



## The Teachings of Jesus Lesson 9 3<sup>rd</sup> Q 2014

### Lesson 9: Our Mission

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**Come and Reason FREE APP** is now available for ios and android. The app allows access to our materials on your smart phones and tablets. Please download the app! **Be sure and type in Come and Reason Ministries** and search in your app store as another unofficial app with our logo is out there.

**Oct 2-4:** Dr. Jennings will be at the American Association of Christian Counselors National Convention in Branson, MO. He and Dr. Curt Thomson, will be conducting a workshop entitled, **Neurobiology and the Treatment of Mood and Anxiety Disorders**. Dr. Jennings will also be a plenary speaker and Come and Reason Ministries will have a booth to give away our materials.

**Oct 10,11:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Vallejo SDA church in Glendale, CA.

**Oct 24/25:** Dr. Jennings will be at Loma Linda University presenting a Spiritual Emphasis Weekend for the psychiatry residents and students. The Friday evening meeting will be open to the public

**Nov 16:** Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the First Baptist Church in Frisco Texas. Speaking for the three church services Sunday morning and then a seminar Sunday afternoon.

**AMAZON Smile:** Amazon now has a program that a percent of all your purchases will be donated to support a charity. Come and Reason Ministries is a registered Charity. So, you can select us, and whenever you shop in their [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) site a portion of your purchase will benefit this ministry.

**NOTE: WARNING:** There is another ministry with a similar name called "Come Reason Ministries" and they are located in California. Please be sure and select **Come AND Reason Ministries Located in Collegedale TN**.

## SABBATH

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What is the mission of the church?

The Mission Statement of the United Methodist Church (from their website):

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/section-1-the-churches>

The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by proclaiming the good news of God's grace and by exemplifying Jesus' command to love God and neighbor, thus seeking the fulfillment of God's reign and realm in the world.

Mission statement of the Southern Baptist Convention (from their website):

<http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/missionvision.asp>

As a convention of churches, our missional vision is to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations.

Mission Statement of the Roman Catholic Church, (from askcatholic.com) citing the Roman Catholic Catechism:

[http://askcatholic.com/WebPostings/Answers/2000\\_08AUG/2000AugMissionOfTheChurch.cfm](http://askcatholic.com/WebPostings/Answers/2000_08AUG/2000AugMissionOfTheChurch.cfm)



**849** *This missionary mandate.* "Having been divinely sent to the nations that she might be 'the universal sacrament of salvation,' the Church in obedience to the command of her Founder and because it is demanded by her own essential universality, strives to preach the Gospel to all men.

**850** *The origin and purpose of the mission.* The Lord's missionary mandate is ultimately grounded in the eternal love of the Most Holy Trinity: "The Church on earth is by her nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, she has her origin the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit." The ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love.

The Official Mission Statement of the SDA church (from the official church website):

<http://www.adventist.org/information/official-statements/statements/article/go/0/mission-statement-of-the-seventh-day-adventist-church/spirituality/>

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to make disciples of all people, communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of [Revelation 14:6-12](#), leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and unite with His remnant Church, discipling them to serve Him as Lord and preparing them for His soon return.

Which one did you like best and why?

Did you hear any problems with any of them, anything you were uncomfortable with?

The Methodist and Baptist mission statements were quite closely tied to the Bible mandate and thus kept the statements very general.

The Roman Catholic, did have two elements that concerned me – the first being

“sent to the nations that she might be 'the universal sacrament of salvation,’” which sounds to me that one must be a member of this organization in order to experience salvation. In other words, salvation is through this particular institutional church. And of course it has been taught that way for years, as a way to coerce kings and people with threats of eternal damnation if one doesn't do what the Pope says. And, the history of burning people at the stake, in order to give last rights and the church “save” them.

The second concern for me is the subtle change in the wording “make disciples” which in Scripture and in the Methodist and Baptist and SDA usage is used to mean to teach people. However, the Catholic version sounds slightly different to me: “The ultimate purpose of mission is none other than to make men share in the communion between the Father and the Son in their Spirit of love.” Does it to you? Perhaps I am reading this in the context of the history of inquisition, burning at the stake, crusades etc., but “make men share in...” sounds coercive here rather than educational. Thoughts?

Then what about the SDA mission statement, any concerns?



Many good things in this statement, “make disciples” is used as in Scripture to teach people, emphasis on the gospel in the setting of the 3 angels, which means in the setting of the Great Controversy over God’s character. This is excellent, presenting the gospel with its universal importance, using the whole of Scripture, all 66 books, not just 62 books that Luther used. I also liked the “leading men” aspect, which implies we leave people free, the importance of service and the expectation of His return. Many great elements – the only phrase that I wonder about is, as part of the mission, what does it mean, “to accept Jesus as personal Savior unite with His remnant Church”?

Are these two separate things, or are they seen as one and the same?

Have we fulfilled our mission if we lead people to Jesus, they are reborn, begin living to serve God and tell people the truth of God’s character in the setting of the Great Controversy and the imminent return of Christ, but not join the SDA organization?

Why am I an SDA?

- Because I don’t believe one has to belong to a particular organization to be saved – one does not have to join the Roman Catholic church and have that organization be the sacrament of my salvation.
- I believe the organizations we have in the world are the progressive steps in advancing truth. God is infinite and we are finite, there is always more truth to understand as we grow in our relationship with Him.
- After the New Testament church, Paul warned a counterattack of Satan would occur – the man of sin would set himself up in God’s temple proclaiming himself to be God. This is the infection of Imperial Roman dictator law and god construct infecting Christianity after Constantine converted. And the world fell in to an age of darkness.
- The Bible predicted however, a reformation and a cleansing of this temple would take place, culminating with a final group to take a clear picture of God’s character to the world for the preparation of His return.
- This groundwork for this cleansing began with John Huss in the early 1400’s, in the Czech republic. He rejected indulgences and taught salvation by grace through faith alone. He was summoned by the Catholic Church to attend the Counsel of Constance where he was found a heretic and burned at the stake in 1415. But from his teachings was founded the Hussites, later to become the Moravian church – the first Protestant church. As this group organized they received ordination through the Waldensians in 1467.
- The groundwork for the cleansing expanded with Luther (1517), but Luther, who rejected the sacraments, indulgences, relics, and also proclaimed salvation by grace through faith along. But he could only take the gospel cleansing so far. Luther rejected four books of the Bible, Revelation – which taught the war in heaven, Hebrews which also taught about the work going on in heaven and the work of our High Priest in heaven, Jude which taught about angels in heaven, and James. Having rejected these four books, Luther didn’t understand the fullness of Christ’s accomplishments, focusing only on one the aspect of the plan of salvation.



- After Luther other reformers carried the truth forward:
  - Calvin (1540's)– defended the reformation in Switzerland
  - John Smyth (1609) – brought in Biblical baptism by immersion to Christianity
  - John Wesley – who argued against Calvinism and predestination, and instead personal choice in relationship with God, which leads to actual heart transformation, living a life of love for God and others.
    - In 1735 Wesley traveled to Savannah, GA. During the trip a storm came up and broke the main mast of the ship. While the majority of the ship panicked, a group of Moravian Christians calmly sang hymns. This deeply moved Wesley. After returning to England he studied with the Moravians, and eventually had his famous dream we shared last week. In 1739 Wesley founded the Methodist Society.
  - William Miller a Baptist preacher began preaching in 1831 the fulfillment of Bible prophecy of the cleansing of the sanctuary, erroneously interpreting the sanctuary to be earth and thus predicted the return of Christ in 1844, which led to the Great Disappointment of 1844
  - Ellen G. White and others – from the seventh-day Baptist discovered the seventh-day Sabbath, also embraced the reformation teachings of Luther, Wesley. In the aftermath of the Great Disappointment discovered the sanctuary to be cleansed was not the earth, nor the physical building built by men, but the heavenly sanctuary, constructed out of intelligent beings. Thus the cleansing of the sanctuary is the cleansing of people from lies about God and selfishness in the heart in preparation for meeting God face to face when Christ returns.
    - This message puts the truth about God at the center of the conflict, we war, as Paul says, against everything that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. We understand the war between good and evil is a universal, not just earthly, war. EGW was raised Methodist, and came to value this larger perspective, which led to a realization of a controversy over God's character and trustworthiness. And led to insights like this, regarding our understanding of religion and our purpose:

The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. **The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience;** how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found. {Ed 190.2}



The reason I am a SDA is not because I believe one must be a member of this organization in order to find salvation, but because I see this organization having within it:

- the broadest, deepest, widest, clearest, most reasonable understanding of reality, and God,
- His design for life,
- the war which began in heaven,
- the understanding of sin,
- the purpose for the creation of humankind,
- what actually went wrong in humanity when Adam and Eve sinned,
- God's actions and purposes through human history,
- the purpose of the incarnation, to dispel the lies, to destroy sin, death, the devil, and restore mankind back to perfection,
- understanding of the two antagonistic forces at work in the hearts of men,
- the culmination of events on earth,
- the purpose of God's people on earth and
- the ultimate elimination of sin and restoration of creation to perfection.

No other organization, that I am currently aware of, has such a complete, harmonious understanding of the entire issue.

Yet, this organization, is also infected with false ideas, for which we, in love, work to address and see removed.

So, what is our mission?

Here is what EGW, one of the co-founders of the SDA church, wrote about the mission of the church:

**The mission of the church of Christ is to save perishing sinners. It is to make known the love of God to men and to win them to Christ by the efficacy of that love.** The truth for this time must be carried into the dark corners of the earth, and this work may begin at home. **The followers of Christ should not live selfish lives;** but, imbued with the Spirit of Christ, they should work in harmony with Him. {3T 381.1}

There are causes for the present coldness and unbelief. The love of the world and the cares of life separate the soul from God. The water of life must be in us, and flowing out from us, springing up into everlasting life. **We must work out what God works in. If the Christian would enjoy the light of life, he must increase his efforts to bring others to the knowledge of the truth. His life must be characterized by exertion and sacrifices to do others good; and then there will be no complaints of lack of enjoyment.** {3T 381.2} [why? Because it is a law that strength come by exertion. If you want to be strong physically you must exercise, if you want to strong musically you must practice, in any endeavor. Second, because it is the law



of love, that only by giving are you able to receive more. The more you love the more love you receive and more capable of you become.]

Angels are ever engaged in working for the happiness of others. This is their joy. That which selfish hearts would consider humiliating service, ministering to those who are wretched and in every way inferior in character and rank, is the work of the pure, sinless angels in the royal courts of heaven. **The spirit of Christ's self-sacrificing love is the spirit which pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss.** {3T 381.3}

**Those who feel no special pleasure in seeking to be a blessing to others, in working, even at a sacrifice, to do them good, cannot have the spirit of Christ or of heaven;** for they have no union with the work of heavenly angels and cannot participate in the bliss that imparts elevated joy to them. Christ has said: "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." If the joy of angels is to see sinners repent, will it not be the joy of sinners, saved by the blood of Christ, to see others repent and turn to Christ through their instrumentality? In working in harmony with Christ and the holy angels we shall experience a joy that cannot be realized aside from this work. {3T 381.4}

Come and Reason Ministries Mission Statement:

Come and Reason Ministries focuses on making God's methods and principles practical, understandable, and applicable to you here and now. We are dedicated to helping you learn to discern, to teach you how to think for yourself, to hone and refine your reasoning powers in order to increase your ability to know right from wrong and healthy from unhealthy, and to working with God to help bring truth, love, and healing to all who are seeking to know and understand their Creator. We accept the Bible as authoritative and believe, rightly understood, that Scripture and Science harmonize perfectly. To that end we actively seek to present an integrated understanding of nature and Scripture for the purpose of helping you develop your full potential and to experience healing of mind, character, and relationships.

Read memory text: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come" MT 24:14

- What gospel?
  - the good news about God – His character and methods
- What kingdom?
  - The kingdom of love, which means the law of love, the way love operates, functions, the design for life
- What witness?
  - To witness truth, love, freedom, helping others, not retaliating, loving enemies, giving to those who mistreat
- What end?



- The end of selfishness, lies, pain, suffering, death

Any thoughts on how we can do a better job of sharing this with the world?

What are obstacles to sharing this?

## SUNDAY

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We are to be the light of the world – what does this mean?

By the Babylonish captivity the Israelites were effectually cured of the worship of graven images. During the centuries that followed, they suffered from the oppression of heathen foes, **until the conviction became fixed that their prosperity depended upon their obedience to the law of God. But with too many of the people obedience was not prompted by love. The motive was selfish.** They rendered outward service to God as the means of attaining to national greatness. **They did not become the light of the world, but shut themselves away from the world in order to escape temptation to idolatry.** {DA 28.5}

thoughts? What was lacking? A desire to obey the law? No, a misunderstanding of God and His law. Thinking it rules to be kept, rather than understanding it as the law of love, the design principle upon which a person actually lives, which transforms the entire being.

"Ye are the light of the world." The Jews thought to confine the benefits of salvation to their own nation; but Christ showed them that salvation is like the sunshine. It belongs to the whole world. **The religion of the Bible is not to be confined between the covers of a book, nor within the walls of a church.** It is not to be brought out occasionally for our own benefit, and then to be carefully laid aside again. **It is to sanctify the daily life, to manifest itself in every business transaction and in all our social relations.** {DA 306.5}

**True character is not shaped from without, and put on; it radiates from within. If we wish to direct others in the path of righteousness, the principles of righteousness must be enshrined in our own hearts.** Our profession of faith may proclaim the theory of religion, but it is our practical piety that holds forth the word of truth. **The consistent life, the holy conversation, the unswerving integrity, the active, benevolent spirit, the godly example,-- these are the mediums through which light is conveyed to the world.** {DA 307.1}

You mean the religion of the Bible isn't in:

- getting people baptized in the right way?
- worshipping on the right day?
- getting people to know who the beast of Revelation is?
- getting people to believe the right doctrines?



**The indwelling of the Spirit will be shown by the outflowing of heavenly love. The divine fullness will flow through the consecrated human agent, to be given forth to others... {COL 419.4}**

**The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit.** It means divine illumination, rejoicing in God. It means a heart emptied of self, and blessed with the abiding presence of Christ. **When Christ reigns in the soul, there is purity, freedom from sin.** The glory, the fullness, the completeness of the gospel plan is fulfilled in the life. **The acceptance of the Saviour brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance. The beauty and fragrance of the character of Christ revealed in the life testifies that God has indeed sent His Son into the world to be its Saviour. {COL 419.6}**

**Christ does not bid His followers strive to shine. He says, Let your light shine.** If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord's glory will be revealed. The light will shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. You cannot help shining within the range of your influence. {COL 420.1}

**The revelation of His own glory in the form of humanity will bring heaven so near to men that the beauty adorning the inner temple will be seen in every soul in whom the Saviour dwells.** Men will be captivated by the glory of an abiding Christ. And in currents of praise and thanksgiving from the many souls thus won to God, glory will flow back to the great Giver. {COL 420.2}

This is very much what John Wesley taught, the transformation of the inner person to live a life of Christ, a life of love for God and others. Real transformation and victory over fear and selfishness.

What are the obstructions that we must remove from ourselves in order for this light to shine through us?

**The acceptance of the Saviour brings a glow of perfect peace, perfect love, perfect assurance**

Is this Christian perfection – being at perfect peace, perfect love and perfect assurance? Notice it is a state of inner being, not one of outward performance?

## **MONDAY**

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To Be Witnesses – witnesses about what and to whom?

Any methods you have found effective?

Why is a message about health effective and even essential to sharing the gospel?





What is the gospel? The Good News about God and His methods!

- What laws do the health message operate upon?
  - Does this mirror God's moral law?
- So those who practice the healing arts – what is their attitude toward the sick?
  - Does this mirror God's attitude toward sinners?
- What do doctors/nurses do to their non-compliant patients?
  - Does this mirror God's actions toward unrepentant sinners?
- What is the cause of pain and suffering in the sick?
  - Does this give insight into the cause of pain and suffering of sinners?
- What causes the death of the sick?
  - Does this give insight into the death of the wicked?
- How do doctors and nurses respond when the sick one who dies is their own child?
  - Does this give insight into how God will respond to the eternal death of His children?
- Can the laws of health be changed to meet the sick patient in their sickness?
  - Does this give insight into why God's law cannot be changed to meet sinners in their sin?
- If a patient is sick and dying what needs to change in order for the patient to live – the laws of health, the attitude of the doctor or the condition of the patient?
  - Does this given insight into what needs to change in order for sinners to be saved –and the purpose of Christ's mission?

Does such a perspective help in witnessing the gospel message?

What does it mean to be a Christian?

The question you need to put to yourselves is, "Am I a Christian?" To be a Christian is to be far more than many understand. **It means more than simply having your name upon the church records. It means to be joined to Christ. It means to have simple faith, unwavering reliance upon God.** It means to have childlike confidence in your heavenly Father through the name and merit of His dear Son. **Do you love to keep the commandments of God, because the commandments of God are God's precepts, the transcript of His character, and can no more be altered than can the character of God?** Do you respect and love the law of Jehovah? {FLB 130.4}

Is there a connection between being a Christian and:

- being joined with Christ?
- having complete confidence, trust or faith in God?
- Relying on God for outcomes?
- Obeying God's law?
- Loving to obey God's law?



Why can the commandments not be altered? For the same reason the laws of health cannot be altered – they are the principles upon which life is constructed to operate.

And what is true obedience? To love to do it – thus Isaiah says we must call the Sabbath a delight- if it isn't a delight to us, a joy, something we are glad to do we are not obedient. Why not?

Because what God wants is love, not behavioral conformity – when the heart loves then living in harmony with the Designer is a joy.

## TUESDAY

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So Send I You – what has Jesus sent us to do?

As the Father sent Jesus, Jesus has sent us – so the question – what did the Father send Jesus to do?

To reveal Him, to dispel the lies about God, to win people back to trust in God, and to provide the Remedy to sin!

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." **We are to bear as definite a testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, as did Christ and his apostles.** Trusting in the efficiency of the Holy Spirit, we are to testify of **the mercy, goodness, and love** of a crucified and risen Saviour, and thus **be agents through whom the darkness will be dispelled from many minds**, and cause thanksgiving and praise to ascend from many hearts to God... {RH, June 25, 1895 par. 1}

**It is [Satan's] purpose to cast his hellish shadow, like the pall of death, between God and man, in order that he may hide Jesus from our view, so that he may cause us to forget the ministry of love and mercy, cut us off from further knowledge of God's great love and power to usward, and intercept every ray of light from heaven.** {RH, June 25, 1895 par. 2}

**Christ alone was able to represent the Deity.** He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, he who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone sufficient to accomplish this work. **No verbal description could reveal God to the world.** Through a life of purity, a life of perfect trust and submission to the will of God, a life of humiliation such as even the highest seraph in heaven would have shrunk from, **God himself must be revealed to humanity.** In order to do this, our Saviour clothed his divinity with humanity. **He employed the human faculties, for only adopting these could he be comprehended by humanity.** Only humanity could reach humanity. **He lived out the character of God through the human body** which God had prepared for him. **He blessed the world by living out in human flesh the life of God**, thus showing that he had the power **to unite humanity to divinity.** {RH, June 25, 1895 par. 3}



Christ was the divine and human united, what about us – because of Jesus, because of His victory, can we be a unity of divinity and humanity?

- We have the mind of Christ 1Cor 2:16
- Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, 2Pet 1:4
- I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. Gal 2:20
- Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? 1Cor 6:19

Are we to be a unity of humanity and divinity? Can we experience victory over sin in our lives? What does that look like? Love!

## WEDNESDAY

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Read third paragraph, “Jesus’ mandate indicates...” What is the purpose of baptism? When is baptism to be administered?

Do we administer baptism as they did in New Testament times?

What gets in the way of doing that?

Do creeds help bring unity, or are they sources of division?

I suggest that creeds, fundamental beliefs, cause division, not unity. It provides fodder for argument, disagreement, and takes our focus off of Jesus.

For instance – how many groups fight over:

- the right way to baptize
- the right foods to eat
- the right way to hold communion
- the right form of music
- the right understanding of the Trinity
- the right day to worship upon etc.

But in doing so have either taken their focus off of God and His character and methods, or another way to say it is, fighting over doctrines, without love results in both groups holding to the same false view of God and His methods.

People are no longer baptized into Christ they are baptized into sects, into divided groups based on their creeds.



We make our creeds, our fundamental beliefs, a test of fellowship and burden people with these systems thus making obstructions in salvation. We are divided as a body of believers over doctrines such as, state of the dead, which day to worship upon, how to baptize, how to perform communion etc. when we should be putting the truth about God at the center.

When we evangelize we do not baptize people when they surrender their heart to Christ – instead we require them to first, give up their Sabbath job, cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, porn, or whatever other identifiable sin we can perceive, and then study and then affirm the 28 beliefs before we baptize. Thus we:

- Require them to overcome sin before baptism into Jesus Christ – can we overcome sin in our own strength?
- And worse – we have merged baptism into Christ with membership into an institutional/denominational church, not the church universal. Thus, if a person becomes hurt by something in the institution and leaves the institution, often they feel as if they have left God, but this is not necessarily so.

Doctrines are only truly important as they inform us about God and reconnect us to Him. When we separate them from God and make them stand alone tenants, with proof texts, and tests of fellowship we place barriers between people and God and obstruct the healing and transformation God would have us experience. This is what the Jews did 2000 years ago, with their many doctrines – but disconnected from God they rejected and crucified their Creator when He stood among them.

Our challenge is to put every doctrine in its right setting, how it reveals the truth about God’s character of love. This is what the pamphlet, Fundamental Focus, does, demonstrates every doctrine is actually a revelation of God’s character of love, thus our only true Fundamental Belief is – God is love!

## **THURSDAY**

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The lesson focuses us on the three angel’s messages of Revelation 14 – and asks “How do these verses encompass the worldwide mission of the church?”

## **FRIDAY**

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Read and discuss questions 1-3