

DEEPER

Daily Bible Study

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

Preparing for Change

2019, Quarter 2, Lesson 3

Sabbath (April 13, 2019)

Proverbs 22:3 says, “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.” This week’s lesson explores the changes that face humanity as we go through life. Of course, not all of these changes are “evil,” as the proverb says, but careful and prayerful preparation help them all go easier. We will start this week’s lessons by looking at the most important change that can occur to any person in their life.

Discussion Questions:

- Read John 3:3. What is the most important change that can happen to any person? (Being born again.)
- Read Jeremiah 17:9. What is the problem with each one of us in our natural, sinful state? (Our heart is “desperately wicked”.) What do you think “desperately wicked” means? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Ephesians 4:22-24. In what way is the born again Christian different from the natural born person? (Their heart now reflects Christ’s character of righteousness and “true holiness.”)

Ellen White writes in Manuscript 148 (1897):

“We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory (from character to character), even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” [2 [Corinthians 3:18](#).] Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. By beholding, we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character. By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him. The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being. {Ms148-1897.22}

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to be “captivated” by the “image of Christ”? (Answers will vary.)
- In what ways have you experienced the reality of this promise in your life? (Answers will vary.)

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Sunday (April 14): Unprepared

Israel's experience in the wilderness provides a sobering lesson in the results of being unprepared to follow God's leading. Hebrews 3:19 bluntly states, "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." In today's lesson we will look at some of the things that kept Israel unprepared to enter the Promised Land.

Discussion Questions:

- Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-4. What had Israel's experience been with God as He led them out of Egypt? (God worked many miracles to free them from the power of Egypt.) In verse 1, what does Paul urge his "brethren" to do? (Remember, and not forget, God's leading in the past.) Is this good counsel for us today? (Yes!) In what ways has God led the Seventh-day Adventist church in the past that we may be in danger of forgetting today? (Answers will vary.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 10:5,6. Besides forgetting God's leading in their past, what other fundamental mistake did Israel make? (They allowed their lust of evil things to overthrow their faith in God.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 10:7-10. What were some of the "evil things" Israel lusted after that caused their destruction in the wilderness? (Idolatry, fornication, presumption, murmuring and complaining.)
- What lessons can we draw from Israel's experience for us today? (Answers will vary.)

Monday (April 15): Preparing for Marriage

Marriage is one of the biggest changes that can occur in a person's life, and for those that choose to get married, Biblical preparation is essential.

Discussion Questions:

- Read Genesis 2:23,24. Aside from the "man leaving his father and his mother," what fundamental change occurs for both the man and woman getting married? (They become "one flesh.") What does this mean? (Answers will vary. Marriage results in a unification of two individuals into one. This is as much, or more, of a spiritual act as it is a physical one.)
- Read Mark 10:4-9. What additional insights does Jesus reveal about the unification of marriage? (It is permanent in God's sight, and even after a legal divorce the two who were united in marriage will remain connected in many ways. For this reason it is imperative that those entering marriage be prepared, to the best of their ability, to ensure that this union will be successful and joyful throughout their lives.)
- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. What keys to a successful marriage are revealed in these verses? (Answers will vary and may include patience, kindness, humility, unselfishness, purity, honesty, perseverance.)

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Tuesday (April 16): Preparing for Parenting

Having children is, of course, another major change that many people experience in their lives. As with marriage, the preparation, mindset, and attitude that one is equipped with when entering this phase of life exerts a tremendous influence on one's eventual success or failure as a parent. Today's lesson looks at just a few Biblical principles that will aid the Christian parent.

Discussion Questions:

- Read 1 Samuel 1:27,28. What important attitude and mindset should every Christian parent have? (Remembering that children are a gift from God and a desire to dedicate them to the Lord.) What practical difference would (or does) this attitude make from day to day for parents? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Judges 13:7. What importance principle for parents is revealed in this verse? (The actions and habits of parents, including that of mothers during pregnancy, bears a direct influence on the spiritual and physical wellbeing of the child.) In what ways, for good or for bad, have you seen this principle played out in your life or the lives of people you know? (Answers will vary.)
- What common experience did Moses, Samuel, Joseph, and Daniel—to name just a few examples—have in their childhood and/or youth? (They were separated from their parents early in life, yet remained faithful to God.) What challenge do these stories carry for parents today? (Answers will vary. Christian parents, especially those who understand Bible prophecy and know the time of trouble that lies ahead, should prayerfully strive to raise their children so that if they are separated from their parents, they too can remain faithful to God.)

Wednesday (April 17) and Thursday (April 18): Preparing for Old Age and Death

Although old age and, at some point, death, mark the final phases of life on this earth, the Bible promises that the first death, at least, is not truly the end of all things. Rather, a time will come when death itself will be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:22-24) and those who are redeemed will live forever with God (Revelation 21:3,4). Until that time, death remains a reality as part of our life here on earth, and it is part of our responsibility to be prepared for this inevitable event.

Both the Bible and the counsel in the Spirit of Prophecy provide wise guidance for those preparing for the final stages of life, and much of this advice is very practical in nature. Consider the following statements from the book *Counsels on Stewardship*:

Property is often bequeathed to children and grandchildren only to their injury. They have no love for God or for the truth, and therefore this means, all of which is the Lord's, passes into Satan's ranks, to be controlled by him. Satan is much more vigilant, keen-sighted, and skillful in devising ways to secure means to himself than our brethren are to secure the Lord's own to His cause. {CS 323.2}

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Some wills are made in so loose a manner that they will not stand the test of the law, and thus thousands of dollars have been lost to the cause. Our brethren should feel that a responsibility rests upon them, as faithful servants in the cause of God, to exercise their intellect in regard to this matter, and secure to the Lord His own. {CS 323.3}

The Lord would have His followers dispense their means while they can do it themselves. Some may inquire, “Must we actually dispossess ourselves of everything which we call our own?” We may not be required to do this now; but we must be willing to do so for Christ’s sake. We must acknowledge that our possessions are absolutely His, by using of them freely whenever means is needed to advance His cause. Some close their ears to the calls made for money to be used in sending missionaries to foreign countries, and in publishing the truth and scattering it like autumn leaves all over the world. {CS 324.1}

That which many propose to defer until they are about to die, if they were Christians indeed they would do while they have a strong hold on life. They would devote themselves and their property to God, and, while acting as His stewards, they would have the satisfaction of doing their duty. By becoming their own executors, they could meet the claims of God themselves, instead of shifting the responsibility upon others. {CS 325.3}

Many are not exercised upon the subject of making their wills while they are in apparent health. But this precaution should be taken by our brethren. They should know their financial standing, and should not allow their business to become entangled. They should arrange their property in such a manner that they may leave it at any time. {CS 328.1}

Discussion Questions:

- In the quoted statements above, what general principles emerge in regards to our disposition of property, money, and other assets? (Answers will vary.)

Friday (April 19): Preparing for the Close of Probation

In today’s lesson we will look at one final change that all those who profess to serve God should be preparing for, and that is the close of probation shortly before Christ’s second coming. At this point in time—still in the future—Christ will cease His work of intercession in heaven’s sanctuary (Revelation 15:8), and every living person on earth will have made his or her final decision for or against God (Revelation 22:11). When this happens, solemn and tremendous events will occur in heaven and on earth. According to the book *The Great Controversy*:

When the third angel’s message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received “the latter rain,” “the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,” and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received “the seal of the living God.” Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, “It is done;” and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” [Revelation 22:11](#). Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out

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their sins. The number of His subjects is made up; “the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,” is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. {GC 613.2}

When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God’s long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old. {GC 614.1}

Discussion Questions:

- Read Revelation 7:1-4. What experience must God’s people have to survive this time of trouble? (They must have received the seal of God.) On whom is the seal of God placed? (His servants.) What does it mean to be a servant of God? (Answers may vary. Compare Romans 6:16.)
- Read Ephesians 1:13; 2 Corinthians 3:3; and Hebrews 8:10. How does the Holy Spirit seal God’s servants? (By writing the law of God on the mind and the heart.) What does it mean to have God’s law written on the mind and heart? (Answers may vary.) Are there practical things we can do today that will help us be prepared to receive the seal of God? If so, what are they? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Luke 18:8 and the following statement: “Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and the Bible only? Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day. He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up their way, entangle them with earthly treasures, cause them to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that their hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life and the day of trial may come upon them as a thief” (GC 625). What experience do we need to be obtaining every day in order to remain faithful to God in the time of trouble? (We must be learning to exercise faith in God’s promises and to trust Him completely.) What experiences can you share from your own life about how God is helping you to live by faith? (Answers will vary.)