

346: Sept. 22; 29. Weakness, Strength, Difference (New Testament Weeks 38-39)

9/22: 2 Cor. 8-13

9/29: Galatians

Godly sorrow and grieving not shame (Important to bring up, and I'm so grateful for the feedback!)

Lori: Greetings friends & fellow saints. How wonderful to be able to share in the discussion on this page.

My husband and I have been learning from Jared Anderson for almost 5 or so years, and thrilled with his unique message and application of the Gospel and scriptures.

This week I wanted to add a few comments about the content and about one of Jared's comments.

1st - Reconciliation - As I was studying this topic, this week, the work of Susan Johnson and her Emotion Focused Therapy struck me as a profound role in Reconciliation with those we are in relationship with - including our Savior and Heavenly Father. In a nut shell - the things that gut us stuck in a crazy making infinity loop that disconnects us from others are caused by

*our interpretations / the stories that we tell. or as Brene Brown would say or Stupid 1st drafts. These are often a result of raw spots and pain, but... these stories, in combination with

Just think of how often these things get in the way of our relationships!! With our loved ones and again, even with our Savior and H us distant and justify our actions and defended / reactive feelings

Underneath it all are our vulnerable feelings, our Attachment fears, our attachment needs and longings

Just think of how often these things get in the way of our relationships!! With our loved ones, and again, perhaps even with our Savior and Heavenly Father. To reconcile with any of them, we must be willing to get vulnerable and do the hard work of healing.

2nd - Men and Shame - I've had the great privilege, for over 20 years, of being trained by Alison Armstrong, and being trained as a licensed partner in her work. As we have studied men and women, there are significant differences in how men and women determine what they deserve (love, kindness, or anything good in this life). There is an arithmetic 'if you will, of deserving. Women will count up all of the great ways that have served or done something for someone, or a cause or their job or whatever. then they will say "I deserve better because _____" (I've done so much for them).

Men on the other hand have a very different achromatic formula. Men are fueled by honor and duty, and thus they will 1st deduct all of the bad that they have done in their lives, then, add up the good. If they feel that their misdeeds outweigh the good, then it can have devastating effects for their entire life. I feel that shame is HORRIBLE for both men and women, but I have seen its lasting effects erode a man's life and stop him from being able to be his best self and provide, protect and preside as God intended him. Forgiveness is the only way out of that horrific shame. Self forgiveness is the critical piece for many that I've worked with.

Please do Not use shame!! And, please if you are stuck in shame work with someone who can support you to forgive yourself. If you have no one, contact me via PM and I will do a "noble forgiveness" session with you. The world needs men, and women, to be their best selves. Our Savior and Heavenly Father needs us to be our best selves.

Ok - enough for my 1st post;)

Thanks for reading.

Ryan:

Thanks for your post. I quite enjoyed the latest episode, particularly the discussion of Christ taking on all the sins and experience of the world and metabolizing it into grace.

To address your post here, my wife and I listened to this episode as well and when Jared mentioned shame my wife immediately said that shame leads people, and men in particular, to suicide. She works for federal VA writing policy and legislation for suicide prevention and has worked for the last decade +/- with suicide prevention at the state and federal level. We had a really interesting discussion about the difference between guilt, which seems to be a God-given attribute to persuade human-kind from becoming repeat offenders and pushes us to seek community support and healing, and shame, which seems to be Satan's twisted version of guilt that attempts to isolate individuals from group interaction and support and negates the healing power of the atonement. I'd

love to hear other's take on this idea as well. I seem to remember a few years ago we discussed shame vs. guilt in this group during the Alma the Younger chapters in the Book of Mormon.

Contrast Mormon and Pahoran vs Galatians

No Sunday School until October 20; I'll make sure things are in place for the rest of the year.

2 Cor. 8

Paul works to convince the Corinthians to generously donate to help the saints in Jerusalem

Titus is set up as a good example

2 Cor. 9:7 "Each should give according to the heart and not out of sorrow or obligation"

2 Cor. 10:10: Quote from Paul's opponents, that his letters are "weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is sickly, and his speech is of no account"

2 Cor. 11. Note that Paul is defending himself against "superlative apostles" (11:5), other Christians who seem to have been very impressive in person (related to the way they claimed to have the benefits of the resurrection here and now, see 1 Cor 4. "Already you are rich! Already you are kings and queens!" etc).

11:14 A source of the tradition that "Satan masquerades as an angel of light"

11:22-33 [read]. Crucial insight into Paul's experiences and challenges. "Boasting in weakness" is an important gospel principle.

1 Cor. 12

Interesting rhetorical device of speaking of one of his most sacred experiencing as if it had happened to someone else.

(So important to discuss! We want to be strong. We want to be delivered from our trials and weaknesses and "thorns in the flesh". We want to be delivered from our sickness and grief. BUT IT IS ALL OF THESE that put us in alignment with the gospel and grace and our best selves.)

2 Cor. 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast more gladly in my weaknesses so that the power of Christ resides

in me. Therefore, I am satisfied with my weaknesses, insults, difficulties, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (Again, because weakness and struggle both motivate us and put us in proper alignment)

One of my all time favorite gospel principles, echoed in Ether 12:27.

And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.

2 Cor. 13

Galatians

Letter writing in antiquity: Look for these elements as you read!

Types of Letters and Their Different Functions

Handbooks from the Greco-Roman world include instructions for writing different types of letters to accomplish different goals.

- *friendship*—shares memories and provides news between friends who are separated
- *prayer*—expresses the content of prayers said on the recipient's behalf
- *congratulations*—applauds the recipient for some accomplishment or honor
- *consolation*—expresses sympathy for those who have experienced suffering or loss
- *recommendation*—testifies to someone's abilities and/or character
- *inquiry*—requests information from the recipient
- *response*—responds to a letter of inquiry by supplying requested information
- *report*—informs the recipient of news that the sender deems relevant
- *supplication*—asks the recipient for some sort of favor
- *thanks*—expresses gratitude for a favor that has been promised or performed
- *excuse*—explains why the sender will not be able to do something that the recipient requested
- *didactic*—teaches the recipient about some topic
- *advice*—recommends one course of action over another
- *encouragement*—urges the recipient to be bold in pursuing some course of action
- *exhortation*—urges the recipient to avoid immorality and exhibit virtuous behavior
- *accusation*—claims that the recipient has an improper attitude or behavior
- *threat*—informs the recipient of consequences for behavior (especially if it continues)
- *defense*—seeks to defuse charges made against the sender by recipient or someone else
- *praise*—commends the recipient for exemplary behavior

The New Testament letters are longer than the letters that exemplify one or another of these types (but see Acts 15:23–29; 23:26–30). They usually are thought to represent "mixed types" for which there was no specific category in the handbooks. Still, all the New Testament letters incorporate aspects of these various letter types into their contents as they seek to accomplish the various functions that those types were intended to serve.

Indebted to David deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 533–34.

(From Mark Powell's NT Introduction)

Format:

- 1) Opening Formula
- 2) Thanksgiving
- 3) Body or Message
- 4) Concluding Formula

(We get Paul at his harshest in this letter, as well as a fascinating and even challenging glimpse into early Christian diversity and conflict)

Wayment, Purpose of Writing: The most obvious reason for writing is to express a sense of outrage and frustration that Peter had eaten with Gentiles but then after the

arrival of individuals from Jerusalem, Peter would no longer eat with Gentiles (2: 1– 14). Paul seemed to believe that his work in Galatia had been threatened by Peter's actions, which must have had some public component to them for them to be so offensive. From the existing letter, there is no evidence that Paul attempted to understand why Peter acted in the way he did, nor does he report anything in Peter's defense. Paul's tone is accusatory and frustrated. That tone of frustration quickly gives way to a reflection on what it means to be a believing Gentile and to be accepted into the covenant of Christ (5: 2– 15). Paul develops the idea of there being two covenants that are interrelated and connected in fundamental ways. He finds in the story of Abraham a type of the two covenants. Famously, Paul concludes that Jews and Gentiles are saved by faith: "I have been crucified with Christ, but it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. Now, the life I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (2: 19– 20). Galatians demonstrates that religious innovation was borne out of trial and affliction.

Wayment, Thomas A.. The New Testament: A New Translation for Latter-day Saints (Kindle Locations 12274-12281). Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book. Kindle Edition.

Galatians 1 This is Paul's only letter without a thanksgiving! Though he does say "grace and peace to you..."

1:8-9: "different gospel"... these verses are often used against missionaries. It's worth asking what makes a "different gospel". In World Religions we would discuss what makes a Christian Christian, and the points when Christian groups acknowledge each other's validity. Just yesterday a director of a non-denominational Christian program told me he didn't think LDS volunteers would be comfortable singing the statement of faith for their program. Understanding Christian diversity both ancient and modern is vital.

We have Paul's own first hand description of his conversion!! So precious historically. Note that Paul emphasizes his spiritual independence (in part because he knows he can't compete with Jesus' original apostles)

12 For I did not receive it from a human source, nor was it taught to me, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. 13For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I violently persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. 14And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my peers among my nation, being extremely zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. 15But when God, who set me apart from the womb and called me by his grace, was pleased 16to reveal his Son in

me so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, 17nor did I travel to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I traveled to Arabia and returned again to Damascus. 18Then after three years, I traveled to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and I stayed with him for fifteen days. 19But I did not see any of the other apostles except Jacob, the brother of the Lord. 20I assure you before God that I am not lying in what I wrote to you. 21Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22But I was not known by sight to the churches of Christ that were in Judea. 23They were only hearing “The one who once persecuted us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy.” 24And they glorified God because of me.

Wayment, Thomas A.. The New Testament: A New Translation for Latter-day Saints (Kindle Locations 12318-12322). Religious Studies Center and Deseret Book. Kindle Edition.

Galatians 2

2:7 Peter (and James, and likely all the original apostles) ministered to the Jews, while Paul ministered to the Gentiles. Before Paul there were mixed congregations; Paul’s innovation was fully Gentile congregations without the requirement to convert to Judaism first.

Paul calls out Peter for first eating with Gentiles (Table fellowship, in alignment with the account in Acts 10) and then retreating to eat only with Jewish Christians once Jesus’ brother James arrives.

2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me” (worth meditating on) I have found it healthy to realize that we are not just “ourselves” (against the hyper individualism of our current culture) but part of something greater. We are all Christ.

Galatians 3

3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of Law by becoming a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree” (Deut 21:23) This is likely Paul’s preconception thinking, and why he held that considering a crucified criminal to be the Messiah to be blasphemy

3:23-29: 23Before faith came, we were held in custody by the Law, being held as prisoners until faith would be revealed, 24so that the Law was our guardian until Christ came so that we might be made righteous by faith. 25Now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. 26For you are all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27For as many of you as were baptized in Christ have clothed yourself in Christ. 28There is no longer Jew or Greek, nor is there slave or free, nor male or female, for all

of you are one in Christ Jesus. 29And if you belong to Christ, you are descendants of Abraham, heirs according to the promise.

28 was likely a baptismal formula

24 is important in understanding the relationship between outward expressions of faith and conversion, spirit and letter of the law.

Galatians 4

4:6-7 is so beautiful “And because you are his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying ‘Abba, Father!’ so that you are no longer servants but children, and if children, then heirs through God”

I LOVE the doctrine that we are adopted by Christ (as King Benjamin describes so beautifully). I think there is more meaning here than we usually realize.

Paul’s reference to illness and “torn out your eyes” and “large letters” at the end of the letter suggests Paul’s affliction related to his eyes/vision.

I love 4:19: “I am feeling the pains of of birth for you until Christ is formed in you” What a beautiful description of the ache we feel for ourselves and others, wanting them to grow.

Galatians 5

5:12!!! Paul seriously loses his cool. This verse seems to mean “I wish those who felt so strongly about circumcision would just go all the way and castrate themselves” You can imagine the scribe saying or at least thinking “Are you SURE you want to say that?”

Wayment translated it right: “I wish that those who trouble you would castrate themselves”

5:14: For the entire law is fulfilled in one word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18)

“Works of the flesh” vs “works of the spirit” (I find this to be very true! Our behavior is guided, almost driven, by the spirit and context we submit to.

5:22-25: 22For the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. 24Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25If we live by the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.

I’ve shared my own personal salvation description is maximized Love. Joy. Growth, Freedom. Peace.

Galatians 6

6:1: Wisdom. We should serve others “to restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness” with proper boundaries and care so that we ourselves remain strong and safe.

6:17 “bear the marks of Jesus in my own body” Possibly scars from being beaten?

Conclusion: Love each other across difference. I know it is challenging and even threatening, but we are getting better at it. We can practice asking, What do you think of this? How do you approach your relationship to God and the Church? I appreciate my Home Teachers valuing my quirks :)

One of my favorite things about chaplain work is this balance... each of us need to be endorsed by our religious community, and from that place of specificity we serve everyone as best as we can. This is the call of ministry that each of us agree to at baptism, I believe. Cultivate the fruits of the spirit. Virtuous cycle: Improve our context, which gives us more room for better reaction, which over time transforms our feelings.

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