

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU ARE SEXIST? P.5

TAMINA BLAESING

FIN 1844

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It's been about two months now since we've been looking at the subject of answering the question, "How do you know if you are a sexist?" You can tell that a simple question can spark a quite a big study. The last two months that we were in the class together, we studied the methodology, the standard, and the habit of human beings. We talked about the moral standard, how the moral standard was updated, and we saw the importance of understanding the foundation, the source of the inspiration that we take for understanding the moral standard. We saw that when the people attack the message, when they attack the moral standard, often, that is because they do not stand on the foundation of the methodology.

So, we came to the conclusion that if we talk with people, based on the context and the situation, we should labor that the people understand the foundation. When you hold up the foundation, it becomes much easier to accept the moral standard. If you don't believe in the correct foundation, you will fight the moral standard of the Midnight Cry (MC), and you think that you will do the Lord's work by fighting the moral standard. It's very important to believe in the foundation of the correct methodology that we have. In other words, "How readest thou?"

We also talked about comparing and contrasting the habits of humans to the moral standard. If you accept the foundation and the moral standard, you believe in the correct methodology, you believe in the moral standard of equality, but you fail to bring it into your life, you miss out as well. Because all the message will be like a dead letter. It's not alive. From the Bible we know that when God starts something, He wants to finish it. If God says something, His message will not come back void. During the camp-meeting, we traced the steps on how to go to heaven. We traced when human beings want to go to heaven, what is the mechanism to get there? This is old information from Adventism, but often, Adventism do not understand this.

It was also shown that even if you perfectly understand the steps to go to heaven, but you do not have the moral standard, knowing the mechanism to go to heaven will not help you. Knowing how to change is not enough unless you also know into what you need to change. As a reminder, at camp-meeting we said that if you want to go to heaven you need a new heart. A new heart means to have a change of character. Let's get real. We are all sexist because that was how we were trained since we were little.

We are all sexists, and the lines tell us that this is our great test. If you are a sexist, you cannot go to heaven because only human beings who agree and live by the rules of heaven can go to heaven. The methodology and the moral standard tells us that sexism is our great test. We look at this human being and say that he is a sexist, and this person wants to go to heaven. What does this person need? He needs a new heart, and a new heart is a changed character. When you're a sexist, you need to change your sexist thoughts, feelings, and habits. Then you can have a new heart, and you can go to heaven. Test question. What is a new heart? New mind, new purposes, and new motives. A new heart, not based upon feelings but based upon the higher nature, is a new mind, new purposes, and new motives.

This is a changed life. When the person is a sexist, and he wants to change his character, this person wants to get rid of the sexism in their life, then he needs to get a new mind, new purposes, and new motives. How do we get the new mind, new purposes, and new motives? How do we get our new character? You change your habits. We went to a quote by EGW to see how character is developed. We saw that thoughts become actions, actions repeated form habits, that forms our character, and character decides if we go to heaven or not.

So, today, let's discuss more about how to change. Before we dive into that subject, however, let's review the subjects of previous studies. We need to review the process of going to heaven, the mechanism of having our character change. We need to look at the nature of man, understanding the will power, habits, character change, having a new heart that takes you to heaven. This is nothing, however, if you don't know what to change into. We reviewed quite extensively the model of the methodology, the moral standard, and our need to compare and contrast (C/C) ourselves to the standard, and correctly reflecting what's written in the moral standard.

We understood that if we want to accept the moral standard, we need to understand and accept the correct methodology. Then accept the standard. Knowing all this however, means nothing if we don't C/C it to our own lives. We posed the question, "How do we get to know the standard?" To answer that question, we went to the model of acquiring knowledge and understanding that leads to action. Today, we'll elaborate on the habits, knowledge, understanding, and action.

So, in order to know that if you're a sexist, there are several requirements. We need to understand that if you want to go to heaven you need to change. You need to accept and agree with the correct methodology. You also need to accept the present truth of the Midnight Cry (MC) in the moral standard. This is essential for you to open your eyes to see yourselves. When Adam and Eve saw that they were naked, was that a pleasant feeling? No. When we come to the model of the character change, what's the problem with Laodicea? Laodicea thinks that they don't need anything. They don't see what they are missing. They don't see that they are blind.

So, how can you tell a person who thinks themselves as not needing anything, how do we make them aware that they are in want of everything? We hope that we can see the bigger picture of what God is trying to do when He calls this movement. The first work that God had to do was to make people aware that they were in need of everything. When you think that everything is good, will you listen to someone preaching to you? That you need to come up higher to the moral standard. If you think that you have everything, will you listen to someone who tells you that you're blind, you don't have anything, and you need everything? No.

So, the first thing that God had to do was to show people that they are naked, before He can show them the standard and say, "Come up higher." This is why we had the first messenger. This is why we had John who paved the way for Christ. His message made the people listen. As it was at the Christ time line, it's the same also in our time line. God first had to make us ready to listen. Then, He can give us the message that He wants to give us. If you want to know if you're a sexist or not, you need to be ready to listen, and be ready to experience your nakedness. You need to be ready to accept that you were wrong. You need to admit that you were blind and that you hurt and abused people.

This is not an easy step to take, and it is not easy to accept. Naturally, it is built in us, if we are chastised, we feel uncomfortable. And we don't like it. When we come to this movement, and we want to actually grow in our spiritual lives, we voluntarily place ourselves into the place where we can be chastised by the moral standard. It is never comfortable to admit that we've been wrong. Christianity, especially Adventism, as a system, we talk about having the perfectly loving character, and be like Christ, but when it comes to daily living, and the moral standard is telling them that what they are doing is wrong, much of this conversation is forgotten. This is what makes the difference with this movement. We should not be afraid to look into the mirror, and be willing to change and come up higher. Accept that we've been wrong.

So, the first hurdle to jump over for someone who were sexist is that we have to be willing to admit that we were wrong. We have to have the humility to accept that we are in the position where we need to be taught. We are sheep that need to be lead. Most people fail in this first hurdle. Why? Because we're Laodiceans. But, the call is to come out of Laodicea. Come out of the mindset that we think we know everything but do not know that we're actually blind. So, the first hurdle to cross is the realization that we need to sit at someone's feet and learn. When you have the attitude of learning you gain a lot. And then, you need to accept the methodology and the moral standard. And then you need to accept the leadership.

You need to accept the person leading you because the person leading you will tell you what is good and what is bad. This is how God always work, whether it be in the time of the Bible, EGW, or present time. Great Controversy (GC) 343.2, it says, "There is no more truth clearly taught in the Bible that God uses human beings as His instrument." God uses His people as His messengers. In the ancient times, we have the prophets telling us what is right and what is wrong. In the time of the Millerites, it was EGW who was giving us the moral standard. EGW showed them what was right and what was wrong. For thousands of years, we're seeing that

the moral standard is getting updated. Abraham was allowed to have slaves. EGW was not allowed to have slaves. When we come to our time period, it's inevitable that God uses messengers who will teach us the moral standard that God wants us to have.

So, that's when you want to know the moral standard. There is no other way but for God to use messengers who will teach the moral standard to His people. You want to know if you're a sexist or not. You have to have the attitude of a learner. You need to accept the methodology and the MC message, and you need to accept the leadership who is teaching us about the moral standard. You get to know the moral standard by the presentations and the media broadcast that Elder Tess puts out. We discussed last time how difficult it is to put all these information and put them in your brain; information overload. We're not concentrating.

So, moral standard, we learn through the presentations and the media broadcast. But, everyone wants to know little bit about their personal lives. This is where the interaction, the relationship, between you and the leader is so important. When it comes to the individual, personal lives, you need to take advantage of the relationship that you have with the leadership. Do not trust the sheep beside you because the sheep beside you has the same struggle that you have, the struggle of having the right attitude, understanding the message correctly and accepting the needed change. Trust the shepherd, not the sheep.

How do we change? Thus far, we know that habits play a role. We know it's about getting to know the moral standard, and C/C ourselves to it. We know that we need a new heart; new mind, new purposes, and new motives. We need the right attitude. We need to be Ephesians and not Laodiceans. We need to accept the methodology, the MC message, and the leadership. We need to accept and understand the steps of how to have a character change that leads us to heaven as well as establishment of the moral standard. Remember, prophetically, we're not children anymore. We might be individually a child, but the movement is no longer prophetically a child. We need to come to understand in the MC message that there are no black and white answers, and that the knowledge is very complex. As a prophetically adult person, we need to deal with the complexity.

For such a short question, "how do I know if I'm a sexist?" we studied all the mechanisms of the different models. We don't have a one liner answer. We take time to show every step to all the mechanisms. We need to understand and accept all the steps we need to take. "Am I a sexist?" Ask yourself, are you in a Laodicean condition or are you ready to learn? Most people in this movement is not ready to learn. Otherwise, we would not have so much problem with being shaken out. Accept the correct methodology, the MC message, and the leadership. Understand and accept the steps that were traced during these studies.

We also need to analyze ourselves. All the knowledge doesn't do you any good if you don't C/C yourself to the standard. How do we actually change? We have the moral standard, and you're standing next to the standard. What do you have to do with the moral standard? You need to C/C yourself to the moral standard. We get to know what's in the moral standard by listening to

the presentations and reading the media broadcast, and developing a relationship with the leadership. Sit at the feet and learn. This is the way we get to know the moral standard. Then, we get to C/C our lives to the moral standard. What is the result of the C/C our lives to the moral standard? We develop a, to do list.

You start to develop a list of what needs to get done. When you have the moral standard, and you get the knowledge about the standard, and you C/C it to your life, the result is a list of certain aspects of your life that needs changing is developed. For example, sometime last summer, Elder Tess did a presentation where she explained what terms we should no longer use to refer to one another. We should no longer refer to one another as brothers and sisters anymore. The moral standard explained by the presentation, a new rule can be written on it where you no longer call each other using the terms brothers and sisters. The moral standard tells us to no longer use those terms when referring to each other.

Why do we not use these terms anymore? Because of our great test of sexism. This is a simple explanation of how presentations add a behavior to the moral standard. And then, you C/C it to yourself. You realize that you always have been using these terms, but now, as you C/C yourself to the standard, on your to do list, you now write, change the habit of calling each other brothers and sisters. Another example, again another presentation at the Brazil camp-meeting, we understand that God is not male, not father, as we understand father to be in this world. Calling Him Father is just a parable. When we come to this generation, understanding the great test, we can explain that it would be better if we don't say, "Dear Father in heaven," when we pray. We do not believe that God is a male, a literal father. It's only a symbol.

This new revelation now is added to the standard. So, we C/C ourselves to the standard. We realize that we used to call God, "Father," but the leader says that God has no gender. So now, we write on the, to do list, we don't call God "Father" anymore. We need to change the habit of calling God "Father" when we kneel down to pray. We need to understand the mechanism of how the moral standard is developed by the leaders, the messengers, we C/C ourselves to the standard, then we create a, to do list in order to change our habits. This is just a simple example. We have developed habits over the years, and when the standard gets upgraded, we C/C ourselves to the standard, we change our habits to match the standard, and we get upgraded.

The moral standard is explained, and we C/C it with the habits that we have. The result is that we apply it to our lives, and we change our habits. The problem comes when our list to change our habits become very long. When you have a very long, to do list, what do you tend to do? There are two types of people. One group might say that it's too long, it's too much work, it's not worth it, and neglect the list. You give up. But, the other group who might be a workaholic, has this huge to do list, and says, "I'm going to do this, and I'm going to get it done today." After six to seven hours, they are so burned out, they are exhausted. They quit. For both of these groups, either from neglect or tiredness, changing their habits never gets done. This is the reason that God took so long to give us this message. Jehovah could've given this entire

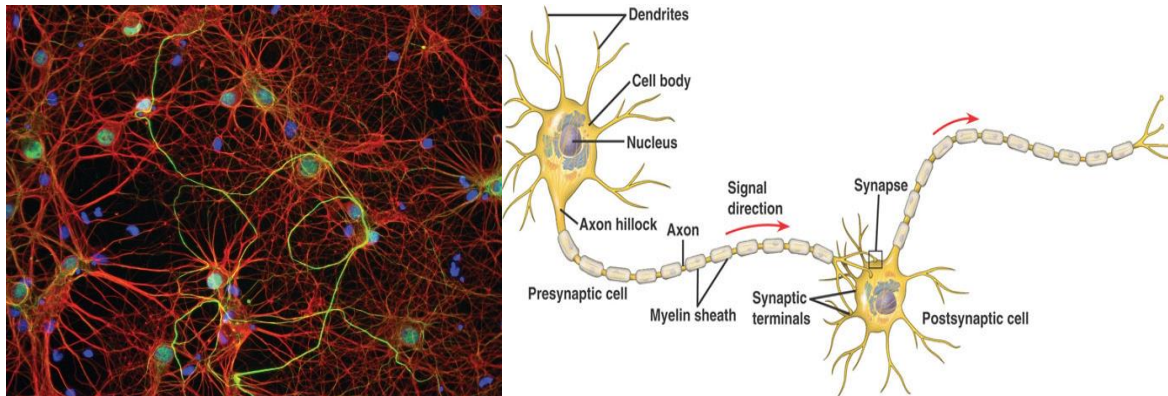
message to us in one second. But, God knows how we work. This is why The Lord took thirty years to teach us about equality.

Even in the MC time period, even there, Jehovah has taken four years to teach us step by step about equality. God doesn't want our list to change our habits to get so long all at once. God realizes that we would just throw everything away because it is too much for us. The Lord is going at a pace where we can follow so not one of us should have any reason to complain. There is enough time to catch up with the moral standard. There is no need to be overwhelmed if we abide by the principle of the nature of man. If we keep the laws of the nature of man. It's about managing our lives. The Lord knows that it is impossible for us to change our lives in 24 hours, all the habits that we developed over our entire lives.

It takes time. We need to master how to change habits. Step by step, without getting overwhelmed, do not be lazy, but consistently get the, to do list done. This is the safe way to develop new habits to change our character and to get a new heart. Specifically, it is our sexist habits that we need to change. How does habit work? Throughout the day, our brain takes in information and makes millions of decisions. Some are conscious and some are not. If every one of our decisions were conscious, we would have a burn out. Our brain cannot take it. We're very complex beings. So, whatever our brain is trying to do is to make its work a bit easier. The way the brain does that is by taking conscious decisions and turning them into unconscious ones.

What does that mean? For example, if we pick up a pen from the desk how many muscles do we use for that? What is the process that our brain has to go through in order to do that action? If we do these actions all consciously, we would be exhausted. In every part of our body, we have special nerve cells, neurons that connect to each other. When we make decisions, there are electro-chemical impulses that occurs between the neurons to pass on information. These impulses are generated throughout the body to pass on the information so action can take place. We know that our thoughts turn into actions, and actions repeated turn into habits. When an action is repeated many times, what the brain does is to connect these neurons where the electro-chemical impulses can travel through.

Connections are made within the neurons, and synapse takes place from cell to cell. What happens is that when you form a habit, your brain cells form a neuropathway. The brain will remember the particular repeated actions, form a neuropathway, and when you experience a trigger, that particular trigger will activate that particular neuropathway automatically so that you don't have to think about it. Over time, this creates the same action, and this becomes a habit where you no longer have to think about it but do it automatically. It might take a while for this neuropathway to develop.



So, actions repeated will create and strengthen the neuropathway. Every time there is the trigger, your brain doesn't need to have to make a conscious decision anymore. The trigger activates that neuropathway in a split second, and the action takes place without you even thinking about it. We all know these moments. There is a trigger, whether you see or feel or hear something, and like lightening, we have action. This is how a habit is created over time. It is said that it only takes on the average of three weeks to create a habit.

Now the moral standard comes. We need to C/C our habits to the moral standard. Think about this trigger. You kneel down to pray. We know that we no longer should say, "Our Father in heaven." But what do we say? "Our Father..." It is automatic, because that trigger, our action of kneeling down to pray, excites that neuropathway of our beginning of prayer with, "Our Father." Without even thinking about it, unconsciously, we are already at the action of saying, "Our Father." But, in our list of habits to change, it says, no more "Our Father." Change this habit.

How do we change our habits? We have the trigger, routine, then we have action or the reward. The trigger is what you hear, see, feel, etc., the electro-chemical impulses synapsing through the neuropathway is the routine, and the action that it produces is the reward. It is not the trigger and the reward that we change. We don't stop praying. What we need to change is the routine. We need to change the neuropathway. How do we change the neuropathway? When you have the trigger, your developed neuropathway will always take you to action.

It is highly unlikely that when you're in your routine of habits, your brain takes the neuropathway like it always does, it is very hard to stop in the middle of it. The best chance for you to change the neuropathway towards the habit is to stop just beyond the trigger, just before the trigger hits the neuropathway. If you want to change the routine, you need to stop the trigger from activating the neuropathway. There is a small window of opportunity between the trigger and the neurotransmission of impulses where you can exercise your will power. We can choose not to go down the same routine but do something different.

So, you're driving down the grocery store, and you always take the same road. You don't even have to think about it anymore. You're wondering how you even got to the grocery store when you had so many other things on your mind. You automatically arrive. But, what if you decide to take another route? We always have the power of decision. We don't have to be slaves to our lower nature. This is what makes us different to animals. Animals are slaves to their lower nature, but we do not have to be. This is where the will power comes in; the power of choice to perform a different routine.

The will power now is activated, you have the trigger, but instead of taking the old path, you choose to go a different path. Take a different route. When the trigger comes, there is a small split of a second when we can choose to go down the same path as before or we can choose to create a new path. This is the power to choose to change. When you have a trigger, before you go down the same road, the same routing, you can pause, you can think, and choose to take another route, develop another pathway, and change the routine. This will take effort because your brain will want to revert back to what is familiar. But, with consistent effort, the brain will create another neuropathway, and it will take a few weeks to develop a new habit.

Now comes the bad part. We would like to think that when we travel down the new path, the old path disappears. Not so. Unfortunately, even after we develop a new neuropathway, a new routine, the old neuropathway still exist. What happens is the brain says, at the point of the trigger, the old pathway is still there, you create a new habit that will override the old habit. The old habit, however, never dies. It will always exist. The new habit, developed over time, now takes precedence over the old habit. At any time, however, the brain can revert back to its old familiar neuropathway, the old routine, the old habit. [Moses striking the rock]

So, at the point of the trigger, we always have to be mindful to exercise our will power and choose to walk another way. This is why it's so important for anyone, but particularly for children, when we learn something new, learn it the correct way. Do not learn something in a bad way, and then try to correct it later. Correcting a bad habit is much more difficult than learning the good habit to begin with. There is always a danger that you will revert back to your old way.

In Eccl, it says that youth shall give God your heart. Why? Because when in youth we form our habits, we should learn the correct habits. Later on it will be much easier. There wouldn't be so much to do on the list of habit changes. Let's say that you have been living for twenty or thirty years with the wrong habits. Trying to change habits that you had for thirty years is extremely difficult. The older you get, the more difficult it gets. Not impossible but harder. This is why when we form habits, form them right to begin with. When you kneel down to pray, pause for a moment, take a breath, and make a conscious effort of how you will begin the prayer.

This is how we change our habits. Recognize that the problem is at the trigger. The moment where the trigger comes, and right away, you want to jump to your familiar habit. But, what should we do when the trigger comes? We should be as the students of prophecy. What do the

students of prophecy do? They will use their will power to choose properly. We must think slowly; use the slow brain. Don't rush. Consider time, context, the rules, moral standard, understand yourself, and then make the decision. Use the slow brain. Elder Parminder has emphasized this over and over again. It's become a useful tool when we want to change our habits. We need to slow down. We'll make less mistakes.

Hopefully, we can appreciate the complexity of this entire subject. We need to be in the right attitude. We need to be ready to learn. We need to accept the foundation, the methodology, the moral standard, the leadership. Then we need to understand the mechanism. We need to understand what we need to have in order to get to heaven. We need to understand the nature of man. How do we work as human beings? How are habits formed? How do I know what is the right moral standard? How do I know what the moral standard wants from me? Trust the right people. Not the sheep but the shepherd. And then you need to C/C yourself, your habits with the moral standard. And then you create a, to do list. If your list is long, don't be overwhelmed. Manage yourself. One step at a time. Be steady. Be consistent.

Be consistent with the methodology. Be consistent with ourselves. We saw how habits are formed. It's a matter of electro-chemical impulses that are synapsing through the neurons, nerve cells that is initiated by a trigger. The result is an action. But, we have the will power. Our will can be exercised like our muscles. If you exercise a muscle, in the beginning you cannot run a marathon. But after you trained yourself, you can run a marathon. At first, you think that your to do list is so long. It's a marathon. But, you can do it if you're consistent and go step by step. Use your slow brain, and exercise your will power.

The rules that we're learning to understand the Bible prophecy and EGW are the same rules that we need to apply to our lives. Consider the context. Understand why how something triggers you and how you respond. Understand your routine and your outcome. Analyze yourself. When you do that, and you have more understanding of yourself, it might make it a bit easier to pause for a second at the point of the trigger to change your habit. Knowledge can be very useful. As knowledge comes, you also need understanding. Remember the steps of gaining knowledge and understanding that leads to action.

When you have your trigger, understand why something triggers you. Also understand why you need to change. Understand why you say, "Our Father," when you pray. And now understand why that's not appropriate to say anymore. The reason is that it is sexist and a wrong understanding of God. Understand why you do something, and if appropriate, why you need to change. Do you have the motivation to change? What is your motivation to change? Growing up Adventist, you struggle with the rules about music and movies. What does the church say? That's just how it is. They are evil. The explanation is that we shouldn't watch or listen to worldly things because they are Satanic. You might accept that for a while and go along with that. But what is fascinating is the MC message. It gives a true explanation of why we shouldn't watch worldly movies and listen to music.

Suddenly, you gain this knowledge, and hopefully you'll come to an understanding why we place these things on the moral standard. All of a sudden, movies are bad, not because Hollywood is some kind of symbol for Satan or anything like that, but because we see the sexism and the stereotypes in the movies. And when you breathe in the MC message, and you watch a movie, you cannot walk away from this movie without feeling and knowing the horrors of sexism. If you watched the same movie before and after understanding the MC message, if the MC message has touched you, you cannot walk away unaffected. You are no longer watching the movies with Laodicean eyes. You now have the eyes of Ephesians where you see the sexism when you did not see it before. Is that pleasant to see when you know that this is the great test for the God's people upon which they determine their destiny.

Now you have a new mind, new purposes, and new motives. You now have a new heart because you are a new person. You have a new life, a life that is prepared for heaven.

Prayer – Amen