

‘He will keep My words’

The ‘Verily verily’ sayings of Christ

The word of God is to be our study. We are to educate our children in the truths found therein. It is an inexhaustible treasure; but men fail to find this treasure because they do not search until it is within their possession. Very many are content with a supposition in regard to the truth. They are content with a surface work, taking for granted that they have all that is essential. They take the sayings of others for truth, being too indolent to put themselves to diligent, earnest labour, represented in the word as digging for hidden treasure. But mans inventions are not only unreliable, they are dangerous; for they place man where God should be. They place the sayings of men where a Thus saith the Lord should be.

Christ is the truth. His words are truth, and they have a deeper significance than appears on the surface. All the sayings of Christ have a value beyond their unpretending appearance. Minds that are quickened by the Holy Spirit will discern the value of these sayings. They will discern the precious gems of truth, though these may be buried treasures...

The Scriptures need not be read by the dim light of tradition or human speculation. As well might we try to give light to the sun with a torch as to explain the Scriptures by human tradition or imagination. Gods holy word needs not the torchlight glimmer of earth to make its glories distinguishable. It is light in itself--the glory of God revealed, and beside it every other light is dim.

But there must be earnest study and close investigation. Sharp, clear perceptions of truth will never be the reward of indolence. No earthly blessing can be obtained without earnest, patient, persevering effort. If men attain success in business, they must have a will to do and a faith to look for results. And we cannot expect to gain spiritual knowledge without earnest toil. Those who desire to find the treasures of truth must dig for them as the miner digs for the treasure hidden in the earth. No halfhearted, indifferent work will avail. It is essential for old and young, not only to read Gods word, but to study it with wholehearted earnestness, praying and searching for truth as for hidden treasure. Those who do this will be rewarded, for Christ will quicken the understanding.

Our salvation depends on a knowledge of the truth contained in the Scriptures. It is Gods will that we should possess this. Search, O search the precious Bible with hungry hearts. Explore Gods word as the miner explores the earth to find veins of gold. Never give up the search until you have ascertained your relation to God and His will in regard to you.

Christ’s Object Lessons, pages 109-111.

Foreword

(To introduce the topics and stimulate the desire for deeper study)

“Verily, verily,” fit introduction to words of power! Fit expression for the lips of Him who is the “Amen,” the faithful and true witness! Fit seal for those weighty doctrines with which John’s Gospel abounds.

Twenty-five times the double verily occurs in this Gospel (and only in John), sometimes in isolated sayings, sometimes repeated again and again in the same discourse. A careful study of these twenty-five sayings and their context leads to the impression that instead of being isolated and accidental, they form together a complete and connected whole, a scheme of Christian doctrine.

The series begins with a saying to Nathaniel showing the access which His servants have to the Father through the Son; then follow two sayings explanatory of the means of entrance into this spiritual kingdom; and then we are introduced, in four weighty sayings, to the nature and power of the Son, His personal knowledge of that which He reveals, His identity with the Father in all He does, His power to give life both to soul and body, to judge and to quicken. Next we have seven sayings expressing gifts of Christ to His people. First, He is able to give them an enduring supply, far superior to that manna which they regarded as the gift of Moses, being in effect everlasting life; this life to be achieved by constant and personal communion with the Son. Then He sets them free from the bondage of sin, and from the fear of death, which He is able to do, being Himself the eternal I AM.

The remaining eleven sayings embrace the subject of the nature, conditions, dangers, privileges and rewards of Christian service. The servant must be a humble follower, but shall be honoured with His Lord. He must not presume upon his position, for he is in danger of betraying or denying his Master; but if he cling to Him in faith, He will give him his own power, will turn his sorrow into joy, and the Father will bestow on him all that he needs. So, treading after Christ in the path of true consecration and self-surrender, he shall follow his Master even through the way of the cross to the eternal crown.

Thus we have in brief outline the teaching of these wonderful words of life, which it is the design of this series of lessons to endeavour to draw out one by one, so as to show the distinct teaching of each saying. There is insufficient space to study all twenty-five sayings, but this series will focus on thirteen of them, and if the result should be to throw further light on the words of our Lord, it will only be through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, through whom, said Jesus, we may be guided into all truth.

Lesson 1: ‘Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’

MEMORY VERSE: 'Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' John 3:3.

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 111-113.

LESSON AIM: To show that conversion is the only entrance to the kingdom of God.

Introduction

'The figure of the new birth, which Jesus had used, was not wholly unfamiliar to Nicodemus. Converts from heathenism to the faith of Israel were often compared to children just born. Therefore he must have perceived that the words of Christ were not to be taken in a literal sense. But by virtue of his birth as an Israelite he regarded himself as sure of a place in the kingdom of God. Accepting new theories, and uniting with a church, does not bring new life to anyone, even though the church with which he unites may be established on the true foundation. Connection with a church does not take the place of conversion.' *Desire of Ages*, page 171.

'Except a man be born again'

1. How does the Bible refer to those who will be the subjects of the kingdom of God? Malachi 3:17.

NOTE: 'In man, defiled and ruined by sin, He saw the possibilities of redemption. Hearts that have been the battleground of the conflict with Satan, and that have been rescued by the power of love, are more precious to the Redeemer than are those who have never fallen. God looked upon humanity, not as vile and worthless; He looked upon it in Christ, saw it as it might become through redeeming love. He collected all the riches of the universe, and laid them down in order to buy the pearl. And Jesus, having found it, resets it in His own diadem. "For they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon His land." Zechariah 9:16. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels.'" Malachi 3:17. *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 118.

'Jesus declared, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (verse 5). It is not a low standard that is placed before us, for we are to become the children of God. We are to be saved as individuals, and in the day of test and trial we shall be able to discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. We are saved as individual believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.' *Faith & Works*, page 101.

2. Why is the experience of the new birth essential? John 3:3.

NOTE: 'How many have their names upon the church books, who know not what it means to have Christ abide in their hearts by faith! There are many who make a profession of Christianity who will have to be born again, or they cannot see the kingdom of heaven. They will have to become partakers of His love and grace before they can present to others the great salvation that has been provided for those who are dead in trespasses and sins.' *Bible Echo*, June 15 1892.

3. Is the new birth only a New Testament experience or has anyone from the Old Testament already seen the kingdom of God? Genesis 5:21-24, 2 Kings 2:11.

NOTE: "'Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.'" For three hundred years Enoch had been seeking purity of soul, that he might be in harmony with Heaven. For three centuries he had walked with God. Day by day he had longed for a closer union; nearer and nearer had grown the communion, until God took him to Himself. He had stood at the threshold of the eternal world, only a step between him and the land of the blest; and now the portals opened, the walk with God, so long pursued on earth, continued, and he passed through the gates of the Holy City, the first from among men to enter there.' *My life today*, page 341.

'The patriarchs and prophets were representative men [samples], and through them, from century to century, a flood of knowledge was poured into the world. Adam, repentant and converted, was a Christian; Abel was a Christian; Enoch was a Christian; Noah was a Christian; Abraham was a Christian. In types and symbols the Gospel was revealed to those of former dispensations. The Old Testament Scriptures show us the power possessed by those who looked to Christ.' *Signs of the Times*, January 13, 1898.

'When thou art converted'

4. What is another Bible expression for the new birth? Luke 22:32.

NOTE: 'Peter was naturally forward and impulsive, and Satan had taken advantage of these characteristics to overthrow him. Just before the fall of Peter, Jesus had said to him, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.'" *Desire of Ages*, page 812.

'At the last meeting of Christ with His disciples by the sea, Peter, tested by the thrice-repeated question, "Lovest thou Me?" (John 21:15-17), had been restored to his place among the Twelve. His work had been appointed him; he was to feed the Lord's flock. Now, converted and accepted, he was not only to seek to save those without the fold, but was to be a shepherd of the sheep.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 515.

'Christ mentioned to Peter only one condition of service: "Lovest thou Me?" This is the essential qualification.' *Desire of Ages*, page 815.

5. What illustration from everyday life did Jesus use to describe God's initiative in the new birth experience? Luke 8:4-8, Matthew 13:18-23.

NOTE: "The sower soweth the word." Christ came to sow the world with truth. Ever since the fall of man, Satan has been sowing the seeds of error. It was by a lie that he first gained control over men, and thus he still works to overthrow God's kingdom in the earth and to bring men under his power. A sower from a higher world, Christ came to sow the seeds of truth. He who had stood in the councils of God, who had dwelt in the innermost sanctuary of the Eternal, could bring to men the pure principles of truth. Ever since the fall of man, Christ had been the Revealer of truth to the world.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 37.

6. What does the seed represent? Luke 8:11, 1 Peter 1:23. Compare John 6:63.

NOTE: 'By Him the incorruptible seed, "the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever," is communicated to men. 1 Peter 1:23. In that first promise spoken to our fallen race in Eden, Christ was sowing the gospel seed. But it is to His personal ministry among men and to the work which He thus established that the parable of the sower especially applies. The word of God is the seed. Every seed has in itself a germinating principle. In it the life of the plant is enfolded. So there is life in God's word. Christ says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." John 5:24. In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realised. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 37-38.

'Knowledge of sin'

7. What is given by the inspiration of God for reproof of sin? 2 Timothy 3:16.

NOTE: 'The world's Redeemer went about doing good. When before the people, speaking to them the words of eternal truth, with what earnestness He watched the changing countenances of His hearers! The faces that expressed deep interest and pleasure as they listened to His words, gave Him great satisfaction. And when the truth, plainly uttered, touched some cherished sin or idol, He marked the change of countenance, the cold, stern, forbidding look, which told that the truth was unwelcome. Jesus knew that the plain reproof of sin was the very thing that His hearers needed; and the light He shed into the darkened chambers of their minds would have been the greatest blessing to them, had they accepted it. Christ's work was to lay down in simple lines, yet so as to be clearly understood, truths that, if obeyed, would bring peace and happiness to the soul. He could look beneath the surface, and see the cherished sins that were ruining the life and character, and shutting souls away from God. He pointed out these sins, that all might see them in the true light, and put them away. In some who presented the most hardened exterior, He discerned hopeful subjects. He knew that they would respond to the light, and that they would become His true followers.' *Gospel Workers*, page 48.

8. How does the Bible define sin? 1 John 3:4.

NOTE: 'The first step in reconciliation to God is the conviction of sin. "Sin is the transgression of the law." "By the law is the knowledge of sin." 1 John 3:4; Romans 3:20. In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God's great standard of righteousness. It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character and enables him to discern the defects in his own.' *Great Controversy*, page 467.

'The law reveals to man his sins, but it provides no remedy. While it promises life to the obedient, it declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The apostle Paul declares that "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" and not until man is convicted of sin, will he truly feel his need of the atoning blood of Christ. . . . "They that be whole," as our Lord Himself observes, "need not a physician, but they that are sick.'" *Great Controversy*, page 264.

'To seek and to save'

9. Who alone can provide the remedy for sin? Luke 4:18-21.

NOTE: 'In the synagogue at Nazareth Jesus had announced himself the Redeemer of mankind. Said He, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.'" *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, page 192.

10. What did Jesus say that He had come to do? Luke 19:10.

NOTE: 'Jesus looked upon the world in its fallen state with infinite pity. He took humanity upon Himself that He might touch and elevate humanity. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He reached to the very depth of human misery and woe, to take man as He found Him, a being tainted with corruption, degraded with vice, depraved by sin, and united with Satan in apostasy, and elevate him to a seat upon His throne.' *Christian Education*, page 96.

'The wind bloweth where it listeth'

11. To what familiar natural occurrence did Jesus liken the converting work of the Holy Spirit on the heart? John 3:7-8.

NOTE: 'The great truth of the conversion of the heart by the Holy Spirit is presented in Christ's words to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God... That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth

where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John 3:3-8, margin.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 98.

‘A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or to trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. By an agency as unseen as the wind, Christ is constantly working upon the heart. Little by little, perhaps unconsciously to the receiver, impressions are made that tend to draw the soul to Christ. Suddenly, as the Spirit comes with more direct appeal, the soul gladly surrenders itself to Jesus. By many this is called sudden conversion; but it is the result of long wooing by the Spirit of God, a patient, protracted process. While the wind is itself invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt.’ *Maranatha*, page 70.

12. What do we become when we have been born of the Spirit? Romans 8:14-16.

NOTE: ‘In comparison with the millions of the world, God’s people will be, as they have ever been, a little flock; but if they stand for the truth as revealed in His word, God will be their refuge. They stand under the broad shield of Omnipotence. God is always a majority. When the sound of the last trump shall penetrate the prison house of the dead, and the righteous shall come forth with triumph, exclaiming, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:55) standing then with God, with Christ, with the angels, and with the loyal and true of all ages, the children of God will be far in the majority.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 590.

‘Born of water’

13. Why is public baptism, by immersion in water, an important part of the new birth experience? John 3:5; Romans 6:3-5

NOTE: ‘Christ here referred to water baptism and the renewing of the heart by the Spirit of God. Repentance, faith, and baptism are the requisite steps in conversion. As Christians submit to the solemn rite of baptism, He registers the vow that they make to be true to Him. This vow is their oath of allegiance. Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God’s spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, The Lord our Righteousness. Jeremiah 23:6. Those who are baptised in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 145.

14. The Sower of the seed looks forward to full harvest, but what is the value of our transformed life and character to our Saviour? Isaiah 53:11; Is 61:3, last part.

NOTE: ‘Of the Spirit Jesus said, He shall glorify Me. The Saviour came to glorify the Father by the demonstration of His love; so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing His grace to the world. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. The honour of God, the honour of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 671.

Lesson 2: ‘The Son can do nothing of himself.’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.’ John 5:19.

STUDY HELP: *Steps to Christ*, pages 67-75.

LESSON AIM: To learn how to live by the example of Jesus.

Introduction

‘Christ Himself declared, “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what He seeth the Father do” (John 5:19). So utterly was He emptied of Himself that He made no schemes and plans. He lived accepting God’s plans for Him, and the Father day by day unfolded His plans. If Jesus was so wholly dependent, and declared, “Whatsoever I see the Father do, that I do,” how much more should human agents depend upon God for constant instruction, so that their lives might be the simple working out of God’s plans!’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 147.

‘That Prophet’

1. Who did Moses prophesy would come to the children of Israel? Deuteronomy 18:18,19.

NOTE: ‘The apostle showed that religion does not consist in rites and ceremonies, creeds and theories. If it did, the natural man could understand it by investigation, as he understands worldly things. Paul taught that religion is a practical, saving energy, a principle wholly from God, a personal experience of God’s renewing power upon the soul. He showed how Moses had pointed Israel forward to Christ as that Prophet whom they were to hear; how all the prophets had testified of Him as God’s great remedy for sin, the guiltless One who was to bear the sins of the guilty. He did not find fault with their observance

of forms and ceremonies, but showed that while they maintained the ritual service with great exactness, they were rejecting Him who was the antitype of all that system.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 451-452.

2. How was the prophecy of 'that Prophet' fulfilled in the life of Christ? John 6:38, John 5:19-21. See also John 6:24, John 7:16-18, 40, Acts 3:22.

NOTE: "Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." Christ brought to our world a certain knowledge of God, and to all who received and obeyed His word, gave He power to become the sons of God. He who came forth from God to our world gave instruction on every subject about which it is essential that man should know in order to find the pathway to heaven.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 405.

'Christ came to do the will of His heavenly Father, and He fulfilled His mission.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 18*, page 185.

God with us

3. Jesus came as 'that Prophet' for whom the faithful in Israel had waited, but in what way was Jesus unique among the prophets? Matthew 1:21-23.

NOTE: "His name shall be called Immanuel, . . . God with us." "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is seen "in the face of Jesus Christ." From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was "the image of God," the image of His greatness and majesty, "the outshining of His glory." It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God's love, to be "God with us." *Desire of Ages*, page 19.

4. How completely was He prepared to lay aside His reputation and His divine powers while He was on earth? Philippians 2:6-7. Compare 2 Corinthians 8:9.

NOTE: 'Voluntarily He had made Himself of no reputation, and taken upon Him the form of a servant. But His words and works revealed His character. All whose hearts were open to divine illumination would recognise in Him "the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14.' *Desire of Ages*, page 387.

'To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of lost humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 213.

'The will of the Father'

5. What did Jesus say was His purpose in coming to our world? John 5:30; Hebrews 10:7.

NOTE: 'It is in neglecting to follow the exact directions of the word of God that many err. They turn away from God's plans, to follow their own ideas. Christ Himself declared, "The Son of Man can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." So utterly was He emptied of self that He made no plans for Himself. He accepted God's plan for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. If Jesus was so wholly dependent, declaring, "I do nothing of myself," how much more should the human agents depend upon God for constant instruction, so that their lives might be the simple working out of God's will. Oh, that failing, erring mortals would be content to seek wisdom from God, and be entirely submissive in working out His directions, in exemplifying His character! If ever mortals needed to send to heaven an earnest cry, "Lord, show me Thy way; teach me the way of the Lord," it is now. Only those will have a fitness for the mansions above who give to God full and implicit obedience. God knows that we would not appreciate His rarest gifts if we were not perfectly submissive to His will.' *Sins of the Times*, November 21, 1892.

6. How did Jesus learn of His Father's will? Isaiah 50:4, 5, Matthew 14:23.

NOTE: 'In a life wholly devoted to the good of others, the Saviour found it necessary to withdraw from the thoroughfares of travel and from the throng that followed Him day after day. He must turn aside from a life of ceaseless activity and contact with human needs, to seek retirement and unbroken communion with His Father. As one with us, a sharer in our needs and weaknesses, He was wholly dependent upon God, and in the secret place of prayer He sought divine strength, that He might go forth braced for duty and trial. In a world of sin Jesus endured struggles and torture of soul. In communion with God He could unburden the sorrows that were crushing Him. Here He found comfort and joy.' *Desire of Ages*, page 362.

'In all who are under the training of God is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and everyone needs to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).' *Reflecting Christ*, page 118.

'Thy will be done in earth'

7. As our example how completely did He submit to His Father's will? Luke 22:39-42. For encouragement also read Luke 22:43.

NOTE: 'Our own way must be overcome. Pride, self-sufficiency, must be crucified and the vacuum supplied with the Spirit and power of God. Did Jesus Christ, the Majesty of heaven, have His way? Behold Him in travail of soul in Gethsemane, praying to His Father. What forces these blood drops of agony from His holy brow? Oh, the sins of the whole world are upon Him! It was separation from the Father's love that forced from His pale and quivering lips the cry, "Father, if it be possible, let

this cup pass from me” (Matthew 26:39). Three times was the prayer offered, but followed by “Nevertheless not My will, but Thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). This must be our attitude: Not my will, but Thine, O God, be done. This is true conversion.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 147.

8. What was Christ aiming to teach us by His reliance on His Father’s power? And what is His promise? Matthew 6:10, 2 Corinthians 9:8.

NOTE: ‘God’s everlasting arm encircles the soul that turns to Him for aid, however feeble that soul may be. The precious things of the hills shall perish, but the soul that lives for God shall abide with Him. “The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” 1 John 2:17. The city of God will open its golden gates to receive him who learned while on earth to lean on God for guidance and wisdom, for comfort and hope, amid loss and affliction.’ *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, page 99.

‘Without faith it is impossible to please Him.’

9. What does the Bible teach about the faith we need to have in God in order to do the will of God? Hebrews 11:6 first part, Hebrews 11:8, Hebrews 11:11.

NOTE: ‘Let us yoke up with Christ. Let us practice self-denial and self-sacrifice. May God help us to do all we can for His work. He will hear our prayers. Let us believe in Him. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Remembering this, let our faith cleave the dark shadow which Satan has thrown across our pathway. Looking into the face of Jesus Christ, let us say, “He is the hope of my calling.” Let us believe in Him, irrespective of feeling. Feeling has nothing to do with faith. It is as distinct from faith as the east is from the west. We have the word of the living God. In that let us trust.’ *General Conference Bulletin*, April 14, 1901.

‘Christianity is simply living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. We are to believe in, and live in, Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. We have faith in God when we believe His Word; we trust and obey God when we keep His commandments; and we love God when we love His law.’ *Faith & Works*, page 122.

10. Once we have been made right with God, how will we live our lives? Habakkuk 2:4, Hebrews 10:38-39.

NOTE: “The gospel,” he declared, “is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” *Acts of the Apostles*, page 380.

‘The worker for God needs strong faith. Appearances may seem forbidding, but in the darkest hour there is light above. The strength of those who love and serve God will be renewed day by day. The understanding of the Infinite is placed at their service, that in carrying out His purposes they may not err. Let these workers hold the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end, remembering that the light of God’s truth is to shine amid the darkness that enshrouds our world. There is to be no despondency in connection with God’s service. The faith of the consecrated worker is to stand every test brought to bear upon it. God is able and willing to bestow upon His servants all the strength they need and to give them the wisdom that their varied necessities demand. He will more than fulfil the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 242.

‘The kingdom of heaven’

11. Who are those whom will Jesus consider to be His brothers and sisters in this world? Matthew 12:50.

NOTE: ‘Jesus was teaching the people when His disciples brought the message that His mother and His brothers were without and desired to see Him. He knew what was in their hearts, and “He answered and said unto him that told Him, Who is My mother? And who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.” Matthew 12:48-50.’ *Counsels on Health*, page 526.

12. In the judgement what is the essential qualification of those who will be the subjects of the kingdom of heaven? Matthew 7:21

NOTE: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). And in the Revelation He declares, “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14).’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 350

Lesson 3: ‘The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.’ John 5:25.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 524-536.

LESSON AIM: To help us learn to know the voice of Jesus now, so that we will have a part in the first resurrection.

Introduction

'How may we know His voice from that of a stranger? How shall we distinguish it from the voice of a false shepherd? God reveals His will to us in His word, the Holy Scriptures. His voice is also revealed in His providential workings; and it will be recognised if we do not separate our souls from Him by walking in our own ways, doing according to our own wills, and following the promptings of an unsanctified heart, until the senses have become so confused that eternal things are not discerned, and the voice of Satan is so disguised that it is accepted as the voice of God.' *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 512.

'The hour is coming and now is'

1. What certain promise did Christ give about the resurrection? John 5:25.

NOTE: 'The scribes and Pharisees listened in amazement to such words as these: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." The conversion of the soul is, as it were, a resurrection from the dead. It is like a re-creation to those, who, through the transforming power of the grace of God, have passed from death unto life. Those who listened to the Saviour's words did not believe them. They said in their hearts, This is an impossibility. Jesus discerned their incredulity, and added: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.'" *Bible Echo*, January 15, 1889.

2. Why is it important to know the voice of Jesus now? John 10:1-5

NOTE: 'There are men of the world who will volunteer to be our guides; they regard their course as wise, but they are of the class who, professing to be wise, need to become fools in order to become wise in God's wisdom. They lead away from the path where the voice of Jesus is heard, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." They are false teachers, blind leaders of the blind. They divert the attention from the very work to be done in this period of the world's history. But those who follow the Leader step by step, will hear and recognise the voice of the True Shepherd.' *Review & Herald*, January 31, 1893.

'The resurrection at the last day'

3. What promise did Jesus make to Martha about her brother Lazarus? John 11:23.

NOTE: 'With human and divine pity Jesus looked into her sorrowful, careworn face. Martha had no inclination to recount the past; all was expressed by the pathetic words, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." But looking into that face of love, she added, "I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee." Jesus encouraged her faith, saying, "Thy brother shall rise again." His answer was not intended to inspire hope of an immediate change. He carried Martha's thoughts beyond the present restoration of her brother, and fixed them upon the resurrection of the just. This He did that she might see in the resurrection of Lazarus a pledge of the resurrection of all the righteous dead, and an assurance that it would be accomplished by the Saviour's power.' *Desire of Ages*, page 530.

4. How did Martha express her confidence in a last day resurrection? John 11:24.

NOTE: 'More than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since He who spake as never man spake, and could utter only truth, declared: "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." The trump of God has not yet sounded; that voice so full of power has not yet penetrated the sepulchres; that hour so full of promise to the people of God has not yet arrived; but it must come, it is not far in the future. Some of us will doubtless be living when the voice that is heard everywhere, even to ocean depths and the sunless caverns of earth, shall be heard, echoing from sea to sea, from valleys and from mountains, calling to life the sleeping dead. There will be a reappearance of every human being that has gone into the grave. The aged who sank under the hand of death with the burden of years upon them, manhood in its prime, youth in the early bloom of life, and the little child, all shall awake, and shake off the fetters of the tomb. But not all shall awake to everlasting life. "Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'" *Bible Echo*, January 15, 1889.

'Believest thou this?'

5. What personal response to Jesus now is essential to ensure our resurrection to eternal life? John 11:25-27.

NOTE: 'Still seeking to give a true direction to her faith, Jesus declared, "I am the resurrection, and the life." In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." See 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life. "He that believeth in Me," said Jesus, "though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?"' *Desire of Ages*, page 530.

6. How should we respond when we hear our Shepherd's voice? John 10:27.

NOTE: "'These are they which follow the Lamb withersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb." Revelation 14:4. The vision of the prophet pictures them as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 591.

‘I am the resurrection and the life’

7. What hope does Jesus promise in a world where death comes to all? John 11:25.

NOTE: ‘When in 1881 Elder James White was laid beside the children, little did his bereaved companion think that the Lord would strengthen her to continue in ministry for a full third of a century. Yet such had been the case; and now, her labours ended, she was to rest by the side of her loved ones. Elder I. H. Evans read the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of John. Jesus has declared: “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.” Elder Evans also read from the apostle Paul’s inspired testimony in 1 Corinthians 15 many positive and comforting assurances concerning the resurrection of the righteous. “If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.” “In Christ shall all be made alive.” “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”’ *Life Sketches*, page 479.

8. Will those who have died live again? Isaiah 26:19.

NOTE: ‘Christ spoke repeatedly of His Second Coming to the earth. At one time He said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” More than eighteen hundred years have passed since He, who spake as never man spake, uttered these words. He who could utter nothing but truth, made this assertion, which implied that the hour was at hand; but the dead are still in their graves. The Lifegiver’s voice has not yet called the sleeping saints from their gloomy prisons, but we have not lost faith, because the predicted hour has not yet arrived. We work on, trusting, and believing, and waiting, not taking one step backward; but obeying the orders of the Captain of our salvation, whose command to His people is, “Go forward.” The hour will come; it is not far distant, and some of us who now believe will be alive upon the earth, and shall see the prediction verified, and hear the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God echo from mountain and plain and sea, to the uttermost parts of the earth. All creation will hear that voice, and those who have lived and died in Jesus, will respond to the call of the Prince of life. It will be heard in the dungeons of men, in the caverns of the deep, in the rocks and caves of the earth, only to be obeyed. It is the same voice that said, “Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,” the same voice which said, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” All those who have obeyed that voice when it said, “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me,” will hear the “Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” To them, that voice will mean rest, peace, and everlasting life.’ *Review & Herald*, July 31, 1888.

‘All that are in the graves shall hear His voice’

9. When has the resurrection voice of Jesus been heard already? John 11:43.

NOTE: ‘Lifting up His eyes, the Saviour prayed, “Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me. And I knew that Thou hearest Me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me.” The hush that followed this prayer was broken by Jesus crying out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth.” Instantly life animates that form which had been so changed by decay that the friends of the deceased recoiled from looking upon it. Lazarus, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and with a napkin about his face, rises, obedient to the command of his Saviour, and attempts to walk, but is impeded by the winding-sheet. Jesus commands his friends to “loose him, and let him go.” Human hands are again brought into requisition to do the work which it is possible for them to do. The burial clothes which bear evidence of the corruption of the body are removed, and Lazarus stands before them, not as one emaciated from disease, and with feeble, tottering limbs, but as a man in the prime of life, and in the vigour of a noble manhood, his eyes beaming with intelligence and love for his Saviour.’ *The Spirit of Prophecy, volume 2*, page 365.

9. Is it only the righteous who will hear the life-giving voice of Christ? John 5:28-29.

NOTE: ‘That voice which penetrates the ear of the dead, they know. How often have its plaintive, tender tones called them to repentance! How often has it been heard in the touching entreaties of a friend, a brother, a Redeemer! To the rejecters of His grace, no other could be so full of condemnation, so burdened with denunciation, as that voice which has so long pleaded, “Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?” [Ezekiel 33:11.] Oh that it were to them the voice of a stranger! Says Jesus: “I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at naught all My counsel, and would none of My reproof.” [Proverbs 1:24-25.] That voice awakens memories which they would fain blot out, warnings despised, invitations refused, privileges slighted.’ *Great Controversy*, page 642.

10. When preaching to Felix, what did Paul say on this subject? Acts 24:15.

NOTE: ‘He [Paul] held up before Felix and Drusilla the character of God, His righteousness, justice, and equity, and the nature of His law. He clearly showed that it is man’s duty to live a life of sobriety and temperance, keeping the passions under the control of reason, in conformity to God’s law, and preserving the physical and mental powers in a healthy condition. He declared that there would surely come a day of judgment when all would be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body, and when it would be plainly revealed that wealth, position, or titles are powerless to gain for man the favour of God or to deliver him from the results of sin. He showed that this life is man’s time of preparation for the future life. Should he neglect

present privileges and opportunities he would suffer an eternal loss; no new probation would be given him.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 423.

'The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout'

11. When Jesus comes back the second time, as King and Archangel, what will be heard from His mouth? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, first part.

NOTE: 'The angels who lingered upon Olivet after Christ's ascension, repeated to the disciples the promise of His return: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." [Acts 1:11.] And the apostle Paul, speaking by the Spirit of inspiration, testified: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God." [1 Thessalonians 4:16.] Says the prophet of Patmos: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him." [Revelation 1:7.]' *Great Controversy*, page 301.

12. In the first resurrection who will hear the voice of the son of God and rise from the dead to everlasting life? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, second part.

NOTE: 'As Paul's epistle was opened and read, great joy and consolation was brought to the church by the words revealing the true state of the dead. Paul showed that those living when Christ should come would not go to meet their Lord in advance of those who had fallen asleep in Jesus. The voice of the Archangel and the trump of God would reach the sleeping ones, and the dead in Christ should rise first, before the touch of immortality should be given to the living. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 258.

13. When will the second resurrection take place? Revelation 20:5 first part.

NOTE: 'In terrible, fearful majesty, Jesus called forth the wicked dead; and they came up with the same feeble, sickly bodies that went into the grave. What a spectacle! What a scene! At the first resurrection all came forth in immortal bloom; but at the second the marks of the curse are visible on all. The kings and noblemen of the earth, the mean and low, the learned and unlearned, come forth together. All behold the Son of man; and those very men who despised and mocked Him, who put the crown of thorns upon His sacred brow, and smote Him with the reed, behold Him in all His kingly majesty. ...And then there arises one long protracted wail of agony, as they flee to hide from the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords.' *Early Writings*, page 292.

'Oh, that now, while it is called today, you would turn to the Lord! Your every deed is making you either better or worse. If your actions are on Satan's side, they leave behind them an influence that continues to work its baleful results. Only the pure, the clean, and the holy can enter the city of God, "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts," but turn to the Lord, that the path you travel may not leave desolation in its track.' *The Adventist Home*, page 358.

Lesson 4: 'Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.' John 8:34.

STUDY HELP: *Lift Him Up*, page 144.

LESSON AIM: To study what it means to be the servant of sin and how to become servants of God.

Introduction

"To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." If we indulge anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, selfishness, or any other sin, we become servants of sin. "No man can serve two masters." If we serve sin, we cannot serve Christ.' *Lift Him Up*, page 144.

'No man can serve two masters'

1. How did Jesus show the impossibility of divided loyalties? Matthew 6:24.

NOTE: 'We cannot serve God with a divided heart. Bible religion is not one influence among many others; its influence is to be supreme, pervading and controlling every other. It is not to be like a dash of colour brushed here and there upon the canvas, but it is to pervade the whole life, as if the canvas were dipped into the colour, until every thread of the fabric were dyed a deep, unfading hue.' *Desire of Ages*, page 312.

2. How did Jesus explain the need for single-minded loyalty? Matthew 6:21.

NOTE: 'If brain and nerve and muscle are all employed in the service of self, you are not making God and heaven the first consideration of your life. It is impossible to be weaving the graces of Christ into your character while you are putting all your energies on the side of the world. You may be successful in heaping up treasure on the earth, for the glory of self; but "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Eternal considerations will be made of secondary importance. You may take

part in the outward forms of worship; but your service will be an abomination to the God of heaven. You cannot serve God and mammon. You will either yield your heart and put your will on the side of God, or you will give your energies to the service of the world. God will accept no half-hearted service.’ *Counsels on Stewardship*, page 217.

3. How does Jesus explain the need to make a firm commitment? Matthew 6:22.

NOTE: ‘If the eye is single, if it is directed heavenward, the light of heaven will fill the soul, and earthly things will appear insignificant and uninviting. The purpose of the heart will be changed, and the admonition of Jesus will be heeded. You will lay up your treasure in heaven. Your thoughts will be fixed upon the great rewards of eternity. All your plans will be made in reference to the future, immortal life. You will be drawn toward your treasure. You will not study your worldly interest; but in all your pursuits the silent inquiry will be, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” Bible religion will be woven into your daily life.’ *Counsels on Stewardship*, page 342.

‘Servants to obey’

4. What reveals whom we have chosen to be our master? Romans 6:16.

NOTE: ‘A profession of Christianity without corresponding faith and works will avail nothing. No man can serve two masters. The children of the wicked One are their own master’s servants, and to whom they yield themselves servants to obey, his servants they are. Until they renounce the Devil and all his works, they cannot be the servants of God. It cannot be harmless for servants of the heavenly King to engage in the pleasures and amusements which Satan’s servants engage in, even if they often repeat that such amusements are harmless. God has revealed sacred and holy truths, to separate His people from the ungodly, and purify them unto Himself.’ *Spiritual Gifts, volume 4B*, page 146.

5. What response did Jesus make to those who claimed Him as their Lord yet did not do His will? Matthew 7:21-23.

NOTE: ‘Let none deceive themselves with the belief that God will accept and bless them while they are trampling upon one of His requirements. The wilful commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law. God will honour those only who honour Him.’ *Signs of the Times*, June 19, 1884.

‘The worldling and the infidel admire consistency, and have ever been powerfully convicted that God was of a truth with His people, when their works correspond with their faith. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Every tree is known by his own fruits. Our words, our actions, are the fruit we bear. There are those who hear the sayings of Christ, but do them not. They profess, but their fruits are such as to disgust unbelievers. They are boastful, and pray and talk in a self-righteous manner, exalting themselves, and virtually thanking God, like the Pharisee, that they are not as other men. They recount their good deeds, yet these very ones are crafty, and overreach in business deal. Their fruits are not good. Their words and acts are wrong, and yet they seem to be blinded to their destitute, wretched condition. I was shown that the following scripture [Matthew 7:21-23] was applicable to such, who go along under such a deception.’ *Spiritual Gifts, volume 4B*, pages 156-157.

‘O wretched man that I am!’

6. How did Paul describe the experience of being a servant of sin? Romans 7:23-24.

NOTE: ‘By sin we have been severed from the life of God. Our souls are palsied. Of ourselves we are no more capable of living a holy life than was the impotent man capable of walking. There are many who realise their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are vainly striving to obtain it. In despair they cry, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?” Romans 7:24, margin.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 203.

7. What is the only way to be free from being a servant of sin? Romans 7:24, first part.

NOTE: ‘Let these desponding, struggling ones look up. The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, “Wilt thou be made whole?” He bids you arise in health and peace. Do not wait to feel that you are made whole. Believe His word, and it will be fulfilled. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength. Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is “dead in trespasses.” Ephesians 2:1. He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 203.

‘Think on these things’

8. How does Paul describe the problems of wrong habits? Ephesians 2:2-3.

NOTE: ‘When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. But if we would enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus in His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words and the character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes.’ *Lift Him Up*, page 144.

9. How does Paul describe the change that God brings about in the soul that yields to Him? Ephesians 2:4-6.

NOTE: ‘Many are inquiring, “How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?” You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are

like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections. The knowledge of your broken promises and forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in your own sincerity, and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centred upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.' *Steps to Christ*, page 47.

10. What practical advice does Paul give concerning the formation of right habits? Philippians 4:8.

NOTE: 'If we would develop a character which God can accept, we must form correct habits in our religious life. Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to often lift the thoughts to God in prayer. If the mind wanders, we must bring it back; by persevering effort, habit will finally make it easy. We cannot for one moment separate ourselves from Christ with safety. We may have His presence to attend us at every step, but only by observing the conditions which He has Himself laid down.' *Lift Him Up*, page 144.

'The renewing of your mind'

11. What promise is made to those who yield themselves to Christ? James 4:7.

NOTE: 'The question is often asked, How can I resist Satan? There is only one way by which you can do this, and that is by faith, taking Christ as your helper and pleading with Him for strength. When Satan suggests doubt to your soul, when he tells you that you are too unworthy, too sinful, to realise the blessing of God, present Christ before him as your Advocate and Saviour. Tell him you know that you are a sinner, but that Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Mark 2:17). Repeat His promises: Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out (John 6:37). Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me (Isaiah 27:5). Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Matthew 21:22). Be simple-hearted enough to believe these promises of God. When Satan comes to you, and tells you that because you are unhappy, perplexed, and troubled you are not a child of God, do not become discouraged for one moment, but gird up the loins of your mind. Let your heart repose in God. He has promised that if you come to Him, you shall find rest to your soul; and if you have done this, rest assured that He will fulfil His word in you.' *That I May Know Him*, page 245.

12. How does Paul describe the submission of the heart to Christ and its result? Romans 12:1-2.

NOTE: 'The transforming power of Christ's grace moulds the one who gives himself to God's service. Imbued with the Spirit of the Redeemer, he is ready to deny self, ready to take up the cross, ready to make any sacrifice for the Master. No longer can he be indifferent to the souls perishing around him. He is lifted above self-serving. He has been created anew in Christ, and self-serving has no place in his life. He realises that every part of his being belongs to Christ, who has redeemed him from the slavery of sin; that every moment of his future has been bought with the precious lifeblood of God's only-begotten Son.' *Lift Him Up*, page 58.

'To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey'

13. How are we shown that we can make a choice over whom we serve? Romans 6:16. Compare Joshua 24:15, first part.

NOTE: 'The will is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or choice. Every human being possessed of reason has power to choose the right. In every experience of life, God's word to us is, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15. Everyone may place his will on the side of the will of God, may choose to obey Him, and by thus linking himself with divine agencies, he may stand where nothing can force him to do evil.' *Education*, page 289.

14. How did John explain that sinning is incompatible with abiding in Christ? 1 John 3:6.

NOTE: 'A mere profession of godliness is worthless. It is he that abideth in Christ that is a Christian. Unless the mind of God becomes the mind of men, every effort to purify himself will be useless; for it is impossible to elevate man except through a knowledge of God. The question you need to put to yourselves is, "Am I a Christian?" To be a Christian is to be far more than many understand. It means more than simply having your name upon the church records. It means to be joined to Christ. It means to have simple faith, unwavering reliance upon God. It means to have childlike confidence in your heavenly Father through the name and merit of His dear Son.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 130.

Lesson 5: 'Before Abraham was, I am'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.' John 8:58.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 47.

LESSON AIM: To study the truth that the only source of eternal life is through Christ.

Introduction

'Christ, who created the world and all things that are therein, is the life and light of every living thing. In Jesus is our life derived. In Him is life, that is original, unborrowed, underived life. In us there is a streamlet from the fountain of life. In Him is the fountain of life. Our life is something that we receive, something that the Giver takes back again to Himself. If our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall, when Christ shall appear, also appear with Him in glory. And while in this world we will give to God, in sanctified service, all the capabilities He has given us.' *Medical Ministry*, page 7.

'I AM THAT I AM'

1. By what name did the Lord reveal Himself to Moses and the children of Israel? Exodus 3:13-14.

NOTE: 'To Moses, Jehovah declared, I AM THAT I AM (Exodus 3:14). Christ declared, Before Abraham was, I am (John 8:58). By this declaration He laid open the resources of His infinite nature, imparting in His words assurance of pardon for the guilty race. He is the Word, conscious of power that He can take up and lay down His life as He chooses [in order] to secure the salvation of those who have fallen under Satan's falsehoods and intrigues.' *The Upward Look*, page 144.

2. What is the significance of this name? Consider the following verses? Psalm 90:2, Isaiah 46:9-10, Revelation 21:6.

NOTE: 'In regard to the personality and prerogatives of God, where He is, and what He is, this is a subject which we are not to dare to touch. The one who in the daily life holds closest communion with God, and who has the deepest knowledge of Him, realizes most keenly the utter inability of human beings to explain the Creator. God always has been. He is the great I AM. The psalmist declares, Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. Psalm 90:2. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. I am the Lord, I change not, He declares. With Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. He is the same yesterday, and to day and for ever. Hebrews 13:8. He is infinite and omnipresent. No words of ours can describe His greatness and majesty. Above the distractions of the earth He sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 42.

'Who only hath immortality'

3. How are we shown that only God is immortal by nature? 1 Timothy 6:14-16. Compare John 5:26.

NOTE: 'The popular ministry cannot successfully resist spiritualism. They have nothing wherewith to shield their flocks from its baleful influence. Much of the sad result of spiritualism will rest upon ministers of this age; for they have trampled the truth under their feet, and in its stead have preferred fables. The sermon which Satan preached to Eve upon the immortality of the soul, Ye shall not surely die, they have reiterated from the pulpit; and the people receive it as pure Bible truth. It is the foundation of spiritualism. The word of God nowhere teaches that the soul of man is immortal. Immortality is an attribute of God only. 1 Timothy 6:16: Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. God's word, rightly understood and applied, is a safeguard against spiritualism.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 344.

4. When will redeemed mankind receive the gift of immortality? 1 Corinthians 15:51-54.

NOTE: 'We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgment. We are preparing to meet Him who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our character, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honour, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 218.

'The same yesterday, today and forever'

5. What important characteristic does the I AM possess? Malachi 3:6.

NOTE: 'The truth of God is not changeable, uncertain, and powerless. It is truth presented in its purity that alone can convict and convert the sinner, and turn him from the error of his ways. The word of God is the only fixed, changeless thing that the world knows. Like its Author in character, it is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It not only causes men to discern what is truth, but it unmasketh the soul, and presents men to themselves as perishing sinners, and calls upon them to repent and to be converted, that their sins may be blotted out, and stand no longer against them.' *Bible Echo*, May 28, 1894.

6. How are we shown that Jesus possesses this characteristic? Hebrews 13:8.

NOTE: 'Do not seek wisdom from men. Those to whom you go may be bewildered by the temptations of Satan, and may plant in your minds the seeds of doubt. Go to Jesus, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. He is unchangeable, the same yesterday, today, and forever; and He can not err. Has not His invitation reached your ears, and touched your heart? He says, Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart:

and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. Go to the Lord with the simplicity and confidence of a little child. Tell Him your needs and your troubles, withholding nothing. Ask Him to teach you how to use your entrusted talents for Him.' *Review & Herald*, October 29, 1903.

'In Him was life'

7. How are we shown that the Lord is the source of all life? John 1:4. Compare John 3:36, John 5:24, John 6:47.

NOTE: 'John writes concerning Christ, saying, In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. Life is associated with light, and if we have no light from the Sun of Righteousness, we can have no life in Him. But this light has been provided for every soul, and it is only as we withdraw from the light that darkness comes upon us. Jesus said, He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. In the world about us there can be no life without light. Were the sun to withdraw his shining, all vegetation, all animal life, would have an end. This illustrates the fact that we cannot have spiritual life unless we place ourselves under the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. If we put a flowering plant in a dark room, it will soon wither and die; and so we may have some spiritual life, and yet lose it by dwelling in an atmosphere of doubt and gloom.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 281.

8. How was this truth expressed in Old Testament times? Psalm 36:9.

NOTE: 'All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life. The youth need to understand the deep truth underlying the Bible statement that with God is the fountain of life. Not only is He the originator of all, but He is the life of everything that lives. It is His life that we receive in the sunshine, in the pure, sweet air, in the food which builds up our bodies and sustains our strength. It is by His life that we exist, hour by hour, moment by moment. Except as perverted by sin, all His gifts tend to life, to health and joy. A mysterious life pervades all nature, a life that sustains the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, that lives in the insect atom which floats in the summer breeze, that wings the flight of the swallow and feeds the young ravens which cry, that brings the bud to blossom and the flower to fruit. The same power that upholds nature is working also in man. The laws that govern the heart's action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds. Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same, a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator's will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one's self out of harmony with the universe.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 164.

'None other name'

9. How only may a person be saved from his sins and receive eternal life? Acts 4:12.

NOTE: 'In His divinity Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. He declares that He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, should say, I have power to lay it [My life] down, and I have power to take it again. Christ was invested with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. Christ became one with humanity that humanity might become one in spirit and life with Him. By virtue of this union in obedience to the Word of God, His life becomes their life.' *That I May Know Him*, page 71.

10. How did Jesus explain this truth? John 3:14-16. Compare Acts 16:30-31.

NOTE: 'Only the believer in Christ can receive life everlasting. Only by continually feeding on Christ's flesh and blood can we have the assurance that we are partakers of the divine nature. No one should be indifferent on this subject, saying, If we are honest, it is no matter what we believe. You cannot with safety surrender any seed of vital truth in order to please yourself or anybody else. Do not seek to avoid the cross. If we receive no light from the Sun of Righteousness, we have no connection with the Source of all light; and if this life and light do not abide in us, we can never be saved.' *Selected Messages, volume 1*, page 299.

'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus'

11. What conditions does the Lord give for receiving eternal life? Matthew 19:16-17. Compare John 14:15, 21, Revelation 14:12.

NOTE: 'Here are the conditions upon which every soul will be elected to eternal life. Your obedience to God's commandments will prove your right to an inheritance with the saints in light. God has elected a certain excellence of character; and every one who, through the grace of Christ, shall reach the standard of his requirement, will have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of glory. All who would reach this standard of character, will have to employ the means that God has provided to this end. If you would inherit the rest that remaineth for the children of God, you must become a co-labourer with God. You are elected to wear the yoke of Christ, --to bear his burden, to lift his cross. You are to be diligent to make your calling and election sure. [2 Peter 1:10.] Search the Scriptures, and you will see that not a son or a daughter of Adam is elected to be saved in disobedience to God's law. The world makes void the law of God; but Christians are chosen to sanctification through obedience to the truth. They are elected to bear the cross, if they would wear the crown.' *Christian Education*, page 118.

12. How does Paul explain the way that God has made it possible to live in harmony with His commandments? Romans 8:3-4. Compare Romans 1:16-17, John 3:36.

NOTE: 'When we speak of faith, there is a distinction that should be borne in mind. There is a kind of belief that is wholly distinct from faith. The existence and power of God, the truth of His Word, are facts that even Satan and his hosts cannot at heart deny. The Bible says that the devils also believe, and tremble; but this is not faith. Where there is not only a belief in God's Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith, faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. And the heart that in its unrenewed state is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, now delights in its holy precepts, exclaiming with the psalmist, O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Psalm 119:97. And the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 90.

Lesson 6: 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' John 12:24.

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 84-86.

LESSON AIM: To show that only those who give themselves freely to God will preserve their lives eternally.

Introduction

'By the casting of the grain into the soil, Christ represents the sacrifice of Himself for our redemption. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die," He says, "it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24. So the death of Christ will result in fruit for the kingdom of God. In accordance with the law of the vegetable kingdom, life will be the result of His death.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 86.

'If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit'

1. What practical lesson can be learned from nature? John 12:24.

NOTE: 'Those who till the soil have the illustration ever before them. Year by year man preserves his supply of grain by apparently throwing away the choicest part. For a time it must be hidden under the furrow, to be watched over by the Lord. Then appears the blade, then the ear, and then the corn in the ear. But this development cannot take place unless the grain is buried out of sight, hidden, and to all appearance, lost.' *Desire of Ages*, page 623.

2. How did Paul express this same truth? 1 Corinthians 15:36.

NOTE: 'The seed dies, to spring forth into new life. In this we are taught the lesson of the resurrection. Of the human body laid away to moulder in the grave, God has said: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power." 1 Corinthians 15:42, 43.' *Education*, page 110.

'He shall see His seed'

3. How is this lesson exemplified in the death of Christ? Isaiah 53:10-11.

NOTE: 'Only by His death could the world be saved. Like a grain of wheat, the Son of man must be cast into the ground and die, and be buried out of sight; but He was to live again. Christ presented His future, illustrating it by the things of nature, that the disciples might understand. The true result of His mission was to be reached by His death. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." When the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it springs up, and bears fruit. So the death of Christ would result in fruit for the kingdom of God. In accordance with the law of the vegetable kingdom, life was to be the result of His death.' *Desire of Ages*, pages 622-623.

4. What memorial are we given of this truth? Romans 6:3-6. Compare Galatians 2:20.

NOTE: 'In receiving baptism, the human agent, inspired with new purposes, pledges himself to die to the world and live in obedience to Christ. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost supply the power that makes him victorious in every conflict with the prince of darkness.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 6*, page 167.

'The repentant believer, who takes the steps required in conversion, commemorates in his baptism the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. He goes down into the water in the likeness of Christ's death and burial, and he is raised out of the water in the likeness of His resurrection to live a new life in Christ Jesus.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 303.

'As if a man should cast seed in the ground'

5. What lessons did Jesus draw from seed-sowing? John 12:25.

NOTE: 'So with all who bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ: self-love, self-interest, must perish; the life must be cast into the furrow of the world's need. But the law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation. The husbandman preserves his grain by casting it away. So the life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man.' *Education*, page 110.

6. How did Jesus explain the futility of trying to live for this earthly life? Luke 9:23-25.

NOTE: 'He who lives for self, and devotes his life to self-serving, will lose his life. He may gather much, but he imparts little. All such are as the grain that is eaten. Those who think and plan for self only, who desire everything to minister to their ideas and advance their interests, pursue a course of selfish idolatry. God says of them, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." Those who love this temporal life so well that they will scheme for themselves, and work upon worldly plans, will find at last that they are bankrupt; for they are without the eternal riches. But those who hate this life, who choose death rather than a life without Christ, win heaven. Those who devote their lives to God's service, who honour Him, and commit the keeping of their souls to Him as unto a faithful Creator, will bring forth fruit unto eternal life. The Lord will keep that which is committed to His trust against that day. He will honour the man who serves Him with the whole heart.' *Signs of the Times*, July 1, 1897.

'To him shall be given'

7. What other important lesson did Jesus draw from seed-sowing? Mark 4:25-29.

NOTE: 'Liberality both in spiritual and in temporal things is taught in the lesson of seed sowing. The Lord says, "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." Isaiah 32:20. "This I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." 2 Corinthians 9:6. To sow beside all waters means a continual imparting of God's gifts. It means giving wherever the cause of God or the needs of humanity demand our aid. This will not tend to poverty. "He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." The sower multiplies his seed by casting it away. So it is with those who are faithful in distributing God's gifts. By imparting they increase their blessings. God has promised them a sufficiency that they may continue to give. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." Luke 6:38.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 85.

8. When we practise liberality, to whom should the gratitude and praise go? Matthew 5:16, 1 Peter 2:12. Compare John 15:8.

NOTE: 'And more than this is wrapped up in the sowing and the reaping. As we distribute God's temporal blessings, the evidence of our love and sympathy awakens in the receiver gratitude and thanksgiving to God. The soil of the heart is prepared to receive the seeds of spiritual truth. And He who ministers seed to the sower will cause the seed to germinate and bear fruit unto eternal life.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 86.

'What more could have been done?'

9. What warning may we learn from the experience of the Jews? Isaiah 5:4. Compare Hosea 10:1, first part.

NOTE: 'He did not pronounce scathing rebukes against those who did not know the truth, but against those whom God had made the depositaries of sacred responsibilities, a people chosen and favoured with every temporal and spiritual advantage, and yet bearing no fruit. The most solemn responsibility for the Jewish nation was when Jesus was in their midst. It was that generation, the generation which rejected him, that was the guilty one. Jesus, speaking sometimes by warning, by judgments, by blessing given and withdrawn, said, "They would none of My counsel, they despised all My reproofs." If thou art destroyed, it is thyself alone who art responsible. "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." Warning, expostulation, forbearance, and patience are about to cease. Mark the cursing of the fig tree, representing the Jewish nation, covered with leaves of profession, but no fruit to be found thereon.' *Special Testimonies, series A, no. 7*, page 59.

10. What is God's plan for His people? John 15:16.

NOTE: 'The change of heart by which we become children of God... is compared to the germination of the good seed sown by the husbandman. In like manner those who are just converted to Christ are, "as newborn babes," to "grow up" to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus (1 Peter 2:2; Ephesians 4:15). Or like the good seed sown in the field, they are to grow up and bring forth fruit. Isaiah says that they shall "be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified" (Isaiah 61:3). So from natural life, illustrations are drawn, to help us better to understand the mysterious truths of spiritual life.' *Steps to Christ*, page 67.

'Herein is My Father glorified'

11. What does the Lord look for in the lives of His people? John 15:8.

NOTE: 'I am alarmed because there is so little genuine burden for perishing souls. The church knows her duty well if she would only contemplate the situation. There is work to be done in home missionary efforts; there is much to be done in far-off lands. Why are there not hundreds giving themselves to the work where now there is one? The heavenly agencies are waiting to co-operate with human agencies in the grand work of reflecting light to the world. Wherever there is even one soul converted on earth, there is a response of joy circulated through heaven. Wherever one soul is snatched from Satan's hand and given as a trophy to Jesus Christ, there is joy in the presence of God, Jesus Christ, and the holy angels, because the lost is found. I send my appeal to the churches to "rise and shine, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." "Ye have not," said Christ, "chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go forth and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit

should remain, that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He may give it you.” *The Home Missionary*, September 1, 1892.

12. What basic principle of the Christian life did Christ explain? Matthew 10:39.

NOTE: ‘All who would bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ must first fall into the ground and die. The life must be cast into the furrow of the world’s need. Self-love, self-interest, must perish. But the law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation. The seed buried in the ground produces fruit, and in turn this is planted. Thus the harvest is multiplied. The husbandman preserves his grain by casting it away. So in human life, to give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ’s sake sacrifice their life in this world, will keep it unto life eternal.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 86.

Lesson 7: ‘The servant is not greater than his lord’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.’ John 13:16.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 151.

LESSON AIM: To understand the true meaning of greatness.

Introduction

‘The church is built upon Christ as its foundation; it is to obey Christ as its head. It is not to depend upon man, or be controlled by man. Many claim that a position of trust in the church gives them authority to dictate what other men shall believe and what they shall do. This claim God does not sanction. The Saviour declares, “All ye are brethren.” All are exposed to temptation, and are liable to error. Upon no finite being can we depend for guidance. The Rock of faith is the living presence of Christ in the church. Upon this the weakest may depend, and those who think themselves the strongest will prove to be the weakest, unless they make Christ their efficiency. “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.” Jeremiah 17:5.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 414.

‘Who should be the greatest’

1. What problem constantly caused strife among the disciples? Mark 9:33-34. Compare Luke 22:24.

NOTE: ‘Christians should regard it as a religious duty to repress a spirit of envy or emulation. They should rejoice in the superior reputation or prosperity of their brethren, even when their own character or achievements seem to be cast in the shade. It was the pride and ambition cherished in the heart of Satan that banished him from heaven. These evils are deeply rooted in our fallen nature, and if not removed they will overshadow every good and noble quality and bring forth envy and strife as their baleful fruits. We should seek for true goodness rather than greatness. Those who possess the mind of Christ will have humble views of themselves. They will labour for the purity and prosperity of the church, and be ready to sacrifice their own interests and desires rather than to cause dissension among their brethren.’ *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 242.

2. Which disciples in particular harboured this ambition? Mark 10:35-37.

NOTE: ‘This self-sufficiency, and this combativeness, and this selfishness and wilfulness that are indulged, separate the soul from Jesus. We want that this will, this strong purpose, be turned into the right channel. Brethren, we want to have a will that will be God’s will. It is right for us to have a will and way, but it must be God’s way and God’s will. When the mind and will are turned into the right channel we shall have success.’ *Sermons & Talks, volume 2*, page 15.

‘Except ye become as little children’

3. What remedy did Jesus propose for this spirit of envy and ambition? Mark 9:35. Compare Mark 10: 43 last part-44.

NOTE: ‘The word of God is to have a sanctifying effect on our association with every member of the human family. The leaven of truth will not produce the spirit of rivalry, the love of ambition, the desire to be first. True, heaven-born love is not selfish and changeable. It is not dependent on human praise. The heart of him who receives the grace of God overflows with love for God and for those for whom Christ died. Self is not struggling for recognition. He does not love others because they love and please him, because they appreciate his merits, but because they are Christ’s purchased possession. If his motives, words, or actions are misunderstood or misrepresented, he takes no offence, but pursues the even tenor of his way. He is kind and thoughtful, humble in his opinion of himself, yet full of hope, always trusting in the mercy and love of God.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 101.

4. What did Jesus specifically forbid among His followers? Mark 10:42-43, first part.

NOTE: ‘In the kingdoms of the world, position meant self-aggrandisement. The people were supposed to exist for the benefit of the ruling classes. Influence, wealth, education, were so many means of gaining control of the masses for the use of the

leaders. The higher classes were to think, decide, enjoy, and rule; the lower were to obey and serve. Religion, like all things else, was a matter of authority. The people were expected to believe and practise as their superiors directed. The right of man as man to think and act for himself was wholly unrecognised. Christ was establishing a kingdom on different principles. He called men, not to authority, but to service, the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak. Power, position, talent, education, placed their possessor under the greater obligation to serve his fellows.' *Desire of Ages*, page 550.

5. How did Christ illustrate this truth? Matthew 18:1-4.

NOTE: 'I beseech you in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to put away everything like spiritual pride and love of supremacy. Become as little children if when the warfare is ended you would become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. Read John 17 over and over again. That prayer of our Saviour offered to His Father on behalf of His disciples, is worthy to be oft repeated, and carried in the practical life. This will raise fallen man; for the Lord has promised that if we preserve this unity, God will love us as He loved His Son; the sinner will be saved, and God eternally glorified.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 295.

'Let each esteem other better'

6. What earnest desire did Paul express for the Philippian church? Philippians 2:5.

NOTE: 'Let the proud spirit bow in humiliation. Let the hard heart be broken. No longer pet and pity and exalt self. Look, oh look upon Him whom our sins have pierced. See Him descending step by step the path of humiliation to lift us up; abasing Himself till He could go no lower, and all to save us who were fallen by sin! Why will we be so indifferent, so cold, so formal, so proud, so self-sufficient? Who of us is faithfully following the Pattern? Who of us has instituted and continued the warfare against pride of heart? Who of us has, in good earnest, brought himself to wrestle with selfishness until it should no longer dwell in the heart and be revealed in the life? Would to God the lessons given us, as we view the cross of Christ and see the signs fulfilling which bring us near to the judgment, might be so impressed upon our hearts as to render us more humble, more self-denying, more kind to one another, less self-caring, less critical, and more willing to bear one another's burdens than we are today.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, pages 17-18.

7. In what practical terms did Paul express this desire? Philippians 2:3-4.

NOTE: 'It is time now for men to humble their hearts before God and to learn to work in His ways. Let those who have sought to rule their fellow workers study to know what manner of spirit they are of. They should seek the Lord by fasting and prayer, and in humility of soul. Christ in His earthly life gave an example that all can safely follow. He appreciates His flock, and He wants no power set over them that will restrict their freedom in His service. He has never placed man as a ruler over His heritage. True Bible religion will lead to self-control, not to control of one another. As a people we need a larger measure of the Holy Spirit, that we may bear the solemn message that God has given us, without exaltation. Brethren, keep your words of censure for your individual selves. Teach the flock of God to look to Christ, not to erring man. Every soul who becomes a teacher of the truth must bear in his own life the fruit of holiness. Looking to Christ and following Him, he will present to the souls under his charge an example of what a living, learning Christian will be. Let God teach you His way. Inquire of Him daily to know His will. He will give unerring counsel to all who seek Him with a sincere heart. Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, praising God in your daily conversation as well as in your prayers. Thus, holding forth the word of life, you will constrain other souls to become followers of Christ.' *Testimonies, volume 9*, pages 275-276.

'Not to be ministered unto'

8. How did Jesus describe His own mission? Mark 10:45.

NOTE: 'We should forget self in the desire to do good to others. With many there is a decided lack of love for others. Instead of faithfully performing their duty, they seek rather their own pleasure. God positively enjoins upon all His followers a duty to bless others with their influence and means. In doing for others, a sweet satisfaction will be experienced, an inward peace which will be a sufficient reward. When actuated by a high and noble desire to do others good, they will find true happiness in a faithful discharge of life's manifold duties. This will bring more than an earthly reward; for every faithful, unselfish performance of duty is noticed by the angels and shines in the life record. In heaven none will think of self, nor seek their own pleasure; but all, from pure, genuine love, will seek the happiness of the heavenly beings around them. If we wish to enjoy heavenly society in the earth made new, we must be governed by heavenly principles here.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 233.

9. How did Jesus reveal the nature of His mission in practical terms? Matthew 14:14, Matthew 15:32, Matthew 20:30-34, Luke 7:12-13. Compare John 21:9.

NOTE: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ was rich, yet for our sake He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. He bids all whom He has entrusted with temporal blessings to follow His example. Jesus says, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good." The want and wretchedness in the world are constantly appealing to our compassion and sympathy, and the Saviour declares that ministry to the afflicted and suffering is the service most pleasing to Him. "Is it not," He says, "to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" We are to minister to the sick, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to instruct the ignorant. There are many who complain of God because the world is so full of want and suffering. But the Lord is a God of benevolence, and through His representatives, to whom He has entrusted His goods, He would have all the needs of His creatures supplied. He has made abundant provision for the wants of all, and if

men did not abuse His gifts, and selfishly withhold them from their fellow men, none need suffer from want.' *Counsels on Stewardship*, pages 161-162.

'All ye are brethren'

10. What relationship is to exist between all the followers of Christ? Matthew 23:8-10.

NOTE: 'The high-handed power that has been developed, as though positions had made men gods, makes me afraid, and ought to cause fear. It is a curse wherever, and by whomsoever it is exercised. This lording it over God's heritage will create such a disgust of man's jurisdiction that a state of insubordination will result. The people are learning that men in high positions of responsibility cannot be trusted to mould and fashion other men's minds and characters. The result will be a loss of confidence even in the management of faithful men. The spirit of domination is extending to the presidents of our conferences. If a man is sanguine of his own powers and seeks to exercise dominion over his brethren, feeling that he is invested with authority to make his will the ruling power, the best and only safe course is to remove him, lest great harm be done, and he lose his own soul, and imperil the souls of others. "All ye are brethren." This disposition to lord it over God's heritage will cause a reaction unless these men change their course. Those in authority should manifest the spirit of Christ. They should deal as He would deal with every case that requires attention. They should go weighted with the Holy Spirit. A man's position does not make him one jot or tittle greater in the sight of God; it is character alone that God values.' *Christian Leadership*, page 31.

11. What is the evidence of genuine Christianity? John 13:34-35.

NOTE: 'We must not strive to mould people to our own ideas and inclinations and practices. By unselfish, consecrated lives, through the power of the Holy Spirit working on our minds, we are to reveal, not our own ways and wills, but the power of the love of Him who gave Himself for us that we should be drawn out of and away from our own traits of character to the perfection of Christ's character. He died that we should cultivate the attributes of His character, and elevate, purify and gladden the hearts and lives of others.' *Christian Leadership*, page 36.

'I have given you an example'

12. In what way did Jesus manifest the nature of His mission? John 13:3-5.

NOTE: 'At a feast it was customary for a servant to wash the feet of the guests, and on this occasion preparation had been made for the service. The pitcher, the basin, and the towel were there, in readiness for the feet washing; but no servant was present, and it was the disciples' part to perform it. But each of the disciples, yielding to wounded pride, determined not to act the part of a servant. All manifested a stoical unconcern, seeming unconscious that there was anything for them to do. By their silence they refused to humble themselves. How was Christ to bring these poor souls where Satan would not gain over them a decided victory? How could He show that a mere profession of discipleship did not make them disciples, or insure them a place in His kingdom? How could He show that it is loving service, true humility, which constitutes real greatness? How was He to kindle love in their hearts, and enable them to comprehend what He longed to tell them? The disciples made no move toward serving one another. Jesus waited for a time to see what they would do... So Christ expressed His love for His disciples. Their selfish spirit filled Him with sorrow, but He entered into no controversy with them regarding their difficulty. Instead He gave them an example they would never forget. His love for them was not easily disturbed or quenched. He knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came from God, and went to God. He had a full consciousness of His divinity; but He had laid aside His royal crown and kingly robes, and had taken the form of a servant. One of the last acts of His life on earth was to gird Himself as a servant, and perform a servant's part.' *Desire of Ages*, page 644.

13. What lesson was this action designed to teach? John 13:12-17.

NOTE: 'There is in man a disposition to esteem himself more highly than his brother, to work for himself, to serve himself, to seek the highest place; and often evil-surmisings and bitterness of spirit spring up over mere trifles. This ordinance preceding the Lord's Supper is to clear away these misunderstandings, to bring man out of his selfishness, down from his stilts of self-exaltation, to the humility of spirit that will lead him to wash his brother's feet.' *Review & Herald*, May 31, 1898.

Lesson 8: 'He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.' John 14:12.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 664-668.

LESSON AIM: To show how we may do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Introduction

"And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father." By this Christ did not mean that the disciples' work would be of a more exalted character than His, but that it would have greater extent. He did not refer merely to miracle working, but to all that would take place under the working of the Holy Spirit.' *Desire of Ages*, page 664.

‘Go ye therefore’

1. While Christ’s work was mainly confined to Judaea and Galilee, what was to be the field of the apostles’ work? Mark 16:15.

NOTE: “‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.’” Christ’s work was largely confined to Judea. But though His personal ministry did not extend to other lands, people from all nations listened to His teaching, and carried the message to all parts of the world. Many heard of Jesus by hearing of the wonderful miracles He performed. When Christ said that His disciples would do greater works that He had done, He did not mean that they would make any more exalted exertion of their powers; he meant that their work would have greater magnitude.’ *The Home Missionary*, July 1, 1897.

2. How are we shown that the apostles carried out this work? Colossians 1:23. Compare Mark 16:20, Acts 8:4.

NOTE: ‘Among those to whom the Saviour had given the commission, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (Matthew 28:19), were many from the humbler walks of life, men and women who had learned to love their Lord and who had determined to follow His example of unselfish service. To these lowly ones, as well as to the disciples who had been with the Saviour during His earthly ministry, had been given a precious trust. They were to carry to the world the glad tidings of salvation through Christ. When they were scattered by persecution, they went forth filled with missionary zeal. They realised the responsibility of their mission. They knew that they held in their hands the bread of life for a famishing world; and they were constrained by the love of Christ to break this bread to all who were in need. The Lord wrought through them. Wherever they went, the sick were healed and the poor had the gospel preached unto them.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 105-106.

‘Greater works’

3. What were some of the evidences of the power working in the apostles? Acts 2:43. Compare Acts 3:6-8, Acts 9:33-34, 36-42.

NOTE: ‘The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought. So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 48-49.

4. What other mighty works were done through the apostles? Acts 2:41, Acts 4:4, Acts 6:7.

NOTE: ‘They spoke in the power of the Spirit; and under the influence of that power, thousands were converted. As Christ’s representatives the apostles were to make a decided impression on the world. The fact that they were humble men would not diminish their influence, but increase it; for the minds of their hearers would be carried from them to the Saviour, who, though unseen, was still working with them. The wonderful teaching of the apostles, their words of courage and trust, would assure all that it was not in their own power that they worked, but in the power of Christ. Humbling themselves, they would declare that He whom the Jews had crucified was the Prince of life, the Son of the living God, and that in His name they did the works that He had done.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 22.

‘Ye shall receive power’

5. What was the source of the power than enabled the apostles to do such a marvellous work? Acts 1:8. Compare Luke 24:49.

NOTE: ‘They were transformed in character, and united in the bonds of Christian love. Although without wealth, though counted by the world as mere ignorant fishermen, they were made, by the Holy Spirit, witnesses for Christ. Without earthly honour or recognition, they were the heroes of faith. From their lips came words of divine eloquence and power that shook the world. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters of Acts give an account of their witnessing. Those who had rejected and crucified the Saviour expected to find His disciples discouraged, crestfallen, and ready to disown their Lord. With amazement they heard the clear, bold testimony given under the power of the Holy Spirit. The words and works of the disciples represented the words and works of their Teacher; and all who heard them said, They have learned of Jesus, they talk as He talked. “And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.”’ *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 67.

6. How did the apostles show that the power did not come from themselves? 1 Thessalonians 1:5, Titus 3:5.

NOTE: ‘The Lord is not dependent upon men of high position, of great intellect, or extensive knowledge. Such men are frequently proud and self-sufficient. They feel themselves competent to devise and execute plans without counsel from God. They separate themselves from the true Vine, and hence become dry and fruitless, as withered branches. The Lord would put to shame the vaunting of men. He will give success to the feeblest efforts, the most unpromising methods, when divinely appointed, and entered upon with humility and trust. God will not test our faith beyond endurance. He will give us sufficient evidence, that we may, in our weakness, lean upon the arm of His strength, and trust wholly in His power.’ *Signs of the Times*, June 30, 1881.

7. How was this fact obvious to those who heard the apostles? Acts 4:13.

NOTE: ‘Used as Christ’s representatives, the apostles would make a decided impression on all minds. The fact that they were humble men would not diminish their influence, but increase it. The minds of their hearers would be carried from them to the Majesty of heaven, who, though unseen, was still working through them. The teaching of the apostles, their words of trust,

would assure all that it was not by their own power they worked, but that they were only continuing the same work carried forward by the Lord Jesus when He was with them. Humbling themselves, they would declare that He whom the Jews had crucified was the Prince of life, the Son of the living God, and that in His name they did the works that He had done.' *Review & Herald*, October 26, 1897.

'Neither pray I for these alone'

8. How are we shown that the power given to the apostles is to be with God's people until the end of the world? Matthew 28:18-20.

NOTE: 'That promise given by Jesus to His disciples was for the benefit of all who should comply with the conditions of Christ to the end of time. God is omnipotent, and man may be strong to accomplish His purpose while he has the promise of divine help in every emergency. God's power is hidden from the unbelieving; His ways and purposes are not understood by them. "The world knoweth Him not." But mighty victories are gained through the prayers of the obedient children of God, presented in the name of Jesus. The secret of the success of the people of God is connection with Him in prayer, and humble obedience of His requirements. Jesus urged upon His disciples the necessity of obeying the commandments He had given them if they would abide in His love. The comfort promised to His followers was on this condition.' *Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1878.

9. Upon what kind of person will this power be bestowed? John 15:7-8.

NOTE: 'God is glorified in having channels through which He can communicate the treasures of heaven to a fallen world. Every one who will cleanse his soul of impurity, and let the similitude of Christ's character be placed on His character, will reflect back to God in pure currents the praise and thanksgiving of the souls he has won for Christ. The Saviour says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.'" *Review & Herald*, July 18, 1899.

'From the testimony of Christ we can see that we are regarded by the Lord according to the kind of fruit we bring forth, the kind of works we perform; for they are an index of the way in which we regard Christ. "If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings; and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me." These were Christ's words during the last interviews He had with His disciples before His death. The fruits of the life testify to the state of the heart. Jesus said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.'" *Review & Herald*, January 29, 1895.

'Ask the Father in My name'

10. How were the disciples to lay hold on the power to do mighty works? John 16:23-24.

NOTE: 'Jesus had been the teacher and counsellor of His disciples, their pitying Friend. Now, when about to leave them, He assured them that He would in no case forsake them, but would be clothed with power, and would become their Friend and Advocate in the presence of the Father, to present any petition they might offer in the name of His Son. He promised them a Comforter when His personal presence was taken from them. The disciples did not comprehend at the time, the full meaning of their Master's words; but afterward, in their religious experience, they cherished the precious promise and presented their petitions to the Father in the name of Jesus.' *Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1878.

11. What condition did Christ put upon such prayers? Matthew 21:22.

NOTE: 'Tell Jesus everything. Lay open before Him the secrets of your heart; for His eye searches the inmost recesses of the soul, and He reads your thoughts as an open book. When you have asked for the things that are necessary for your soul's good, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.' *The Adventist Home*, page 299.

'True faith lays hold of and claims the promised blessing before it is realised and felt. We must send up our petitions in faith within the second veil, and let our faith take hold of the promised blessing, and claim it as ours. We are then to believe that we receive the blessing, because our faith has hold of it, and according to the word it is ours. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. Here is faith, naked faith, to believe that we receive the blessing, even before we realise it.' *Christian Experience & Teaching*, page 126.

'It is not enough to say, "I believe;" we must exercise the living faith that claims the promises of God as our own, knowing that they are sure and steadfast. The enemy of our souls would be glad to steal away these precious promises from us, and cast darkness before our eyes, so that we should not be able to appropriate the good things that God means that we shall have. God is waiting to do great things for us as soon as we come into a right relation with Him; but if we hold ourselves in doubt and unbelief, the enemy can keep the control of our minds, and intercept the promises of God. Unbelief always results in a great loss to our souls. It was said concerning one place where Christ visited, "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Christ cannot work in our behalf if we do not manifest faith in Him. We should train our souls to have faith in God. But instead of this, how many there are who educate themselves to doubt. I have heard testimony after testimony in meeting in which there did not seem to be one word of genuine faith, but which cast a shadow over the whole congregation. It is not God's will that we should be in this position. Brethren and sisters, it is our privilege to walk in the light, as Christ is in the light. He is at our right hand to strengthen us, and He tells us that greater works than He has done shall we do, because He goes to the Father. He is ready to impart unto us the rich blessing and grace of God.' *Signs of the Times*, November 11, 1889.

‘In My name’

12. Through whose intercession will power come? John 14:14.

NOTE: ‘He explained that the secret of their success would be in asking for strength and grace in His name. He would be present before the Father to make request for them. The prayer of the humble suppliant He presents as His own desire in that soul’s behalf. Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 667.

‘The disciples of Christ are to do greater works than Jesus Himself has done. He says further: “Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” “If ye ask anything in My name, I will do it.” Christ spoke these words for the comfort of all who should have faith in Him, and it is our privilege to believe that God will do just as He has said He would.’ *Signs of the Times*, November 11, 1889.

13. If we are to do these ‘greater works’, what experience must be ours? Galatians 2:20.

NOTE: ‘The promise He made to them is for us. If we will take it just as it reads, we shall feel such confidence and such trust in God and the truth that He will be able to reveal His power through us. By our good works we shall show our faith. We can receive power and grace from Christ to enable us to work the works of God. And let us ever remember that we are never to take any credit to ourselves for the work we do. There is nothing good in us; therefore we should not seek to glorify ourselves. God is to receive all the glory.’ *Gospel Herald*, March 1, 1901.

Lesson 9: ‘Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.’ John 16:23.

STUDY HELP: *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 35-37.

LESSON AIM: To study some of the conditions for answered prayer.

Introduction

‘When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when we ask for deliverance from sin. It is His will to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 266.

‘He will give it you’

1. What promise did Jesus make to His disciples? John 16:23.

NOTE: ‘God hears prayer. Christ has said, “If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it.” Again He says, “If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour.” John 14:14; 12: 26. If we live according to His word, every precious promise He has given will be fulfilled to us. We are undeserving of His mercy, but as we give ourselves to Him, He receives us. He will work for and through those who follow Him.’ *Ministry of Healing*, page 226.

2. What assurance does James give us concerning our prayers? James 5:16, last part.

NOTE: ‘Let us learn to pray intelligently, expressing our requests with clearness and precision. Let us put away the listless, sluggish habit into which we have fallen, and pray as though we meant it. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” [James 5:16.] Faith takes a firm hold of the promises of God, and urges her petitions with fervour; but when the life of the soul stagnates, the outward devotions become formal and powerless.’ *Gospel Workers, 1892 ed.*, page 426.

‘According to His will’

3. What prayers may we be certain that they will be heard? 1 John 5:14-15.

NOTE: ‘Our desires and interests should be lost in His will. These experiences that test faith are for our benefit. Faith is strengthened by exercise. We must let patience have its perfect work, remembering that there are precious promises in the Scriptures for those who wait upon the Lord.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 315.

‘We are to present our requests to God in faith, asking for the very things which we know that we need. When we have a sense of what God is, we shall realise our own unworthiness; but we shall also have confidence toward God, knowing what is His character of mercy and love. We shall come into His presence through the merits of Christ, and through Him have boldness and confidence. We may plead the promises of God without the fear of being presumptuous.’ *Review & Herald*, May 28, 1895.

4. How did Jesus express this principle in His own prayer? Matthew 26:39, 42.

NOTE: 'If Jesus, the world's Redeemer, prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me," and added, "nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39), how very appropriate it is for finite mortals to make the same surrender to the wisdom and will of God.' *Counsels on Health*, page 375.

'It is not best to mark out some special way in which God must work to fulfil your desires. Your ways, your plans, may not be God's ways or God's plans. The promise that you have thought suited to your need will be fulfilled in unlooked-for blessings, greater than you have asked or thought. Remember that you are not to doubt because you do not receive the very thing for which you asked. Paul requested that the troublesome thorn in the flesh might be removed, but the Lord gave that which was more valuable, grace to endure it patiently. The strength of Jesus was made perfect in weakness, and Paul was able through Christ to bear about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Jesus prayed that if it were possible, the bitter cup might be removed, but He was not released from the obligation of drinking it. Strength was imparted to Him to drain its bitterest dregs. Jesus said, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." With these precious examples before us, let us trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon our God.' *Present Truth*, January 30, 1890.

'Let him ask in faith'

5. What is required of us if our prayers are to be answered? James 1:6-7.

NOTE: 'God is behind every promise, and we cannot dishonour Him more than by questioning and hesitating, by asking and not believing, and then by talking doubt. If you do not immediately receive what you have asked for, will you go on in sullenness and unbelief? Believe; believe that God will do just what He has promised. Keep your prayers ascending, and watch, work, and wait. Fight the good fight of faith. Say to your heart, "God has invited me to come. He has heard my prayer. He has pledged His word that He will receive me, and He will fulfil His promise. I can trust God; for He so loved me that He gave His only-begotten Son to die for me. The Son of God is my Redeemer.'" *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 299.

6. How did Jesus stress the importance of faith in praying? Matthew 21:22.

NOTE: 'Every promise in the Word of God is for us. In your prayers, present the pledged word of Jehovah and by faith claim His promises. His word is the assurance that if you ask in faith, you will receive all spiritual blessings. Continue to ask, and you will receive exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think. Educate yourself to have unlimited confidence in God. Cast all your care upon Him. Wait patiently for Him, and He will bring it to pass.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 71.

'Iniquity in my heart'

7. What will prevent the Lord from hearing our prayers? Psalm 66:18.

NOTE: 'We are to commit our way to the Lord, testing it by His searching laws. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass" (Psalm 37:5). We cannot commit our way to God if we are working out deeds of injustice. "If I regard iniquity in my heart," the psalmist declares, "the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). When we commit our way to the Lord we are to search the heart through and through, casting out all evil, that Christ may fill it with His righteousness. We are to seek the Lord in prayer, putting at the beginning of our petitions repentance for sin. God's law is the test of our actions. His eye sees every act, searches every chamber of the mind, detecting all lurking self-deception and all hypocrisy. All things are naked and open to the sight of Him with whom we have to do. But He will receive all who come to Him with contrite hearts and a true purpose to forsake every wrong.' *That I May Know Him*, page 290.

8. Why is it that God will not hear prayers from those who persist in iniquity? Isaiah 59:1-2. Compare Proverbs 28:9.

NOTE: 'Inspiration declares, "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" Proverbs 21:27. The God of heaven is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and cannot "look on iniquity." Habakkuk 1:13. It is not because He is unwilling to forgive that He turns from the transgressor; it is because the sinner refuses to make use of the abundant provisions of grace, that God is unable to deliver from sin. "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Isaiah 59:1-2.' *Review & Herald*, April 1, 1915.

'I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me'

9. What example of faith did Jesus show when praying? John 11:41-42.

NOTE: 'For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received.' *Maranatha*, page 87.

10. How did Paul express this principle of prayer? Philippians 4:6.

NOTE: 'We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realised when we need it most.' *Maranatha*, page 87.

'Commit thy way unto the Lord'

11. What are we urged to do with our cares? 1 Peter 5:7.

NOTE: 'It is when we come into difficult places that He reveals His power and wisdom in answer to humble prayer. Have confidence in Him as a prayer-hearing, prayer-answering God. He will reveal Himself to you as One who can help in every emergency. He who created man, who gave him his wonderful physical, mental, and spiritual faculties, will not withhold that which is necessary to sustain the life He has given. He who has given us His Word, the leaves of the tree of life, will not withhold from us a knowledge of how to provide food for His needy children. Some are always anticipating evil, or magnifying the difficulties that really exist, so that their eyes are blinded to the many blessings which demand their gratitude. The obstacles they encounter, instead of leading them to seek help from God, the only source of strength, separate them from Him, because they awaken unrest and repining. Do we well to be thus unbelieving? Why should we be ungrateful and distrustful? Jesus is our friend; all heaven is interested in our welfare; and our anxiety and fear grieve the Holy Spirit of God. We should not indulge in a solicitude that only frets and wears us, but does not help us to bear trials. . . . He invites the weary and care-laden, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Lay off the yoke of anxiety and worldly care that you have placed on your own neck, and "take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11:28, 29. We may find rest and peace in God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 63.

12. What principle will be followed by those who trust in God? Psalm 37:5.

NOTE: 'Every saint who comes to God with a true heart, and sends earnest petitions to Him in faith will be answered; but we must have enduring faith. We must not for a moment let go the promises if we do not see and realise the immediate answers to our prayers. We must not waver. We must rely upon His sure promise, "Ask and ye shall receive." God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Man is erring, and although his petitions are sent up from an honest heart, he does not always ask the things that are good for himself, or that will glorify God. When this is so, our wise and good Father hears our prayers and will answer them, sometimes immediately, but gives us the things that He knows are for our good and His own glory. The blessing received by us will be that which we need the most. If we could look into the plan of God, we should plainly see His wisdom and that He knows what is for our best good. Our prayers will be answered if they are sent up in faith, but nothing hurtful will be given. If we have, in the honesty of our hearts, asked any thing that God sees will not be good for us, He may withhold the thing desired, but in its place give us the blessings we most need. If the answer to our prayers does not come just when we expect it, we must not distrust God, for that will bring darkness. Our confidence in God must be strong.' *Review & Herald*, June 12, 1855.

Lesson 10: 'He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' John 5:24.

STUDY HELP: *Lift Him Up*, page 301.

LESSON AIM: What does it mean to hear God's word and believe?

Introduction

'In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realised. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 38.

'Hear the word of God, and do it'

1. What does it mean to hear the word of God? Luke 8:21. Compare Psalm 103:20.

NOTE: 'Every individual soul, if he would receive the seal of the living God, must hear the Word of the Lord, and do it with exactitude. There must be no such thing as haphazard religion if men would have a place in the family of God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 288.

2. What is the evidence that a person has received the word of God? 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

NOTE: 'The Bible is God's voice speaking to us just as surely as though we could hear Him with our ears. The word of the living God is not merely written, but spoken. Do we receive the Bible as the oracle of God? If we realised the importance of this Word, with what awe would we open it, and with what earnestness would we search its precepts. The reading and contemplating of the Scriptures would be regarded as an audience with the Most High. God's Word is a message to us to be obeyed, a volume to be perused diligently, and with a spirit willing to take in the truths written for the admonition of those upon whom the ends of the world are come. It must not be neglected for any other book. When we open the Bible, let us compare our lives with its requirements, measuring our character by the great moral standard of righteousness.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 134.

3. How did Jeremiah express his love for the word of God? Jeremiah 15:16.

NOTE: 'Without the education found in the Bible, how shall we reach the next world, where we shall enter the presence of God and see His face? Nothing of this world's wisdom, the knowledge gained from books, presents a true and sure foundation upon which we can build for eternity. Nothing but the bread that comes down from heaven satisfies spiritual hunger. "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:33, 63). As we eat the words of Christ we are eating the bread of life, which gives spiritual vitality. The Word of the only true God is infallible. Infinite wisdom, holiness, power, and love are blended in pointing us to the standard by which God measures character. God's Word so plainly defines the laws of His kingdom that none need to walk in darkness. His law is the transcript of His character. It is the standard that all must reach if they would enter the kingdom of God. No one need walk in uncertainty. The law of God is not abolished. It will live through the eternal ages. By Christ's death it was magnified, and sin was exposed in its true light.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 137.

'The word of the Lord came unto me'

4. How has the Lord expressed His word to mankind? 1 Kings 12:22-24, 2 Kings 7:1, 2 Kings 20:16.

NOTE: 'The prophets, who were especially enlightened by the Spirit of God, often could not understand the meaning of the words they wrote upon the paper, or explain the significance of what they uttered when the Spirit caused them to speak, but the word of the Lord accomplished the very work which He designed that it should, and the fruits of the work testified to its divine character.' *Sabbath School Worker*, August 1, 1892.

5. What term is used for the word of the Lord through the prophets? Revelation 19:10, last part.

NOTE: "'See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'" Revelation 19:10. Under similar circumstances the same angel said, as recorded in another place: "'See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets.'" Revelation 22:9. The thought expressed is the same in both these passages. In one, however, John's "brethren" are said to have "the testimony of Jesus;" in the other these "brethren" are called "the prophets." Therefore it is the prophets who have "the testimony of Jesus;" and the angel who appeared to John is evidently the special messenger who conveys instruction to all the prophets, doubtless the angel Gabriel, who is mentioned as having appeared to Daniel. See Daniel 8:16; 9:21. The same angel further said to John, "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10. Comparing the Bible expression, "The testimony of Jesus," with the statement of Revelation 12:17 concerning the "remnant . . . which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," we conclude that prior to Christ's Second Coming His true church will be keeping His commandments, and that they will have the Spirit of prophecy. The rapid fulfilment of the predictions of Holy Scripture regarding the signs and events which were to mark the closing scenes of earth's history is a sure evidence that we are now living in the last days. Therefore a company of Christian people who keep the commandments of God and who have the testimony of Jesus Christ, the Spirit of prophecy, should today be in existence. Where may they be found?" *Christian Experience & Teachings*, page 243.

'Without faith it is impossible to please Him'

6. What does it mean to believe in God? Hebrews 11:6.

NOTE: 'Do you believe that Christ, as your substitute, pays the debt of your transgression? Not, however, that you may continue in sin, but that you may be saved from your sins; that you, through the merits of His righteousness, may be re-instated to the favour of God. Do you know that a holy and just God will accept your efforts to keep His law, through the merits of His own beloved Son who died for your rebellion and sin? You may say that you believe in Jesus, when you have an appreciation of the cost of salvation. You may make this claim, when you feel that Jesus died for you on the cruel cross of Calvary; when you have an intelligent, understanding faith that His death makes it possible for you to cease from sin, and to perfect a righteous character through the grace of God, bestowed upon you as the purchase of Christ's blood.' *Review & Herald* July 24, 1888.

7. What will belief in God enable us to do? Hebrews 12:1-2.

NOTE: 'The means by which we can overcome the wicked one is that by which Christ overcame, the power of the word. God does not control our minds without our consent; but if we desire to know and to do His will, His promises are ours: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching." John 8:32; 7:17, R.V. Through faith in these promises, every man may be delivered from the snares of error and the control of sin.' *Desire of Ages*, page 258.

'Faith without works is dead'

8. What is the evidence that one's faith is genuine? James 2:14. Compare verses 17-18.

NOTE: 'There are many in the Christian world who claim that all that is necessary to salvation is to have faith; works are nothing, faith is the only essential. But God's Word tells us that faith without works is dead, being alone. Many refuse to obey God's commandments, yet they make a great deal of faith. But faith must have a foundation. God's promises are all made upon conditions. If we do His will, if we walk in truth, then we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. While we earnestly endeavour to be obedient, God will hear our petitions; but He will not bless us in disobedience. If we choose to disobey His commandments, we may cry, "Faith, faith, only have faith," and the response will come back from the sure Word of God, "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:20). Such faith will only be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. In

order to have the benefits of God's grace we must do our part; we must faithfully work and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.' *Faith & Works*, page 47.

9. What graphic example does James give of 'faith' without works? James 2:14-16.

NOTE: 'It is only by an unselfish interest in those in need of help that we can give a practical demonstration of the truths of the gospel. "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Much more than mere sermonising is included in preaching the gospel. The ignorant are to be enlightened; the discouraged are to be uplifted; the sick are to be healed. The human voice is to act its part in God's work. Words of tenderness, sympathy, and love are to be witness to the truth. Earnest, heartfelt prayers are to bring the angels near.' *Medical Ministry*, page 251.

'The devils believe and tremble'

10. What example of a false belief are we warned against? James 2:19.

NOTE: 'When we speak of faith, there is a distinction that should be borne in mind. There is a kind of belief that is wholly distinct from faith. The existence and power of God, the truth of His Word, are facts that even Satan and his hosts cannot at heart deny. The Bible says that "the devils also believe, and tremble"; but this is not faith. Where there is not only a belief in God's Word, but a submission of the will to Him; where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith, faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 90.

11. How does the Bible reveal the link between faith in God and obedience to Him? Romans 16:25-26. Compare Hebrews 11:8, 17.

NOTE: 'God justly claims the love and obedience of all His creatures. He has given them in His law a perfect standard of right. But many forget their Maker and choose to follow their own way in opposition to His will. They return enmity for love that is as high as heaven and as broad as the universe. God cannot lower the requirements of His law to meet the standard of wicked men; neither can man in his own power meet the demands of the law. Only by faith in Christ can the sinner be cleansed from guilt and be enabled to render obedience to the law of his Maker.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 425.

'John did not teach that salvation was to be earned by obedience; but that obedience was the fruit of faith and love. "Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins," he said, "and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." 1 John 3:5, 6. If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God's law. There are many who, though striving to obey God's commandments, have little peace or joy. This lack in their experience is the result of a failure to exercise faith. They walk as it were in a salt land, a parched wilderness. They claim little, when they might claim much; for there is no limit to the promises of God. Such ones do not correctly represent the sanctification that comes through obedience to the truth. The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Through the exercise of faith the believer comes into possession of these blessings. Through faith, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed. *Acts of the Apostles*, page 563.

'Lay hold on eternal life'

12. What is the result of the life of faith? 1 Timothy 6:12, first part. Compare 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

NOTE: 'The gift of eternal life is promised on condition of saving faith in Christ. The drawing power of the Holy Spirit is pointed out as an agent in the work of man's salvation. The rewards of the faithful, the punishment of the guilty, are all laid out in clear lines. The Bible contains the science of salvation for all those who will hear and do the words of Christ.' *Christian Education*, page 84.

13. When may we realise the promise of eternal life? 1 Corinthians 15:51-54. Compare John 6:40, 54.

NOTE: 'It is an undeniable fact that the hope of immortal blessedness at death has led to a widespread neglect of the Bible doctrine of the resurrection. This tendency was remarked by Dr. Adam Clarke, who said: "The doctrine of the resurrection appears to have been thought of much more consequence among the primitive Christians than it is now! How is this? The apostles were continually insisting on it, and exciting the followers of God to diligence, obedience, and cheerfulness through it. And their successors in the present day seldom mention it! So apostles preached, and so primitive Christians believed; so we preach, and so our hearers believe. There is not a doctrine in the gospel on which more stress is laid; and there is not a doctrine in the present system of preaching which is treated with more neglect!" *Commentary*, remarks on I Corinthians 15, paragraph 3. This has continued until the glorious truth of the resurrection has been almost wholly obscured and lost sight of by the Christian world. Thus a leading religious writer, commenting on the words of Paul in I Thessalonians 4:13-18, says: "For all practical purposes of comfort the doctrine of the blessed immortality of the righteous takes the place for us of any doubtful doctrine of the Lord's second coming. At our death the Lord comes for us. That is what we are to wait and watch for. The dead are already passed into glory. They do not wait for the trump for their judgment and blessedness." But when about to leave His disciples, Jesus did not tell them that they would soon come to Him. "I go to prepare a place for you," He said. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:2, 3. And Paul tells us, further, that "the

Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” And he adds: “Comfort one another with these words.” I Thessalonians 4:16-18. How wide the contrast between these words of comfort and those of the Universalist minister previously quoted! The latter consoled the bereaved friends with the assurance that, however sinful the dead might have been, when he breathed out his life here he was to be received among the angels. Paul points his brethren to the future coming of the Lord, when the fetters of the tomb shall be broken, and the “dead in Christ” shall be raised to eternal life.’ *Great Controversy*, pages 547-548.

Lesson 11: ‘Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘The words I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.’ John 6:63

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 383-394.

LESSON AIM: To show that the words of Jesus, although at times mysterious to finite minds, are to sow the seeds of eternal life, and to lead us to spiritual truths.

Introduction

‘Fill the whole heart with the words of God. They are the living water, quenching your burning thirst. They are the living bread from heaven. Jesus declares, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. And He explains Himself by saying, The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Our bodies are built up from what we eat and drink; and as in the natural economy, so in the spiritual economy, it is what we meditate upon that will give tone and strength to our spiritual nature.’ *Christian Education*, page 57.

‘I am the bread of life’

1. When the crowds came flocking to Capernaum to hear Him, how did Jesus describe himself? John 6:48.

NOTE: ‘Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven.” The giver of the manna was standing among them. It was Christ Himself who had led the Hebrews through the wilderness, and had daily fed them with the bread from heaven. That food was a type of the real bread from heaven. The life-giving Spirit, flowing from the infinite fullness of God, is the true manna. Jesus said, “The bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” John 6:33, R.V. Still thinking that it was temporal food to which Jesus referred, some of His hearers exclaimed, “Lord, evermore give us this bread.” Jesus then spoke plainly: “I am the bread of life.”’ *Desire of Ages*, page 386.

2. Without Christ in our lives, in what condition do we all find ourselves? John 6:53.

NOTE: ‘There are many who realise their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are vainly striving to obtain it. In despair they cry, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? Romans 7:24, margin. Let these desponding, struggling ones look up. The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, Wilt thou be made whole? He bids you arise in health and peace. Do not wait to feel that you are made whole. Believe His word, and it will be fulfilled. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength. Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is dead in trespasses. Ephesians 2:1.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 203.

‘I set before you the way of life’

3. What was in the Father’s heart when He gave Jesus to our world? John 3:16.

NOTE: ‘It is the glory of the gospel that it is founded upon the principle of restoring in the fallen race the divine image by a constant manifestation of benevolence. This work began in the heavenly courts. There God decided to give human beings unmistakable evidence of the love with which He regarded them. He “so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.’ *Counsels on Health*, page 221.

4. What choice does God set before us? Jeremiah 21:8.

NOTE: ‘Josiah was deeply stirred as he heard read for the first time the exhortations and warnings recorded in this ancient manuscript. Never before had he realised so fully the plainness with which God had set before Israel “life and death, blessing and cursing” (Deuteronomy 30:19): and how repeatedly they had been urged to choose the way of life, that they might become a praise in the earth, a blessing to all nations. “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid,” Israel had been exhorted through Moses; for the Lord thy God. He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, not forsake thee.

Deuteronomy 31:6. The book abounded in assurances of God's willingness to save to the uttermost those who should place their trust fully in Him.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 393.

'The bread that I will give is my flesh'

5. How are we to be made whole? Mark 4:20, John 6:57-58.

NOTE: 'To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to receive Him as a personal Saviour, believing that He forgives our sins, and that we are complete in Him. It is by beholding His love, by dwelling upon it, by drinking it in, that we are to become partakers of His nature. What food is to the body, Christ must be to the soul. Food cannot benefit us unless we eat it, unless it becomes a part of our being. So Christ is of no value to us if we do not know Him as a personal Saviour.' *Desire of Ages*, page 389.

6. What is the personal result of eating the flesh of the Son of man and drinking His blood? 2 Corinthians 5:17.

NOTE: 'By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude. This is what it means to live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." This is eating the Bread that comes down from heaven.' *Desire of Ages*, page 391.

'This is an hard saying'

7. How did the Jews respond to the teaching that Jesus was the bread that came down from heaven? John 6:51, 52.

NOTE: 'Now the rabbis exclaimed angrily, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" They affected to understand His words in the same literal sense as did Nicodemus when he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" John 3:4. To some extent they comprehended the meaning of Jesus, but they were not willing to acknowledge it. By misconstruing His words, they hoped to prejudice the people against Him.' *Desire of Ages*, page 389.

8. How did Jesus respond to their lack of spiritual understanding to His teaching? John 6:53-57.

NOTE: 'Christ did not soften down His symbolical representation. He reiterated the truth in yet stronger language: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.'" *Desire of Ages*, page 389.

9. How did the larger group of disciples that followed Jesus respond when Jesus told them that His flesh and blood were to be eaten and drunk? John 6:60, 66.

NOTE: 'The unbelieving Jews refused to see any except the most literal meaning in the Saviour's words. By the ritual law they were forbidden to taste blood, and they now construed Christ's language into a sacrilegious speech, and disputed over it among themselves. Many even of the disciples said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" The Saviour answered them: "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.'" *Desire of Ages*, page 390.

'They shall be filled'

10. How did Jesus describe the desire of those who long for righteousness? Matthew 5:6

NOTE: 'The whole Bible is a manifestation of Christ, and the Saviour desired to fix the faith of His followers on the word. When His visible presence should be withdrawn, the word must be their source of power. Like their Master, they were to live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4. As our physical life is sustained by food, so our spiritual life is sustained by the word of God. And every soul is to receive life from God's word for himself. As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive nourishment, so we must receive the word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of another's mind.' *Desire of Ages*, page 390.

'A theoretical knowledge will do us no good. We must feed upon Him, receive Him into the heart, so that His life becomes our life. His love, His grace, must be assimilated.... Are you a follower of Christ? Then all that is written concerning the spiritual life is written for you, and may be attained through uniting yourself to Jesus. Is your zeal languishing? Has your first love grown cold? Accept again of the proffered love of Christ. Eat of His flesh, drink of His blood, and you will become one with the Father and with the Son.' *Desire of Ages*, page 389.

11. On what solemn occasion did Jesus again use the symbols of His flesh and blood? Luke 22:17-20

NOTE: 'Our Lord has said, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. . . . For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. This is true of our physical nature. To the death of Christ we owe even this earthly life. The bread we eat is the purchase of His broken body. The water we drink is bought by His spilled blood. Never one, saint or sinner, eats his daily food, but he is nourished by the body and the blood of Christ. The cross of Calvary is stamped on every loaf. It is reflected in every water spring. All this Christ has taught in appointing the emblems of His great

sacrifice. The light shining from that Communion service in the upper chamber makes sacred the provisions for our daily life. The family board becomes as the table of the Lord, and every meal a sacrament. To the Holy Communion this scripture in a special sense applies. As faith contemplates our Lord's great sacrifice, the soul assimilates the spiritual life of Christ. That soul will receive spiritual strength from every Communion. The service forms a living connection by which the believer is bound up with Christ, and thus bound up with the Father. In a special sense it forms a connection between dependent human beings and God. "He that eateth My flesh," He says, "and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." *Desire of Ages*, page 660.

'Holy and without blame before Him in love'

12. What transformation is Christ seeking in those whom He invites to eat and drink of His life? 1 Peter 1:14-16

NOTE: 'And how much more are Christ's words true of our spiritual nature. He declares, "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life." It is by receiving the life for us poured out on Calvary's cross, that we can live the life of holiness. And this life we receive by receiving His word, by doing those things which He has commanded. Thus we become one with Him. "He that eateth My flesh," He says, "and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." *Desire of Ages*, page 660.

13. How did Peter express His confidence that life is found only in Jesus Christ? John 6:68, 69.

NOTE: The tree of life was a type of the one great Source of immortality. Of Christ it is written, In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. He is the fountain of life. Obedience to Him is the life-giving, vivifying power that gladdens the soul. Through sin man shut himself off from access to the tree of life. Now, life and immortality are brought to light through Jesus Christ.' *Medical Ministry*, page 233.

'I then saw Jesus leading His people to the tree of life, and again we heard His lovely voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, saying, "The leaves of this tree are for the healing of the nations. Eat ye all of it." Upon the tree of life was most beautiful fruit, of which the saints could partake freely. Language is altogether too feeble to attempt a description of heaven. As the scene rises before me, I am lost in amazement. Carried away with the surpassing splendour and excellent glory, I lay down the pen, and exclaim, "Oh, what love! what wondrous love!" The most exalted language fails to describe the glory of heaven or the matchless depths of a Saviour's love.' *Early Writings*, page 289.

Lesson 12: 'Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. John 1:51.

STUDY HELP: *Confrontation*, page 46.

LESSON AIM: To show how Jesus is the link between heaven and earth.

Introduction

'Satan flattered himself that he had forever broken the link between heaven and earth. But in this he was greatly mistaken and disappointed. The Father had given the world into the hands of His Son for Him to redeem from the curse and the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall. Through Christ alone can man now find access to God. And through Christ alone will the Lord hold communication with man.' *Confrontation*, page 20.

'Heaven open'

1. What promise did Jesus make to Nathaniel? John 1:51.

NOTE: 'Here Christ virtually says, On the bank of the Jordan the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended like a dove upon Me. That scene was but a token that I am the Son of God. If you believe on Me as such, your faith shall be quickened. You shall see that the heavens are opened, and are never to be closed. I have opened them to you. The angels of God are ascending, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed to the Father above, and descending, bringing blessing and hope, courage, help, and life, to the children of men. The angels of God are ever passing from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth. The miracles of Christ for the afflicted and suffering were wrought by the power of God through the ministration of the angels. And it is through Christ, by the ministration of His heavenly messengers, that every blessing comes from God to us. In taking upon Himself humanity, our Saviour unites His interests with those of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam, while through His divinity He grasps the throne of God. And thus Christ is the medium of communication of men with God, and of God with men.' *Desire of Ages*, pages 142-143.

2. How was Jacob also shown this important truth? Genesis 28:12.

NOTE: 'Jacob in the night vision saw earth connected with heaven by a ladder reaching to the throne of God. He saw the angels of God, clothed with garments of heavenly brightness, passing down from heaven and up to heaven upon this shining ladder. The bottom of this ladder rested upon the earth, while the top of it reached to the highest heavens and rested upon the

throne of Jehovah. The brightness from the throne of God beamed down upon this ladder and reflected a light of inexpressible glory upon the earth. This ladder represented Christ, who had opened the communication between earth and heaven. In Christ's humiliation He descended to the very depths of human woe in sympathy and pity for fallen man, which was represented to Jacob by one end of the ladder resting upon the earth, while the top of the ladder, reaching unto heaven, represents the divine power of Christ grasping the Infinite and thus linking earth to heaven and finite man to the infinite God. Through Christ the communication is opened between God and man. Angels may pass to and fro from heaven to earth with messages of love to fallen man, and to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. It is through Christ alone that the heavenly messengers minister to men.' *Confrontation*, page 46.

'That Rock was Christ'

3. How are we shown that Jesus was the One who came down on Sinai to give the Ten Commandments? Compare Nehemiah 9:6-15 with John 1:3, John 6:31-35, Hebrews 12:18-26.

NOTE: 'There is a necessity of dwelling upon the love of Jesus Christ; this is essential. But it is not all that must be spoken. The great standard of character, God's holy law, with all its solemn injunctions, should be distinctly set forth, together with the circumstances of the giving of the law from Mount Sinai in awful grandeur. The Lord Jesus Christ was there in person. He spoke that law, and gave the commandments, which are unalterable, unchangeable, and eternal in their character.' *1888 Materials*, page 781.

4. How are we shown that Jesus was the One who provided for His people in the wilderness? 1 Corinthians 10:1-4. Compare Deuteronomy 32:3-4.

NOTE: 'It was Christ, by the power of His word, that caused the refreshing stream to flow for Israel. "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4). He was the source of all temporal as well as spiritual blessings. Christ, the true Rock, was with them in all their wanderings. "They thirsted not when He led them through the deserts: He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them." "They ran in the dry places like a river" (Isaiah 48:21; Psalm 105:41). The smitten rock was a figure of Christ, and through this symbol the most precious spiritual truths are taught. As the life-giving waters flowed from the smitten rock, so from Christ, "smitten of God," "wounded for our transgressions," "bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:4, 5), the stream of salvation flows for a lost race. As the rock had been once smitten, so Christ was to be "once offered to bear the sins of many" (Hebrews 9:28). Our Saviour was not to be sacrificed a second time; and it is only necessary for those who seek the blessings of His grace to ask in the name of Jesus, pouring forth the heart's desire in penitential prayer. Such prayer will bring before the Lord of hosts the wounds of Jesus, and then will flow forth afresh the life-giving blood, symbolised by the flowing of the living water for Israel.' *That I May Know Him*, page 23.

'The Spirit of Christ which was in them'

5. How did Jesus communicate with His people in Old Testament times? 1 Peter 1:10-11.

NOTE: 'It was Christ that spoke to His people through the prophets. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets "prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." 1 Peter 1:10, 11. It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 366.

6. How did Peter emphasise the importance of heeding the prophetic word? 2 Peter 1:19.

NOTE: 'It was not the scholarly theologians who had an understanding of this truth, and engaged in its proclamation. Had these been faithful watchmen, diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures, they would have known the time of night; the prophecies would have opened to them the events about to take place. But they did not occupy this position, and the message was given by humbler men. Said Jesus: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35. Those who turn away from the light which God has given, or who neglect to seek it when it is within their reach, are left in darkness. But the Saviour declares: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. Whoever is with singleness of purpose seeking to do God's will, earnestly heeding the light already given, will receive greater light; to that soul some star of heavenly radiance will be sent to guide him into all truth.' *Maranatha*, page 17.

'The Word was made flesh'

7. In what tangible way did Christ demonstrate that He is the link between heaven and earth? John 1:14, Philippians 2:5-7.

NOTE: 'Of Christ it is said, "And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." We need to realise the truth of Christ's manhood in order to appreciate the truth of the above words. It was not a make-believe humanity that Christ took upon Himself. He took human nature and lived human nature.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 5*, page 1124.

8. How was Christ thus able to reveal God to mankind? John 14:7-9.

NOTE: 'Christ has revealed God. Let those who desire to know God study the work and teaching of Christ. To those who receive Him and believe on Him, He gives power to become the sons of God. He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye

shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30). Human talent and human conjecture have tried by searching to find out God. Many have trodden this pathway. The highest intellect may tax itself until it is wearied out in conjectures regarding God, but the effort will be fruitless, and the fact will remain that man by searching cannot find out God. This problem has not been given us to solve. All that man needs to know and can know of God has been revealed in the life and character of His Son, the Great Teacher.’ *The Upward Look*, page 323.

9. In what supreme way did Christ reveal God to us? John 3:16-17. Compare 1 Corinthians 2:2.

NOTE: ‘To Paul the cross was the one object of supreme interest. Ever since he had been arrested in his career of persecution against the followers of the crucified Nazarene he had never ceased to glory in the cross. At that time there had been given him a revelation of the infinite love of God, as revealed in the death of Christ; and a marvellous transformation had been wrought in his life, bringing all his plans and purposes into harmony with heaven. From that hour he had been a new man in Christ. He knew by personal experience that when a sinner once beholds the love of the Father, as seen in the sacrifice of His Son, and yields to the divine influence, a change of heart takes place, and henceforth Christ is all and in all.’ *Lift Him Up*, page 246.

‘I will not leave you comfortless’

10. How has Jesus continued this link between heaven and earth since He returned to heaven? John 14:16.

NOTE: ‘The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high. This promise belongs to us now as surely as it belonged to the disciples.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 191.

11. How did Jesus explain that the Holy Spirit would continue His work? John 14:26.

NOTE: ‘Those only who read the Scriptures as the voice of God speaking to them, are true learners. They tremble at the voice of God, for to them it is a living reality. They open their understanding to divine instruction and pray for grace, that they may obtain a preparation for service. As the heavenly torch is placed in his hand, the seeker for truth sees his own frailty, his infirmity, the hopelessness of looking to himself for righteousness. He sees that there is in him nothing that can recommend him to God. He prays for the Holy Spirit, the representative of Christ, to be his constant guide, to lead him into all truth. He repeats the promise, “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things.” John 14:26.’ *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 450.

‘This same Jesus’

12. What precious promise was given after Jesus returned to heaven? Acts 1:11. Compare 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

NOTE: “‘This same Jesus!’” Oh, how sweetly

Fall those words upon the ear,
Like the swell of far-off music
In a night-watch still and clear!
He who healed the hopeless leper,
He who dried the widow’s tear,
He who changed to health and gladness
Helpless suffering, trembling fear.
He himself, and “not another,”
He for whom our hearts have yearned
Through long years of twilight waiting,
To His ransomed ones returned.
For this word, O Lord, we bless Thee,
Bless our Master’s changeless name;
Yesterday, today, forever,
Jesus Christ is still the same.’

Frances Ridley Havergal

13. What contrasting responses will there be to the return of Jesus? Isaiah 25:8-9, Revelation 1:7.

NOTE: ‘Purify your souls by obeying the truth. Faith without works is dead. Put not off the day of preparation. Slumber not in a state of unpreparedness, having no oil in your vessels with your lamps. Let none leave their safety for eternity to hang upon a peradventure. Let not the question remain in perilous uncertainty. Ask yourselves earnestly, Am I among the saved, or the unsaved? Shall I stand, or shall I not stand? He only that hath clean hands and a pure heart shall stand in that day.’ *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 443.

Lesson 13: ‘Your sorrow shall be turned into joy’

MEMORY VERSE: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.' John 16:20.

STUDY HELP: *Early Writings*, pages 14-20.

LESSON AIM: To see beyond present troubles to the joy that is set before us.

Introduction

'God is not pleased to have His people hanging dark and painful pictures in memory's hall. He would have every soul plucking the roses and the lilies and the pinks, hanging memory's hall with the precious promises of God blooming all over the garden of God. He would have us dwelling upon them, our senses sharp and clear, taking them in in their full richness, talking of the joy that is set before us.' *Selected Messages, book 3*, page 163.

'The joy that was set before Him'

1. What enabled Jesus to endure the sufferings of the cross? Hebrews 12:2.

NOTE: 'Christ's earthly life, so full of toil and sacrifice, was cheered by the thought that He would not have all His travail for nought. By giving His life for the life of men, He would win the world back to its loyalty. Although the baptism of blood must first be received, although the sins of the world were to weigh upon His innocent soul, yet for the joy that was set before Him He chose to endure the cross and despised the shame.' *Counsels on Health*, page 511.

2. What precious promises were given to Jesus in His suffering? Isaiah 53:10-11.

NOTE: 'What sustained the Son of God during His life of toil and sacrifice? He saw the results of the travail of His soul and was satisfied. Looking into eternity, He beheld the happiness of those who through His humiliation had received pardon and everlasting life. His ear caught the shout of the redeemed. He heard the ransomed ones singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 601.

3. As He faced the crisis of His life, how did Jesus reach out to encourage His disciples? John 14:1-3, 27. Read verses 1-21.

NOTE: 'Their Master and Lord, their beloved Teacher and Friend, He was dearer to them than life. To Him they had looked for help in all their difficulties, for comfort in their sorrows and disappointments. Now He was to leave them, a lonely, dependent company. Dark were the forebodings that filled their hearts. But the Saviour's words to them were full of hope. He knew that they were to be assailed by the enemy, and that Satan's craft is most successful against those who are depressed by difficulties. Therefore He pointed them away from "the things which are seen," to "the things which are not seen." 2 Corinthians 4:18. From earthly exile He turned their thoughts to the heavenly home.' *Desire of Ages*, page 662.

'Looking unto Jesus'

4. What words of encouragement did Paul address to the Hebrew believers, soon to face the destruction of Jerusalem? Hebrews 12:1-3.

NOTE: 'Looking unto Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 355.

5. What enabled Paul to face the prospect of execution with confidence? 2 Timothy 4:6-8.

NOTE: 'Ransomed by the sacrifice of Christ, washed from sin in His blood, and clothed in His righteousness, Paul has the witness in himself that his soul is precious in the sight of his Redeemer. His life is hid with Christ in God, and he is persuaded that He who has conquered death is able to keep that which is committed to His trust. His mind grasps the Saviour's promise, "I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:40. His thoughts and hopes are centred on the second coming of his Lord. And as the sword of the executioner descends and the shadows of death gather about the martyr, his latest thought springs forward, as will his earliest in the great awakening, to meet the Life-giver, who shall welcome him to the joy of the blest. Well-nigh a score of centuries have passed since Paul the aged poured out his blood as a witness for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. No faithful hand recorded for the generations to come the last scenes in the life of this holy man, but Inspiration has preserved for us his dying testimony. Like a trumpet peal his voice has rung out through all the ages since, nerving with his own courage thousands of witnesses for Christ and wakening in thousands of sorrow-stricken hearts the echo of his own triumphant joy: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." 2 Timothy 4:6-8. *Acts of the Apostles*, page 513.

'When the Lord makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be looked upon with pleasure. Angels are employed in making crowns for such ones, and upon these star-gemmed crowns will be reflected, with splendour, the light which radiates from the throne of God. Talk of heavenly things. Talk of Jesus, His loveliness and glory, and of His undying love for you, and let your heart flow out in love and gratitude to Him, who died to save you. O, get ready to meet your Lord in peace. Those who are ready will soon receive an unfading crown of life, and will dwell forever in the kingdom of God, with Christ, with angels,

and with those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. A crown of glory is laid up for us who wait, and love, and long for, the appearing of the Saviour.' *Maranatha*, page 309.

'A city that hath foundations'

6. What sustained Abraham in his years of homeless wandering? Hebrews 11:8-10.

NOTE: 'God gave to Abraham a view of this immortal inheritance, and with this hope he was content. "By faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Hebrews 11:9, 10. Of the posterity of Abraham it is written, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Verse 13. We must dwell as pilgrims and strangers here if we would gain "a better country, that is, an heavenly." Verse 16. Those who are children of Abraham will be seeking the city which he looked for, "whose builder and maker is God.'" *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 170.

7. What hope awaits each faithful Christian and what effect should this hope have on our lives? 1 John 3:2-3.

NOTE: 'Can any earthly promotion confer honour equal to this, to be sons of God, children of the heavenly King, members of the royal family? Man may be ambitious of the honour that his finite fellow-man may bestow; but what will it avail? The nobility of earth are but men; they die, and return to dust; and there is no lasting satisfaction in their praise and honour. But the honour that comes from God is lasting. To be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, is to be entitled to unsearchable riches, treasures of such value that in comparison with them the gold and silver, the gems and precious stones of earth, sink into insignificance. Through Christ we are offered joy unspeakable, an eternal weight of glory. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." [1 Corinthians. 2:9, 10.]' *Gospel Workers, 1892 ed.*, page 421.

'The things which God hath prepared'

8. What does the Bible say about what God has in store for His people? Isaiah 64:4.

NOTE: 'Long have we waited for our Saviour's return. But none the less sure is the promise. Soon we shall be in our promised home. There Jesus will lead us beside the living stream flowing from the throne of God and will explain to us the dark providences through which on this earth He brought us in order to perfect our characters. There we shall behold with undimmed vision the beauties of Eden restored. Casting at the feet of the Redeemer the crowns that He has placed on our heads and touching our golden harps, we shall fill all heaven with praise to Him that sitteth on the throne. Let all that is beautiful in our earthly home remind us of the crystal river and green fields, the waving trees and the living fountains, the shining city and the white-robed singers, of our heavenly home, that world of beauty which no artist can picture, no mortal tongue describe. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'" *The Adventist Home*, page 545.

9. How does Isaiah describe the joy set before God's people? Isaiah 60:18-21.

NOTE: 'Language is altogether too feeble to attempt a description of heaven. As the scene rises before me, I am lost in amazement. Carried away with the surpassing splendour and excellent glory, I lay down the pen, and exclaim, "Oh, what love! what wondrous love!" The most exalted language fails to describe the glory of heaven or the matchless depths of a Saviour's love.' *Early Writings*, page 289.

'The former things are passed away'

10. What precious promise is for those who endure to the end? Revelation 21:4.

NOTE: 'In the home of the redeemed there will be no tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Isaiah 33:24. One rich tide of happiness will flow and deepen as eternity rolls on. Let us consider most earnestly the blessed hereafter. Let our faith pierce through every cloud of darkness and behold Him who died for the sins of the world. He has opened the gates of Paradise to all who receive and believe on Him. Let the afflictions which pain us so grievously become instructive lessons, teaching us to press forward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ. Let us be encouraged by the thought that the Lord is soon to come. Let this hope gladden our hearts. We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the city of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King. Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God. It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centred. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 362.

11. With what words of joy will His people greet the Lord at His appearing? Isaiah 25:8-9.

NOTE: 'The Lord is soon to come, and we must be prepared to meet Him in peace. Let us be determined to do all in our power to impart light to those around us. We are not to be sad, but cheerful, and we are to keep the Lord Jesus ever before us. He is soon coming, and we must be ready and waiting for His appearing. Oh, how glorious it will be to see Him and be welcomed as His redeemed ones! Long have we waited, but our hope is not to grow dim. If we can but see the King in His beauty we shall be forever blessed. I feel as if I must cry aloud: "Homeward bound!" We are nearing the time when Christ will come in power and great glory to take His ransomed ones to their eternal home.' *Maranatha*, page 311.

'Lift up your heads'

12. What counsel did Jesus give to those living in the last days? Luke 21:28.

NOTE: 'A little longer, and we shall see the King in His beauty. A little longer, and He will wipe all tears from our eyes. A little longer, and He will present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24. Wherefore, when He gave the signs of His coming He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 344.

13. What counsel did Jesus give to those who suffer for righteousness' sake? Matthew 5:11-12.

NOTE: 'Heaven is very near those who suffer for righteousness' sake. Christ identifies His interests with the interests of His faithful people; He suffers in the person of His saints, and whoever touches His chosen ones touches Him. The power that is near to deliver from physical harm or distress is also near to save from the greater evil, making it possible for the servant of God to maintain his integrity under all circumstances, and to triumph through divine grace. Persecution should bring joy to the disciples of Christ, for it is an evidence that they are following in the steps of their Master. While the Lord has not promised His people exemption from trials, He has promised that which is far better. He has said, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deuteronomy 33:25). "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). If you are called to go through the fiery furnace for His sake, Jesus will be by your side even as He was with the faithful three in Babylon. Those who love their Redeemer will rejoice at every opportunity of sharing with Him humiliation and reproach. The love they bear their Lord makes suffering for His sake sweet.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 90.

Afterwords

Life will not all be cross-bearing. Even here we may get many green pastures and still waters, much rest and refreshment on our way, and many things to help us and make our burden lighter, whilst before us stands the **crown**, the end of our probation time, the eternal reward that fades not away. And this is assured for His people, for just as the Lord passed from humiliation to glory, just as in proportion to the depths of His humiliation was the greatness of His exaltation, so it will be with all the members of His kingdom, for He speaks clearly as to the identity of His glory with theirs; and lest there should be the slightest mistake on the subject, He Himself says: 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father on His throne.'

The cross-bearing lasts at most but a few years; the crown is for ever. The cross is lightened by many a tender word and much help and blessing; the crown is diminished by nothing. The cross is in itself an assurance of a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while the glory is in itself an assurance of increased glory, for we are taught that we are to be changed from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

These 'verily verily' sayings of Jesus have a remarkable ending, two words which seem to gather up into themselves all the teachings, all the promises, all the warnings and all the hopes of each individual saying, and apply them to us:

**"And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him,
Follow Me."**

John 21:19.