

MOTIVES OF THE HEART

Sabbath School Bible Studies

Five Questions for Life Change

Study Text: Hebrews 4:15 & 16

The Role of Stewardship

Open

As we try to determine the role of stewardship for the life of a Christian, take a few minutes to read and discuss together this paragraph from *The Great Controversy*.

“In the judgment, the use made of every talent will be scrutinized. How have we employed the capital lent us of Heaven? Will the Lord, at His coming, receive His own with usury? Have we improved the powers entrusted us, in hand and heart and brain, to the glory of God and the blessing of the world? How have we used our time, our pen, our voice, our money, our influence? What have we done for Christ, in the person of the poor, the afflicted, the orphan, or the widow? God has made us the depositaries of His holy Word; what have we done with the light and truth given us to make men wise unto salvation? No value is attached to a mere profession of faith in Christ; only the love which is shown by works is counted genuine. Yet it is love alone which in the sight of Heaven makes any act of value. Whatever is done from love, however small it may appear in the estimation of men, is accepted and rewarded of God.”—The Great Controversy, Page 487.

What do you like about these thoughts? What do you not like? Is it reasonable for God to judge us? Are the first two lines above bad news for us, and the last three lines good news? How do they connect?

Dig

1. Read *Hebrews 4:14-16*.

Whoever Paul is talking about in verse 14, ‘has passed through the heavens’. William Barclay comments on this verse as follows: “*Jesus is so great that even heaven is too small a place for him.*” When you think of Jesus, do you naturally think of His closeness, “*It is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me,*” or do you think more of His greatness/majesty, King of the Universe? How do we keep a balanced view of both?

2. Share together anything you can find from scripture, or know, about the role of the High Priest in Israel. What was the role? What was special about the people group he came from? Why does the author of Hebrews (Paul, or possibly somebody else) compare the role of the High Priest with Jesus?
3. The end part of verse 15 reads: “*tempted as we are, yet without sin.*” What do you understand those words to mean? How do they work for you in your daily relationship with God?
4. “*Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace.*” What does this mean? Who is the throne of grace? How would you explain the term grace to a friend who is not a Christian? What do you understand by the term ‘grace’?

Reflect

William Barclay on this passage:

“Jesus went to our limit of temptation and far beyond it, and still did not collapse.”

The experience of Jesus had three effects:

- 1. It gave him the gift of sympathy.*
- 2. It gave God the quality of mercy.*
- 3. It makes God able to help.*

How Stott defines grace:

“Grace is love, that stoops, and cares, and rescues.” (Stott)

How easy or difficult is it to connect the opening statement with the definition of grace?

What’s the core ‘so what’ of this bible study? Come up with the answer together. Pray for the answer to move beyond an intellectual response, to a heart response.

To get the most out of this inductive Bible study:

Read the study text together (taken from the adult Sabbath School Lesson study).

Use question 1, as the icebreaker, an introduction to the discussion.

Use questions 2, 3, and 4, to dig as deep into scripture as your group wishes to go.

Question 5 is for reflection/application.

Surround the study with prayer.