

# **‘The church of the living God’**

## **General Introduction**

I have seen a device representing a bullock standing between a plough and an altar, with the inscription, “Ready for either”, willing to swelter in the weary furrow or to bleed on the altar of sacrifice. This is the position the child of God should ever be in, willing to go where duty calls, to deny self, and to sacrifice for the cause of truth. The Christian church was founded upon the principle of sacrifice. “If any man will come after Me,” says Christ, “let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” He requires the whole heart, the entire affections. The exhibitions of zeal, earnestness, and unselfish labour which His devoted followers have given to the world should kindle our ardour and lead us to emulate their example. Genuine religion gives an earnestness and fixedness of purpose which moulds the character to the divine image and enables us to count all things but loss for the excellency of Christ. This singleness of purpose will prove an element of tremendous power.

We have a greater and more solemn truth than was ever before committed to mortals, and we are responsible for the way we treat that truth. Every one of us should be intent on saving souls. We should show the power of the truth upon our own hearts and characters, while doing all we can to win others to love it. To bring a sinner to Christ is to elevate, dignify, and ennoble his whole character, and make him a blessing in the home, in society, and in the church. Is not this a work that is worthy of our noblest powers?

*Testimonies volume 5, page 307*

## **Lesson 1: ‘The whole family in heaven and earth’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘But now, O LORD, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our Potter; and we all are the work of Thy hand.’ Isaiah 64:8.

STUDY HELP: *Desire of Ages*, pages 325-327.

### **Introduction**

“‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’ Here are stated the conditions of adoption into the family of God. We are to separate ourselves from the enemies of the Lord. Those who will firmly take their stand upon God’s word, and obey His commandments, will be called old-fashioned and singular. But God designed that His people should be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Christ gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, purifying unto Himself a peculiar people. Those who belong to Christ are not like the world in thought or action, and only those who are unlike the world will God acknowledge as His. There are many pretenders to piety, but few really live for Christ, and let their light shine forth to the world in good works. Those who are content to have little knowledge of God here, who take no delight in communing with Him, will never see heaven, because they do not delight in heaven or heavenly things.’ *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1890.

### **‘Your father the devil’**

#### **1. To what family do our sinful actions reveal that we belong? John 8:44.**

NOTE: ‘Jesus denied that the Jews were children of Abraham. He said, “Ye do the deeds of your father.” In mockery they answered, “We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.” These words, in allusion to the circumstances of His birth, were intended as a thrust against Christ in the presence of those who were beginning to believe on Him. Jesus gave no heed to the base insinuation, but said, “If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God.” Their works testified of their relationship to him who was a liar and a murderer.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 467.

#### **2. What fundamental principle did Jesus explain to show whether we are a child of God or a child of Satan? John 8:41, first part.**

NOTE: ‘All that is not in accordance with the known and expressed will of God, is at enmity with God, and has its origin in the synagogue of Satan. The will of God is expressed in His law, and sin is the transgression of the law. Those who disregard the commandments of God, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men, are working in Satan’s line, and are in harmony

with the great leader of apostasy. When the Jews were claiming Abraham for their father, while not doing the works of Abraham, Jesus said to them: "Ye are of your father the devil." *Signs of the Times*, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1894.

### **'To them gave He power'**

#### **3. How may we cease to become children of the devil and join the family of God? John 1:12.**

NOTE: 'Christ is our example, our inspiration, our exceeding great reward. "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." 1 Corinthians 3:9. God is the Master Builder, but man has a part to act. He is to co-operate with God. "We are labourers together with God." Verse 9. Never forget the words, "**together with God.**" Remember that working with Christ as your personal Saviour is your strength and your victory. This is the part that all are to act. To those who do this comes the assurance: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." John 1: 12. Christ declares: "Without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. And the humble, believing soul responds: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philipians 4:13.' *Testimonies, volume 7*, page 39.

#### **4. What is God's attitude to those who truly wish to become members of His family? John 6:37.**

NOTE: 'Let the heart-searching God reprove the erring, and let each one bow before Him in humility and contrition, casting aside all self-righteousness and self-importance, confessing and forsaking every sin, and asking God, in the name of the Redeemer, for pardon. God declares, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37); and those who in sincerity present themselves before Him will be pardoned and justified, and will receive power to become the sons of God.' *Testimonies, volume 8*, page 101.

### **'Who are My brethren?'**

#### **5. What description did Jesus give of those who are truly members of His family? Matthew 12:46-50.**

NOTE: 'Here is the relationship that exists between Christ and His followers. We occupy this exalted position, if we are indeed doing the will of God. We are to consider ourselves as constituting the family of Christ, and we are to follow Him as dear children. Adopted into the household of God, shall we not honour our Father and our kindred? We have no excuse to plead, for through Jesus we may command all power in Heaven and earth that we may walk worthy of our high calling.' *Signs of the Times*, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1888.

'If we are doing the will of God, we are counted as the brethren and sisters of our Master. We are to remember this in our daily life. We are to be in harmony with God, but at enmity with Satan. There is too much fellowship with the prince of darkness. It is not natural for us to bruise Satan under our feet; but we are to close our hearts to the temptations of the evil one, and to open them to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. We are to press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling, exerting every God-given power, that we may be overcomers. We must be constantly drawing nigh to God. We must talk of Jesus, expressing His love in a devoted life of entire consecration to His service. The more we dwell upon the purity of the character of Christ, the more we shall desire to become like Him, and thus we shall be brought nearer to Him. The more we behold His loveliness, the more we shall reflect His divine image.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1888.

#### **6. What will be the fundamental question upon which Christ judges us? Matthew 7:21-23.**

NOTE: 'This is the assurance given to all who follow the teachings of Christ that they shall become members of the heavenly family. Says Christ, Obedience to my Father in heaven is filial obedience. This is the bond of union between Me and all who shall become members of the heavenly family. All who accept the word of truth will enter the hallowed circle that binds to Me every believer as brother or sister or mother.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 1899.

### **'Love one another as I have loved you'**

#### **7. What spirit must be seen in the life of the one who loves God? 1 John 4:20-21, 1 John 3:18.**

NOTE: 'I saw that brethren should feel interested for one another. Especially should those who are blessed with health have a kind regard and care for those who have not good health. They should favour them. They should remember the lesson taught by Jesus of the Good Samaritan. Said Jesus: "Love one another, as I have loved you." How much? His love cannot be told. He left the glory that He had with the Father before the world was. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." He patiently bore every indignity and scorn. Behold His agony in the garden, when He prayed that the cup might pass from Him! Behold His sufferings on Calvary! All this for guilty, lost man. And Jesus says: "Love one another, as I have loved you." How much? Well enough to give your life for a brother.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 150.

#### **8. How does Paul describe the life of one who truly loves? 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.**

NOTE: 'Christ has given us an example of pure, disinterested love. You have not as yet seen your deficiency in this respect, and your great need of this heavenly attainment, without which all your good purposes, and your zeal, even if it be of that nature that you could give your goods to feed the poor and your body to be burned, is nothing. You need that charity which suffereth long, is not easily provoked, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Without the spirit of love, no one can be like Christ. With this living principle in the soul, no one can be like the world.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 169.

### **'Thou art our Father'**

**9. Once we accept God as our Father, what must we be willing to let Him do? Isaiah 64:8. (See Isaiah 45:9, Jeremiah 18:1-6.)**

NOTE: 'As we come to feel our utter reliance upon Christ for salvation, are we to fold our hands, and say, "I have nothing to do; I am saved; Jesus has done it all"? No, we are to put forth every energy that we may become partakers of the divine nature. We are to be continually watching, waiting, praying, and working. But do all that we may, we cannot pay a ransom for our souls, We can do nothing to originate faith, for faith is the gift of God; neither can we perfect it, for Christ is the finisher of our faith. It is all of Christ. All the longing after a better life is from Christ, and is an evidence that He is drawing you to Himself, and that you are responding to His drawing power. You are to be as clay in the hands of the potter; and if you submit yourself to Christ, He will fashion you into a vessel unto honour, fit for the Master's use. The only thing that stands in the way of the soul who is not fashioned after the divine Pattern is that he does not become poor in spirit; for he who is poor in spirit will look to a higher Source than himself that he may obtain the grace that will make him rich unto God. While he will feel that he cannot originate anything, he will say, "The Lord is my helper.' *Bible Echo*, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1892.

'The potter takes the clay in his hands and moulds and fashions it according to his own will. He kneads it and works it. He tears it apart and then presses it together. He wets it and then dries it. He lets it lie for a while without touching it. When it is perfectly pliable, he continues the work of making of it a vessel. He forms it into shape and on the wheel trims and polishes it. He dries it in the sun and bakes it in the oven. Thus it becomes a vessel fit for use. So the great Master Worker desires to mould and fashion us. And as the clay is in the hands of the potter, so are we to be in His hands. We are not to try to do the work of the potter. Our part is to yield ourselves to the moulding of the Master Worker.' *Testimonies, volume 8*, page 186.

**10. Because God is our Father, what privilege does this give us? Luke 11:2-4.**

NOTE: 'Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him... Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. "The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.' *Steps to Christ*, pages 93 & 100.

### **'The manifestation of the sons of God'**

**11. For what is the whole creation waiting? Romans 8:19.**

NOTE: The marginal reading for 'creature' is 'creation.'

'God... has paid a great price to redeem them from Satan's power, that they might become sons and daughters of God. When they act like sinners, they are counted as sinners, and must repent and do their first works of love. Christians are to love one another, as Christ has loved them. Upon the manifestation of this love hinges the world's recognition of the truth of the gospel. It was for this that Christ prayed in the last prayer He offered. Christians must not act like unruly children. Before the world those who claim to be God's children must give evidence that they have left behind them the childish ways of their unconverted life.' *1888 Materials*, page 1791.

**12. What will the whole creation see when the sons of God are made manifest? Philippians 2:15, 1 John 3:1-2.**

NOTE: 'Christ has given to the church a sacred charge. Every member should be a channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that the Saviour desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and His character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour's love. All heaven is waiting for men and women through whom God can reveal the power of Christianity.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 600.

## **Lesson 2: 'Power to become the sons of God'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.' John 1:12

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 307-319.

### **Introduction**

'Remember that working with Christ as your personal Saviour is your strength and your victory. This is the part that all are to act. To those who do this comes the assurance: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of

God.” John 1:12. Christ declares: “Without Me ye can do nothing.” John 15:5. And the humble, believing soul responds: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:13.’ *Testimonies Volume 7*, page 39.

## ‘Dead in trespasses and sins’

### 1. How does Paul describe the mind of those who are without Christ? Romans 8:5-8, Ephesians 2:1-3.

NOTE: ‘Today a large part of those who compose our congregations are dead in trespasses and sins. They come and go like the door upon its hinges. For years they have complacently listened to the most solemn, soul-stirring truths, but they have not put them in practice. Therefore they are less and less sensible of the preciousness of truth. The stirring testimonies of reproof and warning do not arouse them to repentance. The sweetest melodies that come from God through human lips, justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ, do not call forth from them a response of love and gratitude. Though the heavenly Merchantman displays before them the richest jewels of faith and love, though He invites them to buy of Him “gold tried in the fire,” and white raiment” that they may be clothed, and “eyesalve” that they may see, they steel their hearts against Him, and fail to exchange their lukewarmness for love and zeal. While making a profession, they deny the power of godliness. If they continue in this state, God will reject them. They are unfitting themselves to be members of His family.’ *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 427.

### 2. What struggle takes place in the mind of the one who tries to live a good life without Christ? Romans 7:18-24.

NOTE: ‘There are many who will be lost, because they depend on legal religion, or mere repentance for sin. But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. Man cannot be saved by his own works. Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion.’ *Signs of the Times*, December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1889.

‘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. Many realise their helplessness; they are longing for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God, and are striving to obtain it. But in vain. In despair they cry, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?” Romans 7:24, margin.’ *Ministry of Healing*, page 84.

## ‘But God...’

### 3. In his despair what cry for help did Paul make and who answered his cry? Romans 7:24-25 first part.

NOTE: ‘If we are conscious of our needs, we should not devote all our powers to mourning over them. While we realize our helpless condition without Christ, we are not to yield to discouragement, but rely upon the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. Look and live. Jesus has pledged His word; He will save all who come unto Him.’ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 432.

‘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 the Saviour’s word. 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.’ *Ministry of Healing*, page 84.

### 4. How is the sinner’s cry for help answered? Ephesians 2:4-6.

NOTE: ‘It is His love that encircles us, bringing us back to the fold. His love gives us the privilege of sitting together with Him in heavenly places. When the blessed light of the Sun of Righteousness shines into our hearts, and we rest in peace and joy in the Lord, then let us praise the Lord; praise Him who is the health of our countenance and our God. Let us praise Him, not in words only, but by the consecration to Him of all that we are and all that we have. “How much owest thou unto my Lord?” Compute this you cannot. Since all that you have is His, will you withhold from Him that which He claims? When He calls for it, will you selfishly grasp it as your own? Will you keep it back and apply it to some other purpose than the salvation of souls?’ *Testimonies Volume 6*, pages 480-481.

### 5. What change takes place in the life of the converted Christian? Romans 6:1-6.

NOTE: “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” And John declares: “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” Romans 3:31; 6:2; 1 John 5:3. In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with His law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then “the righteousness of the law” will “be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4. And the language of the soul will be: “O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.” Psalm 119:97.’ *Great Controversy*, page 468.

## ‘Ye must be born again’

### 6. In what way did Jesus describe the change that must take place in the life of the one who becomes a Christian? John 3:3-7.

NOTE: Though we cannot see the Spirit of God, we know that men who have been dead in trespasses and sins, become convicted and converted under its operations. The thoughtless and wayward become serious. The hardened repent of their sins, and the faithless believe. The gambler, the drunkard, the licentious, become steady, sober, and pure. The rebellious and obstinate become meek and Christlike. When we see these changes in the character, we may be assured that the converting power of God has transformed the entire man. We saw not the Holy Spirit, but we saw the evidence of its work on the changed character of those who were hardened and obdurate sinners. As the wind moves in its force upon the lofty trees and brings them down, so the Holy Spirit can work upon human hearts, and no finite man can circumscribe the work of God. The Spirit of God is manifested in different ways upon different men. One under the movings of this power will tremble before the word of God. His convictions will be so deep that a hurricane and tumult of feeling seem to rage in his heart, and his whole being is prostrate under the convicting power of the truth. When the Lord speaks forgiveness to the repenting soul, he is full of ardour, full of love to God, full of earnestness and energy, and the life-giving Spirit which he has received cannot be repressed. Christ is in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. His feelings of love are as deep and ardent as was his distress and agony. His soul is like the fountain of the great deep broken up, and he pours forth his thanksgiving and praise, his gratitude and joy, until the heavenly harps are tuned to notes of rejoicing. He has a story to tell, but not in any precise, common, methodical way. He is a soul ransomed through the merits of Jesus Christ, and his whole being is thrilled with the realisation of the salvation of God. Others are brought to Christ in a more gentle way. "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." You cannot see the operating agency, but you can see its effects.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1896.

**7. How does Paul describe this change? 2 Corinthians 5:17. (Compare Galatians 2:20.)**

NOTE: Those who are satisfied to carry with them a vast amount of selfishness, fault-finding, suspicion; distrust, and strife, will be so deceived that they will not know their short measurement. They are filled with their own doings. They have not the least idea of what it means to be crucified with Christ. To humble self is an experience strange to them. Before they can serve God acceptably, self must die. Christ's words, "Ye must be born again. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God," must come home to them with power.' *Southern Watchman*, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 1899.

**'Every thought into captivity'**

**8. What will be the result of the life of the one who abides in Christ? What does sin in the life reveal? 1 John 3:6; 1 John 2:5-6.**

NOTE: 'This conformity to Jesus will not be unobserved by the world. It is a subject of notice and comment. The Christian may not be conscious of the great change; for the more closely he resembles Christ in character the more humble will be his opinion of himself; but it will be seen and felt by all around him. Those who have had the deepest experience in the things of God are the farthest removed from pride or self-exaltation. They have the humblest thoughts of self, and the most exalted conceptions of the glory and excellence of Christ. They feel that the lowest place in His service is too honourable for them.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 223.

**9. Though it is not God's purpose that His followers should continue to sin, what provision has He made for those who fall? 1 John 2:1.**

NOTE: 'There are those who have known the pardoning love of Christ and who really desire to be children of God, yet they realise that their character is imperfect, their life faulty, and they are ready to doubt whether their hearts have been renewed by the Holy Spirit. To such I would say, Do not draw back in despair. We shall often have to bow down and weep at the feet of Jesus because of our shortcomings and mistakes, but we are not to be discouraged. Even if we are overcome by the enemy, we are not cast off, not forsaken and rejected of God. No, Christ is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' *Steps to Christ*, page 64.

**10. What will be the outcome when we lay hold of the spiritual weapons provided by God? 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.**

NOTE: 'The work of gaining salvation is one of co-partnership, a joint operation. There is to be co-operation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But he is wholly dependent upon God for success. Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power it avails nothing. God works and man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness. God wishes us to have the mastery over ourselves. But He cannot help us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the powers and faculties given to man. Of ourselves, we are not able to bring the purposes and desires and inclinations into harmony with the will of God; but if we are "willing to be made willing," the Saviour will accomplish this for us, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:5.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 482.

**'The measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ'**

**11. What is God's purpose in our Christian life? Ephesians 4:13-15, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 John 3:2, Matthew 5:48.**

NOTE: 'The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. There is opened before us a path of constant advancement. We have an object to gain, a standard to reach, that includes everything good and pure and noble and elevated. There should be continual striving and constant progress onward and upward toward perfection of character.' *Testimonies, volume 8*, page 64.

'The tempter's agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God. The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life. Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours. The Lord says of those who believe in Him, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." 2 Corinthians 6:16.' *Desire of Ages*, page 311.

**12. Where does the power for victory over temptation and sin come from? John 1:12, Matthew 6:13, Romans 1:16, 2 Corinthians 4:7.**

NOTE: 'Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. "I counsel thee," He says, "to buy of Me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." Revelation 3:18. This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. "All our righteousness are as filthy rags." Isaiah 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God "was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin." Sin is defined to be "the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:5, 4. But Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. When on earth, He said to His disciples, "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 15:10. By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 311.

### **Lesson 3: 'One Lord, one faith'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. John 17:20-21.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies, volume 1*, pages 413-420.

#### **Introduction**

'Honest souls will see the straight chain of present truth. They will see its harmonious connections, link after link uniting into a great whole, and will lay hold upon it. The present truth is not difficult to be understood, and the people whom God is leading will be united upon this broad, firm platform. He will not use individuals of different faith, opinions, and views, to scatter and divide. Heaven and holy angels are working to unite, to bring into the unity of the faith, into the one body. Satan opposes this, and is determined to scatter, and divide, and bring in different sentiments, that the prayer of Christ may not be answered: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." John 17:20, 21. Jesus designed that the faith of His people should be one. If one goes forth preaching one thing, and another differing with him preaches something else, how can those who believe through their word be one?' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 327.

#### **'The gospel of Christ... is the power of God unto salvation'**

**1. What warning did Paul give about alternative 'gospels'? Galatians 1:6-9.**

NOTE: 'The position that it is of no consequence what men believe is one of Satan's most successful deceptions. He knows that the truth, received in the love of it, sanctifies the soul of the receiver; therefore he is constantly seeking to substitute false theories, fables, another gospel. From the beginning the servants of God have contended against false teachers, not merely as vicious men, but as inculcators of falsehoods that were fatal to the soul. Elijah, Jeremiah, Paul, firmly and fearlessly opposed those who were turning men from the word of God. That liberality which regards a correct religious faith as unimportant found no favour with these holy defenders of the truth.' *Great Controversy*, page 520.

**2. Against what particular false 'gospel' did Paul warn the believers in Rome? Romans 6:1-2.**

NOTE: 'Today let the question come home to the heart of every one who professes the name of Christ, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" Not, "Do you admit that Jesus is the Redeemer of the world?" Not to soothe your conscience and the consciences of others by saying, "I believe," and think that is all there is to be done. But do you believe with all your heart that Jesus is your Saviour? Do you bring Him into your life, and weave Him into your character, until you are one with Christ? Many accept Jesus as an article of belief, but they have no saving faith in Him as their sacrifice and Saviour. They have no realisation that Christ has died to save them from the penalty of the law which they have transgressed, in order that they may

be brought back to loyalty to God. 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 reinstated 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.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1888.

### **3. Against which false 'gospel' did Paul warn the believers in Galatia? Galatians 2:16.**

NOTE: 'A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abomination in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a deception. Our own works can never purchase salvation.' *Desire of Ages*, page 280.

'Said the Judge: "All will be justified by their faith and judged by their works." How vividly then appeared their neglect, and how wise the arrangement of God in giving to every man a work to do to promote the cause and save his fellow men. Each was to demonstrate a living faith in his family and in his neighbourhood, by showing kindness to the poor, sympathising with the afflicted, engaging in missionary labour, and by aiding the cause of God with his means. But, like Meroz, the curse of God rested upon them for what they had not done.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 386.

### **4. What is the true and only Gospel of Jesus Christ? Romans 1:16.**

NOTE: 'The gospel is to be presented, not as a lifeless theory, but as a living force to change the life. God desires that the receivers of His grace shall be witnesses to its power. Those whose course has been most offensive to Him He freely accepts; when they repent, He imparts to them His divine Spirit, places them in the highest positions of trust, and sends them forth into the camp of the disloyal to proclaim His boundless mercy. He would have His servants bear testimony to the fact that through His grace men may possess Christlikeness of character, and may rejoice in the assurance of His great love. He would have us bear testimony to the fact that He cannot be satisfied until the human race are reclaimed and reinstated in their holy privileges as His sons and daughters.' *Desire of Ages*, page 826.

'We have now only a little time in which to prepare for eternity. May the Lord open the closed eyes of His people and quicken their dulled senses, that they may realise that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. May they see the importance of giving so pure and righteous a representation of God that the world shall see Him in His beauty. May they be so filled with the Spirit that dwells in Him that the world will have no power to divert them from the work of presenting to men the wonderful possibilities before every soul who receives Christ.' *Testimonies, volume 7*, page 12.

## **'Them that obey not the Gospel'**

### **5. What response does the Gospel require from the Christian? 1 Peter 4:17, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, Romans 10:16.**

NOTE: 'It is the privilege of all to give to the world in their home life, in their customs and practices and order, an evidence of what the gospel can do for those who obey it. Christ came to our world to give us an example of what we may become. He expects His followers to be models of correctness in all the relations of life. He desires the divine touch to be seen upon outward things.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 196.

### **6. What example are we given of how even leading men could be led astray from the Gospel? Galatians 2:11-14.**

NOTE: 'The church was threatened with division. But Paul, who saw the subverting influence of the wrong done to the church through the double part acted by Peter, openly rebuked him for thus disguising his true sentiments. In the presence of the church, Paul inquired of Peter, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Galatians 2:13, 14. Peter saw the error into which he had fallen, and immediately set about repairing the evil that had been wrought, so far as was in his power. God, who knows the end from the beginning, permitted Peter to reveal this weakness of character in order that the tried apostle might see that there was nothing in himself whereof he might boast. Even the best of men, if left to themselves, will err in judgement.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 198-199.

## **'One body and one Spirit'**

### **7. How does Paul counsel the believers to behave in order to maintain the unity of the church? Ephesians 4:2-3.**

NOTE: 'The apostle exhorts his brethren to manifest in their lives the power of the truth which he had presented to them. By meekness and gentleness, forbearance and love, they were to exemplify the character of Christ and the blessings of His salvation. There is but one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith. As members of the body of Christ all believers are animated by the same spirit and the same hope. Divisions in the church dishonour the religion of Christ before the world and give occasion to the enemies of truth to justify their course. Paul's instructions were not written alone for the church in his day. God designed that they should be sent down to us. What are we doing to preserve unity in the bonds of peace?' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 239.

### **8. What especially should unite the people of God? Ephesians 4:4-6.**

NOTE: 'If God's professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them from His word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "There is," he says, "one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Ephesians 4:3-5. Such were the blessed results experienced by those who accepted the advent message. They came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were hurled to the ground; conflicting creeds were shivered to atoms; the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned, false views of the second advent were corrected, pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship, and love and joy reigned supreme. If this doctrine did this for the few who did receive it, it would have done the same for all if all had received it.' *Great Controversy*, pages 379-380.

## **'One Lord'**

### **9. What does it mean to acknowledge Jesus as Lord? Luke 6:46.**

NOTE: 'The Lord desires all to understand that their prosperity is hid with Him in Christ; that it is dependent on their humility and meekness, their wholehearted obedience and devotion. When they shall learn the lesson of the great Teacher, to die to self, to put no confidence in man, nor to make flesh their arm, then, as they call upon Him, the Lord will be to them a present help in every time of need. He will guide them in judgement. He will be at their right hand to give them counsel. He will say to them: "This is the way, walk ye in it.'" *Testimonies, volume 7*, page 212.

### **10. What did Jesus say of those who claimed to call Him 'Lord' and yet refused to do His will? Matthew 7:21-23.**

NOTE: 'Not all who profess His name and wear His badge are Christ's. Many who have taught in My name, said Jesus, will be found wanting at last. "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." There are persons who believe that they are right, when they are wrong. While claiming Christ as their Lord, and professedly doing great works in His name, they are workers of iniquity. "With their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." He who declares God's word is to them "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear Thy words, but they do them not." Ezekiel 33:31, 32. A mere profession of discipleship is of no value. The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. "Believe, believe," they say, "and you need not keep the law." But a belief that does not lead to obedience is presumption. The apostle John says, "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." 1 John 2:4.' *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, pages 145-146.

## **'One faith, one baptism'**

### **11. What marvellous example of faith is given us? Matthew 8:5-10.**

NOTE: 'What is faith? It is simply taking God at His word; it is believing that God will do just as He has promised.' *Signs of the Times*, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1889.

### **12. What does the Bible mean by baptism? Acts 8:35-38. (Compare Mark 16:16.)**

NOTE: Our English word 'baptise' and its related words come from the Greek word 'bapto' which means to cover wholly with a fluid, to immerse or to dip. In common usage, it was the word used for the process of dying fabrics by immersing them. The New Testament knows nothing of the sprinkling or pouring of water over infants which some churches miscall 'baptism.'

'Soon after our return from the camp meeting, I, with several others, was taken into the [Methodist] church on probation. My mind was very much exercised on the subject of baptism. Young as I was, I could see but one mode of baptism authorised by the Scriptures, and that was immersion. Some of my Methodist sisters tried in vain to convince me that sprinkling was Bible baptism. The Methodist minister consented to immerse the candidates if they conscientiously preferred that method, although he intimated that sprinkling would be equally acceptable with God. Finally the time was appointed for us to receive this solemn ordinance. It was a windy day when we, twelve in number, went down into the sea to be baptised. The waves ran high and dashed upon the shore, but as I took up this heavy cross, my peace was like a river. When I arose from the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of the Lord rested upon me. I felt that henceforth I was not of this world, but had risen from the watery grave into a newness of life.' *Life Sketches*, page 25.

## **Lesson 4: 'Let this mind be in you'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement.' 1 Corinthians 1:10.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies Volume 3*, pages 434-448.

## **Introduction**



‘Christ is leading out a people, and bringing them into the unity of the faith, that they may be one, as He is one with the Father. Differences of opinion must be yielded, that all may come into union with the body, that they may have one mind and one judgement. 1 Corinthians 1:10: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement.” Romans 15:5, 6: “Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Philippians 2:2: “Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”’ *Testimonies Volume 1*, page 324.

### ‘A new commandment’

#### 1. What vital command did Christ give to His disciples? John 13:34-35.

NOTE: ‘At the time when these words were spoken, the disciples could not understand them; but after they had witnessed the sufferings of Christ, after His crucifixion and resurrection, and ascension to heaven, and after the Holy Spirit had rested on them at Pentecost, they had a clearer conception of the love of God and of the nature of that love which they must have for one another. Then John could say to his fellow disciples: “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” After the descent of the Holy Spirit, when the disciples went forth to proclaim a living Saviour, their one desire was the salvation of souls. They rejoiced in the sweetness of communion with saints. They were tender, thoughtful, self-denying, willing to make any sacrifice for the truth’s sake. In their daily association with one another, they revealed the love that Christ had enjoined upon them. By unselfish words and deeds they strove to kindle this love in other hearts.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 547.

#### 2. In what practical ways is this love to be manifested? 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

NOTE: The word that the King James Bible translates as ‘charity’ is precisely the same word translated as ‘love’ elsewhere in the New Testament. This came from the word ‘caritas’ in the Latin version, which did not use the word ‘amor, because of its sexual overtones.

‘Love is an active principle; it keeps the good of others continually before us, thus restraining us from inconsiderate actions lest we fail of our object in winning souls to Christ. Love seeks not its own. It will not prompt men to seek their own ease and indulgence of self. It is the respect we render to I that so often hinders the growth of love.’ *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 124.

### ‘Love is the fulfilling of the Law’

#### 3. What indissoluble link does the Bible show between obedience to God’s Law and love? Joshua 22:5; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8.

NOTE: “‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ Have you done this? “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.” If this commandment is obeyed, it prepares the heart to obey the second, which is like unto it: “Love thy neighbour as thyself.” All the Ten Commandments are embodied in the two specified. The first includes the first four commandments, which show the duty of man to his Creator. The second embraces the last six, which show the duty of man to his fellow man. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. They are two great arms sustaining all ten of the commandments, the first four and the last six. These must be strictly obeyed.’ *Testimonies Volume 2*, page 43.

#### 4. How does John describe the man who claims to love God but does not show love to his brother? 1 John 4:20-21; 1 John 2:9-10.

NOTE: ‘Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?’ Take the question to your own hearts, and answer it as if before the Judge of all the earth. A reformation must take place in every family, in every institution, in every church. “Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” “Let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. . . . Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. . . . If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.” “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.” These sacred lessons, if received into the heart, will bring about the reformation essential. Many will lose heaven unless they change their selfish, unlovable, unsympathetic ways, and learn that the Spirit of Christ is not selfish and forbidding, uncourteous and loveless.’ *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1900.

### ‘Lovest thou Me?’

#### 5. What vital question did the Lord three times put to Peter? John 21:15-17.

NOTE: It is not easy in English translation to convey the inner meaning of this conversation between the Lord and Peter. Christ asks Peter whether he loves his Lord more than these, the other disciples. In putting this question, Christ uses the word ‘agapan’, the love of 1 Corinthians 13. Peter dare not commit himself to such a love; he knows his frailty all too well. He will not compare himself with ‘these’, the other disciples, and uses another word for love, ‘philein’, the love between friends. The second time the Lord no longer asks Peter to compare himself with his brethren. This weakness (see Matthew 26:33) has gone

from the apostle. 'Now his self-confidence was gone. Never again were the old boastful assertions repeated.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 154. But again Peter is too doubtful of his constancy to commit himself to 'agapan.' He will only undertake 'philein.' The third time the Lord adopts Peter's own word for love. Peter feels he cannot reach Christ's standard of love and has chosen one of which he can be more sure. So the Lord asks Peter whether he will commit himself to friendship. Peter knows both his weakness and the Lord's deep insight into his inner self. 'Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee.' ['philein.']

'Three times Peter had openly denied his Lord, and three times Jesus drew from him the assurance of his love and loyalty, pressing home that pointed question, like a barbed arrow to his wounded heart. Before the assembled disciples Jesus revealed the depth of Peter's repentance, and showed how thoroughly humbled was the once boasting disciple.' *Desire of Ages*, page 812.

#### **6. What commission did the Lord three times give to Peter? John 21:15-17.**

NOTE: 'The first work that Christ entrusted to Peter on restoring him to the ministry was to feed the lambs. This was a work in which Peter had little experience. It would require great care and tenderness, much patience and perseverance. It called him to minister to those who were young in the faith, to teach the ignorant, to open the Scriptures to them, and to educate them for usefulness in Christ's service. Heretofore Peter had not been fitted to do this, or even to understand its importance. But this was the work which Jesus now called upon him to do. For this work his own experience of suffering and repentance had prepared him.' *Desire of Ages*, page 812.

'In his charge to Peter, the Saviour first bade him, "Feed my lambs." and afterward commanded him, "Feed my sheep." In addressing the apostle, Christ says to all his ministers, "Feed my lambs." When Jesus admonished the disciples not to despise the little ones, he addressed all disciples, in all ages. His own love and care for children is a precious example for his followers.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1881.

### **'The love of Christ constraineth us'**

#### **7. What was the controlling power in the life of the apostles? 2 Corinthians 5:14.**

NOTE: 'Christ gave no stinted service. He did not measure His work by hours. His time, His heart, His soul and strength, were given to labour for the benefit of humanity. Through weary days He toiled, and through long nights He bent in prayer for grace and endurance that He might do a larger work. With strong crying and tears He sent His petitions to heaven, that His human nature might be strengthened, that He might be braced to meet the wily foe in all his deceptive workings, and fortified to fulfil His missions of uplifting humanity. To His workers He says, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done." John 13:15. "The love of Christ," said Paul, "constraineth us." 2 Corinthians 5:14. This was the actuating principle of his conduct; it was his motive power. If ever his ardour in the path of duty flagged for a moment, one glance at the cross caused him to gird up anew the loins of his mind and press forward in the way of self-denial. In his labours for his brethren he relied much upon the manifestation of infinite love in the sacrifice of Christ, with its subduing, constraining power.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 500.

#### **8. What example of loving service should we desire to follow? Philippians 2:5-8.**

NOTE: 'The third angel of Revelation is represented as flying swiftly through the midst of heaven crying: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Here is shown the nature of the work of the people of God. They have a message of so great importance that they are represented as flying in the presentation of it to the world. They are holding in their hands the bread of life for a famishing world. The love of Christ constraineth them. This is the last message. There are no more to follow, no more invitations of mercy to be given after this message shall have done its work. What a trust! What a responsibility is resting upon all to carry the words of gracious invitation: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Everyone who heareth is to say: Come. Not only ministers, but the people. All are to join in the invitation. Not only by their profession, but by their character and dress, all are to have a winning influence. They are made trustees for the world, executors of the will of One who has bequeathed sacred truth to men. Would that all could feel the dignity and glory of their God-given trust.' *Testimonies*, volume 5, pages 206-207.

### **'Forbearing one another'**

#### **9. What qualities should the Christian manifest in his attitude to his fellowmen? Colossians 3:12-15.**

NOTE: 'We must guard well every point; for Satan is unwearied in his work of temptation. Watch well your words; guard well the spirit that prompts your words. Stand as faithful sentinels over your own defective attributes of character, that you may do nothing which will prove a stumbling-block to your brother. Do not make crooked paths for your feet, paths that will turn his feet out of the way of life. I wish all to remember that a day is coming in which the case of every one will be revealed. Then the plague-spot that tainted your character, the rock of offence that wrecked your barque, will be seen. Many will then realise that the tongue, though a little member, can do a weight of mischief. Many, eternally lost, will then, in their despair, look reproachfully upon those who sowed bitterness in their hearts, and planted suspicious thoughts in their minds. No provision has been made for Christians to draw apart from one another. By our unity and love we are to reveal the character of Christ.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, April 27<sup>th</sup> 1897.

#### **10. What counsel does the Lord give us concerning differences between brethren? Matthew 18:15-17.**

NOTE: 'Do not tell others of the wrong. One person is told, then another, and still another; and continually the report grows, and the evil increases, till the whole church is made to suffer. Settle the matter "between thee and him alone." This is God's plan. "Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another." Proverbs 25:8, 9. Do not suffer sin upon your brother; but do not expose him, and thus increase the difficulty, making the reproof seem like a revenge. Correct him in the way outlined in the word of God. Do not suffer resentment to ripen into malice. Do not allow the wound to fester and break out in poisoned words, which taint the minds of those who hear. Do not allow bitter thoughts to continue to fill your mind and his. Go to your brother, and in humility and sincerity talk with him about the matter.' *Testimonies, volume 7*, pages 260-261.

### **'How good and pleasant it is'**

#### **11. How did David describe unity among brethren? Psalm 133.**

NOTE: 'The religion of Christ does not require us to lose our identity of character, but merely to adapt ourselves, in some measure, to the feelings and ways of others. Many people may be brought together in a unity of religious faith whose opinions, habits, and tastes in temporal matters are not in harmony; but if they have the love of Christ glowing in their bosoms, and are looking forward to the same heaven as their eternal home, they may have the sweetest and most intelligent communion together, and a unity the most wonderful. There are scarcely two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one may not be the trials of another, and our hearts should ever be open to kindly sympathy and all aglow with the love that Jesus had for all His brethren.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 65.

#### **12. What work of the Holy Spirit will also bring a unity among God's people? Ephesians 4:13.**

NOTE: 'God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. If one man takes his views of Bible truth without regard to the opinions of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ? And if another and still another arises, each asserting his right to believe and talk what he pleases without reference to the faith of the body, where will be that harmony which existed between Christ and His Father, and which Christ prayed might exist among His brethren? God is leading out a people and establishing them upon the one great platform of faith, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. He has given His people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin and has been searched for as for hidden treasure. It has been dug out through careful searching of the Scriptures and through much prayer.' *Testimonies, volume 3*, pages 446-447.

## **Lesson 5: 'There is no respect of persons with God'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.' James 2:1.

STUDY HELP: *Gospel Workers*, pages 330-336.

### **Introduction**

'As the children of God are one in Christ, how does Jesus look upon caste, upon society distinctions, upon the division of man from his fellow-man, because of colour, race, position, wealth, birth, or attainments? The secret of unity is found in the equality of believers in Christ. The reason of all division, discord, and difference is found in separation from Christ. Christ is the centre to which all should be attracted; for the nearer we approach the centre, the closer we shall come together in feeling, in sympathy, in love, growing into the character and image of Jesus. With God there is no respect of persons.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1891.

### **'Of one blood'**

#### **1. How did Paul express the essential brotherhood of all mankind? Acts 17:26.**

NOTE: 'The Saviour longed to unfold to His disciples the truth regarding the breaking down of the "middle wall of partition" between Israel and the other nations, the truth that "the Gentiles should be fellow heirs" with the Jews and "partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel." Ephesians 2:14; 3: 6. This truth was revealed in part at the time when He rewarded the faith of the centurion at Capernaum, and also when He preached the gospel to the inhabitants of Sychar. Still more plainly was it revealed on the occasion of His visit to Phoenicia, when He healed the daughter of the Canaanite woman. These experiences helped the disciples to understand that among those whom many regarded as unworthy of salvation, there were souls hungering for the light of truth. Thus Christ sought to teach the disciples the truth that in God's kingdom there are no territorial lines, no caste, no aristocracy; that they must go to all nations, bearing to them the message of a Saviour's love. But not until later did they realise in all its fullness that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and

hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us." Acts 17:26, 27.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 19-20.

## **2. How does the prophet Malachi express the same thought? Malachi 2:10.**

NOTE: 'No distinction on account of nationality, race, or caste, is recognised by God. He is the Maker of all mankind. All men are of one family by creation, and all are one through redemption. Christ came to demolish every wall of partition, to throw open every compartment of the temple, that every soul may have free access to God. His love is so broad, so deep, so full, that it penetrates everywhere. It lifts out of Satan's circle the poor souls who have been deluded by his deceptions. It places them within reach of the throne of God, the throne encircled by the rainbow of promise.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 386.

### **'I should not call any man common or unclean'**

## **3. In what ways did Christ seek to break down the racial prejudices of the Jewish people? Mark 7:24-29.**

NOTE: 'They saw that their Master treated her with indifference, and they therefore supposed that the prejudice of the Jews against the Canaanites was pleasing to Him. But it was a pitying Saviour to whom the woman made her plea, and in answer to the request of the disciples, Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Although this answer appeared to be in accordance with the prejudice of the Jews, it was an implied rebuke to the disciples, which they afterward understood as reminding them of what He had often told them, that He came to the world to save all who would accept Him.' *Desire of Ages*, page 400.

## **4. How was the truth brought home to Peter? Acts 10:9-16; Acts 10:28; Acts 11:4-9.**

NOTE: 'How carefully the Lord worked to overcome the prejudice against the Gentiles that had been so firmly fixed in Peter's mind by his Jewish training! By the vision of the sheet and its contents He sought to divest the apostle's mind of this prejudice and to teach the important truth that in heaven there is no respect of persons; that Jew and Gentile are alike precious in God's sight; that through Christ the heathen may be made partakers of the blessings and privileges of the gospel.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 136.

## **5. What story did Jesus tell to show the relations that should exist among all peoples? Luke 10:25-37.**

NOTE: 'The great difference between the Jews and the Samaritans was a difference in religious belief, a question as to what constitutes true worship. The Pharisees would say nothing good of the Samaritans, but poured their bitterest curses upon them. So strong was the antipathy between the Jews and the Samaritans that to the Samaritan woman it seemed a strange thing for Christ to ask her for a drink. "How is it," she said, "that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?" "For," adds the evangelist, "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." John 4:9. And when the Jews were so filled with murderous hatred against Christ that they rose up in the temple to stone Him, they could find no better words by which to express their hatred than, "Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" John 8:48. Yet the priest and Levite neglected the very work the Lord had enjoined on them, leaving a hated and despised Samaritan to minister to one of their own countrymen. The Samaritan had fulfilled the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," thus showing that he was more righteous than those by whom he was denounced. Risking his own life, he had treated the wounded man as his brother. This Samaritan represents Christ. Our Saviour manifested for us a love that the love of man can never equal. When we were bruised and dying, He had pity upon us. He did not pass us by on the other side, and leave us, helpless and hopeless, to perish. He did not remain in His holy, happy home, where He was beloved by all the heavenly host. He beheld our sore need, He undertook our case, and identified His interests with those of humanity. He died to save His enemies. He prayed for His murderers. Pointing to His own example, He says to His followers, "These things I command you, that ye love one another"; "as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 15:17; 13:34.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 380-381.

### **'To be seen of men'**

## **6. What example of prejudice was found in the early church? James 2:1-4.**

NOTE: 'Jesus did not seek the admiration or applause of the world. He commanded no army, He ruled no earthly kingdom. He passed by the wealthy and honoured of the world. He did not associate with the leaders of the nation. He dwelt among the lowly of the earth. To all appearances He was merely a humble man, with few friends. Thus He sought to correct the world's false standard of judging the value of men. He showed that they are not to be estimated by their outward appearance. Their moral worth is not determined by their worldly possessions, their real estate or bank stock. It is the humble, contrite heart that God values. With Him there is no respect of persons. The attributes that He prizes most are purity and love, and these are possessed only by the Christian.' *The Southern Work*, page 10.

## **7. How did Jesus condemn among Christians the distinctions based on rank? Matthew 23:8-12.**

NOTE: 'He also reproved the vanity shown in coveting the title of rabbi, or master. Such a title, He declared, belonged not to men, but to Christ. Priests, scribes, and rulers, expounders and administrators of the law, were all brethren, children of one Father. Jesus impressed upon the people that they were to give no man a title of honour indicating his control of their conscience or their faith. If Christ were on earth today, surrounded by those who bear the title of "Reverend" or "Right Reverend," would He not repeat His saying, "Neither be ye called masters: for One is your Master, even Christ"? The Scripture declares of God, "Holy and reverend is His name." Psalm 111:9. To what human being is such a title befitting? How little does man reveal of the wisdom and righteousness it indicates! How many of those who assume this title are misrepresenting the

name and character of God! Alas, how often have worldly ambition, despotism, and the basest sins been hidden under the brodered garments of a high and holy office! The Saviour continued: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Again and again Christ had taught that true greatness is measured by moral worth. In the estimation of heaven, greatness of character consists in living for the welfare of our fellow men, in doing works of love and mercy.' *Desire of Ages*, page 613.

**8. How does Christ condemn those who seek the praise of men? Matthew 23:5-8; Matthew 6:1-2.**

NOTE: 'In such plain words the Saviour revealed the selfish ambition that was ever reaching for place and power, displaying a mock humility, while the heart was filled with avarice and envy. When persons were invited to a feast, the guests were seated according to their rank, and those who were given the most honourable place received the first attention and special favours. The Pharisees were ever scheming to secure these honours. This practice Jesus rebuked.' *Desire of Ages*, page 613.

**'It shall not be so with you'**

**9. What counsel does Jesus give to His followers? Luke 14:7-10.**

NOTE: 'In this parable Christ gives a safe precept as to the proper manner of conducting ourselves when so greatly honoured as to be invited as a guest to the house of one who is honourable. The word of God not only lays out the great principles that should underlie our actions, but also gives a definite rule with which to regulate our conduct. How perfectly adapted are the lessons of Christ to the regulation of society! The Lord desires that all who claim God as their Father should bring their actions into accordance with heavenly principles. He would have men recognise their obligation to their fellowmen. He would not have His children striving for the highest place. In this parable the Lord shows us that He disapproves of the efforts of men who seek to be thought the greatest. The spirit that urges men to seek the highest place, is accompanied with pride, selfishness, and self-esteem, and the result will be that he who struggles for the highest position will find himself in the lowest. Nothing will make a man really great except to be truly good. But he who is wholly consecrated to God does not have the exaltation of self in view, but the glory of God.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1895.

**10. What spirit must never be found among the followers of Christ? Matthew 20:25-27.**

NOTE: 'There was to be a difference between His kingdom and the kingdoms of the world. "The princes of the Gentiles" were ambitious, and sought for place and power; but their course in this respect resulted from false ideas of greatness and the pride of the human heart. Among the disciples of Christ an entirely different state of things was to exist. One was not to aspire to dominion over his brethren, and to seek to be lord over God's heritage.' *Signs of the Times*, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1885.

**'Ye commit sin'**

**11. How does God regard those who practise respect of persons? James 2:9.**

NOTE: 'At the feet of Jesus, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, meet together, with no thought of caste or worldly pre-eminence. All earthly distinctions are forgotten as we look upon Him whom our sins have pierced. The self-denial, the condescension, the infinite compassion of Him who was highly exalted in heaven, puts to shame human pride, self-esteem, and social caste. Pure, undefiled religion manifests its heaven-born principles in bringing into oneness all who are sanctified through the truth. All meet as blood-bought souls, alike dependent upon Him who has redeemed them to God.' *Gospel Workers*, page 330.

**12. What principle of God's judgement did Jesus reveal? Luke 14:11.**

NOTE: 'Let us examine ourselves, and see how many vain thoughts dwell within our hearts, how much we love praise, how selfishness is shown in our manners, how often we misjudge the character and motives of others, or feel contempt for them because their appearance is not prepossessing. Let us think how our words sound in the ears of God, how our selfish thoughts look in His sight, when we judge and condemn others, who may be better in heart and purpose than ourselves... The teachings of Christ give no countenance to a spirit of self-righteousness which would exalt self over others. Vanity is never the result of virtue and true piety. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." *Signs of the Times*, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1885.

**Lesson 6: 'Many members yet but one body'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'But now are they many members, yet but one body.' 1 Corinthians 12:20.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies Volume 4*, pages 16-20.

**Introduction**

'The religion of Christ does not require us to lose our identity of character, but merely to adapt ourselves, in some measure, to the feelings and ways of others. Many people may be brought together in a unity of religious faith whose opinions, habits, and tastes in temporal matters are not in harmony; but if they have the love of Christ glowing in their bosoms, and are looking forward to the same heaven as their eternal home, they may have the sweetest and most intelligent communion together, and a

unity the most wonderful. There are scarcely two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one may not be the trials of another, and our hearts should ever be open to kindly sympathy and all aglow with the love that Jesus had for all His brethren.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 66.

### **'How good and how pleasant it is'**

#### **1. How does David describe the blessings of unity among God's people? Psalm 133:1-3.**

NOTE: 'The apostles differed widely in habits and disposition. There were the publican, Levi-Matthew, and the fiery zealot Simon, the uncompromising hater of the authority of Rome; the generous, impulsive Peter, and the mean-spirited Judas; Thomas, true-hearted, yet timid and fearful, Philip, slow of heart, and inclined to doubt, and the ambitious, outspoken sons of Zebedee, with their brethren. These were brought together, with their different faults, all with inherited and cultivated tendencies to evil; but in and through Christ they were to dwell in the family of God, learning to become one in faith, in doctrine, in spirit. They would have their tests, their grievances, their differences of opinion; but while Christ was abiding in the heart, there could be no dissension. His love would lead to love for one another; the lessons of the Master would lead to the harmonising of all differences, bringing the disciples into unity, till they would be of one mind and one judgement. Christ is the great centre, and they would approach one another just in proportion as they approached the centre.' *Desire of Ages*, page 296.

#### **2. What counsel did Paul give to the believers in Philippi? Philippians 2:1-5.**

NOTE: 'Brethren and sisters, we have no time to dwell on little differences. For Christ's sake, to your knees in prayer! Go to God, and ask Him to give you a clean heart. Ask Him to help you to stand where He wants you to be. Labour in harmony with one another, even though you are not alike. Do you not know that of the leaves on a tree there are no two exactly alike? From this God would teach us that among His servants there is to be unity in diversity.' *General Conference Bulletin*, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1903.

### **'The unity of the Spirit'**

#### **3. What earnest plea did Paul make to the believers in Ephesus? Ephesians 4:1-3.**

NOTE: 'I spoke upon the necessity of labouring for unity and cultivating Christian courtesy, "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The effect of truth upon the heart is to cleanse it from every defilement. It will not increase self-love, but will lead the receiver to humble his heart, and to ascribe nothing to self, but all to God. He ceases to esteem himself more highly than his brethren. His former sensitiveness to reproach, neglect, or contempt disappears, and he is not so easily irritated; he becomes gentle and condescending, and exemplifies the simplicity of Christ who was meek and lowly of heart. His own nation and personal friends are no longer the boundary lines of his love. He loves Jesus with all his heart, and all who are trying to be the children of God he loves as himself. There is an entire change in his life.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1885.

#### **4. What specific examples of the oneness of God's people did Paul mention? Ephesians 4:4-6.**

NOTE: 'If God's professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them from His word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "There is," he says, "one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Ephesians 4:3-5. Such were the blessed results experienced by those who accepted the advent message. They came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were hurled to the ground; conflicting creeds were shivered to atoms; the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned, false views of the second advent were corrected, pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship, and love and joy reigned supreme.' *Great Controversy*, page 379.

'There is but one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith. As members of the body of Christ all believers are animated by the same spirit and the same hope. Divisions in the church dishonour the religion of Christ before the world and give occasion to the enemies of truth to justify their course. Paul's instructions were not written alone for the church in his day. God designed that they should be sent down to us. What are we doing to preserve unity in the bonds of peace?' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 239.

### **'Unity in the bond of peace'**

#### **5. What sound counsel did Paul give to those whose views were causing division? Romans 14:19.**

NOTE: 'In union there is strength; in disunion there is weakness. God's chosen ones are to reveal to the world their union one with another. It is not possible for a few to walk to heaven alone because they can agree with no others. God's people are to be a unit. If some entertain ideas so peculiar that others cannot accept them, they should compare notes in a teachable spirit, and all should be willing to learn. They should make the most strenuous efforts to be one, to come into the unity of the faith in the bonds of peace.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1897.

#### **6. What characteristics are we to cultivate in order to achieve unity in the bond of peace? Colossians 3:12-15.**

NOTE: 'The apostle exhorts his brethren to manifest in their lives the power of the truth which he had presented to them. By meekness and gentleness, forbearance and love, they were to exemplify the character of Christ and the blessings of His

salvation. There is but one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith. As members of the body of Christ, all members are to be animated by the same spirit and the same hope. Harmony and union existing among men of varied dispositions is the strongest witness that can be borne that God has sent His Son into the world to save sinners. It is our privilege to bear this witness. Our characters must be moulded in harmony with His character, our wills must be surrendered to His will.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1908.

### **'The unity of the faith'**

#### **7. What was one of the purposes for members being given the different spiritual gifts in the church? Ephesians 4:11-13.**

NOTE: 'Honest souls will see the straight chain of present truth. They will see its harmonious connections, link after link uniting into a great whole, and will lay hold upon it. The present truth is not difficult to be understood, and the people whom God is leading will be united upon this broad, firm platform. He will not use individuals of different faith, opinions, and views, to scatter and divide. Heaven and holy angels are working to unite, to bring into the unity of the faith, into the one body. Satan opposes this, and is determined to scatter, and divide, and bring in different sentiments, that the prayer of Christ may not be answered: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." John 17:20, 21. Jesus designed that the faith of His people should be one.' *Testimonies Volume 1*, page 327.

#### **8. Though God's people have different gifts, what are we to do so that diversity does not become division? 1 Corinthians 1:10**

NOTE: 'Christ is leading out a people, and bringing them into the unity of the faith, that they may be one, as He is one with the Father. Differences of opinion must be yielded, that all may come into union with the body, that they may have one mind and one judgement. 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement." Romans 15:5, 6: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians 2:2: "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." *Testimonies Volume 1*, page 324.

### **'We, being many, are one'**

#### **9. How does Paul describe the diversity that exists among God's people? Romans 12:4, 6-8.**

NOTE: 'Study this scripture carefully. God has not given to every one the same line of work. It is His plan that there shall be unity in diversity. When His plan is studied and followed, there will be far less friction in the working of the cause.' *Pacific Union Recorder*, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1904.

#### **10. What picture did Paul use to demonstrate the importance of each individual member to the whole church? 1 Corinthians 12:12-21.**

NOTE: 'The Lord desires His church to respect every gift that He has bestowed on the different members. Let us beware of allowing our minds to become fixed on ourselves, thinking that no one can be serving the Lord unless he is working on the same lines as those on which we are working. Never is a worker to say, "I do not want to work with such a one, because he does not see things as I do. I wish to work with some one who will agree with all I say, and follow out all my ideas." The one the worker thus refuses to connect with may have truths to present that have not yet been presented. Because of the worker's refusal to accept the help provided by the Lord, the work is made one-sided. The work is hurt unless there are brought into it all the gifts that God has bestowed. Many times the progress of the work has been hindered because the labourers thought their gifts all that were necessary for its advancement. The Lord has not done for His people what He would have done if so many of the workers had not limited the development of the work by refusing to co-operate with labourers who should have been given standing room and encouragement. In self-sufficiency, men have ignored and pushed aside those to whom God has given a special work.' *Pacific Union Recorder*, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1904.

### **'By this shall all men know...'**

#### **11. What counsel does Paul give to Christians concerning those who bring division among God's people? Romans 16:17.**

NOTE: 'Let the suspicious ones, who think and speak evil of their brethren, remember that they are doing the devil's drudgery. Let each member of the church work with earnest determination, and with prayer for help, to cure the diseased member, the tongue. Let every one feel that it is his duty and privilege to pass over little differences and mistakes without comment. Do not magnify the small mistakes made by some one, but think of the good that is in him. Each time these mistakes are thought of and talked about, they grow larger. A mountain is made out of a molehill. Ill-feeling and a lack of confidence is the result.' *Australasian Union Conference Record*, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1903.

#### **12. What did Christ say was convincing evidence that we are His disciples? John 13:35.**

NOTE: 'The more closely we resemble our Saviour in character, the greater will be our love toward those for whom He died. Christians who manifest a spirit of unselfish love for one another are bearing a testimony for Christ which unbelievers can

neither gainsay nor resist. It is impossible to estimate the power of such an example. Nothing will so successfully defeat the devices of Satan and his emissaries, nothing will so build up the Redeemer's kingdom, as will the love of Christ manifested by the members of the church. Peace and prosperity can be enjoyed only as meekness and love are in active exercise.' *Testimonies Volume 5*, page 168.

## Lesson 7: 'Not of the World'

MEMORY VERSE: 'I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the world.' John 17:15

STUDY HELP: Great Controversy, pages 600-602.

### Introduction

'I have been shown the high and responsible position which God's people should occupy. They are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and they must walk even as Christ walked. They will come up through great tribulation. The present is a time of warfare and trial. Our Saviour says in Revelation 3:21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." The reward is not given to all who profess to be followers of Christ, but to those who overcome even as He overcame. We must study the life of Christ and learn what it is to confess Him before the world.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 303

### 'The light shineth in darkness'

#### 1. What is the light that is to shine into the world? 2 Corinthians 4:3-5.

NOTE: 'In order to gain a proper knowledge of ourselves, it is necessary to look into the mirror, and there discovering our own defects, avail ourselves of the blood of Christ, the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, in which we may wash our robes of character and remove the stains of sin. But many refuse to see their errors and correct them; they do not want a true knowledge of themselves. If we would reach high attainments in moral and spiritual excellence we must live for it. We are under personal obligation to society to do this, in order continually to exert an influence in favour of God's law. We should let our light so shine that all may see that the sacred gospel is having an influence upon our hearts and lives, that we walk in obedience to its commandments and violate none of its principles. We are in a great degree accountable to the world for the souls of those around us.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, pages 58-59.

#### 2. Whom do God's remnant people have as their example in bringing light to a dark world? John 3:17.

NOTE: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man's necessity. He "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," that He might minister to every need of humanity. Matthew 8:17. The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His mission to bring to men complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 17.

#### 3. What is Christ asking us to do for our Heavenly Father? John 17:18, Matthew 5:16.

NOTE: 'I have been shown that the disciples of Christ are His representatives upon the earth; and God designs that they shall be lights in the moral darkness of this world, dotted all over the country, in the towns, villages, and cities, "a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." If they obey the teachings of Christ in His Sermon on the Mount, they will be seeking continually for perfection of Christian character, and will be truly the light of the world, channels through which God will communicate His divine will, the truth of heavenly origin, to those who sit in darkness and who have no knowledge of the way of life and salvation.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 631.

#### 4. Whose life shows that it possible to live as a pure light for God in today's world? Genesis 5:21-24

NOTE: 'Christ came into the world to save it, to connect fallen man with the infinite God. Christ's followers are to be channels of light. Maintaining communion with God, they are to transmit to those in darkness and error the choice blessings which they receive of heaven. Enoch did not become polluted with the iniquities existing in his day; why need we in our day? But we may, like our Master, have compassion for suffering humanity, pity for the unfortunate, and a generous consideration for the feelings and necessities of the needy, the troubled, and the despairing.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 113.

### 'An Holy Nation'

#### 5. What characteristics will be seen in our lives if we are truly to reflect God to those around us? 1 Peter 1:13-16.

NOTE: 'In order to manifest the character of God, in order that we may not deceive ourselves, the church, and the world by a counterfeit Christianity, we must become personally acquainted with God. If we have fellowship with God, we are His ministers, though we may never preach to a congregation. We are workers together with God in presenting the perfection of His character in humanity.' *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 13.



**6. What will be the sign of true holiness and loyalty to our Saviour and Creator? Exodus 20:8; Psalm 29:2; Revelation 14:7.**

NOTE: 'Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works. These who were so familiar with prophecy and the treasures of divine wisdom should have acted their faith. They should have commanded their households after them, that by a well-ordered family they might present to the world the influence of the truth upon the human heart.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, pages 213-214.

**'A royal priesthood'**

**7. A priest is the one who stands between God and man. What is the 'royal priesthood' to declare about God to the world? 1 Peter 2:9-10.**

NOTE: 'God declares, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." He is the benefactor of the universe. His tender mercies are over all His works. "The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." It is God's desire that man shall proclaim the benevolence of His character. In word and deed His people are to reveal His mercy, calling attention to His compassionate designs. The world is to see in the believers who make it their first aim to fulfil the will of Christ, a true representation of Christianity.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 1901.

**8. What are the sacrifices to be offered by today's 'royal priesthood'? Romans 12:1-2.**

NOTE: 'In the ancient Jewish service it was required that every sacrifice should be without blemish. In the text we are told to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. We are God's workmanship. The psalmist, meditating upon the marvellous work of God in the human frame, exclaimed, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." There are many who are educated in the sciences, and are familiar with the theory of the truth, who do not understand the laws that govern their own being. God has given us faculties and talents; and it is our duty, as his sons and daughters, to make the best use of them. If we weaken these powers of mind or body by wrong habits or indulgence of perverted appetite, it will be impossible for us to honour God as we should.' *Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene*, page 15.

**'A chosen generation'**

**9. What special work for the world is assigned to the last generation of God's people? Revelation 14:6.**

NOTE: 'We are nearing the close of this earth's history. We have before us a great work, the closing work of giving the last warning message to a sinful world. There are men who will be taken from the plough, from the vineyard, from various other branches of work, and sent forth by the Lord to give this message to the world. The world is out of joint. As we look at the picture, the outlook seems discouraging. But Christ greets with hopeful assurance the very men and women who cause us discouragement. In them He sees qualifications that will enable them to take a place in His vineyard. If they will constantly be learners, through His providence He will make them men and women fitted to do a work that is not beyond their capabilities; through the impartation of the Holy Spirit He will give them power of utterance. Many of the barren, unworked fields must be entered by beginners. The brightness of the Saviour's view of the world will inspire confidence in many workers, who, if they begin in humility, and put their hearts into the work, will be found to be the right men for the time and place. ...He corrects our erring piety, giving the burden of the work for the poor and needy in the rough places of the earth to men and women who have hearts that can feel for the ignorant and for those that are out of the way. The Lord teaches these workers how to meet those whom He wishes them to help. They will be encouraged as they see doors opening for them to enter places where they can do medical missionary work. Having little self-confidence, they give God all the glory. Their hands may be rough and unskilled, but their hearts are susceptible to pity; they are filled with an earnest desire to do something to relieve the woe so abundant; and Christ is present to help them.' *Testimonies Volume 7*, page 271.

**10. How will these workers find protection from the final, angry onslaught of the evil one? Ephesians 6:10-18**

NOTE: 'The Great General is not only leading a few generals; but the Captain of the Lord's host is leading the armies of both heaven and earth to battle; and they are marching on to the glorious victory. Every soldier is to put on the whole armour of God, and fight courageously, realising that he is battling in full view of the invisible universe. If they will obey orders, the Lord's army will find themselves influenced by the Holy Spirit to work the works of God. The battlefield is glorified with the light shining from the cross of Calvary.' *Australasian Union Conference Record*, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1898.

**'I pray for them'**

**11. How are we included in Jesus prayer for His disciples? John 17:11, 20-21.**

NOTE: 'Yes, that prayer of Christ embraces even us. We should be comforted by the thought that we have a great intercessor in the heavens, presenting our petitions before God. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." In the hour of greatest need, when discouragement would overwhelm the soul, it is then that the watchful eye of Jesus sees that we need His help. The hour of man's necessity is the hour of God's opportunity. When all human support fails, then Jesus comes to our aid, and His presence scatters the darkness and lifts the cloud of gloom.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 529.

**12. As we realise our weakness and frailty, what invitation and promises come to us from the Most Holy Place? Hebrews 4:14-16.**

NOTE: 'Let us begin to work for those who have not had the light. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth," the Saviour declares, "and, lo, I am with you alway." Matthew 28:18, 20. What we need is a living faith, faith to proclaim over the rent sepulchre of Joseph that we have a living Saviour, one who will go before us and who will work with us. God will do the work if we will furnish Him the instruments. There needs to be among us a great deal more of prayer and much less of unbelief. We need to lift up the standard higher and still higher before the people. We need to remember that Christ is always at our right hand as we proclaim liberty to the captives and deal the bread of life to hungry souls. When we keep before our minds the urgency and importance of our work, the salvation of God will be revealed in a remarkable manner.' *Testimonies Volume 9*, page 107.

## **Lesson 8: 'Holy and without blemish'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 469-478.

### **Introduction**

'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 judgement. 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 characters, 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. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 355.

### **'To serve Him in holiness'**

**1. What is God's desire for all His people? Luke 1:74-75.**

NOTE: 'It is our privilege to stand with the light of heaven upon us. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. It was no easier for Enoch to live a righteous life than it is for us at the present time. The world in his time was no more favourable to growth in grace and holiness than it is now. It was by prayer and communion with God that Enoch was enabled to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. We are living in the perils of the last days, and we must receive our strength from the same source. We must walk with God. A separation from the world is required of us; for we can not remain free from its pollution unless we follow the example of the faithful Enoch.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1900.

**2. How does Jesus describe the ones who will have the privilege of seeing God? Matthew 5:8.**

NOTE: 'The Bible contains instruction regarding the character God's children must possess. "Blessed are the pure in heart," it declares, "for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Hebrews 12:14. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:2, 3.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents and Students*, page 429.

'Blessed are the pure in heart, now; not, Blessed will be the pure in heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8. Yes, as did Moses, they shall endure the seeing of Him who is invisible. They have the assurance of the richest blessings, both in this life and in the life that is to come.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents and Students*, page 103.

### **'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?'**

**3. How may we be freed from the guilt of those sins we have committed? 1 John 1:9.**

NOTE: 'The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy. The apostle says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." James 5:16. Confess your sins to God, who only can forgive them, and your faults to one another. If you have given offence to your friend or neighbour, you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty freely to forgive you. Then

you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because the brother you have wounded is the property of God, and in injuring him you sinned against his Creator and Redeemer.' *Steps to Christ*, page 37.

#### **4. Is forgiveness all that we need to inherit eternal life? Romans 6:1-2.**

NOTE: 'None can endure to be with God if they are not constantly conforming their minds and hearts to His will and developing characters after the divine similitude. None can have forgiveness without living the purity of character exemplified in Christ. No man need expect happiness without the holiness of God. They cannot partake of the feast without the garment of Christ's righteousness, woven in the loom of heaven. Privileges and opportunities improved will give every soul a fitness to obey the law of His kingdom.' *Home Missionary*, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1897.

### **'Let us cleanse ourselves'**

#### **5. What 'exceeding great and precious promises does God give to those who wish to become like Jesus? 1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:18, 2 Peter 2:9, Revelation 3:10.**

NOTE: 'Bid the tempted one look not to circumstances, to the weakness of self, or to the power of temptation, but to the power of God's word. All its strength is ours. "Thy word," says the psalmist, "have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." "By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Psalms 119:11; 17:4. Talk courage to the people; lift them up to God in prayer. Many who have been overcome by temptation are humiliated by their failures, and they feel that it is in vain for them to approach unto God; but this thought is of the enemy's suggestion. When they have sinned, and feel that they cannot pray, tell them that it is then the time to pray. Ashamed they may be, and deeply humbled; but as they confess their sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive their sins and cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on the merits of the Saviour. By prayer, by the study of His word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go.' *Ministry of Healing*, pages 181-182.

#### **6. In the light of God's promises, what counsel does Paul give? 2 Corinthians 7:1.**

NOTE: 'The Christian life is constantly an onward march. Jesus sits as a refiner and purifier of His people; and when His image is perfectly reflected in them, they are perfect and holy, and prepared for translation. A great work is required of the Christian. We are exhorted to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Here we see where the great labour rests. There is a constant work for the Christian. Every branch in the parent vine must derive life and strength from that vine, in order to yield fruit.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 340.

#### **7. Who works in co-operation with the Christian to complete the work of salvation from all sin? Philippians 2:12-13.**

NOTE: 'God requires us to bear much fruit. He will not give commands without giving with them power for their performance. He will not do our part of the work, neither does He require that we do His. It is God that worketh in us, but we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Faith must be sustained by works; the doers of the work are justified before God.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 167.

'Man is allotted a part in this great struggle for everlasting life; he must respond to the working of the Holy Spirit. It will require a struggle to break through the powers of darkness, and the Spirit works in him to accomplish this. But man is no passive being, to be saved in indolence. He is called upon to strain every muscle and exercise every faculty in the struggle for immortality; yet it is God that supplies the efficiency. No human being can be saved in indolence.' *Testimonies, volume 8*, page 65

### **'Be ye holy; for I am holy.'**

#### **8. To what kind of lives has God called us? 1 Thessalonians 4:7.**

NOTE: 'We are called to represent to the world the character of God as it was revealed to Moses. In answer to the prayer of Moses, "Show me Thy glory," the Lord promised, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee." "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Exodus 33:18, 19; 34:6, 7. This is the fruit that God desires from His people. In the purity of their characters, in the holiness of their lives, in their mercy and loving-kindness and compassion, they are to demonstrate that the "law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7.' *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 221.

#### **9. What is the measure of the holiness to which God has called us? 1 Peter 1:15-16.**

NOTE: 'A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. Those who are under the instruction of Christ in this world will take every divine attainment with them to the heavenly mansions. And in heaven we are continually to improve. How important, then, is the development of character in this life. The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you. As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 332-333.

### **'Holy and without blemish'**

**10. How in practical detail is this holiness described? Titus 1:8, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, Romans 12:1, Colossians 1:22, 1 Peter 1:15, Ephesians 5:27.**

NOTE: 'Holiness is agreement with God.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 743.

'Holiness is constant agreement with God. Shall we not be that which Christ so greatly desires us to be, Christians in deed and in truth, that the world may see in our lives a revelation of the saving power of truth?' *Southern Watchman*, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1903.

'True holiness is wholeness in the service of God. This is the condition of true Christian living. Christ asks for an unreserved consecration, for undivided service. He demands the heart, the mind, the soul, the strength. Self is not to be cherished. He who lives to himself is not a Christian.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 49.

'No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unforsaken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.' *Desire of Ages*, page 556.

'Holiness is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in the light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in His love.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 51.

**11. How does the Bible describe those who have part in the first resurrection, at the Second Coming of Jesus? Revelation 20:6.**

NOTE: 'We may not be living when Christ shall come in power and great glory, for all are subject to death at any time, but if we are righteous, in harmony with the law of God, we shall respond to the voice that will call the people of God from their graves, and shall come forth to receive immortality. It is only the blessed and holy who will be ready for the first resurrection; for when Christ comes, He will not change the character.' *Signs of the Times*, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1891.

**12. How does the Bible describe those who are alive to see Jesus as He is? 1 John 3:2.**

**13. What important counsel does John give to those who hope to meet Jesus? 1 John 3:3-6.**

NOTE: 'The exhortation of the apostle is, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." It is by engaging in this work, and by exercising living faith in God, that we are to perfect Christian character. The work of cleansing the soul-temple and preparing for Christ's appearing must be done while we are in this world of temptation. Just as Christ finds us in character when He comes, so we shall remain.' *Signs of the Times*, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1887.

## **Lesson 9: 'Go ye therefore and teach'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' Mark 16:15.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies Volume 7*, pages 25-28.

### **Introduction**

'The whole body of believers needs to be vitalised by the Holy Spirit of God. We should study, plan, economise, and set in operation every means possible whereby we may reach and bless suffering and ignorant humanity. The light which God has given to us as a people is not given that we may treasure it among ourselves. We are to act in harmony with the great commission given to every disciple of Christ, to carry to all the world the light of truth.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1909.

### **'Go ye and teach.'**

**1. What task has Christ given to His church? Matthew 28:19-20.**

NOTE: 'The commission reaches those who shall believe on His word through His disciples. And all who are called of God to stand as ambassadors for Him should take the lessons upon practical godliness given them by Christ in His word and teach them to the people.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 401.

**2. How is the accomplishment of this task linked to the end of the world? Matthew 24:14.**

NOTE: 'A crisis is right upon us. We must now by the Holy Spirit's power proclaim the great truths for these last days. It will not be long before everyone will have heard the warning and made his decision. Then shall the end come. It is the very essence of all right faith to do the right thing at the right time. God is the great Master Worker, and by His providence He prepares the way for His work to be accomplished. He provides opportunities, opens up lines of influence and channels of working. If His people are watching the indications of His providence, and stand ready to co-operate with Him, they will see a great work accomplished. Their efforts, rightly directed, will produce a hundredfold greater results than can be accomplished with the same means and facilities in another channel where God is not so manifestly working.' *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 24.

### **'How shall they hear?'**

**3. How does Paul express the need for people to proclaim the Gospel? Romans 10:14.**

NOTE: 'While the angels hold the four winds, we are to work with all our capabilities. We must bear our message without any delay. We must give evidence to the heavenly universe, and to men in this degenerate age, that our religion is a faith and a power of which Christ is the Author and His word the divine oracle. Human souls are hanging in the balance. They will either be subjects for the kingdom of God or slaves to the despotism of Satan. All are to have the privilege of laying hold of the hope set before them in the gospel, and how can they hear without a preacher? The human family is in need of a moral renovation, a preparation of character, that they may stand in God's presence. There are souls ready to perish because of the theoretical errors which are prevailing, and which are calculated to counterwork the gospel message. Who will now fully consecrate themselves to become labourers together with God?' *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 21.

**4. What Bible story illustrates how the willing servant of God can be used to win a soul to Christ? Acts 8:26-39.**

NOTE: 'This Ethiopian represented a large class who need to be taught by such missionaries as Philip, men who will hear the voice of God and go where He sends them. There are many who are reading the Scriptures who cannot understand their true import. All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in. An angel guided Philip to the one who was seeking for light and who was ready to receive the gospel, and today angels will guide the footsteps of those workers who will allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify their tongues and refine and ennoble their hearts. The angel sent to Philip could himself have done the work for the Ethiopian, but this is not God's way of working. It is His plan that men are to work for their fellow men. In the trust given to the first disciples, believers in every age have shared. Everyone who has received the gospel has been given sacred truth to impart to the world.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 109.

**'The word of their testimony'**

**5. How have God's saints of old been able to overcome the assaults of Satan? Revelation 12:11.**

NOTE: 'Awake, ye sleeping virgins, and trim your lamps. With the Bible in your hands, go to your neighbours with the message of present truth. In the spirit of deep repentance confess your past neglect in the assembly of God's people, as they meet to worship God. Then the Lord will pardon your transgressions and forgive your sin. If you feel that you have not the ability nor the knowledge that are needed in order to present the truth to others, read your neglected Bible, and seek for an understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus. Many have not developed a Christlike character in the daily life and conversation. They have not lived for the Lord Jesus and for Him alone, daily gaining a fitness to unite with those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.' *Australasian Union Conference Record*, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1907.

**6. How can the word of our testimony strengthen and encourage fellow-believers? Hebrews 10:25, Malachi 3:16-17.**

NOTE: 'The Lord has shown me that great interest should be taken by Sabbath-keepers to keep up their meetings and make them interesting. There is great necessity of more interest and energy being manifested in this direction. All should have something to say for the Lord, for by so doing they will be blest. A book of remembrance is written of those who do not forsake the assembling of themselves together, but speak often one to another. The remnant are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Some expect to overcome alone by the blood of the Lamb, without making any special effort of their own. I saw that God has been merciful in giving us the power of speech. He has given us a tongue, and we are accountable to Him for its use. We should glorify God with our mouth, speaking in honour of the truth and of His unbounded mercy, and overcome by the word of our testimony through the blood of the Lamb.' *Early Writings*, page 115.

**'Whom shall I send?'**

**7. What call to God's people comes from the throne of God? Isaiah 6:8.**

NOTE: 'When the Lord's voice calls, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" the Divine Spirit puts it into hearts to respond: "Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8. But bear in mind that the live coal from the altar must first touch your lips. Then the words you speak will be wise and holy words. Then you will have wisdom to know what to say and what to leave unsaid. You will not try to reveal your smartness as theologians. You will be careful not to arouse a combative spirit or excite prejudice by introducing controverted points of doctrine. You will find enough to talk about that will not excite opposition, but that will open the heart to desire a deeper knowledge of God's word.' *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 325.

**8. What promises did God make to one who felt his inadequacy to speak for God? Jeremiah 1:6-9.**

NOTE: 'In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess learning or eloquence or worldly wealth. He asks: "Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way? Can I put My words into their lips? Will they represent Me?"' *Testimonies, volume 7*, page 144.

'O, if we would only lay hold of these assurances by living faith in the One who has abundance of comfort and encouragement for us all. Then we would praise the Lord in the morning and at noon and at night. We would have a message of mercy to carry to others. The Lord of heaven wants us to have an advanced experience. Will you study these words? Will you accept them? Will you be sanctified by the truths they teach?' *General Conference Bulletin*, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1909.

**'Let your light so shine'**

**9. Besides the word of our testimony, in what other way is the follower of God to witness? Matthew 5:16.**

NOTE: 'The good works of the children of God are the most effectual preaching that the unbeliever has. He thinks that there must be strong motives that actuate the Christian to deny self, and use his possessions in trying to save his fellow men. It is unlike the spirit of the world. Such fruits testify that the possessors are genuine Christians.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 193.

**10. How does Isaiah describe this work of letting the light shine? Isaiah 58:6-8.**

NOTE: 'Thus in the night of spiritual darkness God's glory is to shine forth through His church in lifting up the bowed down and comforting those that mourn. All around us are heard the wails of a world's sorrow. On every hand are the needy and distressed. It is ours to aid in relieving and softening life's hardships and misery. Practical work will have far more effect than mere sermonising. We are to give food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, and shelter to the homeless. And we are called to do more than this. The wants of the soul, only the love of Christ can satisfy. If Christ is abiding in us, our hearts will be full of divine sympathy. The sealed fountains of earnest, Christlike love will be unsealed. God calls not only for our gifts for the needy, but for our cheerful countenance, our hopeful words, our kindly handclasp. When Christ healed the sick, He laid His hands upon them. So should we come in close touch with those whom we seek to benefit.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 417 – 418.

**'And I saw another angel'**

**11. What special message are God's people called to proclaim in the days just before Christ's coming? Revelation 14:6-12.**

NOTE: 'The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the Commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the Third Angel's Message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 91-92.

**12. What additional message must also be given to warn God's people of their danger? Revelation 18:1-4.**

NOTE: 'There are true Christians in every church who do not know the origin of the Sunday-sabbath, and believe that they are keeping the day which God sanctified and blest. This is true of worshipers even in the Catholic Church; and while this ignorance and integrity remain, God accepts of their sincerity; but when light shall fall upon their pathway, God requires them to come into harmony with His law, and to observe the Sabbath of His appointing. The time has come when the glory of the Lord is to fill the earth, and when the whole earth shall be lightened with His glory. The cry is sounding to the honest in heart to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.'" *Signs of the Times*, November 19<sup>th</sup> 1894.

**Lesson 10: 'Known and read of all men'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Ye are the light of the world.' Matthew 5:14.

STUDY HELP: *Ministry of Healing*, pages 349-355.

**Introduction**

'It is no small matter for a family to stand as representatives of Jesus, keeping God's law in an unbelieving community. We are required to be living epistles known and read of all men. This position involves fearful responsibilities.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 106.

'The effort to make the home what it should be, a symbol of the home in heaven, prepares us for work in a larger sphere. The education received by showing a tender regard for each other enables us to know how to reach hearts that need to be taught the principles of true religion....The truth lived at home, makes itself felt in disinterested labour abroad. He who lives Christianity in the home will be a bright and shining light everywhere.' *Signs of the Times*, Sept 1, 1898

**'Ye shall be my sons and daughters'**

**1. How does God use the family to teach us about our relationship with Him? Ephesians 5:21-31, Matthew 6:9, 2 Corinthians 6:17-18.**

Note: 'He who gave Eve to Adam as a helpmeet, performed His first miracle at a marriage festival. In the festal hall where friends and kindred rejoiced together, Christ began His public ministry. Thus He sanctioned marriage, recognising it as an institution that He Himself had established. He ordained that men and women should be united in holy wedlock, to rear families whose members, crowned with honour, should be recognised as members of the family above. Christ honoured the

marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church. Christ “loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it; ... that it should be holy and without blemish.” “So ought men to love their wives.” Ephesians 5:25-28.’ *Ministry of Healing*, page 356.

## **2. What does Paul teach about the parents and children? Ephesians 6:1-4.**

NOTE: ‘The children look to the father for support and guidance; he needs to have a right conception of life and of the influences and associations that surround his family; above all he should be controlled by the love and fear of God, and by the teaching of His word that he may guide the feet of his children in the right way.... The father should do his part in making home happy.’ *Ministry of Healing*, pages 390 & 392.

‘The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home. The work of parents underlies every other. Society is composed of families, and is what the heads of families make it. Out of the heart are “the issues of life” (Proverbs 4: 23); and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences.’ *Ministry of Healing*, page 349.

## **3. What part did his mother and grandmother play in Timothy’s spiritual development? 2 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 3:15.**

NOTE: ‘Especially does responsibility rest upon the mother. She, by whose lifeblood the child is nourished and its physical frame built up, imparts to it also mental and spiritual influences that tend to the shaping of mind and character. It was Jochebed, the Hebrew mother, who, strong in faith, was “not afraid of the king’s commandment” (Hebrews 11:23), of whom was born Moses, the deliverer of Israel. It was Hannah, the woman of prayer and self-sacrifice and heavenly inspiration, who gave birth to Samuel, the heaven-instructed child, the incorruptible judge, the founder of Israel’s sacred schools. It was Elizabeth, the kinswoman and kindred spirit of Mary of Nazareth, who was the mother of the Saviour’s herald.’ *Ministry of Healing*, page 372.

## **4. How should the divine pattern for our relationships show in our earthly families? Ephesians 4:32 - 5:1 - 2.**

NOTE: “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” Christ Himself became poor for our sake, that we, through His poverty, might come into possession of eternal riches. He has adopted the poor and the suffering as His own peculiar treasure, and has left them to the care of His church. His disciples are to be stewards of His gifts, and to use His bounties in relieving suffering humanity. They are to feed and clothe and shelter those who have need. Parents are to present to their children the example of being God’s almoners, in order that they in turn may become missionaries, may be tender-hearted, pitiful, kind, patient labourers together with God. They are to work as co-partners with Christ to restore, to heal, to save those who are perishing.’ *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1895.

## **Ye are the light of the world**

## **5. What is God’s purpose for the Christian home? Matthew 5:16.**

NOTE: ‘A well-ordered Christian household is a powerful argument in favour of the reality of the Christian religion, an argument that the infidel cannot gainsay. All can see that there is an influence at work in the family that affects the children, and that the God of Abraham is with them. If the homes of professed Christians had a right religious mould, they would exert a mighty influence for good. They would indeed be the “light of the world.”’ *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 144.

## **6. Which young people in the Bible show the missionary power of a godly upbringing? 2 Kings 5:1-5, Daniel 1:1-17.**

NOTE: ‘Missionaries for the Master are best prepared for work abroad in the Christian household, where God is feared, where God is loved, where God is worshipped, where faithfulness has become second nature, where haphazard, careless inattention to duty is not permitted, where quiet communion with God is looked upon as essential to the performance of daily duties.’ *The Adventist Home*, page 35.

## **7. God had important work for Moses, Samuel and John the Baptist. What does the Bible say about the families in which they were brought up? Exodus 2:1-10, 1 Samuel 1, Luke 1:5-6.**

NOTE: God designs that the families of earth shall be a symbol of the family in heaven. Christian homes, established and conducted in accordance with God’s plan, are among His most effective agencies for the formation of Christian character and for the advancement of His work. If parents desire to see a different state of things in their families, let them consecrate themselves wholly to God and co-operate with Him in the work whereby a transformation may take place in their households. When our own homes are what they should be, our children will not be allowed to grow up in idleness and indifference to the claims of God in behalf of the needy all about them. As the Lord’s heritage, they will be qualified to take up the work where they are. A light will shine from such homes which will reveal itself in behalf of the ignorant, leading them to the source of all knowledge. An influence will be exerted that will be a power for God and for His truth.’ *Testimonies Volume 6*, page 430.

## **‘Sing unto God, sing praises unto His name’**

## **8. How does God care for those who do not have an earthly family? Psalm 68:5, Psalm 27:10, Matthew 19:29.**

NOTE: 'If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way; whatever our perplexities, we have a sure Counsellor; whatever our sorrow, bereavement, or loneliness, we have a sympathising Friend. If in our ignorance we make missteps, Christ does not leave us. His voice, clear and distinct, is heard saying, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." John 14:6. "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper." Psalm 72:12.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 173. 'Christians may have the joy of communion with Christ; they may have the light of His love, the perpetual comfort of His presence. Every step in life may bring us closer to Jesus, may give us a deeper experience of His love, and may bring us one step nearer to the blessed home of peace. Then let us not cast away our confidence, but have firm assurance, firmer than ever before. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," and He will help us to the end. 1 Samuel 7:12. Let us look to the monumental pillars, reminders of what the Lord has done to comfort us and to save us from the hand of the destroyer. Let us keep fresh in our memory all the tender mercies that God has shown us, the tears He has wiped away, the pains He has soothed, the anxieties removed, the fears dispelled, the wants supplied, the blessings bestowed, thus strengthening ourselves for all that is before us through the remainder of our pilgrimage.' *Steps to Christ*, page 125.

#### **9. Does God understand the hearts of those who are alone? Psalm 68:5-6 first part, Isaiah 54:5.**

NOTE: 'Our work in this world is to live for others' good, to bless others, to be hospitable; and frequently it may be only at some inconvenience that we can entertain those who really need our care and the benefit of our society and our homes.' *Testimonies*, volume 2, page 645.

'These acts of courtesy God thought of sufficient importance to record in His word; and more than a thousand years later they were referred to by an inspired apostle: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Hebrews 13:2. The privilege granted Abraham and Lot is not denied to us. By showing hospitality to God's children, we too may receive His angels into our dwellings. Even in our day, angels in human form enter the homes of men and are entertained by them. And Christians who live in the light of God's countenance are always accompanied by unseen angels, and these holy beings leave behind them a blessing in our homes.' *Testimonies Volume 6*, page 342.

#### **10. What counsel did Paul give to those who, like himself, were alone? Philippians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 7:32-35.**

NOTE: 'Every saint who comes to God with a true heart, and sends his honest petitions to Him in faith, will have his prayers answered. Your faith must not let go of the promises of God, if you do not see or feel the immediate answer to your prayers. Be not afraid to trust God. 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 His saints that walk uprightly. Man is erring, and although his petitions are sent up from an honest heart, he does not always ask for 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, sometimes immediately; but He gives us the things that are for our best good and His own glory. God gives us blessings; if we could look into His plan, we would clear see that He knows what is best for us and that our prayers are answered. Nothing hurtful is given, but the blessing we need, in the place of something we asked for that would not be good for us, but to our hurt.' *Testimonies*, volume 1, page 120.

### **'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed'**

#### **11. Through whose line are all families of the earth to be blessed? Genesis 12:1-4.**

NOTE: 'God made the promise to Abraham, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." To Abraham was unfolded God's purpose for the redemption of the race. The Sun of righteousness shone upon him, and his darkness was scattered. Christ declared, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.'" *Youth's Instructor*, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1900.

#### **12. What is that blessing, and through whom does it come to us and our families? Acts 3:25-26.**

NOTE: 'The gospel is a wonderful simplifier of life's problems. Its instruction, heeded, would make plain many a perplexity and save us from many an error. It teaches us to estimate things at their true value and to give the most effort to the things of greatest worth, the things that will endure....They should not allow themselves to be diverted from the highest aim. Let them remember that the home on earth is to be a symbol of and a preparation for the home in heaven. Life is a training school, from which parents and children are to be graduated to the higher school in the mansions of God.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 363. 'The gospel is the sanctifying influence in our world. Its influence upon hearts will bring harmony.' *Testimonies*, volume 8, page 77.

## **Lesson 11: 'And knowest not...'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.' Revelation 3:18.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies*, volume 4, pages 87-90.

### **Introduction**



'I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people. I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance; all who truly receive it will obey it and be purified.' *Early Writings*, page 270.

## **'The Faithful and True Witness'**

### **1. Who is the One who addresses the church of the Laodiceans? Revelation 3:14.**

NOTE: 'The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 585.

'The Holy Spirit... comes to the world as Christ's representative. He is not only the faithful and true witness to the Word of God, but He is the searcher of the thoughts and purposes of the heart. He is the source to which we must look for efficiency in the restoration of the moral image of God in man... His transforming influence was to bring even the thoughts into harmony with the will of God, and establish a living connection between earth and heaven.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1908.

### **2. What solemn statement does the faithful and true Witness make to the Laodiceans, and all the churches?**

**Revelation 3:15, first part. (Compare Revelation 2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8.)**

NOTE: "'I know thy works'" (not thy profession), says the True Witness. God is now sifting His people, testing their purposes and their motives. Many will be but as chaff, no wheat, no value in them.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 51.

'It will be found in the day of final settlement that God was acquainted with everyone by name. There is an unseen Witness to every action of the life. "I know thy works," says He that "walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." It is known what opportunities have been slighted, how untiring have been the efforts of the Good Shepherd to search out those who were wandering in crooked ways, and to bring them back to the path of safety and peace.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 435.

## **'Neither cold nor hot'**

### **3. How does the faithful and true Witness describe the spiritual state of the Laodicean church? Revelation 3:15.**

NOTE: 'Satan is willing that you should be Christians in name, for you can suit his purpose better. If you have a form and not true Godliness, he can use you to decoy others into the same self-deceived way. Some poor souls will look to you, instead of looking to the Bible standard, and will come up no higher. They are as good as you, and are satisfied.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 162.

'Were you cold, there would be some hope that you would be converted; but where self-righteousness girds one about, instead of the righteousness of Christ, the deception is so difficult to be seen, and the self-righteousness so hard to be put away, that the case is the most difficult to reach. An unconverted, godless sinner stands in a more favourable condition than such.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 175.

### **4. How does the faithful and true Witness describe His reaction to those who are spiritually lukewarm? Revelation 3:16.**

NOTE: 'The True Witness hates this lukewarmness. He loathes the indifference of this class of persons. Said He: "I would thou wert cold or hot." Like lukewarm water, they are nauseous to His taste. They are neither unconcerned nor selfishly stubborn. They do not engage thoroughly and heartily in the work of God, identifying themselves with its interests; but they hold aloof and are ready to leave their posts when their worldly personal interests demand it. The internal work of grace is wanting in their hearts.' *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 87.

'This record is made for the special benefit of those who are living in these last days. Many who have had great light have not appreciated and improved it, as it was their privilege to do. They have not practised the truth. And because of this the Lord will bring in those who have lived up to all the light they have had. Those who have been privileged with opportunities to understand the truth, and who have not obeyed its principles, will be swayed by Satan's temptations for self-advancement. They will deny the principles of truth in practice and bring reproach upon the cause of God. Christ declares that He will spew these out of His mouth, and leave them to follow their own course of action to distinguish themselves. This course of action does indeed make them prominent as men that are unfaithful householders. The Lord will give His message to those who have walked in accordance with the light they have had, and will recognise them as true and faithful, according to the measurement of God. These men will take the place of those who, having light and knowledge, have walked not in the way of the Lord, but in the imagination of their own unsanctified hearts.' *Spalding-Magan Collection of Unpublished Testimonies*, page 207.

## **'And knowest not...'**

### **5. How does the Laodicean church regard itself? Revelation 3:17, first part.**

NOTE: 'What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right when they are all wrong! The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true condition of

spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake, for it is the True Witness who speaks, and His testimony must be correct. It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, and who believe themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that they are deceived and in need of every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” I was shown that many are flattering themselves that they are good Christians, who have not a ray of light from Jesus. They have not a living experience for themselves in the divine life.’ *Testimonies, volume 3, page 252.*

‘Especially should our ministers beware of indolence and pride, which are apt to grow out of a consciousness that we have the truth and strong arguments which our opponents cannot meet; and while the truths which we handle are mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of the powers of darkness, there is danger of neglecting personal piety, purity of heart, and entire consecration to God. There is danger of their feeling that they are rich and increased with goods, while they lack the essential qualifications of Christians.’ *Testimonies, volume 3, page 210.*

#### **6. How does the faithful and true Witness view the Laodicean church? Revelation 3:17, last part.**

NOTE: ‘I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof is shutting away the light from God’s people. Unbelief is closing their eyes so that they are ignorant of their true condition. The True Witness thus describes their blindness: “And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” Faith in the soon coming of Christ is waning. “My Lord delayeth His coming” is not only said in the heart, but expressed in words and most decidedly in works. Stupidity in this watching time is sealing the senses of God’s people as to the signs of the times. The terrible iniquity which abounds calls for the greatest diligence and for the living testimony, to keep sin out of the church. Faith has been decreasing to a fearful degree, and it is only by exercise that it can increase.’ *Testimonies, volume 3, page 255-256.*

### **‘I counsel thee...’**

#### **7. To restore the Laodicean church, what precious counsel does the faithful and true Witness give? Revelation 3:18.**

NOTE: ‘The True Witness counsels us to buy of Him gold tried in the fire, white raiment, and eyesalve. The gold here recommended as having been tried in the fire is faith and love. It makes the heart rich; for it has been purged until it is pure, and the more it is tested, the more brilliant is its lustre. The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ for a life of willing obedience. The eyesalve is that wisdom and grace which enables us to discern between the evil and the good, and to detect sin under any guise. God has given His church eyes which He requires them to anoint with wisdom, that they may see clearly; but many would put out the eyes of the church if they could; for they would not have their deeds come to the light, lest they should be reproved. The divine eyesalve will impart clearness to the understanding. Christ is the depository of all graces. He says: “Buy of Me.”’ *Testimonies Volume 4, page 88.*

#### **8. In order to buy these precious gifts from the faithful and true Witness, what work are the Laodiceans called upon to engage in? Revelation 3:19.**

NOTE: ‘The Lord has shown me in vision some things concerning the church in its present lukewarm state, which I will relate to you. The church was presented before me in vision. Said the angel to the church: “Jesus speaks to thee, ‘Be zealous and repent.’” This work, I saw, should be taken hold of in earnest. There is something to repent of. Worldly-mindedness, selfishness, and covetousness have been eating out the spirituality and life of God’s people. The danger of God’s people for a few years past has been the love of the world. Out of this have sprung the sins of selfishness and covetousness. The more they get of this world, the more they set their affections on it; and still they reach out for more. Said the angel: “It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” Yet many who profess to believe that we are having the last note of warning to the world, are striving with all their energies to place themselves in a position where it is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye than for them to enter the kingdom. These earthly treasures are blessings when rightly used. Those who have them should realise that they are lent them of God and should cheerfully spend their means to advance His cause. They will not lose their reward here. They will be kindly regarded by the angels of God and will also lay up a treasure in heaven. I saw that Satan watches the peculiar, selfish, covetous temperament of some who profess the truth, and he will tempt them by throwing prosperity in their path, offering them the riches of earth. He knows that if they do not overcome their natural temperament, they will stumble and fall by loving mammon, worshipping their idol. Satan’s object is often accomplished. The strong love of the world overcomes, or swallows up, the love of the truth. The kingdoms of the world are offered them, and they eagerly grasp their treasure and think they are wonderfully prospered. Satan triumphs because his plan has succeeded. They have given up the love of God for the love of the world.’ *Testimonies, volume 1, pages 141-142.*

### **‘Behold I stand at the door’**

#### **9. Where is the faithful and true Witness pictured as standing? Revelation 3:20, first part.**

NOTE: ‘I saw that many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of their heart that they cannot get the door open. Some have difficulties between themselves and their brethren to remove. Others have evil tempers, selfish covetousness, to remove before they can open the door. Others have rolled the world before the door of their heart, which bars the door. All this rubbish must be taken away, and then they can open the door and welcome the Saviour in.’ *Testimonies, volume 1, pages 143.*

‘The True Witness says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.” Revelation 3:20. Every warning, reproof, and entreaty in the word of God or through His messengers is a knock at the door of the heart. It is the voice of Jesus asking for entrance. With every knock unheeded, the disposition to open becomes weaker. The impressions of the Holy Spirit if disregarded today, will

not be as strong tomorrow. The heart becomes less impressible, and lapses into a perilous unconsciousness of the shortness of life, and of the great eternity beyond. Our condemnation in the judgement will not result from the fact that we have been in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for learning what is truth.' *Desire of Ages*, page 490.

#### **10. What exceeding great and precious promise does the faithful and true Witness give to the one who opens the door to Him? Revelation 3:20.**

NOTE: 'Oh, how precious was this promise, as it was shown to me in vision! "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Oh, the love, the wondrous love of God! After all our lukewarmness and sins He says: "Return unto Me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all thy backslidings.'" *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 143.

'So great is the unwillingness of the Lord to leave you, and such is His love toward you, that notwithstanding your life has not been in accordance with His will, and your works and ways have been offensive to Him, the Majesty of heaven condescends to beg the privilege of making you a visit and leaving you His blessing: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." The mansions in glory are His, and the joy of that heavenly abode; yet He humbles Himself to seek an entrance at the door of your heart, that He may bless you with His light and make you to rejoice in His glory. His work is to seek and to save that which is lost and ready to perish. He wishes to redeem as many as He can from sin and death, that He may elevate them to His throne and give them everlasting life.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 224.

'The Saviour... is not repulsed by scorn or turned aside by threatening, but continually seeks the lost ones, saying, "How shall I give thee up?" Hosea 11:8. Although His love is driven back by the stubborn heart, He returns to plead with greater force, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." The winning power of His love compels souls to come in. And to Christ they say, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." Psalm 18:35.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 235.

### **'To him that overcometh...'**

#### **11. What promise is given to the overcomer? Revelation 3:21.**

NOTE: "'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every evil temper, every sin, every temptation, and sit down at last with Him. It is our privilege to have faith and salvation. The power of God has not decreased. His power, I saw, would be just as freely bestowed now as formerly. It is the church of God that have lost their faith to claim, their energy to wrestle, as did Jacob, crying: "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Enduring faith has been dying away. It must be revived in the hearts of God's people. There must be a claiming of the blessing of God. Faith, living faith, always bears upward to God and glory; unbelief, downward to darkness and death.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 144.

#### **12. How can we overcome our sins and weaknesses? Revelation 3:21, 1 Peter 2:21-23.**

NOTE: 'Ample provisions have been made for all who sincerely, earnestly, and thoughtfully set about the work of perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Strength, grace, and glory have been provided through Christ, to be brought by ministering angels to the heirs of salvation. None are so low, so corrupt and vile, that they cannot find in Jesus, who died for them, strength, purity, and righteousness, if they will put away their sins, cease their course of iniquity, and turn with full purpose of heart to the living God. He is waiting to strip them of their garments, stained and polluted by sin, and to put upon them the white, bright robes of righteousness; and He bids them live and not die. In Him they may flourish. Their branches will not wither nor be fruitless. If they abide in Him, they can draw sap and nourishment from Him, be imbued with His Spirit, walk even as He walked, overcome as He overcame, and be exalted to His own right hand.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, pages 453-454.

'We are to seek for the pearl of great price, but not in worldly marts or in worldly ways. The price we are required to pay is not gold or silver, for this belongs to God. Abandon the idea that temporal or spiritual advantages will win for you salvation. God calls for your willing obedience. He asks you to give up your sins. "To him that overcometh," Christ declares, "will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." Revelation 3:21. There are some who seem to be always seeking for the heavenly pearl. But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits. They do not die to self that Christ may live in them. Therefore they do not find the precious pearl. They have not overcome unholy ambition and their love for worldly attractions. They do not take up the cross and follow Christ in the path of self-denial and sacrifice. Almost Christians, yet not fully Christians, they seem near the kingdom of heaven, but they cannot enter there. Almost but not wholly saved, means to be not almost but wholly lost.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 117-118.

## **Lesson 12: 'To make ready a people prepared for the Lord''**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.' Revelation 19:7-8.

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 405-421.

### **Introduction**

'In both the Old and the New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring home His bride to the Father's house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. He says, "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; . . . but thou shalt be called My Delight; . . . for the Lord delighteth in thee." "He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." Isaiah 62:5, 4, margin; Zephaniah 3:17. When the vision of heavenly things was granted to John the apostle, he wrote: "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Revelation 19:6, 7, 9.' *Desire of Ages*, page 151.

## **'Prepare ye the way of the Lord'**

### **1. What work was necessary in preparation for the first advent of Christ? Luke 1:17.**

NOTE: 'John was to reform the children of Israel, and turn them to the Lord. He had the promise that God would work with him. He was "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." John was a representative of the people of God in the last days, to whom God has committed important and solemn truths. The world at large are given to gluttony and the indulgence of base passions. The light of health reform is opened before the people of God at this day, that they may see the necessity of holding their appetites and passions under control of the higher powers of the mind. This is also necessary, that they may have mental strength and clearness to discern the sacred chain of truth, and turn from the bewitching errors and pleasing fables that are flooding the world. Their work is to present before the people the pure doctrine of the Bible. Hence health reform finds its place in the preparatory work for the second appearing of Christ.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1873.

### **2. What work must the church accomplish before Christ can return? Matthew 24:14.**

NOTE: 'The truth will be proclaimed in clear, unmistakable language. As a people we must prepare the way of the Lord under the overruling guidance of the Holy Spirit. The gospel is to be given in its purity. The stream of living water is to deepen and widen in its course. In all fields, nigh and afar off, men will be called from the plough and from the more common commercial business vocations that largely occupy the mind, and will be educated in connection with men of experience. As they learn to labour effectively they will proclaim the truth with power. Through most wonderful workings of divine providence, mountains of difficulty will be removed and cast into the sea. The message that means so much to the dwellers upon the earth will be heard and understood. Men will know what is truth. Onward and still onward the work will advance until the whole earth shall have been warned, and then shall the end come.' *Testimonies*, volume 9, page 96.

## **'Having the everlasting gospel to preach'**

### **3. What message is needed to prepare the way of the Lord? Revelation 14:6-12.**

NOTE: 'The Lord God of heaven will not send upon the world His judgements for disobedience and transgression until He has sent His watchmen to give the warning. He will not close up the period of probation until the message shall be more distinctly proclaimed. The law of God is to be magnified; its claims must be presented in their true, sacred character, that the people may be brought to decide for or against the truth. Yet the work will be cut short in righteousness. The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel.' *Testimonies*, volume 6, page 19.

### **4. What sort of person is needed to prepare the way of the Lord? Luke 1:15-17.**

NOTE: 'John separated himself from friends and from the luxuries of life. The simplicity of his dress, a garment woven of camel's hair, was a standing rebuke to the extravagance and display of the Jewish priests, and of the people generally. His diet, purely vegetable, of locusts and wild honey, was a rebuke to the indulgence of appetite and the gluttony that everywhere prevailed. The prophet Malachi declares: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Here the prophet describes the character of the work. Those who are to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ's first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, and their extravagance in dress and other things. The self-denial, humility, and temperance required of the righteous, whom God especially leads and blesses, is to be presented to the people in contrast to the extravagant, health-destroying habits of those who live in this degenerate age. God has shown that health reform is as closely connected with the third angel's message as the hand is with the body. There is nowhere to be found so great a cause of physical and moral degeneracy as a neglect of this important subject. Those who indulge appetite and passion, and close their eyes to the light for fear they will see sinful indulgences which they are unwilling to forsake, are guilty before God. Whoever turns from the light in one instance hardens his heart to disregard the light upon other matters.' *Testimonies*, volume 3, page 62.

## **'The harvest of the earth is ripe'**

**5. What two harvests will take place when Jesus returns? Revelation 14:14-20.**

NOTE: 'The tares are permitted to grow among the wheat, to have all the advantage of sun and shower; but in the time of harvest ye shall "return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not." Malachi 3:18. Christ Himself will decide who are worthy to dwell with the family of heaven. He will judge every man according to his words and his works. Profession is as nothing in the scale. It is character that decides destiny. The Saviour does not point forward to a time when all the tares become wheat. The wheat and tares grow together until the harvest, the end of the world. Then the tares are bound in bundles to be burned, and the wheat is gathered into the garner of God. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Then "the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire.'" *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 74-75.

**6. How is the ripeness of God's people described? Ephesians 4:13-15.**

NOTE: "'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.'" Galatians 5:22, 23. This fruit can never perish, but will produce after its kind a harvest unto eternal life. "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 68-69.

**7. How is the ripeness of the follower of Satan described? Genesis 6:5-6.**

NOTE: 'I was shown the state of the world, that it is fast filling up its cup of iniquity. Violence and crime of every description are filling our world, and Satan is using every means to make crime and debasing vice popular. The youth who walk the streets are surrounded with handbills and notices of crime and sin, presented in some novel or to be acted at some theatre. Their minds are educated into familiarity with sin. The course pursued by the base and vile is kept before them in the periodicals of the day, and everything which can excite curiosity and arouse the animal passions is brought before them in thrilling and exciting stories. The literature that proceeds from corrupted intellects poisons the minds of thousands in our world. Sin does not appear exceeding sinful. They hear and read so much of debasing crime and vileness that the once tender conscience which would have recoiled with horror becomes so blunted that it can dwell upon the low and vile sayings and actions of men with greedy interest. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.'" *Testimonies, volume 3*, pages 471-472.

**'Ye shall receive power'**

**8. How was the early church empowered to accomplish its task of taking the Gospel to the world? Acts 1:8.**

NOTE: 'On the day of Pentecost the Spirit was given. Christ's witnesses proclaimed the power of the risen Saviour. The light of heaven penetrated the darkened minds of those who had been deceived by the enemies of Christ. They now saw Him exalted to be "a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31. They saw Him encircled with the glory of heaven, with infinite treasures in His hands to bestow upon all who would turn from their rebellion. As the apostles set forth the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, three thousand souls were convicted. They were made to see themselves as they were, sinful and polluted, and Christ as their friend and Redeemer. Christ was lifted up, Christ was glorified, through the power of the Holy Spirit resting upon men. By faith these believers saw Him as the One who had borne humiliation, suffering, and death that they might not perish but have everlasting life. The revelation of Christ by the Spirit brought to them a realising sense of His power and majesty, and they stretched forth their hands to Him by faith, saying, "I believe." Then the glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost bounds of the inhabited world. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Believers were reconverted. Sinners united with Christians in seeking the pearl of great price. The prophecy was fulfilled, The weak shall be "as David," and the house of David "as the angel of the Lord." Zechariah 12:8. Every Christian saw in his brother the divine similitude of benevolence and love. One interest prevailed. One object swallowed up all others. All hearts beat in harmony. The only ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character, and to labour for the enlargement of His kingdom. "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. . . . With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." Acts 4:32, 33. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47. The Spirit of Christ animated the whole congregation; for they had found the pearl of great price. These scenes are to be repeated, and with greater power. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the Former Rain, but the Latter Rain will be more abundant. The Spirit awaits our demand and reception. Christ is again to be revealed in His fullness by the Holy Spirit's power.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 120-121.

**9. What great change had taken place in the hearts of the disciples? Acts 2:1. (Compare Mark 9:34, Luke 22:24.)**

NOTE: 'By the grace of Christ the apostles were made what they were. It was sincere devotion and humble, earnest prayer that brought them into close communion with Him. They sat together with Him in heavenly places. They realised the greatness of their debt to Him. By ear nest, persevering prayer they obtained the endowment of the Holy Spirit, and then they went forth, weighted with the burden of saving souls, filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. And under their labours many souls were brought from darkness to light, and many churches were raised up.' *Testimonies, volume 7*, page 32.

'It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God, that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1897.

### **'The Latter Rain'**

#### **10. What promise is given of a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit's power in the last days? Acts 2:17.**

NOTE: 'The first disciples went forth preaching the Word. They revealed Christ in their lives. And the Lord worked with them, "confirming the word with signs following." These disciples prepared themselves for their work. Before the day of Pentecost they met together, and put away all differences. They were of one accord. They believed Christ's promise that the blessing would be given, and they prayed in faith. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely; they were weighted with the burden for the salvation of souls. The gospel was to be carried to the uttermost parts of the earth, and they claimed the endowment of power that Christ had promised. Then it was that the Holy Spirit was poured out, and thousands were converted in a day. So it may be now. Instead of man's speculations, let the Word of God be preached. Let Christians put away their dissensions, and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them in faith ask for the blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in apostolic days was the "former rain," and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1908.

#### **11. What reaction among some of the Jews at Pentecost is a warning for God's people today? Acts 2:13.**

NOTE: 'Only those who are living up to the light they have, will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognise the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1897.

### **'Them that had gotten the victory'**

#### **12. What work must be done by and for those who will experience the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord? Acts 3:19-20.**

NOTE: 'I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of "refreshing" and the "latter rain" to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father. Before this time the awfully solemn declaration has gone forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." I saw that none could share the "refreshing" unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.' *Early Writings*, page 72.

#### **13. What promise and hope does the church have that this work will be accomplished by the time that Christ returns? 1 John 3:2-6.**

NOTE: 'The exhortation of the apostle is, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." It is by engaging in this work, and by exercising living faith in God, that we are to perfect Christian character. The work of cleansing the soul-temple and preparing for Christ's appearing must be done while we are in this world of temptation. Just as Christ finds us in character when He comes, so we shall remain.' *Historical Sketches*, page 134.

'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 characters, 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. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.' *Testimonies*, volume 2, page 355.

## **Lesson 13: 'Gather the wheat into My barn'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' Revelation 7:13-14.

STUDY HELP: *Last Day Events*, pages 43-62.

## Introduction

'To-day, as in the past, all heaven is watching to see the church develop in the true science of salvation. Christ has bought the church with His blood, and He longs to clothe her with salvation. He has made her the depository of sacred truth, and He wishes her to partake of His glory. But in order that the church may be an educating power in the world, she must co-operate with the church in heaven. Her members must represent Christ. Their hearts must be open to receive every ray of light that God may see fit to impart. As they receive this light, they will be enabled to receive and impart more and more of the rays of the Sun of Righteousness.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1900.

### 'Put on the whole armour of God'

#### 1. How does Paul describe the warfare in which the church is engaged? Ephesians 6:12.

NOTE: 'The church is God's fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armour, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 11.

#### 2. How is the individual Christian to be prepared for this warfare? Ephesians 6:11, 13-18.

NOTE: 'If we overcome our trials, and get victory over the temptations of Satan, then we endure the time of our faith, which is much more precious than gold, and are stronger, and better prepared to meet the next. But if we sink down, and give way to the temptations of Satan, we shall grow weaker, and get no reward for the trial, and shall not be so well prepared to meet the next. In this way we shall grow weaker, and weaker, until we are led captive by Satan at his will. We must have on the whole armour of God, and be ready at any moment, for a conflict with the powers of darkness. When temptations and trials rush in upon us, let us go to God, and agonise with Him in prayer. He will not turn us away empty; but will give us grace and strength to overcome, and to break the power of the enemy. O, that all could see these things in their true light, and endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus. Then would Israel move forward, strong in God, and in the power of His might.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1849.

### 'The seal of the living God'

#### 3. Before the final catastrophe comes on the world, how will God show His recognition of His people? Revelation 7:1-3.

NOTE: 'Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads, it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved, just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come.' *Last Day Events*, pages 219-220.

#### 4. How does Paul describe this shaking? Hebrews 12:26-27.

NOTE: 'The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause. The angel said, "Think ye that any will be compelled to sacrifice? No, no. It must be a freewill offering. It will take all to buy the field." I cried to God to spare His people, some of whom were fainting and dying. Then I saw that the judgements of the Almighty were speedily coming, and I begged of the angel to speak in his language to the people. Said he, "All the thunders and lightnings of Mount Sinai would not move those who will not be moved by the plain truths of the Word of God, neither would an angel's message awake them." *Early Writings*, page 50.

#### 5. What promise do God's faithful people have that none of them will be lost in the shaking? Amos 9:9.

NOTE: 'Jesus and holy angels are bringing up and uniting God's people into one faith, that they may all have one mind and one judgement. And while they are being brought into the unity of the faith, to see eye to eye upon the solemn, important truths for this time, Satan is at work to oppose their advancement. Jesus is at work through His instruments to gather and unite. Satan works through his instruments to scatter and divide. "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." God is now testing and proving His people. Character is being developed. Angels are weighing moral worth, and keeping a faithful record of all the acts of the children of men. Among God's professed people are corrupt hearts; but they will be tested and proved. That God who reads the hearts of everyone, will bring to light hidden things of darkness where they are often least suspected, that stumbling blocks which have hindered the progress of truth may be removed, and God have a clean and holy people to declare His statutes and judgements. The Captain of our salvation leads His people on step by step, purifying and fitting them for translation, and

leaving in the rear those who are disposed to draw off from the body, who are not willing to be led, and are satisfied with their own righteousness.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, pages 332-333.

### **'There shall no evil befall thee'**

#### **6. How is the final crisis described in the Book of Daniel and what precious promise is made to God's people? Daniel 12:1.**

NOTE: 'The "time of trouble, such as never was," is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job" were in the land, "as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Ezekiel 14:20.' *Great Controversy*, page 622.

#### **7. How is that time described in the Book of Revelation? Revelation 16:1-21.**

NOTE: 'When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (Revelation 14:9, 10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgements which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. Says the Revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: "There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image." The sea "became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea." And "the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood." Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: "Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.'" *Great Controversy*, page 627.

#### **8. What precious promises will comfort God's people during that fearful time? Psalm 91:1-16.**

NOTE: 'The time of trouble is just before us; and then stern necessity will require the people of God to deny self, and to eat merely enough to sustain life; but God will prepare us for that time. In that fearful hour our necessity will be God's opportunity to impart His strengthening power, and to sustain His people.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 206.

'The Lord has shown me repeatedly that it is contrary to the Bible to make any provision for our temporal wants in the time of trouble. I saw that if the saints had food laid up by them or in the field in the time of trouble, when sword, famine, and pestilence are in the land, it would be taken from them by violent hands and strangers would reap their fields. Then will be the time for us to trust wholly in God, and He will sustain us. I saw that our bread and water will be sure at that time, and that we shall not lack or suffer hunger; for God is able to spread a table for us in the wilderness. If necessary, He would send ravens to feed us, as He did to feed Elijah, or rain manna from heaven, as He did for the Israelites.' *Early Writings*, page 56.

#### **9. What counsel for our present life will prepare us for that time? Matthew 6:25-34.**

NOTE: 'Much unnecessary care and anxiety is felt in regard to our future, concerning what we shall eat and drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed... Our Saviour would not only have us discern the love of God displayed in the beautiful flowers about us, but He would have us learn from them lessons of simplicity, and of perfect faith and confidence in our Heavenly Father. If God cares to make these inanimate things so beautiful, that will be cut down and perish in a day, how much more careful will He be to supply the needs of His obedient children, whose lives may be as enduring as eternity.' *Pamphlet 69*, page 17.

'The Lord has shown me that some of His children would fear when they see the price of food rising and they would buy food and lay it by for the time of trouble. Then in a time of need, I saw them go to their food and look at it, and it had bred worms and was full of living creatures and not fit for use.' *Maranatha*, page 181.

### **'They which have come out of great tribulation'**

#### **10. What vision was John given of those who will come through this great tribulation? Revelation 7:9-17.**

NOTE: 'As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble, trouble such as has not been since there was a nation, His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 513.

#### **11. When the whole world is united against the people of God, who will stand up for them? Daniel 12:1.**

NOTE: 'In the time of trouble, Satan stirs up the wicked, and they encircle the people of God to destroy them. But he does not know that "pardon" has been written opposite their names in the books of heaven. He does not know that the command has been given, "Take away the filthy garments" from them, clothe them with "change of raiment," and set "a fair mitre" upon their heads. [Zechariah 3:1-5] The promise made to Joshua is made to all the remnant people of God: "If thou wilt walk in My ways [not in your own ways], and if thou wilt keep My charge, then thou shalt also judge My house, and shalt also keep My courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Who are these that stand by? They are the angels of



God. Could our eyes be opened, as were those of the servant of Elisha at Dothan, we should see evil angels all around us, urging their presence upon us, and watching for an opportunity to tempt and overthrow us; we should also see holy angels guarding us, and with their light and power pressing back the evil angels.' *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1908.

### **'So shall we ever be with the Lord'**

#### **12. What precious promises will be fulfilled when Jesus returns? Isaiah 25:8.**

NOTE: 'From garrets, from hovels, from dungeons, from scaffolds, from mountains and deserts, from the caves of the earth and the caverns of the sea, Christ will gather His children to Himself. On earth they have been destitute, afflicted, and tormented. Millions have gone down to the grave loaded with infamy because they refused to yield to the deceptive claims of Satan. By human tribunals the children of God have been adjudged the vilest criminals. But the day is near when "God is judge Himself." (Psalm 50:6). Then the decisions of earth shall be reversed. "The rebuke of His people shall He take away." Isaiah 25: 8. White robes will be given to every one of them. (Revelation 6:11.) And "they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord." Isaiah 62:12. Whatever crosses they have been called to bear, whatever losses they have sustained, whatever persecution they have suffered, even to the loss of their temporal life, the children of God are amply recompensed. "They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads." Revelation 22:4.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 179-180.

#### **13. What will be the cry of God's people when they see Jesus coming? Isaiah 25:9.**

NOTE: 'With pity and compassion, with tender yearning and love, the Lord is looking upon His tempted and tried people. For a time the oppressors will be permitted to triumph over those who keep God's holy commandments. All are given the same opportunity that was granted to the first great rebel to reveal the spirit that moves them to action. It is God's purpose that all shall be tested and tried, that He may see whether they are loyal or disloyal to the laws that govern the kingdom of heaven. To the last, God permits Satan to reveal himself as a liar, an accuser, and a murderer. Thus the final triumph of His people is made more marked, more glorious, more full and complete. The words of the prophet will then be fulfilled, "The day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come." The song of the Lord's people will then be: "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: He sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion; and He is high above the people.'" *Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1900.