



Biblical Missionaries 3Q 2015 Lesson 1

The Missionary Nature of God

INTRODUCTION

In the first paragraph the lesson quotes Jesus, “All authority has been given Me in heaven and earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Mt 28:18-20)

What does it mean? Let’s break it down point by point:

- Who are disciples? Followers willing to be taught, to learn and apply what they learn to their lives.
- What is baptism? Is it a ritual or something else? It is about dunking in water, or about immersing the mind/heart into God?
- What does “in the name” mean? Is it about syllables? Or, is it about character?
- What does observe mean? To keep certain holidays, feast days? Or does it mean to live in harmony with God’s design?
- What did Jesus command? To love—but can love be commanded? Then why did He do it?
- So what is the message that the disciples of Jesus are to learn, assimilate into their lives, immerse others in and observe? Is it not the truth about God’s character of love, kingdom of love, methods of love, design protocols of love that life is constructed to operate upon?

Here is MT 28:18-20 from *The Remedy*:

Then Jesus walked up to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.¹⁹ So go and spread the Remedy to the entire world, teach the people of every nation, immersing their hearts and minds into the character and methods of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teach them to live in harmony with the law of love, the design protocols upon which life is built, exactly as I have instructed you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, all the way, right through to the very end of time."

Is this the way you think of the gospel commission? Or do we have some other idea?

Is the gospel commission to get people to join a certain denomination? Is it to get them to change their lifestyle (aren’t there many health-conscience people that have no interest in God?) Is it about getting people to worship on a certain day? What is the gospel commission?

Read second paragraph, “It’s not hard...” When you hear the first of the three angel’s messages, what do you hear?



What is the war between good and evil center upon? The truth about God (2Cor 10:3-5)

Who is the one who has been accused of being unjust and untrustworthy? God!

Who did Paul say would win his day in court? God! (Rom 3:4)

So, what is the final message to go to the world? Would it not be the good news about God, that allows people to make a right judgment about him so they can be saved?

Here is Rev 14:6-8 from *The Remedy*:

Then I saw another messenger flying in midair, and he had the eternal good news about God's character of love to proclaim to everyone living on earth, to every nation, tribe, language and people, which represents a movement of people who arise to proclaim the truth about God's character of love throughout the world.⁷He said in a clear resounding voice, "Be in awe of God, and glorify him by living his methods of love, because the hour has come for everyone to make a judgment about God and worship the Designer, Creator and Builder who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and springs of water, all of which operate upon his law of love."

Where do we find ourselves now in God's plan? Does God have a plan for His people to be missionaries in the world today? If so, what is the message we are to be taking to the world?

We often hear things like the "remnant of God," what message are they to take to the world?

Rev 12:17:

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- Who is the dragon? Satan
- Who is the woman? God's people, the true church invisible
- Who is the remnant? The end time people who remain true to God
- What does keep the commandments of God mean? Live in harmony with God's design for life, His law.
- What is the testimony of Jesus that they have?

At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev 19:10

What is the spirit of prophecy? One interpretation of this phrase is, an institution in which one



member of that institution was blessed with a particular gift of the spirit, called the gift of prophecy.

I think that particularly interpretation misdirects our focus and our message away from the central issue in the war, which is about God, and subtly directs our attention toward putting a church institution at the center. 2000 years ago a group of people were God's chosen on earth to fulfill a mission of evangelizing the world for Christ's first advent. They were blessed with many members who had the gift of prophecy. And this caused them to think of *themselves* as special, elite, and caused them to believe it was essential, above all else, that their nation survive. Thus, putting their institution at the center, Caiaphas said, "What fools you are! ⁵⁰Don't you realize that it is better for you to let one man die for the people, instead of having the whole nation destroyed?" Jn 11:49,50

If we interpret the phrase "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" to mean a single person, now deceased, who was gifted with the gift of prophecy, do we subtly shift the focus where Scripture does not actually lead? (Note, I am not questioning at all whether the gift of prophecy was manifested in a person or not. The Jewish nation clearly had many prophets, yet it did not protect them from, as a nation, choosing institutional loyalty over loyalty to God.)

Here is Rev 19:10 from the Good News Translation:

I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Don't do it! I am a servant together with you and with your fellow-believers, all those who hold to the truth that Jesus revealed. Worship God!" For the truth that Jesus revealed is what inspires the prophets.

Does this suggest another meaning? What truth would it be that Jesus revealed that would have inspired the prophets? What is the central issue in the war? Who is on trial? What is the truth Jesus said He came to reveal?

Here it is from *The Remedy*:

I was so overwhelmed with awe I fell down to honor him, but he told me, "Don't honor me! I am a fellow worker on God's team with you and with your brothers and sisters who hold to the testimony Jesus revealed about his Father. Give honor to God and worship him! For the testimony Jesus gave about his Father is the same as that which inspired the prophets."

What is our mission as missionaries today? Is it not to present the truth about God, first, last and always? Here is a quote from one of the founders of our church:

"It is the **darkness of misapprehension of God** that is enshrouding the world. **Men are losing their knowledge of His character.** It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. **At this time** a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. **His character is to be made known.** Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy and



truth...**The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is the revelation of His character of love.**” Christ's Object Lessons, p.415

Is this the message we are taking to the world, or instead, have we also taken a dictator god to the world, a god who imposes laws and imposes rules, only telling people we know his true rules and you have a wrong set of rules, come keep the rules we have?

SABBATH

Read first paragraph, “Our world...” Are we all sinners? Yes—but how did we become this way?

Ps. 51:5 we were born this way—we didn’t choose to be this way! And therefore, it isn’t our fault we are this way. But even though not our fault, we are still terminal.

Consider a child with HIV infected parents, born HIV infected. Did the child do anything wrong? No, but does the child still have a condition that will kill it? This is our situation, we are not born guilty, we are not under legal condemnation, we are born with a condition that is deviant from God’s design and we need healing.

Read second paragraph, “All is not lost...” Jesus died for our sins, which means what? What law lens do you use?

Is God’s law design law, protocols upon which life is built or functionally, no different that what created beings make, rules that require external enforcement and inflicted punishment?

Pause and think about it and then think, through both views, what does it mean Jesus died for our sins?

What is the Catholic understanding of how Jesus death deals with our sins?

I watched a discussion between a Catholic Priest and Protestant theologian on this question. The Catholic Priest said our sins are dealt with when we confess and partake of the Holy Communion, i.e. the Eucharist which becomes the literal flesh of Jesus when one partakes. The Protestant theologian challenged this saying that the Bible says Jesus died, once for all, and alleged that the Catholic view teaches Jesus dies over and over again every time the Eucharist is taken. The Priest responded with this explanation:

“There are two elements to any sacrifice the immolation and the offering. The immolation is a bloody death. The lamb is slain, what is precious about that is the life in the blood of the lamb is precious and that pays back God. That’s how the Old Testament rituals used to work. The immolation happened once but the offering is something Christ does for all eternity. He is right now in the presence of the Father, in the holy of holies, in the eternal presence, offering



himself to the Father for the forgiveness of our sins.... Christ isn't killed again and again and again, he is offered [in the Eucharist] in the same eternal presence as Christ offers himself."

<http://amazingdiscoveries.org/12.10.24-debate-about-the-mass-and-transubstantiation>

The priest said it was in this offering of his sacrifice over and over again to God that the sins were paid for. So each time we sin, we must take mass in order to have the sacrifice of Christ pay God for that sin.

How do you think the Protestant theologian responded? The Protestant theologian responded, with the argument that Christ is not in heaven offering his sacrifice over and over, but offering his *merits* to the Father over and over again to pay for our sins.

In the Protestant view, all human sins were placed on Christ at the Cross and paid for there, but when we pray for forgiveness, then Jesus goes to the Father and reminds the Father of what He has already done in paying for the sins and claims his "merits" as the payment He offers to the Father.

What is the basis of their argument? They both believe God's law is no different operationally than human law, rules imposed that require punishment. Thus, both believe Jesus had to do some legal action to pay for those sins, and that the Father as the supreme Judge must have something offered to Him to satisfy His sense of justice and deal with His anger and wrath. The Catholic view, it is Jesus' sacrifice being offered to the Father, the Protestant view, it is Jesus' merits being offered to the Father.

What do you think? What do you understand if you step back and realize God's law is design law, that deviations are destructive to the deviant and if God does nothing, the sinner dies eternally. Then, what do you understand dying for our sins to mean?

Here are a few quotes from one of the founders of our church:

"In assuming human nature, that he might reach to the very depths of human woe and misery and **lift man up**, Christ has shown what estimate he places upon the human race. In this work everything was at stake. **Satan claimed to be the lawful owner of the fallen race; [who takes a legal approach?]** and with what persistent effort did he seek to overthrow Christ through his subtlety! It was only by the most desperate conflict with the powers of Satan that Christ could accomplish his **purpose of restoring the almost obliterated image of God in man, and place his own signature upon his forehead.** It was a desperate battle; for **Satan had so long worked in league with human intelligencies** as to almost completely intercept every ray of light shining from the throne of God upon the human mind. The cross of Calvary alone could destroy the works of the devil. In that wondrous sacrifice all eyes were called to 'behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' The love of Christ kindles in the heart of all who continue to behold him. {General Conference Daily Bulletin, March 2, 1897 par. 17}



In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. **Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost.** GC 645

Weakened through sin, we can not of ourselves keep the law of God. But **Christ came to our world to restore the moral image of God in men**, and to bring them back from the path of disobedience to a path of obedience. **His mission to the world was to reveal the character of God by living the law, which is the foundation of his government;** and those who will accept him as their personal Saviour will grow in grace, and in his strength will be enabled to obey the law of God. {ST, February 11, 1897 par. 15}

Christ came to give expression to the law of God, to represent the Father's character. He came to minister to man, to restore in him the moral image of God. Tho he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. {ST, August 26, 1897 par. 3}

How does God get a new heaven and new earth? What is the key to making it new? Is it merely a issue of recreating physical matter? Or is it something more? It is about having an environment without fear, without selfishness, where all beings are 100% trustworthy all the time and love others more than self?

How does God get such a place? Can He get this by force and power?

God can only get what He longs for, the restoration of His character of love into His children, when we come back to a true knowledge of Him – and this cannot happen until we reject the imposed law construct and come back to worship Him who made the heavens, earth, sea and all that is in them – Designer worship!

WEDNESDAY

God's Initiative to Save Us – what does this title mean? Do you believe it?

From what is God saving us? Is God working through Christ to save us from Himself, from the punishment He would inflict on us if Christ didn't die for us? Absolutely not! But this is what is often taught.

God is working through Christ to heal us (save, Greek *sodzo* means to save), from sin, which is a state of being deviant from His design. He is working to set us right, or make us right, which is the same as to make righteous or justify. However, because of the infection of imposed law, the term justify has been twisted to mean legal adjustment rather than actual change within the heart and mind of the believer in Christ. See the last paragraph,



“God ‘made Him who knew...” notice how the last sentences says so we can be “counted as righteous” no, it is so we can be MADE righteous, actually healed, actually restored, actually recreated to have the mind of Christ!

Our natural heart is “enmity” toward God, i.e. opposed to God, selfish rather than selfless, and thus out of harmony with God’s design for life. This is a terminal condition. Romans 4 tells us Abraham trusted God and THEN, after his heart was changed from distrust to trust, he was recognized or counted as righteous. The change in Abraham came first, the accounting or recognition was a recognition of what was real, what had actually transpired in the heart/mind of Abraham, not as penal/legal theologies state, a declaration of righteousness even though we are not.

SUNDAY

We are talking about Biblical Missionaries – why do you think the lesson focuses on the creation of Adam and Eve?

The lesson will go on to discuss free will and love, and then the fall, but for right now, is there some aspect of God’s missionary nature that was being expressed in the creation of Adam and Eve?

What was happening in the universe when this earth was created? War had already broken out in heaven—what kind of war? A polemic (Rev 12) – which is a war of words, over what? Over God’s trustworthiness—so how did God respond?

God provided evidence: He began to create a new solar system, with a new planet teeming with life and with new intelligent beings who were given procreative ability and dominion to govern, and then God rested His case. Why? What was revealed? What were the charges of Satan that were refuted by God’s work during creation week of planet earth?

Paul says that we are a spectacle, a theater, to angels and men (1Cor 4:9)

Was God being a missionary by creating planet earth and were Adam and Eve to be missionaries to angels?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, “Embedded in the Creation...” Why was it wrong to eat from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge? The lesson states we have the capacity for moral judgment, which is the ability to tell right from wrong – so why don’t we examine the question of eating from the Tree of Knowledge through the seven levels.



1. **Level One—Reward and Punishment:** It is wrong to eat from it because God will punish. It is right not to eat because God will not punish.
2. **Level Two—Marketplace Exchange:** It is wrong to eat because it breaks the deal with God and would lose His blessings and place in the garden. It is right not to eat to keep all the benefits from God.
3. **Level Three—Social Conformity:** It is wrong to eat if my community says it is wrong, it is right to eat we, as a community, agree it is right.
4. **Level Four—Law and Order:** It is wrong because it breaks God’s law and is treason against the divine government, which would require a just God to inflict the death penalty. It is right not to eat because we avoid legal trouble with God.
5. **Level Five—Love for Others:** It is wrong to eat because it would be an act of selfishness, taking what is not one’s own. When we love others we don’t take what is another’s for ourselves. It is right not to eat because we want to protect the best interests of the other.
6. **Level Six—Principle-Based Living:** It is wrong to eat because it would deviate from God’s design and infect them with a terminal condition. It is right not to eat because they continue to live in harmony with His design of love.
7. **Level Seven—Understanding Friend of God:** It is wrong to eat because it breaks trust with God, which violates the law of love, alters their condition, and obstructs God’s purpose for the creation of earth and humankind.

Read second paragraph, “God could...” What would be lost had He done this? The ability to love!

Read fourth paragraph, “Because of its divine...” This is so well said – do you agree?

If it is against the character of God to force compliance or obedience how do we apply this fact to our theology?

Are certain teachings ruled out if this is true?

If someone said to you, “You are free to obey me or not. That is your choice, but if you don’t I will torture and kill you.” Are they respecting your freedom?

But, what if they said, “I have to torture and kill you because the law requires it and I must be just—but remember you are free and I would never coerce you”?

So, if God is not threatening to kill us if we disobey, does that mean everyone will be saved? Why not?



The critical issue is: how do we understand God's law – if we accept the lie that it functions like human law, rules imposed, we inevitably teach God inflicts punishment, which contradicts His character, the law of liberty and coerces.

We must come back to understanding God as Creator, and His law as the protocols upon which life is constructed, then deviations are understood to destroy the deviant as God leave all free who choose to persist in deviation from His design. Death comes from sin, living outside the law life was designed to operate upon, not from God!

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Eating a little...” What do you think “stern necessity” means? Had it been some stern necessity would that had made a difference?

Why did God give the clear instructions? What was the purpose for Him telling them not to eat of the fruit? Why did He put the tree in the Garden in the first place?

Here are a couple of historic quotes:

God would not permit Satan to follow the holy pair with continual temptations. **He could have access to them only at the tree of knowledge of good and evil.** E.G. White, Story of Redemption 31

God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case **man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automaton.** Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. **There could have been no development of character...** It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule. E.G. White, Conflict and Courage 33

Do you agree? If you understand Design Law then this reasons fit perfectly, but if operating level four and below, under imposed law concepts, then other reasons come to mind.

Read second paragraph, “Likewise, we must...” How does God get us to choose to follow Him? What method does He use?

Truth, presented in love, leaving us free! As the lesson says, He never coerces. How much of Christianity violates this by presenting God as threatening to punish disobedience?

So, what does it mean to cherish God's Word? Does it mean a “God said it, I believe it, that settles



it” attitude? Is it “My Bible says” attitude?

What is the problem with cherishing the Word of God like this? First, it doesn’t require one to actually understand what is meant, thus misunderstanding occurs and people can actually go out in God’s name and misrepresent Him.

Further, if one has a thoughtless attitude, just obey, they only have to be convinced the messenger is from God and they do what they are told, no questions. Remember the story of the young and old prophet? (1Kings 13)

Who were called God’s friends in the Old Testament? Abraham and Moses, and what did they do when God came with instructions? How did they respond to God’s Word?

- When God told Moses he needed him to be a spokesperson what did Moses do? Did he cherish that information? Did he argue?
- When God told Moses he was going to destroy Israel, what did Moses do?
- When God told Abraham that he was going to destroy Sodom, what did Abraham do? Did he cherish God’s Word, or question it?

God wants us to understand, so if we don’t, he wants us to ask questions, with a heart of true concern for God, to truly know and be in harmony with Him. He hates blind obedience, thoughtless adherence to rules, because such practices obstruct our growth and healing and actually separate us from God.

Fourth paragraph quotes Genesis 3:24: “After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”

What are the implications? If, as many Christians believe, human beings possess innate immortality, why bar them from the tree of life?

What was the reason for barring them? To prevent sinners from having access to the fountain of youth, which is what I believe the tree of life actually was—a source of perfect nutrition that prevented physiological aging and healed all physiological problems. But, the tree of life would not have prevented Cain from smashing Abel’s head with a rock, or beheading, or vaporization in a nuclear explosion. True immortality comes only from God, not from a tree.

Imagine, what would have happened on earth if the tree had remained accessible to sinful beings? Who do you think would have controlled it?

Just consider how evil would have been multiplied and magnified on earth had that happened. Thus, God, in great love and mercy, limited evil by preventing sinful beings from having access to a youth promoting, healing resource.



THURSDAY

What is our mission? What is the message we have to offer? Do we have something to say that people need to hear? What?

What does salt do? Not only does it enhance flavor, it increases thirst – are we to make the gospel more palatable and cause people to thirst for more?

FRIDAY

Discuss questions 1-3



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

On July 4, Class **WILL** meet here at our usual time, however, we will not broadcast it live because our entire broadcast team will be at the GC. We will audio record it and the audio and notes will be available on our website. On July 11, we will be back to normal broadcast and recording.

The Remedy – Dr. Jennings’ New Testament Paraphrase– ALL GLITCHES NOW FIXED in the IOS Version! So please UPDATE to latest version.

The Journal of the Watcher is now available as a movie in itunes for everyone without ios or android, you can now get it in itunes.

July 1-12: GC session at San Antonio. Come and Reason will have a booth in the exhibit hall, booth A481. Please come by and see us if you are there. We will have class at our regular times here in Collegedale.

August 1: Dr. Jennings will be speaking to the Petaluma, CA SDA church.

September 3,4: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Baptist Boomer’s Conference in San Antonio, TX.

September 12: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Vallejo Dr., CA SDA church.

September 23-26: American Association of Christian Counselors World Convention at Gaylord Opryland Hotel, Nashville TN. Come and Reason will have a booth in the exhibit hall, and Dr. Jennings will be doing a preconference workshop and regular conference presentation, as well as commencement speaker for Light University graduation.

October 24: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in Puyallup, WA.