

Central Study Hour Sabbath School Lesson Notes for *Family Seasons*

Lesson 3: Preparing for Change

Introduction: Family life shows who we really are. “You will come up....determining our destiny.” Adventist Home, page 16. “Just as you conduct....saint in his own family.” AH 317. Family life is vitally important!

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read Title. Changes are transition points. Things change all the time, sometimes unexpectedly. Sometimes we can see changes coming. As much as possible, we should prepare for changes so things go well. Four of life’s biggest changes are marriage, children, old age, and death. Note the picture at the top of the page. Does it show the transitions of life? How to prepare for life’s monumental changes is the focus of this lesson.

SUNDAY: UNPREPARED

No one likes to be caught unprepared. Pop quizzes, unexpected visits, surprise inspections can create a knot in the stomach. People often fail to prepare well enough for things, and sometimes not at all. The Bible doesn’t gloss over the realities and stark failures of people who were unprepared. In fact, the “word of God paints a sad picture of the human race.” “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23.

Share highlights of 1 Cor. 10:1-10 (Read verses 6-8 for sure).

What warnings are in these verses? Warnings against lust, idolatry, and fornication.

Read AH 326 from the last part of Friday’s lesson narrative.

(Read verse 10). *Do we have trouble with that sometimes?*

Read 1 Cor. 10:11-13. Along with warning, what promises are given? God’s way to escape temptation.

Is there a preparation for this promised way of escape? (Mostly for thought at this point.)

Read the narrative in the middle of the page (incl Ed 57 and following sentence). *How do we prepare to live such principled lives?*

What mistakes did the people in the following texts make in the face of change, and what can we learn from their mistakes? How can we heed the warning?

Acts 5:1-10 – Ananias and Sapphira succumbed to greed, love of wealth, coveting and ended up lying to God.

Gen. 16:1-2, 5-6. Abraham + Sarah didn’t trust God to keep His promise of a son and used Hagar to have a son.

Matt. 20:20-22. James and John coveted the highest places in the Messianic Kingdom and had their mother make that request to Jesus. Obviously, we must learn to be content with God’s plan for us and trust Him.

Read the final paragraph of the narrative. We must maintain a close faith relationship with Jesus at all times. That is our best preparation for changes that come into our lives.

MONDAY: PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE

Read 1st sentence. This one we choose. However, not all make this choice. Lot’s of people never do marry.

One mark of value for marriage is that it is the 1st social arrangement mentioned in the Bible. Cite Gen. 2:24 (from narrative). This verse is directly quoted 3 times in the NT. This shows that “once a person gets married, the most important relationship in their lives should be between them and their spouse, even more than between them and their parents.”

Another value in marriage is that “it typifies the relationship that exists between His [God’s] Son, Jesus, and the church, His bride.” A lot more could be said on this.

Is it important to prepare for marriage financially? Spiritually? What are some crucial spiritual traits that are important for all aspects of life but are especially important for those preparing for marriage?

Read 1 Cor. 13:4-8. Vs. 4: Develop traits of love, such as, patience, contentment, and humility (opposite of covetousness + pride); vs. 5: love is not jealous or proud; vs. 6: love isn't selfish, easily angered, suspicious, and does not gloat; vs. 7: love believes in people, sees the best in them, and hopes for their good.

Read Gal. 5:22-23. All this is summed up in the fruit of the Spirit.

"Preparation for marriage must begin with us personally and individually." It is not reasonable for one to pray and expect God to send the right person if one is not preparing to be the right one for that person. A person that is selfish and lacks the fruit of the Spirit needs to change and mature before planning on marriage.

Share the key points from the final paragraph of the narrative (What to look for in a future spouse. Note each trait referred to). Besides being a hard worker and having a good temper, the SOP especially asks young ladies to evaluate how a young man treats his mother. "The answers to these questions can mean a future of happiness or a lifetime of sorrow."

TUESDAY: PREPARING FOR PARENTING

This is not a job for the faint of heart. Normally, this is a change that we choose.

Read the 1st paragraph. Parenting can have great rewards, but it also can be very sorrowful. "Children do not arrive with an owner's manual." It's on the job training. A child can exhibit stubbornness in attitude, words, or actions that frustrate even the most experienced and skilled parents. It's important to prepare for being a parent. It can be very challenging!

Is it possible to be 100% ready to be a parent? Many would say, "No."

What principles about parenting can we get from the following stories about births?

1 Sam. 1:27 – God answers prayers to have children (Samuel).

Judges 13:7 – The parents were to raise the child (Samson) with strict temperance.

Luke 1:6, 13-17, 39-55, 76-79 – Zacharias and Elizabeth were righteous, and God also intervened for them to have a child (John the Baptist). They were to make sure that he abstained from strong drink for he was to be holy from the womb. These verses also point to the birth of Jesus.

Each of the four children referred to in the above verses became a prophet or leader in Israel, and one was the forerunner of the Messiah, and one was the Messiah.

Read the 2nd to last paragraph of the narrative ("Yet, even if...in their lives.")

Read the quotation from AH 256. This is a preparation that goes way beyond training in parenting skills, as important as that is. The most important preparation for parenting is what you are – even more than what you know!

WEDNESDAY: PREPARING FOR OLD AGE

For this change we don't get a choice. It's inevitable...unless you die first. This isn't a very exciting life change.

Read (or share highlights of) the opening paragraph. It's not all bad. Grandchildren can be a lot of fun.

Share Life Application question #1 from the Teacher's Comments, page 42-43.

Share highlights from the Teacher's Comments Commentary, Health Illustration, about Joseph's "Grandpa A" who ended up with poor health, pages 39-41. (There is much worth sharing, esp. on p.41.)

Read the middle paragraph on Wednesday's page that sums up Psalm 71, and note highlights of the 3 key points that follow.

Read Psalm 71:1, 3, 5-6, 8-9, 12a, 16, 17a, 18 to see those lessons to prepare for aging. (Note the word

“continually” as it implies habits that should be established. Note verse 18 especially for leaving a legacy for mission-mindedness.)

Read the box and questions at the bottom of the page.

THURSDAY: PREPARING FOR DEATH

Why is this important enough to get a full page in the quarterly? (Just for thought – will come back to it.)

We don't get a choice on this life change, do we?

Read the opening paragraph of the narrative. Yes, death can have a huge impact on the family.

*What does **1 Cor. 15:24-26** teach us about death?* In the end, when God sets up His eternal kingdom **“the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (vs. 26).**

“Many times, of course, death comes unexpectedly and tragically.”

How often do people know ahead of time that it's their last day or the last day for a loved one?

Read the middle paragraph of the narrative. (“Other than making sure...or your loved one.”) (Repeat the question at the top of Thursday's notes.)

Because one can't guarantee to live through each day, is it actually important to be ready to die at all times?

“On the other hand, what would you do if you knew you only had a few months to live?”

Read 1 Kings 2:1-4. *What lessons can we take from David's last words to Solomon about preparing for death?*

The bottom line is to walk in the ways of the Lord, and always make sure we will be right with God whenever the end of our life may come. It's actually vitally important to die right with God.

CONCLUSION

Share the highlights from Teacher's Comments (“Commentary, Wisdom Illustration,”) about Joseph's

“Grandpa B” who had no spiritual legacy to leave his children and grandchildren, pages 41-42.

Close with the Memory Text (Psalm 85:13) on Sabbath Afternoon's page. Footsteps for a pathway is about the influence of a father or grandfather leaving a legacy of righteousness.