



METRO NEW YORK WORLD MINISTRY
ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL CONTRIBUTING NOTES
For the week of Feb 6 – Feb 12, 2016
Lesson #7: **Rebellion and Redemption**

Title: Jesus' Teachings and the Great Controversy

Memory Text: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

We are to come unto Christ because He knows the Father. Why go to people who do not know God? We come unto Christ because He knows the Father, and because we are laden with sin and the cares of life. So it only makes sense to come to Him that is able to free us from sin and who can help us in every emergency of life.

Every day we labor physically, mentally, and spiritually. But the labor that Jesus is referring to is not physical labor, but that which is mental and spiritual. Every day we labor in making choices. We want to do the right thing. We want to become more like Jesus. So where should we go? We should go to Jesus.

If we go to Jesus for the forgiveness of sin, for deliverance from sin, to have direction in our life both mentally and spiritually, then we will find the sweet rest that we are looking for. It all centers around Christ. Therefore, the spiritual journey for health and healing begins by coming to Jesus.

Sunday's Lesson

Title: Many Kinds of Rest

Scripture: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:29

When animals are placed under a yoke they have direction for a specific task. The yoke is not designed to make things harder, but easier. However, the yoke of the Pharisees made things harder for the people.

The yoke of Christ includes meekness and humility. When we receive the meekness and humility of Jesus we are no longer at war in protecting self. Instead, we find rest and peace.

The meekness and humility of Jesus corrects our spiritual eyesight. We are now able to see others as better than ourselves. We see the beauty of service. We begin to following in the footsteps of Jesus as one who mingles with people as one desiring their good. Gossip and backbiting is turned into sympathy. Hated is turned into love. We now have rest for the soul.



Monday' Lesson

Title: Planting and Harvesting

Scripture: Matthew 13:3-8; 18-23

What does the Parable of the Sower have to do with the great controversy? The Parable of the Sower could have been called the Parable of the Soils. Since the seed never changes, for God's Word stand forever, then it is the soil that matters. The way side hearers are not really interested in spiritual things. But Satan takes no chances. Like the birds who are eager to find seed during sowing time, Satan does all that he can to snatch away the seed.

The stony ground hearers have a shallow emotional tie to truth. They like what they hear, but there is no real interest in being changed. Their great enemy is the selfish human heart. They love themselves more than they love truth. So there is a great controversy from without and from within.

The thorny ground hearer has somewhat of an interest to be forgiven, but not transform. The seed takes some root, but in the end, the thorns of life crowd out spiritual interests.

The good soil hearer is one who wants to be both forgiven and transformed. They want both justification and sanctification. The good soil hearer is born-again and growing in Christ Jesus. He is maturing in Christ and is fruitful in his Christian experience.

In this great controversy, there is only one safe soil condition. It is the good soil hearer.

Tuesday's Lesson

Title: Building on Rock

Scripture; Matthew 7:21-27

Many can talk faith, but do they have an active faith that produces the fruit of the Spirit? We cannot be mere talkers in this great controversy between truth and error. We must be doers of God's will.

"Many will say to Me in that day," the day of judgment, "have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?" Indeed, these are wonderful miracles. However, the greatest miracle is victory over sin. Jesus said to them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The man who is a hearer and doer of God's Word is like the man who built his house upon a rock. The storms of life and the winds of temptation may come as a hurricane, but the house stands because it is built upon the Rock of Jesus Christ. But the man who hears the Word of



God and does not do what God says, is like a man who built his house upon the sands. The rains descend and the wind blows and the house comes down. Why? Because it was not built upon Christ.

To withstand the fiery darts of the adversary in this great controversy, we must experience the greatest miracle of all, the transformation of heart and mind after the similitude of Christ.

Wednesday's Lesson

Title: Do Not Judge

Scripture: Matthew 7:1-5

In this great controversy, we must be careful not to judge the motives of others. We are not able to read the human heart. Only God can read the heart and the motive behind every word spoken and every deed performed.

Our ministry is that of reconciliation. We are to restore the sinner in “the spirit of meekness.”

If only we could assume the best, instead of the worst. If only we could reconcile, instead of condemn. If only we returned good for evil, and not evil for evil. Think how differently our work would be if we followed in the footsteps of Jesus, who hated sin with a perfect hatred, but loved the sinner with self-sacrificing love.

Thursday's Lesson

Title: “I am with you always.”

Scripture: “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:20

We are not alone in this great controversy between good and evil, and between truth and error. Christ is always with us in the work of the Holy Spirit. We are not to move forward as if we were alone. The work cannot be finished by mere human effort. The battles we face must be fought with divine power. We are to overcome temptation by cooperating with divine agencies.

In fact, we are to begin each day with God. We are to receive fresh supplies of grace. We are to dedicate ourselves before every visitation and Bible study. Never are we to go forward in our own strength.

Friday's Lesson: Additional Thoughts

Spiritual Rest and the Sabbath: Lessons from the book of Hebrews



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4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

These opening words indicated that many in the early church were in danger of making the same mistake as ancient Israel. A whole generation did not enter into Canaan. The next generation did, but failed to enter into spiritual rest. Now the early church faced a spiritual dilemma. The ultimate promise is that God will save us from our sins. Note that the gospel is more than the forgiveness of sins. God desires to free us from sin. We are not free from temptation, but we do not need to consent to sin. This is the rest that God desired of ancient Israel. This is the spiritual rest that He desired for the early church and for us.

The idea that we can “come short” of spiritual rest implies that there is a part we play. While it is God’s power that gives us the victory over our inherited and cultivated tendencies to sin, it ever remains the choice of the believer to seek deliverance from sin.

4:2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

Those in the early church heard the gospel preached as well as ancient Israel before them. Paul tells his audience that while Israel of old heard the precious words of the gospel, it did not profit him because they lacked true faith. It is not enough to hear or read truth. The Words of God must be received by faith before they can bear fruit of a Christlike character.

It is a tragedy that many have not heard the precious gospel because of false shepherds who preach smooth words. But there is a part the listener plays in his own search for truth. We are to hear and obey. We are to trust and obey. But all obedience to God’s commands depends upon faith in His ability to mold and transform us.

4:3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

While ancient Israel did not enter that rest (Hebrews 3:19), many in Paul’s days did enter that rest. This shows that the ultimate rest that God has for His people was not the literal land of Palestine. God’s ultimate rest is that spiritual rest which prepares us to live in the heavenly Canaan.

It is quite obvious that we must be speaking about spiritual rest because those that did enter His rest in Paul’s day did not possess the land of Israel. In fact, the early church found it near impossible to even own a church building. They met mostly in homes. Yet, they had entered into that rest because the rest that God desires for His people is spiritual rest.

If new believers in Paul’s day were entering into this spiritual rest, then that rest is still available for all who would believe. That spiritual rest is available to us today.

In the second part of this verse we have a reference to the Creation week, which states, “although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.” It is obvious from our reading of Genesis chapters one and two that God had intending that men and women would enjoy God’s rest. Man was created on the sixth day and then



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enjoyed the Sabbath hours on the next day, the seventh day. So in man's first two days of existence, he experienced both labor (the sixth day) and rest (the seventh day).

The first rest was a Sabbath rest. On this Sabbath day, Adam and Eve enjoyed the presence of God and the worship of God. In their original innocent, they were in agreement with God. This is what spiritual rest is all about. God wants us to get us back to that original rest.

When it says that God's "works were finished," it means more than simply a material creation. There was a purpose for everything that God created. He did not just create a man; He created man with a particular purpose in mind. When the Creation week was finished, everything was perfect. The finishing touch of that Creation week was the Sabbath rest. Adam and Eve could rest assured of God's love, of His sustaining power, of His close fellowship with them, and His purpose for their lives.

Let us consider a couple verses that speak about our rest in Him. "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein." Jeremiah 6:16. Notice that "rest" has to do with walking in the good path. Sin is the bad path, not the good path. Rest then has to do with walking with God. Creation rest is enjoying the presence of God. In fact, we prefer our fellowship with God over our fellowship with one another. But because of our fellowship with God we choose to love our fellowman as our self.

Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:28, 29. Spiritual rest is to have the burden of guilt lifted from your shoulders. It has to do with taking upon the yoke of Jesus in helping our fellowman. It has to do with humility and meekness. There is a death to selfishness and pride. We have come to see others as better than ourselves. Spiritual rest has to do with learning of Jesus. It is becoming one with Him. It is found in a growing faith that leads to a closer and closer relationship with our Creator and Redeemer.

4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

Paul was inspired to connect the Sabbath with spiritual rest. So what do we know about the Sabbath?

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Genesis 2:1-3

Here we find that God sanctified the Sabbath. In other words, He made the Sabbath holy and set it apart for a holy use.

"Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them." Ezekiel 20:12



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The Sabbath is a sign that God wants to sanctify us. God wants to make us holy and also set us apart for a holy work.

“And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.” Ezekiel 20:20

The Sabbath is a sign that we wholly belong to God.

“Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.” Isaiah 56:2

We are not to pollute the Sabbath nor are we to pollute ourselves. As the Sabbath was sanctified we are to be sanctified.

By keeping the Sabbath we are agreeing with God’s original purpose. On the sixth day, after God had created everything, He said it was “very good.” In fact, it was perfect. By keeping the Sabbath we show our faith in the original perfection of our world. We are also saying that we are in agreement with that perfection. More than that, we are agreeing to cooperate with God to be brought back to that original perfection. This can only be done by becoming perfect in Christ.

The Sabbath could never represent imperfection, nor could it represent a lack of faith in God’s ability to make us perfect in Him. The Sabbath has to represent perfection. And since the rest that God desires for us is connected to the Sabbath, therefore the rest that God desires is nothing less than bringing us back to that original perfection.

God did rest from His work because it was perfect. There was nothing more for Him to do. There is nothing more to add. It was finished; it was perfect. By resting on the Sabbath we are expressing our desire to rest in God’s original perfection of our world. And if we cooperate with Him now in the perfection of character, then we shall live in the perfect New Earth.

4:5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

As Paul was writing this verse, it is evident that men and women still had an opportunity to “enter into” this rest. “If they shall enter into my rest,” means that the invitation to enter into that rest was still available. It is available to us today as long as probation lingers. But when probation closes, that opportunity to enter His rest is closed.

The time will come when the door will be shut, as Jesus said in His parable of the ten virgins, “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.” Matthew 25:10-12

4:6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:



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Ancient Israel did not enter into the Promised Land because of unbelief. However, Israel's unbelief did not nullify the promise. The promise of rest is still good. In Paul's day there "remaineth" a rest for the people of God. And there remains a rest for us too. It is not a physical rest in Palestine, but that spiritual rest in Christ Jesus our Lord. Not only does that spiritual rest remain, but the Sabbath which points to that spiritual rest also remains.

We can be assured that "some" will enter that spiritual rest and will dwell in the New Earth. God's promise is sure. His original plan for man will succeed and be fulfilled. There will be a holy people upon this Earth when it is created a second time with a people who have been re-created in Christ.

4:7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Ancient Israel did not enter the Promised Land. That generation died in the wilderness. The next generation entered the land with Joshua but did not enter into that spiritual rest. Centuries went by until the time of David. It was then hoped that Israel would now enter that spiritual rest, but they did not. Therefore, there still remains a rest for the people of God. And Paul says to his generation, "Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." The same Word is calling us to enter into that rest. Here we are two thousand years after the writing of this book, and we still have not entered that rest. But there will be a last generation, because they have entered that rest. Praise God!

4:8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

The translators should have written, "For if Joshua (not Jesus) had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." You can see this correction made in the margin of your Bible.

Here again is Paul's argument. If Joshua had led them into the rest by simply bringing them into the land of Canaan, then God would not have afterward spoken of another day for His people to enter that rest. Therefore, it is quite obvious that the rest that God speaks of is not the literally occupation of Palestine. Even in David's day when they controlled the land of Palestine, they still had not entered that rest. Now in Paul's day, many but not all, entered that rest. It is clear that the rest spoken of is not the occupation of Palestine.

4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

The word for "rest" in this passage is "sabbatismos," which means Sabbath, and may be translated as "keeping the Sabbath." The verse would literally read, "There remaineth therefore still a Sabbath-rest for the people of God."

The word "remaineth" clearly refers back to the original and only Sabbath for the people of God. Therefore, the people of God are not to be looking for a new Sabbath. No other day would point back to the creative works of God from which He rested. It is the same Sabbath that Adam and Eve, Moses, Joshua, David, and Jesus kept. It is the one and only Sabbath that could point to the spiritual rest that God desires of us.



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As the Sabbath is higher than any other day, the rest that God speaks of is higher than any other kind of rest. The seventh-day Sabbath points back to perfection, therefore the spiritual rest that we are to seek is perfection in Christ.

4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

This verse has clear reference to God's creative works and the first Sabbath. God did indeed cease from His works of creation to rest on the seventh-day Sabbath. Since God is perfect, and His works of creation were perfect, then He perfectly rested on the seventh day. If we enter into that spiritual rest that brings us closer and closer to that original perfection in Him, then we will truly rest on the Sabbath day as He did. He who would keep the Sabbath holy, must himself be holy. The early church, which kept the seventh-day Sabbath was in danger of living in sin while trying to keep the Sabbath as a holy day of rest. But we cannot truly keep the Sabbath while knowingly living in sin.

We could fall into the same trap as did ancient Israel. They thought they had entered into God's rest because they now occupied the Promised Land. We may believe that we have entered into God's Sabbath rest because we go to church on the seventh-day. In the same way that the seventh-day is no ordinary day, but a holy day set apart from every other day, we are to live no ordinary life. We are to live a holy life set apart to serve God with our whole heart.

While we are not asked of God to return to the land of Palestine, we are commanded of God to keep His Sabbath holy. True Sabbath-keeping is but an outward sign of an inward work. The believer now has a new heart, a renewed mind, whereby he chooses to glorify God in all things. Resting on the Sabbath is the outward sign that we are now resting in Him.

4:11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Let us be diligent and earnest to enter into that spiritual rest. Do not follow in the steps of ancient Israel who lacked faith. Learn from their failure.

Ancient Israel left Egypt for the Promised Land but failed. Today, we can fail or fall too. The fact that a man can "fall" shows that he has at some point confessed Christ. However, if we do not commit ourselves fully to Christ we will fall as did ancient Israel.