

Sabbath School Today
With the 1888 Message Dynamic

***Making Friends for God:
The Joy of Sharing in His Mission***

Lesson 3: Seeing People Through Jesus' Eyes

About 20 years ago there was a Christian movement that identified itself by wearing jewelry and bracelets with "WWJD?" on them—"What Would Jesus Do?" The idea was that the wearer was declaring that their actions and words took place with this question foremost in their minds. If presented with a situation, they would ask themselves: what would Jesus do if He were confronted with this problem?

The biggest problem that Jesus ever faced was the rebellion of His creatures when Adam and Eve sinned by listening to the Enemy and turning their backs on their Maker. It was not an insurmountable problem, neither was it a problem which the Godhead was unprepared to meet. The problem was promptly answered by Jesus Himself. "I will put enmity [intense hatred] between you [Satan] and My beloved. They have turned their backs on Me now, but they will come to realize the intensity of My eternal love for them, and they will return to Me." That is His promise to all who will believe.

Jesus looked with pity upon His deceived human friends, and with His divine arm He encircled them in His embrace of love. Forgiveness was immediate, even though Adam did not ask for it. "As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour." The death penalty did not fall on Adam because "the instant man accepted the temptations of Satan, and did the very things God had said he should not do, Christ, the Son of God, stood between the living and the dead, saying, 'Let the punishment fall on Me. I will stand in man's place. He shall have another chance.'" [1] Adam well knew the punishment for sinning; the death penalty was clearly presented to him by God Himself. "In the day that you eat of this tree, you will die." (Gen. 2:17).

What would Jesus do when His children rebelled against Him? He laid down His life for them. "Let the punishment fall on Me, so that man can have another chance." Each and every human being ever born into this world was born because of the gift of Jesus' death for them. In theological terms this is called "legal justification" and it took place "as soon as there was sin" in this world through Adam's fall. The human race was placed on a second probation to see how, individually, we would handle the gift of God's Son. Through His death Jesus redeemed the human race. "He has bought us; and having bought us, He has broken every bond that hindered us from serving Him. If we but believe, we have the victory that has overcome the world. 1 John 5:4; John 16:33." [2]

Jesus saved us from the just penalty of the broken law that demanded the death of the sinner. He did this by “being made a curse for us” (Gal. 3:13). “Sin can have no dominion over us if we accept Christ in truth and without reserve. This was just as much present truth in the days of Abraham, Moses, David, and Isaiah, as it is today.” [3]

In the Garden that fateful day when Adam sinned, victory was obtained for the whole human race through the promise of God’s everlasting covenant which is the eternal promise that the Son of God would lay down His life to save us. “This victory, in its fullness, is free to every soul in Christ Jesus. It is received by faith in Jesus. It is accomplished and maintained by ‘the faith of Jesus,’ which He wrought out in perfection, and has given to every believer in Him. For ‘this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith.’” [4]

When we “see people through Jesus’ eyes” we will see that they are saved by His precious blood. They are already one of God’s children, destined for the eternal kingdom. All were “chosen before the foundation of the world” as “adopted children in Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:4, 5). There is no difference in race, social position in life, male or female, Jew or Gentile. All were included in that promise to place enmity in our hearts against sin and Satan so that we might learn to appreciate the gift of God’s love for us, demonstrated through His Son, who laid down His life for His friends (John 15:13; Rom. 5:10).

This being the truth, it is our responsibility as God’s witnesses to declare to all who have not heard this good news that they *already have* forgiveness for their sins. No one is asked to make himself “good” before he can come to God. No one is capable of “making himself good.” That is an impossibility. We are all “without strength” and completely incapable of making ourselves any better than we are: “wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked” (Rev. 3:17).

Jesus’ mission was to save the world, and salvation comes only through His compassion and love. “At the time of Christ’s first advent the world was in a terrible condition. Men were being controlled by satanic agencies. The Majesty of heaven looked with pity on the human race. He saw that Satan was gaining control of the bodies and minds of men, and Christ knew that He alone could break the enemy’s power. It was because of this that He laid off His kingly crown and royal robe, and clothing His divinity with humanity, came to our world to meet the powers of darkness, and to hold in check the forces of Satan. This was His work. A counter-working influence, coming from the highest authority, was to hold the enemy in check, and resist his power.” [5]

“The Lord wants everyone to be saved, and that with the very fullness of salvation. And therefore He has given to every one of us the very fullness of grace, because it is grace that brings salvation. For it is written, ‘The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,’ Titus 2:11. Thus the Lord wants all to be saved, and therefore He gave all of His grace, bringing salvation to all.” [6]

If ever there was powerful good news, this is it! “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (2 Cor. 5:19, 20). God has already done what is necessary for the salvation of the whole human race. Our assignment as God’s ambassadors is to bring this good news to the people we come into contact with on a daily basis.

—Ann Walper

Endnotes:

[1] Ellen G. White, Letter 22, Feb. 13, 1900.

[2] E. J. Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, p. 13; CFI ed. (2016).

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

[4] A. T. Jones, *Review and Herald*, Oct. 2, 1900; cf. Gal. 2:16, 20; Rom. 12:3.

[5] Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, January 21, 1909.

[6] A. T. Jones, *Review and Herald*, April 17, 1894.

Notes:

Pastor Paul Penno’s video of this lesson is on the Internet at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMUp5ehWZ6Q>

Many of Pastor Penno’s sermons are on YouTube in Spanish. Just type **pastor paul penno en español** in the search bar.

You may subscribe to the e-mail version of *Sabbath School Today* by sending a request to sabbathschooltoday@1888message.org