

MEMORY VERSE: “I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life. I am Yours, save me; for I have sought Your precepts.”

Psalms 119:93, 94, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This week’s lesson explores the impact of sin on our relationships.

1. Sin is action as well as condition (Sun, Mon)

- The Bible describes sin as action (1 Jn. 3:4; Isa. 1:18; Mt. 1:21) as well as condition (Jn. 1:29; Rom. 5:12; 7:8, 9).
 - Adam & Eve’s sin (action) separated them from God (condition) – see Isa. 59:1, 2. Satan now preys upon our weakened natures to keep us apart from God.
 - “Perhaps you’ve been distracted with something that may not necessarily be wrong in itself but takes so much time and energy that there’s very little left for God. Maybe it’s work, social media, shopping, sports, or food. When we take a good hard look at ourselves, we’ll see that overconsumption and an imbalance of any of these things can allow for little time for God and others. The enemy knows each of our weaknesses and the kinds of things that distract us from spending time with God.” *Otly, Sun, par 2*
- Monday’s lesson points out several “relationship barriers” such as pride, lust, critical or judgmental attitudes and hate.
 - In harmony with Jesus’ teaching in Mk. 9:43, 44, the lesson cautions us to take serious measures to avoid these things.
 - It must be kept in mind, however, that all of these proceed “out of the heart” (see Mt. 15:18, 19).

2. God’s Law reveals sin and righteousness (Tue)

- “It’s the law that brings to light what sin really is” (Ps. 119:172; Rom. 3:20; 7:7; 1 Tim. 1:8-11).
 - God’s Law – the Ten Commandments – is often referred to as the “moral law,” or the law that points out what’s right and wrong. But what is it that makes morality “right?”
 - God’s law reveals what is best for us and prohibits what is not (Ps. 19:11; 84:11; Dt. 6:24, 25; Pr. 29:18).

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression. 1SM 235.1 (see also SC 46.2)

3. The gospel is God's remedy for sin (Wed, Thu)

- While the law points out the right from the wrong, it can neither help us do right nor forgive us for doing wrong.
 - “At-one-ment” can only be achieved by the removal of sin, and this is something the law can never do. This is why the Gospel is the “good news” about Jesus, who came to save us from our sins (see Mt. 1:21).

Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort, all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce an outward correctness of behavior, but they cannot change the heart... . There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul, and attract it to God, to holiness. SC 18.1

- The fruit of the gospel, therefore, is obedience (see Mt. 7:21).
- Legalism, on the other hand, is man's outright rejection of the gospel in order to save himself by his own works.
 - While obedience is a *response* to God's favor, legalism is an attempt to *earn* God's favor. While true obedience springs from a love of God and His law, legalistic obedience comes from a servile fear of God and His law.
 - What makes legalism especially burdensome is that those seeking to earn God's favor by their own works of obedience are on a path of perpetual failure with no hope of assurance.

The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us, but in our hearts and characters. 7ABC 464.4

CONCLUSION

“This blueprint of a close relationship is no secret. It's revealed in the pages of God's inspired Word, and He offers it to every person. It's each one's personal choice to accept it by faith, to claim the perfect righteousness of Christ, and then to live out that righteousness.” Q4tly,