

YG Sr. High Sunday School Notes

WINTER 2017

Lesson 1 : Ultimately, there are two basic ways to understand the world (Romans 12:1-2)

“God is” or “God isn’t” (no absolute freedom of thought)

“God is” : The true God exists; so understanding the world, life and ourselves as God wants us to understand the world, life and ourselves is the best and most beneficial way to understand the world, life and ourselves.

“God isn’t” : God does not exist; so we, ourselves, determine the best and most beneficial way to understand the world, life and ourselves.

Lesson 2: Ultimately, there are two basic ways to live life. (Colossians 1:9-10)

“Under the Law of the Spirit” or “Under the Law of Sin” (no absolute freedom of choice/action)

“Under the Law of the Spirit” : As a Christian, we by grace can live under the Law of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

- The Law of the Spirit is the law that leads us to life, eternal life, in Christ Jesus.
- The Law of the Spirit is the law that leads us to blessing, blessing in this life and eternal blessing in the life to come.
- The Law of the Spirit is the law that provides our lives meaning and purpose.

“Under the Law of Sin” : A non-Christian, can only live under the Law of Sin, sin that reigns in their hearts.

- The Law of Sin is the law that leads to death, eternal death, under God’s wrath.
- The Law of Sin is the law that leads to destruction, destruction in this life and eternal destruction in the life to come.
- The Law of Sin is the law that provides only emptiness and despair.

Lesson 3: Ultimately, there are two basic ways to see ourselves. (John 17:14)

“God’s Creation” or “Random Existence” (no absolute freedom to choose identity)

“God’s Creation” : As a Christian, we by grace understand and believe that God created us.

- We have “Identity Certainty.” Christians can know they are who they are because God has created and redeemed them in his wisdom, power and love.
- We have “Clarity of Purpose.” Christians can know that God has created and redeemed them for a clear, good purpose.
- We have “Delight in the Lord.” Christians can know that God has created and redeemed them to receive his unending goodness and enjoy Him forever.

“Random Existence” : A non-Christian believes that there is no Creator. All existence, including themselves, is random.

- They have an “Identity Crisis.” Non-Christians live in conflict of who they are and who they think they are. They believe that they have the freedom to self-determine their own identity.
- They have a “Confusion of Purpose.” Non-Christians live without an “established” purpose. Their only purpose is that which they determine. They believe that their purpose is self-defined.
- They have “Life Depression” : Non-Christians live a “depressed” life that falls short of the delight that God intended for his Creation. No matter how much they try to live life to the fullest, their life experience can not rise to the level that God intended for them. They believe that the enjoyment of life is self-attained.

Lesson 4: Because there are only two ways to understand the world, live life and see ourselves, we must understand that there are, ultimately, only two different ways to think about the world, life and ourselves. (Philippians 3:7)

Think with a 1) God-perspective, a 2) Heavenly-perspective and an 3) Eternal-perspective. This is how we can learn to think in Christ and must now put-on.

- Christians can think with a God-perspective that accepts the truth that God is in control over all things. God will provide for all things. God will protect us, his people (Psalm 127). God has a plan for us (Jeremiah 29:11).
- Christians can think with a Heavenly-perspective that believes God will give us greater things than are in the world when we get to heaven. (Matthew 6:19-21)
- Christians can think is an Eternal-perspective that accepts God has given us eternity to enjoy all good things, to have life abundantly forever (John 10:10). We can enjoy life, without rushing and becoming anxious, in this life because we know that we will have eternity to enjoy life more fully in the life to come.

Think with a 1) Me-perspective, an 2) Earthly-perspective and a 3) Now-perspective. This is how we used to think before Christ and must now put-off.

- Non-Christians think with a Me-perspective that accepts the self-determined “truth” that “I’m in control.” They believe that they have to provide for themselves; they have to protect themselves; they have to make a plan for themselves; they have to carry out their plans themselves.
- Non-Christians think with an Earthly-perspective that believes the world and all that is in it is all that they will ever have. They have to make the most of what they have in this world and fight to hold on to it because once its gone, it’s gone for good. “He who dies with the most toys wins.”
- Non-Christians think with a Now-perspective that accepts the time on earth, in this life, is “all” the time they will ever have (anything that may come after death, they view as a “bonus”). They have to “live life to the fullest” and do as many things and enjoy as many experiences as possible before they die. There won’t be another chance to “live” again... so “make the most of life”... and “live as long as you can.”

Lesson 5: How do we, then, train ourselves to think in Christ - to put-off our old ways of thinking before Christ and to put-on the new way of thinking in Christ? (1 Peter 1:13)

Step 1 : Prepare : Pray (Philippians 1:9-11, 4:6-7; James 1:5)

- Zechariah 4:6 - *"6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."*
- The battle for the transformation of our mind is fought and won in the Holy Spirit and by the Holy Spirit. Our efforts are powerless without the indwelling presence of power of the Holy Spirit.

Step 2 : Learn : Study, Read and Meditate on Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, 11:18-20; Acts 2:42; Philippians 4:8)

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - *"16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."*
- General knowledge (the knowledge that God reveals to us through Creation) is not sufficient to teach us how to battle for the transformation of our mind. The Special Revelation of God, the Scriptures, is required for us to learn how we may be victorious in the battle for our mind. Scripture alone is sufficient to teach us, reproof (rebuke) us, correct us and train us to think and live righteously - to discern what God's will is - his good, acceptable and perfect will for our lives.

Step 3 : Internalize : Memorize Scripture (Colossians 3:16)

- Psalm 119:11 - *"I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."*
- A "superficial" (surface) studying, reading and meditation of Scripture offers "limited" benefit in the battle for the transformation of our mind. The greatest benefit comes in the "storing up" of Scripture in our heart/mind and having the word of God "dwell richly" in us.

Step 4 : Practice : Put Scripture into practice - obey Scripture (Psalm 119:9, Philippians 4:9)

- James 1:22-26 - *"22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing."*
- True faith in Christ, faith that leads to the transformation of our mind and life, is not manifested in what we say we believe but in doing what we know to be true in Christ. True "knowing" of Scripture is evidenced in the "doing" of Scripture.

Step 5 : Repeat, Repeat, Repeat... Steps 1-5 : Persevere

- Galatians 6:9 - *"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."*
- The battle for the transformation of the mind and as an extension, life, is a life-long process. As long as we live in the world, we are being sanctified (being set apart to be more and more like Christ) and will one day be glorified (made perfect, without sin). In Christ, we are called to persevere and not grow weary. Why? God will never give up on us - whether we are victorious or defeated in our battles. God will never leave us nor forsake us. God will make sure that we reach the finish line and cross over into glory. Jesus Christ is both the Author and Perfecter of our faith.

Lesson 6: How in the world do we stay on track - 3 Life Disciplines? (1 Timothy 6:12)

Discipline 1 : FLEE (1 Timothy 6:11)

- Avoid distractions of the mind : Recognize and flee from false teaching - know the truth well so that you will recognize counterfeit ideologies, thinking and philosophies (refer to lesson 5)
- Avoid distractions of the heart : Recognize and flee from false idols - worldly fame, materialism, worldly riches, worldly power, etc.

Discipline 2 : FOCUS (Colossians 3:1-17)

- Focus your mind on the Scripture and the Gospel - keeping your mind on the goal of knowing Jesus will keep you on track and keep you from straying into danger and wandering around in circles in life.
- Focus your heart on contentment - God who loves us perfectly will always provide us with the best. Keep your heart on gratitude and thankfulness for what you have.

Discipline 3 : FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT (1 Timothy 6:12)

- Fight to hold onto Christ no matter how strong the temptations to let go - pray, study Scripture, memorize, put into practice, worship, fellowship, etc.
- Fight to put off what we once were no matter how strong the temptations to return - pray, repent, accountability/mentorship, etc.

Memory Passage(s)

Romans 12:1-2

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Colossians 1:9-10 (focus on v.10)

9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

John 17:14

14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Philippians 3:7

7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

1 Peter 1:13

13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 6:12

12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.