by the Holy Spirit of truth and love we are no longer controlled by fear and will not shrink from death, we will no longer seek to save self, but will sacrifice self for God and His kingdom.

God has settled many of His friends into this state of being throughout human history:

- Job—could not be moved despite his terrible tribulation and did not shrink from death. Though he didn't understand what was happening, though he had many questions, he was so settled that he said, “even if God were to kill me, yet I would still trust Him.”

- Daniel and the lion's den—Daniel would not shrink from death
- Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego would not shrink from death
- The Apostles after Jesus' resurrection
- The many martyrs through history

When we are settled into truth and love, sealed of God, we will overcome by the life of Christ, the spirit of love, the animating motive of love for God, trust in Him, and by knowing in our minds the truth of who God is and how His kingdom operates and trusting Him with how things turn out.

SUNDAY

Read the first paragraph,

- Perhaps the greatest love common to human experience is the love of a parent for a child. The Bible often uses the imagery of the parent-child relationship to depict God's amazing compassion for people, emphasizing that God's compassion is exponentially greater than even the deepest and most beautiful human expression of the same emotion. *Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2025, God's Love and Justice* p. 29.

This is absolutely true. God designed humans to be images bearers of Himself, and as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, from the unity of love, create, God designed for husbands and wives to join together in the unity of love and procreate beings in their image. From their love, life comes forth.

It was God's design that Adam and Eve would fulfill this purpose in Eden in a world without sin. And what would have been revealed had Adam and Eve had children in a world without sin?

How would Adam and Eve have treated their children, would they have exploited, dominated, controlled, abused, demanded service and worship or would Adam and Eve have done everything in their power for the health, welfare, development, advancement, and good of their children?

And the universe would have learned that God didn't create intelligent beings to wait on Him, for Him to dominate, control, exploit, demand worship from, but for Him to love, to pour Himself into and celebrate their growth and development.

So, yes, the parent child relationship is designed to teach us truth about God and His love for us.

But has sin damaged human beings in such a way that even parent child relationships can misrepresent God, can be harmful rather than healing?

I think it is pretty obvious that overt abuse—abuse of any kind is not representative of God and is harmful: and we are not talking about loving discipline but parents venting their anger, rage, and problems onto the child and injuring and harming the child, or parents exploiting the children, taking

children's birthday and Christmas presents and pawning them so the parents can buy drugs; parents verbally abusing, or neglecting etc.

But what is not as obvious is when parents act not out of selfishness, or rage, or anger, or lust, or some unbridled emotion, but are acting with compassion, mercy, empathy, sympathy, and only goodwill in their heart—yet have divorced their actions from objective reality, from the truth, from God's design laws and their emotional love is not applied in truth and this harms.

Remember, the Bible teaches that love rejoices with the truth, but sometimes people can be tricked by their emotional tenderness to avoid bringing loving truth to bear because of the pain, discomfort, anguish that the truth will have upon the one they care about. In other words, the overly empathic and loving parent cannot tolerate their own emotional discomfort to do what is actually best for the child. This often happens in addictions, in which the compassionate person becomes what is called an enabler—they are not seeking to harm, their actions are intended to help, but because of objective reality, how things work, the actions are harmful.

One of the best depictions of this is in the movie *The Miracle Worker*, which is the story of the life of Helen Keller.

But before I unpack this, let me preface by saying, that there is no evil person doing evil in what I am going to describe. All parties have good motives, good hearts, seeking to do good, but because we humans don't know everything, we can with good hearts take actions that are not actually healing, that interfere with healing. It is important to recognize this, because some may hear themselves in this and be tempted to feel guilty—that would be the wrong response, that would be the devil seeking to trick you into self-injury by embracing a lie that your intentions, motives, goals were wrong, when in reality you lived to do what you understood was best—but what was interfering was a full comprehension of what is objectively healthy.

It is important we recognize the difference between heart motive and objective performance. Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. Humans look at how well the task is performed, or the positive or negative impact of the action, but God looks first and foremost on the motive that leads to the action. And then, for those who trust God, He will lead them to embrace and practice healthier methods which improve their performance over time.

Because we are finite we all will have places in our lives where in the past we did things with good motives but were applying less than ideal methods. We want to be lovers of truth, meaning, we love to grow and advance in truth as soon as we can comprehend it and we do not live in fear of truth exposing areas in our lives where we can improve, in fact, lovers of truth rejoice in this.

Helen Keller was born deaf and blind and therefore never learned to talk so she was also mute. Her mother had great love and compassion for Helen and couldn't bring herself to ever discipline the child because she was so disadvantaged. And in that home Helen became an unruly, wild, undisciplined, individual who had no boundaries and caused discord throughout the entire family. One scene depicted in the movie was the family sitting at dinner with food on the plates and Helen, who could smell,

walking around the table and sticking her hands on everyone's plate and grabbing food with her unwashed hands off their plates to eat. And the mother allowed this because poor Helen couldn't see or hear or speak.

The family brought in a specialist to try and help Helen, Annie Sullivan, who herself had been blind for much of her life and a new procedure allowed her to gain vision.

When Annie Sullivan began to set boundaries and hold Helen accountable, Helen, predictably, protested, cried out, acted out, appeared distressed, waled and cried, and the mother intervened to comfort Helen and stop the discipline.

This resulted in Annie demanding that Helen be removed from the presence of the mother, and in that new environment Annie began to teach Helen. She started by putting a spoon in her hand to eat with, and Helen threw the spoon, and Annie put another in her hand, which was thrown, and this continued over and over until Helen slapped Annie across the face, and what did Annie do? She slapped Helen back, and eventually Helen stopped acting out and started to learn. And she learned sign language, and eventually braille and was able to go to school and eventually got a college degree. An entire new world opened to Helen who developed her mental faculties and became a self-controlled intelligent being in whom the image of God was formed.

Now, who emotionally loved Helen more, the mother or Annie? Who functionally loved Helen more? And who did Helen come to have greater appreciation and affection for, and ultimately trust more?

Does what I describe here make Helen's mother evil? No, not at all. Her heart was that of love. It makes her ignorant. She really didn't understand what Annie was doing, and she really didn't want to harm Helen, and she didn't understand that emotional distress and discomfort and pain do not necessarily represent harm, it all depends on the reason and what is transpiring.

She didn't understand that once there is injury or brokenness of any kind there are no pain free options, there is only the option to heal or not heal, but the path of healing, of applying what restores to an injury or brokenness is painful, yet not harmful. But if we allow emotions or feelings to determine what is best, then we avoid doing what is healthiest because it doesn't feel best in the moment.

This is where truth and love must be united and together lead to wisdom.

The lesson focuses on the object lesson of God taking the role of a loving parent and we humans are His children and how God yearns and anguishes over His children. Then in the last paragraph, we have the following sentence,

- Even despite their infidelity, God continues to bestow His abundant compassion and mercy on His people and does so beyond all reasonable expectations. *Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2025*, God's Love and Justice p. 29.

My question, who are “His people”?

When you hear this term used, what do you think? I wonder if an unconscious misunderstanding has woven itself into our thinking and we conclude that God’s people are the Jews?

Are God’s people the Jews or are God’s people humanity, all the descendants of Adam and Eve?

- Are only the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob created to be images bearers of God?
- Are only the Jews loved by God?
- Did Jesus come only to save only the Jews? (John 3:16)
- In Old Testament times were the Jews the only ones God called His people?

Were the following God’s people?

- Seth
- Enoch
- Noah
- Melchizedek
- Job

Were any of them descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? What about after Israel was established—any others who were God’s people?

What about Rahab and Ruth? Or, what about this passage:

- Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: “Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and **my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,**” declares the LORD. Jeremiah 25:8-9 NIV84, emphasis mine

Was king Nebuchadnezzar one of God’s people?

My point is that God called Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob’s descendants for a specific mission or purpose, to be His witnesses, His lights, His bearers of truth, the ones through whom He would give the inspired written Word and through whom the living Word, Jesus our Messiah, would be born **so that** God could accomplish His design, intent, purpose and save the world, save the species human, save every single human being who responds positively to His grace—because we are all called to be His people.

MONDAY

The lesson focuses on God’s instruction to Hosea to marry a woman of harlotry and the actions of Hosea are to continue to redeem her and bring her back to himself. This was a living object lesson to

the people of God's love seeking them when they continued to leave Him and give their hearts to other gods.

Was Hosea's altruistic and selfless love and his actions to love and redeem and bring Gomer back sufficient in itself to produce a healthy marriage?

Can a healthy marriage be achieved by the love and actions of one of the partners?

What is required for a healthy marriage? Healthy people!

God cannot experience, achieve, or obtain restoration, reconciliation, unity with sinful humans as long as we remain unhealthy in heart and mind, as long as we live our lives controlled by the spirit of fear and selfishness. The way God obtains His goal of human beings being reconciled to Him in love, trust, friendship, loyalty, devotion—is by healing us, by restoring in us His original design, by eradicating lies, fear and selfishness and restoring in us truth, love, and trust.

This is the sealing of God's people, the cleansing of His bride, the cleansing of His sanctuary, the completion of the plan of salvation.

Read the third paragraph,

- In contrast to God's unwavering faithfulness, His people were repeatedly unfaithful, ultimately pushing God away and bringing judgment upon themselves and deeply grieving Him. God is compassionate, but never to the exclusion of justice. (As we will see in a later lesson, love and justice go together.) *Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2025*, God's Love and Justice p. 30.

What do you hear in this paragraph?

How do we understand the terms judgment and justice?

Does the law lens we use impact our understanding?

If we accept the lie that God's law functions like human law, then what is judgment? It is judicial, a legal ruling of guilt for law-breaking and what is justice? The infliction of just punishments for unforgiving crimes.

But this is all fiction—it is fantasy, it is false, it is the fruit of believing Satan's lie that God's law functions like human law.

When we return to worshiping the Creator and understand God's law is design law, the laws built into the fabric of reality and which govern the operations of life itself, then we understand that God's judgments are His accurate diagnosis of what is wrong and His therapeutic interventions to heal and save. And God's justice is doing what is right or just, which is always to heal and save, never to destroy.

Before I share some historical quotes, any questions about this, any examples you can cite from Scripture?

- What was the purpose of the 70-year captivity? Why did it occur, what was its cause? What did God do?
- What was the purpose of the 3.5-year drought during Elijah's day?

What were God's judgments and justice in these circumstances?

And why were these actions on God's part recorded in Scripture? What is the purpose of Scripture? Does the Scripture have anything to do with advancing God's judgment?

- Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." John 9:39 NIV84.

What does this mean? How is Jesus' presence in the world for judgment, and a judgment that causes some that can't see to see and others who see to become blind?

Is this talking about a judicial process? Is it talking about God using divine power to miraculously heal some and miraculously blind others?

Consider this Bible commentary, do you agree with its interpretation of the passage, and what type of law is in operation in this description:

- A group of Pharisees had gathered near, and the sight of them brought to the mind of Jesus the contrast ever manifest in the effect of His words and works. He said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Christ had come to open the blind eyes, **to give light** to them that sit in darkness. He had declared **Himself to be the light** of the world, and the miracle just performed was in attestation of His mission. The people who beheld the Saviour at His advent were favored with a **fuller manifestation** of the divine presence than the world had ever enjoyed before. **The knowledge of God was revealed** more perfectly. **But in this very revelation, judgment was passing upon men. Their character was tested, their destiny determined.** *The Desire of Ages* p. 475, emphasis mine.

What type of judgment is this? What is being described? Is it an external judicial process or is it the outworking of reality, people are demonstrating by their actions and choices who they trust, what they believe, what kind of person they are, whose methods they prefer, and ultimately on whose side they align with? What type of judgment is this? A few pages earlier in the same book, the author states it more clearly,

- **They thought themselves passing judgment on Christ; but in rejecting Him they were pronouncing sentence upon themselves.** "He that is of God," said Jesus, "heareth God's

words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." *The Desire of Ages* p 468, emphasis mine.

Here is another quote:

- The forbearance of God was very great toward the children of men; **but when they stubbornly persisted in their impenitence, He removed from them His protecting hand.** They refused to listen to the voice of God in His created works, and in the warnings, counsels, and reproofs of His word, and thus **He was forced to speak to them through judgments."** *Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 587, emphasis mine.

What type of judgment is this? If you have a child that takes your resources and goes into wild living, rejects all counsel, rejects all attempts to restore them to wellness and health, what does your judgment ultimately say? Let them go to reap what they have sown and perhaps their suffering will awaken them to the destructiveness of their choices. This is the story of the Prodigal son. This is God's judgment. His accurate diagnosis of what is wrong and His therapeutic judgment of the best course for Him to take that provides the greatest opportunity to bring the wayward to repentance.

Here is another quote:

- "I was shown that the **judgments of God would not come directly out from the Lord** upon them, but in this way;
 "They place themselves beyond His protection. He warns, corrects, reproves, and points out the only path of safety; then if those who have been the objects of His special care will follow their own course, independent of the Spirit of God, after repeated warnings, **if they choose their own way, then He does not commission His angels to prevent Satan's decided attacks upon them.**
 "It is Satan's power that is at work at sea and on land, bringing calamity and distress, and sweeping off multitudes to make sure of his prey, and storm and tempest both by sea and land will be, for Satan has come down in great wrath. He is at work. He knows his time is short and, he is not restrained; we shall see more terrible manifestations of his great power than we have ever dreamed of." *Manuscript Release* vol. 14, p. 3, emphasis mine.

What is God's judgment? Is it judicial? What kind of law is in operation in this description?

Consider this quote:

- The Jews had forged their own fetters; they had filled for themselves the cup of vengeance. In the utter destruction that befell them as a nation, and in all the woes that followed them in their dispersion, they were but reaping the harvest which their own hands had sown. Says the prophet: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;" "for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." Hosea 13:9; 14:1. **Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of**

God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control. *The Great Controversy* p. 35, emphasis mine.

How much of Christianity have also been tricked into teaching that God uses His power to inflict punishment for disobedience? That God's judgments are judicial and justice is God externally punishing? Imposed external law with coercive enforcement is the way creatures operate, it is Satan's lie about God.

Or consider this quote:

- We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God's mercy and long-suffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil one. But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed. **God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejectors of His mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. Every ray of light rejected, every warning despised or unheeded, every passion indulged, every transgression of the law of God, is a seed sown which yields its unfailing harvest. The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last withdrawn from the sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan.** *The Great Controversy* p. 36, emphasis mine.

What kind of law is in operation? Do you notice there is nothing penal legal going on.

When we represent God's judgments and justice to be like human, imposed rulings with imposed punishments we are advancing Satan's kingdom and working against heaven.

TUESDAY

The lesson focuses on the compassion of Jesus in His life, ministry, and sacrificial death.

Read the bottom green section,

- There is no greater example of God's great compassionate love for us than Jesus Himself—who gave Himself for us in the ultimate demonstration of love. Yet, Christ is not only the perfect image of God. He is also the perfect model of humanity. How can we model our lives after the life of Christ, focusing on the felt needs of others, and, thus, not merely preaching God's love but showing it in tangible ways? *Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2025*, God's Love and Justice p. 31.

Do you like the language of “gave Himself for us in the ultimate demonstration of love.”

Might there be a better word used here than demonstration—how about manifestation, fulfillment, accomplishment, outworking?

I agree that that what Jesus accomplished included demonstration of God’s love, but did it do more? In fact, if it was only a demonstration would it have had saving value? Would a demonstration alone be sufficient to save humanity from sin?

Consider an object lesson as an example, you have a child who overdoses on a drug and their actions have destroyed their liver and kidneys and they are dying. Will it have any saving value for your child for you to take an even higher dose of the drug and die of the same cause to demonstrate how much you love your child?

But, what if you donated your liver and kidney, which are perfectly healthy, to save your child—would that not only demonstrate your love but also provide what is necessary to redeem your child, save your child from death?

Yes, the life of Christ is a demonstration of God’s love, but it is much more, it is the outworking of God’s love in humanity for the eradication of the cause of death and the restoration of the cause of life into the species.

What did you think of this sentence,

- How can we model our lives after the life of Christ, **focusing on the felt needs of others**, and, thus, not merely preaching God’s love but showing it in tangible ways?

Are they saying we focus on what others feel they need? If they are saying this then they are teaching us to harm people and obstruct healing. Consider again Helen Keller, what did Helen Keller feel she needed? What did she actually need?

And consider this, what would happen in our society today if a licensed social worker slapped a deaf, dumb, and blind child across the face?

Take a moment and really consider this question?

Did Annie Sullivan do anything that was harmful to Helen? No. In fact, that action was an act of love that brought healing to the child.

But, if our society would arrest, punish, fine, censure, revoke the license of a social worker who did this what does that mean?

Our society is sick, it has disconnected itself from God’s designs and methods and far too many people have put in policies that are based on feelings instead of truth, empathy instead of objective reality,

and allowed all kinds of false theories and destructive practices to enter, which prioritizes an individual's feelings over objective reality.

Consider the following, a person feels inside themselves that they are a disabled person who is really paralyzed from the waist down, despite the objective reality that they are in a body that is perfectly healthy, so they go to a surgeon, identifying as a disabled person and ask for the surgeon to surgically sever their spinal cord and make them a paraplegic so they can live in the body of their true identity.

Do you think I just made that up from my imagination? I didn't, this is a group of people who describe themselves as transabled. <https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/transgendered-transabled-people-choosing-identify-handicapped>

Now, because these people really feel like their identity is that of a disabled person and they claim they are emotionally tormented being in a body that can walk, should we surgically sever their spinal cord and give them what their felt need is?

If we love such a person, what response should we provide for them? We should give them the mental health care that they need, for this is symptomatic of a severe identity disturbance. What about the people who are struggling with other internal identity disturbances that cause them to believe they are not in the right body for their identity, should we allow their feelings to determine reality and surgically intervene to mutilate their bodies in order to provide their felt needs? And what if such people are children? Should we allow the feelings of children to determine reality? Or are we to be lovers of truth? A person's feelings cannot change objective reality.

We are living in a very sin-sick world with very unhealthy methods and practices being taught that are corrupting hearts and minds. The only path to safety and health is the path of truth and love combined.

WEDNESDAY

Read the last three paragraphs,

- The “jealousy” of God is often misunderstood. If you refer to someone as a jealous husband or wife, you likely do not mean it as a compliment. The term jealousy often has negative connotations in many languages. However, in the Bible, divine jealousy has no negative connotations. **It is the righteous passion of a loving husband for an exclusive relationship with his wife.**

While there is a kind of jealousy that is against love (1 Cor. 13:4), according to 2 Corinthians 11:2, there is a good and righteous “jealousy.” Paul refers to it as “godly jealousy” (2 Cor. 11:2). God's jealousy is only and always the righteous kind and may better be spoken of as God's passionate love for His people.

God's passion (qana') for His people stems from His profound love for them. **God desires an exclusive relationship with His people; He alone is to be their God.** Yet, God is often depicted as a scorned lover, whose love is unrequited (see Hosea 1–3, Jer. 2:2, Jer. 3:1–12). **Thus, God's "jealousy" or "passion" is never unprovoked** but always responsive to the infidelity and evil people. God's jealousy (or "passionate love") lacks the negative connotations of human jealousy. It is never envious but always the **proper righteous passion for an exclusive relationship with His people and for their good.** *Adult SS Guide 1st Q 2025*, God's Love and Justice p. 32, emphasis mine.

What do you hear? I want to be sure I am not misreading this, but do you hear that God's jealousy is provoked because He wants exclusivity with us and if we don't give Him exclusivity that makes Him jealous, but when God does it is a good jealousy, but if a human husband wants an exclusive relationship with his wife and becomes jealous if she goes after other men then that is a bad jealousy?

Does this sound contradictory or confusing? Because it is, because it fails to understand reality, design law.

God is not jealous for Himself. He is not jealous because He is not getting exclusivity, that is the jealousy of selfishness that seeks to control.

No, God is jealous *for* us, for our health, wellbeing, happiness, and eternal best good. Like my wife being jealous for my reputation and wanting to act in ways that protects me, not get something for her.

And this is directly connected to God's design laws built into reality and then later described by God in the Ten Commandments, the first two which read:

- "You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:3-6 NIV84.

Why does God say this?

Because of the law of worship, by beholding we are changed (2 Corinthians 3:18), or as Paul wrote when they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped images made with their own hands their minds became darkened, depraved, and futile (Romans 1:18-32), or as Jeremiah wrote,

- They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves. Jeremiah 2:5 NIV84.

It is a design law of worship that we become like that which we admire, esteem, value, and worship. As the highest created beings on planet earth there is nothing on this planet we can worship that will advance and develop us. Anything on earth we worship degrades us. God says to worship Him, the

infinite one because as we worship Him we grow, develop, advance, on a continual eternal journey of development. He tells us to worship Him not for His rights or needs but for our good, because He loves us.

And this is why He is jealous—He is jealous for us, for our hearts and minds, our characters, our lives, our good, our eternal destiny. And He created us in His image and He knows that our choices in what we eat, how we think, the beliefs we hold the God we worship changes us, We epigenetically alter how our own DNA is expressed, and when we have children we pass along not only the DNA sequences, but the epigenetic markers that instruct the genes on how to express themselves, and these markers pass down 3-4 generations. God is jealous for our health and that of our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren so He tells us to worship Him and live in harmony with His designs for life, but if we refuse to do so, then by His design, by the unchanging design laws of health and life built into the fabric of reality our choices will pass down and injure our children. But God’s mercy and love will continue through all generations and all who turn to Him He will save and heal.

FRIDAY

Read quote from COL, which is the first paragraph,

- “All who have a sense of their deep soul poverty, who feel that they have nothing good in themselves, may find righteousness and strength by looking unto Jesus. He says, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden.’ Matthew 11:28. He bids you **exchange your poverty for the riches of His grace**. We are not worthy of God's love, but Christ, our surety, is worthy, and is abundantly able to save all who shall come unto Him. Whatever may have been your past experience, however discouraging your present circumstances, if you will come to Jesus just as you are, weak, helpless, and despairing, our compassionate Saviour will meet you a great way off, and will throw about you His arms of love and **His robe of righteousness**. **He presents us to the Father clothed in the white raiment of His own character. He pleads before God in our behalf**, saying: **I have taken the sinner’s place. Look not upon this wayward child, but look on Me**. Does Satan plead loudly against our souls, accusing of sin, and claiming us as his prey, **the blood of Christ pleads with greater power.**” Ellen G. White, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 8, 9, emphasis mine.

What do you hear? Are you tempted to think along lines of penal legal theologies? The view that God needs someone to plead with Him? The idea that we need to have our sins covered over to hide the reality of our sinfulness from the Father, the idea that in the judgment the Father doesn’t look at the reality of our sinfulness but the sinlessness of His Son and declares us legally pardoned and righteous or legally justified while we remain unrighteous in reality hiding behind the legal cloak and payment of Jesus?

My first recommendation is to read widely, understand all 66 books of the Bible, bring all the inspired record to bear. Never draw conclusions from single texts or single passages. Define terms in light of the Bible and what is revealed there. Allow the author being quoted to shed light on the meaning of the

terms they use and how they understand them. So read widely from that source as well. And if you do, you will know immediately that there is nothing penal legal going on in this commentary, but a symbolic description of how design law works.

Without unpacking it all, we can clarify the meaning very quickly with one clear description later in the same book by the same author, so we can have confidence of what this author intended by the language of presenting us to the Father in the white raiment of His own character, consider this:

- Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. **This covering, the robe of His own righteousness**, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul... This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. **Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us...** By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. **When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. *Christ's Object Lessons* p. 311, emphasis mine.

We see immediately that the author does not mean some legal process in record books, some covering over sin, some hiding things from the Father, but that Jesus presents us to the Father with His character reproduced within us. This is reality. This is healing. This is restoration to righteousness. This is having the mind of Christ, the law written on the heart and mind, being a partaker of the divine nature, having Christ living within. It is not judicial, it is actual.

What do we make of the pleading before God and the blood of Jesus pleading louder than Satan's accusation?

Note, the author does not say pleading to God, but before God. Jesus is the member of the Godhead through whom God accomplishes His purpose of defeating Satan, destroying sin and death, and saving humankind. Thus the battle between Christ and Satan occurs under the purview of the Father—Jesus does all things before the Father. But the battle between Christ and Satan is NOT FOR THE loyalty, love, trust, devotion of the Father. Christ and Satan are not battling to win the Father to their side. The Father is already on the side of Christ. But sadly, the penal legal view of things places the Father in a position where Christ needs to do something to win Him to the side of the righteous. This idea is evil and contrary to Scripture.

The Bible tells us, that:

- God so loved the world He gave us His son John 3:16
- That God is for us and therefore who can be against us? Romans 8:31
- That God was in the Son reconciling the world to Himself 2 Cor 5:19

- Fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus Col 2:9
- If we have seen Jesus we have seen the Father John 14:9

No, Jesus pleading before the Father was not to persuade the Father, then who? Who are the only beings in the universe left who are vulnerable to Satan's accusations and who need to be plead with to love and trust God? You and me, sinful humans. And Jesus, in His mediatorial role of our High Priest in heaven pleads before the Father the love and truth of God, symbolically represented by His blood, to YOU and ME and the Holy Spirit comes to us, not speaking on His own but only what He hears, the pleadings of Jesus, "my blood, my blood, don't you know how much I love you, how much I have sacrificed for you, and the health, happiness, healing, freedom, joy, peace, that can be yours if you trust me and allow my life, my blood, to flow into your heart and mind? Won't you trust me, won't you let me heal you, don't listen to the father of lies, my Father and I are One. Everything that is true about me is true about my Father. He is on your side, don't believe the lies that He is the source of pain, suffering, and death God is the source of life and if you trust me you can receive my life and live with us eternally."

This is what his happening in the description above. And how can I be so confident this is what that author intended? Because I read widely, and this is from the same author, consider what she describes here about the pleadings of Christ before the Father in heaven.

- **As Satan accused Joshua** and his people, **so in all ages he accuses** those who are seeking the mercy and favor of God. In the Revelation he is declared to be the "accuser of our brethren," "which accused them before our God day and night." **The controversy is repeated over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil** and whose name is registered in the Lamb's book of life. Never is one received from the family of Satan into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the wicked one. **Satan's accusations against those who seek the Lord are not prompted by displeasure at their sins.** He exults in their defective characters. Only through their transgression of God's law can he obtain power over them. **His accusations arise solely from his enmity to Christ. Through the plan of salvation, Jesus is breaking Satan's hold upon the human family and rescuing souls from his power.** All the hatred and malignity of the archrebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ's supremacy, and with fiendish power and cunning **he works to wrest from Him the remnant of the children of men who have accepted His salvation.** *5 Testimonies* 470.1, emphasis mine. [where is such a battle taking place? Where is the work of Jesus occurring that will rescue a sinner from Satan's power? Where does Satan's powers of lies and selfishness occur? Who listens to Satan's lies, who believes Satan's accusations? Who would Christ need to plead with to persuade them that His sacrifice is sufficient to free the sinner from sin? Would God need to be persuaded that the sacrifice of Christ is sufficient? Would the sinner?]

He [Satan] leads men into skepticism, causing them to lose confidence in God and to separate from His love; [who is listening to Satan's accusations? With whom will Christ need to plead in order to overcome the accusations and restore their confidence?] he tempts them to break His law, and then he claims them as his captives and contests the right of Christ to take them from him. **He knows that those who seek God earnestly for pardon and grace will**

obtain it; therefore he presents their sins before *them to discourage them.* [Notice the dynamic here. The author doesn't say that Satan knows if he can find a sin the person committed that they forgot to confess and ask forgiveness for that it remains on the legal registry in heaven and God will be forced to pronounce them guilty and Satan wins his legal case. NO! Satan knows that all who trust God will, as Isaiah 55 says, receive FREE pardon from God and grace that heals and restores them and gives them a new heart and empowers them to overcome the accusations and temptations of Satan. So Satan accuses the sinner to the sinner to discourage the repentant sinner tempting them to give up and let go of their faith in Jesus. So, again, where is Christ plea directed?] He [Satan] is constantly seeking occasion against those who are trying to obey God. **Even their best and most acceptable services he seeks to make appear corrupt.** [To whom is Satan seeking to make our best seem corrupt? To the repentant sinner in order to discourage and dishearten them so THEY GIVE UP. So, to whom would Christ be pleading for them not to listen to the accusations of Satan?] **By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he [Satan] endeavors to secure their condemnation.** [By whom? From whom is Satan seeking to get the sinner condemned? Christ Jesus He is at the Father's right hand and is also interceding for us—also, in addition to who, the Father and who is the Father interceding with? With the accusations of the devil that try and discourage us!] **Man cannot meet these charges himself.** In his sin-stained garments, confessing his guilt, he stands before God. [Exactly, we don't stand before God and say, "I don't need Jesus. I can cure my own sin condition. In fact, I really haven't sinned, I am righteous in my own strength." NO! We stand before God and say, "Father I acknowledge I was born in sin and conceived in iniquity. I was born with a terminal sin condition I didn't choose this condition and I have had many symptoms along the way many sins and shortcomings from your glorious ideal. I have been fearful and selfish and acted out against your law. I have no ability to change my heart, to heal my condition. I confess I am dead in trespass and sin. I am only here before you because Jesus overcame where I cannot and Jesus has gifted me His victory, His mind, His heart, His love, His motives, His character and it is no longer I that live but Jesus lives in me through the indwelling Spirit." Note what happens next.] **But Jesus our Advocate presents an effectual plea in behalf of all who by repentance and faith have committed the keeping of their souls to Him. He pleads their cause and vanquishes their accuser by the mighty arguments of Calvary.** [For all who acknowledge their condition Jesus pleads effectively TO THEM, "My grace is sufficient for you." I have engraved YOU on the palm of my hand. My victory is your victory. Trust me and I will make you whole! The accusations of Satan that we are too sinful to be saved are vanquished by the effectual plea of Jesus to you and to me!] His perfect obedience to God's law, even unto the death of the cross, has given Him all power in heaven and in earth, and **He claims of His Father mercy and reconciliation for guilty man.** [Whose mercy? God's mercy, God so loved the world that He sent Jesus to procure the Remedy and then empowers Jesus with all the power of heaven to distribute it to us to heal and save us. God doesn't win God's mercy, or beg God to be merciful, He claims the mercy that is God's, because of God's mercy Jesus was sent and became our Remedy to sin.] **To the accuser of His people He declares: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan."** These are the purchase of My blood, brands plucked from the burning." [Jesus doesn't plead His blood to the Father, Jesus rebukes Satan and refutes his accusations. And listen to what Jesus says to us.] **Those who rely upon Him** in faith receive

the comforting assurance: “**Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.**” [He removes the fear, the guilt, the shame, the selfishness, the sin-condition and gives us a new heart and right spirit, writes His law of love into our inmost beings so that it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me.] All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ. Not one soul that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. 5

Testimonies 470.2, emphasis mine.

The fact that the acknowledged people of God are represented as standing before the Lord in filthy garments **should lead to humility and deep searching of heart on the part of all who profess His name. Those who are indeed purifying their souls by obeying the truth will have a most humble opinion of themselves.** [This is the investigative judgment. The investigation of our own hearts/minds/characters and the investigating the truth about God to experience the healing power of Christ purging and cleansing us from sin to prepare us to meet Him face to face.] The more closely they view the spotless character of Christ, the stronger will be their desire to be conformed to His image, and the less will they see of purity or holiness in themselves. But while we should realize our sinful condition, we are to rely upon Christ as our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption. **We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but on His own.** 5

Testimonies 471.1, emphasis mine.