

DEEPER

Daily Bible Study

Adult Sabbath School Lesson
Podcast, Study Notes, and Teacher Helps

The Rhythms of Life

2019, Quarter 2, Lesson 1

Sabbath (March 30, 2019): Family Seasons

This quarter's lessons focus on the family, God's purpose for it, and the various challenges and victories that a Christian family faces as it passes through the seasons of life. Last quarter we studied the book of Revelation, which predicts the glorious fulfillment of Christ's promise in Matthew 24:14 that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." One of the primary ways that the "everlasting gospel" (Revelation 14:6) will be shared with the world is through the influence of the Christian family.

Discussion Questions:

- Read the following statement: "The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart" (AH 32). For what reasons is this statement true? (Answers will vary.) In what ways have you seen the truth of this statement demonstrated in families you know? (Answers will vary.)
- Read the following statement: "Our business in this world ... is to see what virtues we can teach our children and our families to possess, that they shall have an influence upon other families, and thus we can be an educating power although we never enter into the desk. A well-ordered, a well-disciplined family in the sight of God is more precious than fine gold, even than the golden wedge of Ophir" (AH 32). What is implied by the phrase "our business in this world"? (The focus of our best energy, resources, and prayers, should include the well-being of our family.)

Sunday (March 31, 2019): In the Beginning

The family, along with the Sabbath, is one of the "twin institutions" given by God to humanity in the Garden of Eden "for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity" (AH 340). The Christian family formed by the union of a man and woman in marriage is part of God's creation that He declared to be "very good" in Genesis 1:31.

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Discussion Questions:

- Read Genesis 2:22. How did God form the first human family? (He united Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, in marriage.)
- Read Genesis 2:23-24. What secret for a happy and successful marriage is revealed here? (In marriage, and in a family formed by that marriage, both the man and the woman should remember that they are now “one.”) In what ways should this concept permeate every relationship within a family? (All members of the family should remember that they are united together by God.)
- Read the following statement: “Home should be made all that the word implies. It should be a little heaven upon earth, a place where the affections are cultivated instead of being studiously repressed. Our happiness depends upon this cultivation of love, sympathy, and true courtesy to one another” (AH 15). What other institutions or “pictures” of heaven has God given to us here on earth? (Answers may vary. The Sabbath, the church, and the sanctuary are possible answers.) What does this tell you about the sanctity and importance of the family?
- Read the following statement: “Society is composed of families, and is what the heads of families make it. Out of the heart are “the issues of life”; and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences” (AH 15). In what ways have you found this to be true in your own family, church, and community? (Answers will vary.)

Monday (April 1, 2019): The Rhythms of Life

Ecclesiastes 3:1 states, “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” These “rhythms of time” were certainly built into the physical fabric of creation through the interaction of the heavenly bodies to delineate the day, the month, and the solar year. However, the seven-day week is unique because the Word of God defines and determines it, and the seventh-day Sabbath is special because “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it” (Genesis 2:3).

Discussion Questions:

- What does, or should, the Sabbath teach us about the importance of time? (Answers will vary. Our use of the Sabbath hours is important, as is the preparation we make for the Sabbath on the other six days of the week.)
- Read the following statement: “Then [at Creation] marriage and the Sabbath had their origin, twin institutions for the glory of God in the benefit of humanity” (AH 340). In what ways are the Sabbath and the family connected? (Both are for the “glory of God in the benefit of humanity.”) What does it mean that both of these institutions are for the “glory of God in the benefit of humanity? (Answers will vary. God is best glorified when we are benefiting others, not simply pursuing our own spiritual or physical well-being.)

Tuesday (April 2, 2019): The Unexpected

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Perhaps no other story in the Bible better illustrates a faithful Christian response to the unexpected twists, turns, and tragedies of life than does the story of Job. Job chapters 1 and 2 recount the sudden and unexpected events that transformed Job's life from one of wealth, honor, and prestige to financial, relational, and physical ruin. Of course, because of Job's faithfulness through these trials, God blesses him with even more wealth, property and honor than he had before (see Job 41:7-17).

Discussion Questions:

- Read Romans 8:28. What key to maintaining our faith in God during life's hard times is revealed in this verse? (Remembering and trusting that God can and will work through all of life's trials to accomplish the best for us.)
- Read Job 1:21; 2:10; and 13:15. What aspects of Job's character are revealed in these verses? (Answers will vary.)
- In what ways does Job's story, and his faithfulness, give you courage and hope in the midst of life's unexpected trials? (Answers will vary.)

Wednesday (April 3, 2019): Transitions

Life is full of transitions, even for a single person. For a family, the frequency and impact of life's transitions becomes greatly magnified. While we often worry and stress about these transitions—such as where to go to school, getting married, having children, moving, changing jobs, or entering retirement—the Bible identifies the most important transition that every person will hopefully make in their life.

Discussion Questions:

- Read John 3:3-5. What is the most important transition we can make in our life? (Being "born again" of water and the Spirit.)
- For what reasons, other than the obvious one of being saved, is the new birth experience so important in our lives, especially in relation to the other transitions and decisions we face? (Answers will vary. When we are born again and led by the Holy Spirit, God can lead us toward wise decisions in the various other aspects of our lives.)
- Read John 4:34. In what ways would the many transitions in our lives be simpler, or at least less stressful, if Christ's attitude were our attitude each day? (Answers will vary.)

Thursday (April 4, 2019): Interactions

Revelation 21:1-4 reveal that God is a relational Being, One Who loves His creation and desires a relationship with us. Since we are created in His image (Genesis 1:26,27), our lives, too, are made up of interactions with other people. Perhaps nowhere is the impact, both for good and for bad, of human interactions realized than within the family.

Discussion Questions:

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- Read the following statement: “God would have our families symbols of the family in heaven. Let parents and children bear this in mind every day, relating themselves to one another as members of the family of God. Then their lives will be of such a character as to give to the world an object lesson of what families who love God and keep His commandments may be. Christ will be glorified; His peace and grace and love will pervade the family circle like a precious perfume” (AH 17). What challenges and promises do you see in this statement? (Answers will vary.)
- Read the following statement: “The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth. It was designed to be a blessing to mankind. And it is a blessing wherever the marriage covenant is entered into intelligently, in the fear of God, and with due consideration for its responsibilities” (AH 18). How can God’s purpose for family relationships be realized in our lives today? (Answers will vary. See James 3:17; Romans 15:7; Ephesians 4:2,32; and 1 Thessalonians 3:2; and James 5:16 for help.)

Friday (April 5, 2019): The Family Sanctuary

The importance of the family and God’s purpose for Christian families at the end of time can be measured in part by the devil’s unprecedented level of attack against families today. Yet it is clear, both from Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy, that God has a critical and unique purpose for Christian families today. Consider the following statement from the book *The Ministry of Healing*:

The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home. The work of parents underlies every other. Society is composed of families, and is what the heads of families make it. Out of the heart are “the issues of life” ([Proverbs 4:23](#)); and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences” (MH 349).

In a sense, the Christian family is to be a sanctuary where God can dwell, where life is lived in holiness, and where others can learn the truth of the gospel. As with the wilderness sanctuary that Moses built, God desires that He may “dwell among” (Exodus 25:8) every Christian family. Within this framework, the family may be understood as a type of the sanctuary.

The Family Sanctuary

The Gate

The gate represents the door between the world and the sanctuary, or home. The Word of God should determine what comes through the gate and enters the family sanctuary. “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart...And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates” (Deuteronomy 6:6,9). Consider the following statements regarding the responsibility of parents to guard what comes into the home.

The influence of a carefully guarded Christian home in the years of childhood and youth is the surest safeguard against the corruptions of the world. In the atmosphere of such a home the children will learn to love both their earthly parents and their heavenly Father.¹⁸ {MS 126, 1903; AH, 19.2}

*From their infancy the youth need to have a firm barrier built up between them and the world, that its corrupting influence may not affect them.*¹⁹ {CT 119; AH 19.3}

Every Christian family should illustrate to the world the power and excellence of Christian influence...Parents should realize their accountability to keep their homes free from every taint of moral evil.²⁰ {RH, Oct. 9, 1900; AH 19.4}

Altar of Burnt Offering

The altar of burnt offering was the place where morning and evening sacrifices were offered in the sanctuary. In the family sanctuary, this altar represents morning and evening worship. Exodus 29:38-46 contains several interesting points about the morning and evening sacrifice that also apply to successful family worships.

- These offerings were voluntary, not mandated (Leviticus 1:3). While worship may be required for younger members of the family, the goal should be that this participation becomes voluntary as children grow.
- Morning sacrifice to cover sins committed during the night and evening sacrifice to cover sins committed during the day (*Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 277). Family worships should include a time of confession and forgiveness for sins committed against each other since the previous worship.
- A continual sacrifice (Exodus 29:38) from day to day. Family worship should occur every day.
- At set times each day (Exodus 29:39). Family worship should be at the same time each day.
- God met the children of Israel at these sacrifices (Exodus 29:43). It should be remembered that God wants to meet the family during worship.
- The tabernacle sanctified by God’s glory during these sacrifices (Exodus 29:43). The family can be sanctified by this time with God.

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- Fire never to go out on altar of burnt offering (Leviticus 6:8-13). The lessons and attitude carried from worship should continue throughout the day.

Compare the following statement about the importance of morning and evening worship:

In every family there should be a fixed time for morning and evening worship. How appropriate it is for parents to gather their children about them before the fast is broken, to thank the heavenly Father for His protection during the night, and to ask Him for His help and guidance and watch care during the day! How fitting, also, when evening comes, for parents and children to gather once more before Him and thank Him for the blessings of the day that is past! {CG 520.1}

The Holy Place

In the family sanctuary, the “holy place” is where family members learn to do well, understand the family and church’s mission, and are enabled to be proactive in our witness to others.

- The table of showbread represents the Word of God, the foundation of how the family is ordered (compare Deuteronomy 6:4-8).
- The altar of incense represents prayer. “Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Wellspring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor” (*Messages to Young People*, 249, 250).
- The candlestick represents the mission of the Christian family. Consider the following statements regarding God’s purpose for Christian families:

*The first work of Christians is to be united in the family. Then the work is to extend to their neighbors nigh and afar off. Those who have received light are to let the light shine forth in clear rays. Their words, fragrant with the love of Christ, are to be a savor of life unto life.*¹² {MS 11, 1901; AH 37.4}

*The greatest evidence of the power of Christianity that can be presented to the world is a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart.*⁵ {AH 32.2}

*One well-ordered, well-disciplined family tells more in behalf of Christianity than all the sermons that can be preached...*The whole family is engaged in the service of the Master; and by their godly example, others are inspired to be faithful and true to God in dealing with His flock, His beautiful flock. {AH 32.1}

The Most Holy Place

The Most Holy Place represents the place of faith in Christ’s work for us as High Priest in heaven’s sanctuary, and the spiritual victory that He gives us through that work (compare

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Leviticus 16:30 and Ephesians 5:25-27). Every Christian family should be a safe, encouraging, and empowering place where every member of the family can grow in this faith relationship with Jesus Christ, and where spiritual growth and victories can be experienced.