

Sabbath School Lessons 2nd Quarter, 2005.

‘This is life eternal’

General Introduction

In bearing a light on a dark night, to direct the footsteps of others, frequently the light bearer becomes careless, permitting his own body to come between the light and those whom he is guiding. Thus those who follow lose the benefit of the light. This is the case with some who hold up the light of truth to others. They reveal their own selfish interests, their lack of consecration, their errors, their defects of character, all of which affect their actions and make their dark bodies conspicuous but benefit no one by the truth which they professedly believe.

The light of truth should be allowed to shine so that men, by seeing the righteous course of those who know the truth, will acknowledge that there is power in the truth, because it has accomplished so great a work for those who have received it. They will fall in love with the principles of holiness that shine forth in the lives of the representatives of truth, and they will accept the truth and glorify God by consecrating themselves to Him to become lights to the world in their turn.

As Abraham and other holy men of old were a light in their generation, so must God’s people be a light in the world. The beams of heaven’s attractive loveliness are to shine forth from us, showing the only good and right way, and ever showing the superiority of God’s law above every human enactment. Bible religion is not to be hidden away in the dark. It delights to be examined. Every additional ray of light that shines upon our pathway is in God’s plan a fresh element of strength, an added power by which to draw the world to God.

Christ declares, “Ye are the light of the world.” Christ is the source of light and power for His church. If the heart is pure and right, if godliness is dwelling there, it will be revealed in the life. It will pervade the conversation and all the relations of man to his fellow man. He will be a doer of the words of Christ. His every action will shine with a holy lustre. He will be invested with power, for the divine presence is with him.

In Heavenly Places, page 315.

In these lessons, you will be studying those things which the Apostle John says are essential for the Christian to know and be assured of. In preparation for studying these lessons, it is recommended that you read the First Epistle of John, noting as you do so how John repeatedly speaks of those things the Christian should know.

Lesson 1: March 27-April 2 ‘Ye have known the Father’ 1 John 2:13

MEMORY VERSE: ‘I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him [that is] from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.’ 1 John 2:13.

STUDY HELP: *Faith and Works*, page 115.

LESSON AIM: To consider what it means to know God and why this is so important.

Introduction

The mightiest human being, whatever may be his claim, is not infinite. He cannot understand infinity. Christ plainly stated, “No man knoweth the Father but the Son.” A teacher [Epictetus] was once endeavouring to present the exaltation of God, when a voice was heard saying, “We cannot as yet understand who He is.” The teacher nobly replied, “Were I able fully to set forth God, I should either be a god myself, or God Himself would cease to be God.” The mightiest created intellect cannot comprehend God; words from the most eloquent tongue fail to describe Him; in His presence silence is eloquence.’ *Bible Echo*, May 1, 1899

‘That they might know Thee’

1. What knowledge identifies the true Christian? 1 John 2:13.

NOTE: ‘These words of approval and instruction are addressed to every young man who has put on the whole armour of righteousness. Young and strong, they may do giant strokes for God, if they will make God their only trust. The older ones who are addressed as “fathers,” have a decided work to do in holding up the standard: but they feel the pressure of the burdens of life, and it is fitting that the younger ones should be encouraged to qualify themselves for duty by obtaining an experience in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, so that as the standard falls from the fathers, the strong young men may grasp it, and bear it aloft. “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”’ *Youth’s Instructor*, October 25, 1894.

2. How did Jesus stress the importance of knowing God? John 17:3.

NOTE: ‘In His prayer to the Father, Christ gave to the world a lesson which should be graven on mind and soul. “This is life eternal,” He said, “that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” John 17:3. This is true education. It imparts power. The experimental knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man

into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe. This is the knowledge which is obtained by searching the word of God. And this treasure may be found by every soul who will give all to obtain it.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 114.

3. What is the only way for us to know the Father? Matthew 11:27.

NOTE: 'Christ is the touchstone of all hearts. He is the revealer of the Father and of the Father's love. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."' *Testimonies to South Africa*, page 59.

'An heart to know Me'

4. What is the clearest way to knowing God? John 14:7-9.

NOTE: 'To see Christ as He is, is one of the greatest blessings that can ever come to fallen humanity; and to know Him is to know the Father also. But how few today know the precious Saviour as He is! How few know Him and the Father! Many acknowledge Jesus as the world's Redeemer, but they know Him not as a personal Saviour; this is essential, the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." The knowledge of God is eternal life, and this knowledge is received only through Christ.' *Bible Echo*, November 12, 1894.

5. What promise does God make to those who return to Him? Jeremiah 24:7.

NOTE: 'The value of man is estimated in heaven according to the capacity of the heart to know God. This knowledge is the spring from which flows all power. God created man that every faculty might be the faculty of the divine mind; and He is ever seeking to bring the human mind into association with the divine. He offers us the privilege of co-operation with Christ in revealing His grace to the world, that we may receive increased knowledge of heavenly things. Looking unto Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity. *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 354-355.

'They did not like to retain God in their knowledge'

6. What shows that a person does not know God? Titus 1:16.

NOTE: 'The Redeemer of the world declares that there are greater sins than that for which Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Those who hear the gospel invitation calling sinners to repentance, and heed it not, are more guilty before God than were the dwellers in the vale of Siddim. And still greater sin is theirs who profess to know God and to keep His commandments, yet who deny Christ in their character and their daily life. In the light of the Saviour's warning, the fate of Sodom is a solemn admonition to all who are trifling with Heaven-sent light and privileges.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 53.

7. What will be the result for those who turn from knowing God? Romans 1:28-31.

NOTE: 'What a picture here of the sinner's state! Notwithstanding that we are surrounded with the blessings of His love, there is nothing that the sinner desires so much as separation from God. Like the ungrateful son, he claims the good things of God as his by right. He takes them as a matter of course, and makes no return of gratitude, renders no service of love. He will not wait for the future to receive his inheritance. His thoughts are centred on the present. He will enter into his kingdom now. Present enjoyment, selfish indulgence, is his aim. As Cain went out from the presence of the Lord to seek his home; as the prodigal wandered into the "far country," so do sinners seek happiness in forgetfulness of God. They do not like to retain God in their knowledge. Romans 1:28.' *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, December 1, 1895.

'The people that do know their God'

8. What sustained God's people in the long ages of persecution when many were seduced into apostasy? Daniel 11:32.

NOTE: 'In the kingdom of heaven. He wills that we should be one with Him. What a thought! How willing it makes me to make any and every sacrifice for His sake! He is my love, my righteousness, my comfort, my crown of rejoicing, and He wills that we should behold His glory. If we follow Him in His humiliation, in His self-sacrifice, in trial and test, we shall behold Him as He is, we shall see His glory; and if we see His glory, we shall be made partakers of it. He says: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me." O how little we know of Him! He says the world has not known the Father. God forbid that any of those who carry the truth should be destitute of a knowledge of God! O may Christ be able to say of us, "But these have known Thee!"' *Review & Herald*, March 11, 1890.

9. How did Jesus describe the behaviour of those 'believers' who do not know the Father? John 16:2-3.

NOTE: 'Jesus was treated as the worst of malefactors, and the servant is not greater than his Lord. Said the Saviour, "These things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them." In these last days, when iniquity shall abound, and the love of

many shall wax cold, God will have a people to glorify His name, and stand as reprovers of unrighteousness. They are to be a “peculiar people,” who will be true to the law of God, when the world shall seek to make void its precepts; and when the converting power of God works through His servants, the hosts of darkness will array themselves in bitter and determined opposition. Satan will work with “all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.” He will employ every device of deception to seduce the souls of men and if “it were possible,” he “shall deceive the very elect.” *Review & Herald*, May 8, 1888.

‘He that loveth not’

10. What is an evidence that a person knows God? 1 John 4:7-8. Compare 1 John 3:15.

NOTE: ‘There is among us a very limited amount of real, unselfish love. The Lord says: “Everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.” 1 John 4:7, 8, 12. It is not pleasing to God to see man looking only upon his own things, closing his eyes to the interests of others.’ *Testimonies, volume 8*, page 137.

11. What prayer did Paul pray for the Ephesian believers? Ephesians 3:19.

NOTE: ‘To comprehend and enjoy God is the highest exercise of the powers of man. This may be attained only when our affections are sanctified and ennobled by the grace of Christ: “No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.” In Christ was “God manifested in the flesh, reconciling the world unto Himself.” In Christ was the brightness of His Father’s glory, the express image of His person. Said our Saviour, “He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.” In Christ is the life of the soul. In the outgoings of our hearts to Him, in our earnest, affectionate yearnings for His excellence, in our eager searching into His glory, we find life. In communion with Him we eat the bread of life.’ *Review & Herald*, May 30, 1882.

‘They shall all know me’

12. What is an essential feature of those living under the new covenant? Jeremiah 31:33-34. Compare Hebrews 8:11.

NOTE: ‘If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience, the service and allegiance of love, is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 5:3; 2:4. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience.’ *Steps to Christ*, page 60.

13. What is needed if God’s people are to receive the latter rain and be prepared for Christ’s coming? Hosea 6:3.

NOTE: ‘Many of you have a twilight perception of Christ’s excellence, and your souls thrill with joy. You long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Saviour’s love. You are unsatisfied. But do not despair. Give to Jesus the heart’s best and holiest affections. Treasure every ray of light. Cherish every desire of the soul after God. Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communings. You have seen by the first rays of the early dawn of His glory. As you follow on to know the Lord, you will know that His going forth is prepared as the morning. “The path of the righteous is as the light of dawn, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Having repented of our sins, confessed them, and found pardon, we are to continue to learn of Christ, until we come into the full noontide of a perfect gospel faith.’ *Christian Service*, page 238.

Lesson 2: April 3-9

‘We know that it is the last time’ 1 John 2:18

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.’ 1 John 2:18.

STUDY HELP: *Maranatha*, page 64.

LESSON AIM: To consider how Christians may know that this is the last time.

Introduction

‘These deceivers will come, and, while claiming to be doing a special work for God, while professing to have advanced piety, to be sanctified, to see visions, and to have dreams, they will be doing the work of the enemy, and be found breaking the commandments of God. We should be on our guard, and bring these pretenders to the test; “to the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Shall we take heed to the solemn warnings of Christ, of Paul, and of John upon this point, and not be deceived by the subtle devices of the enemy, for Christ has said that the signs and wonders wrought by these deceivers will be so great that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.’ *Signs of the Times*, July 4, 1895.

‘And shall deceive many’

1. Against what did Jesus warn His people in the last days? Matthew 24:24. See also verses 4-5, 11.

NOTE: ‘In these days of peril we are not to accept everything that men bring to us as truth. As professed teachers from God come to us declaring that they have a message from God, it is proper to inquire carefully, How do we know that this is truth? Jesus has told us that “false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many” (Matthew 24:11). But we need not be deceived; for the Word of God gives us a test whereby we may know what is truth. The prophet says, “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). From this statement it is evident that it becomes us to be diligent Bible students, that we may know what is according to the law and the testimony. We are safe in no other course of action.’ *Selected Messages, volume 2*, page 99.

2. What test did Jesus give to distinguish between false prophets and true? Matthew 7:15-20.

NOTE: ‘The preacher who bears the sacred truth for these last days must... by his life of practical godliness, plainly mark the distinction existing between the false and the true shepherd. The Good Shepherd came to seek and to save that which was lost. He has manifested in His works His love for His sheep. All the shepherds who work under the Chief Shepherd will possess His characteristics; they will be meek and lowly of heart. Childlike faith brings rest to the soul and also works by love and is ever interested for others. If the Spirit of Christ dwells in them, they will be Christlike and do the works of Christ. Many who profess to be the ministers of Christ have mistaken their master. They claim to be serving Christ and are not aware that it is Satan’s banner under which they are rallying. They may be worldly wise and eager for strife and vainglory, making a show of doing a great work; but God has no use for them. The motives which prompt to action give character to the work. Although men may not discern the deficiency, God marks it.’ *Testimonies, volume 4*, page 377.

3. What test was given by the prophet Isaiah to distinguish those inspired by evil spirits from true prophets? Isaiah 8:20.

NOTE: ‘In these days of delusion, every one who is established in the truth will have to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Every variety of error will be brought out in the mysterious working of Satan, which would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, and turn them from the truth. There will be false dreams and false visions, which have some truth, but lead away from the original faith. The Lord has given men a rule by which to detect them: “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” If they belittle the law of God, if they pay no heed to His will as revealed in the testimonies of His Spirit, they are deceivers. They are controlled by impulse and impressions which they believe to be from the Holy Spirit and consider more reliable than the Inspired Word. They claim that every thought and feeling is an impression of the Spirit; and when they are reasoned with out of the Scriptures, they declare that they have something more reliable. But while they think that they are led by the Spirit of God, they are in reality following an imagination wrought upon by Satan.’ *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 7*, page 952.

‘Try the spirits’

4. What particular teaching will be given by false prophets? 1 John 4:1-3.

NOTE: So that Christ might be the Intercessor between God and man, it was essential that He should be both fully God, and fully human. Throughout the history of the Christian Church, there have been those who deny one or other of these vital truths. Groups like the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Christadelphians and others deny the full deity of Christ. But far more common are those groups and churches which deny His full humanity. Perhaps the commonest manifestation of this teaching is the idea that Jesus did not inherit through Mary the humanity of those He came to save, but was a new creation with a nature identical to Adam at his creation. This denial of Christ’s humanity is characteristic of the spirit which inspires antichrist.

‘Adam was tempted by the enemy, and he fell. It was not indwelling sin which caused him to yield; for God made him pure and upright, in His own image. He was as faultless as the angels before the throne. There were in him no corrupt principles, no tendencies to evil. But when Christ came to meet the temptations of Satan, He bore “the likeness of sinful flesh.” In the wilderness, weakened physically by a fast of forty days, He met the adversary. His dignity was questioned, His authority disputed, His allegiance to His Father assailed by the fallen foe... Christ lived a human life that He might be man’s example in all things. He endured temptation even as every human being must endure. He believed God as we must believe. He learned obedience even as we are required to learn obedience. And He overcame as we must overcome. His path lay through manifold temptations; therefore He knows how to succour those who are tempted.’ *Signs of the Times*, October 17, 1900.

5. How completely did Jesus take upon Himself the humanity of those He came to save? Hebrews 2:17-18. Compare Romans 8:3-4.

NOTE: ‘We marvel at the Saviour’s sacrifice in exchanging the throne of heaven for the manger, and the companionship of adoring angels for the beasts of the stall. Human pride and self-sufficiency stand rebuked in His presence. Yet this was but the beginning of His wonderful condescension. It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 48.

‘According to the flesh’

6. How did Paul emphasise Christ’s human ancestry? Romans 1:3.

NOTE: ‘The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, “even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.” It is the great and profound mystery of godliness. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Christ took upon Himself human nature, a nature inferior to His heavenly nature. Nothing so shows the wonderful condescension of God as this. He “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” John presents this wonderful subject with such simplicity that all may grasp the ideas set forth, and be enlightened. Christ did not make-believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. “As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.” He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the Man Christ Jesus.’ *Lift Him Up*, page 74.

7. How did Paul reveal the spiritual growth of Jesus in His earthly life? Hebrews 5:8-9.

NOTE: ‘It was not only on the cross that Christ gave Himself for humanity, not only in the wilderness of temptation and in Gethsemane that He overcame in our behalf. Every day’s experience was an outpouring of His life; every day he learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And because the life of Jesus was a life of perfect trust His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering. He met and resisted all the temptations that man must meet because in his humanity he relied upon divine power. The life of Christ reveals what every youth may accomplish through His grace. As the enemy worked to overcome the Saviour, so he works against God’s children today. There will come to you, as there came to Christ times of special difficulty and need. But in every trial and difficulty know that Christ has passed this way before you. And He who came forth from the most severe test without one stain of sin, stands ready to strengthen all who struggle with Him against the powers of evil. He understands every difficulty. He waits to hear and answer prayer.’ *Columbia Union Visitor*, October 2, 1912.

‘Believe it not’

8. What other false teaching will be common in the last days? Matthew 24:23, 26.

NOTE: Perhaps the most commonly accepted belief about the Second Coming among Christians today is the Rapture, formerly known as ‘the Secret Rapture.’ This teaching, that Christ will return secretly to snatch His church out of the world, arose in the early 19th century from a study of the writings of Jesuits Francisco Ribera and Manuel de Lacunza. The departure of the church would leave the world open to the influence of an evil individual called Antichrist who would dominate the world during the seven years that are said to elapse between the Rapture and the Glorious Appearing. Individuals and groups endorsing these teachings include: Cardinal Newman, John Nelson Darby, founder of the Exclusive Brethren, the Moody Bible Institute, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield of the Scofield Bible, the Dallas Theological Seminary, Hal Lindsay, writer of *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, writers of the best-selling *Left Behind* novels, and Henry Morris, co-author of *The Genesis Flood* and leading figure in the Creation Science movement.

9. How did the Apostle Paul describe the return of Christ for His people? 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

NOTE: In this verse Paul speaks of the shout from the voice of the Archangel when ‘the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven. No one acting in secret would shout! But this shout is accompanied by the sound of a trumpet. Trumpets were traditionally regarded as loud instruments and were used to arouse people, to warn and to relay commands in the tumult of battle. A secret return would not employ a trumpet. Far from describing a secret and silent event, Paul depicts what will perhaps be the noisiest event in human history.

10. How did Jesus describe His return? Matthew 24:27, 30.

NOTE: ‘Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures, and who have received the love of the truth, will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. The Saviour has warned His people, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming. “There shall arise false christs. . . . Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matthew 24:24-27. This coming, there is no possibility of counterfeiting. It will be universally known, witnessed by the whole world.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 346.

‘Having a form of godliness’

11. What developments in the churches show that we are in the last days? 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

NOTE: ‘They do not know God. They have not studied His character; they have not held communion with Him; therefore they do not know how to trust, how to look and live. Their service to God degenerates into a form. “They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as My people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.” Ezekiel 33:31. The apostle Paul points out that this will be the special characteristic of those who live just before Christ’s second coming. He says, “In the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves; . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” 2 Timothy 3:1-5.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 411.

12. What did Jesus foretell that such ‘Christians’ will do? John 16:2-3. Compare Revelation 13:15.

NOTE: 'As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbath-keepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.' *Maranatha*, page 196.

'Be ye also ready'

13. In view of the nearness of Christ's coming, what question does Peter ask? 2 Peter 3:11.

NOTE: 'It is essential that all shall know what atmosphere surrounds their own souls, whether they are in co-partnership with the enemy of righteousness, and unconsciously doing his work, or whether they are yoked up with Christ, doing His work. Satan would be pleased to have anyone and everyone become his allies in the work of weakening the confidence of brother in brother, and sowing discord among those who profess to believe the truth. Satan can accomplish his purpose most successfully through professed friends of Christ who are not walking and working in Christ's lines. This is the day of the Lord's preparation. We have no time now to talk unbelief or to do the devil's work. Let everyone beware of unsettling the faith of others by sowing seeds of envy, jealousy, disunion; for God hears the words, and He judges, not by assertions which are yea and nay, but by the fruit of one's course of action.' *Maranatha*, page 63.

14. How does Peter answer his own question? 2 Peter 3:14.

NOTE: 'To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion, a familiar friend. They have lived in close, constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 358.

Lesson 3: April 10-16

'Ye know the truth' 1 John 2:21

MEMORY VERSE: 'I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.' 1 John 2:21.

STUDY HELP: *Early Writings*, pages 118-121.

LESSON AIM: To consider what is truth and what is the responsibility of those who know the truth.

Introduction

'Those who study the word of God with hearts open to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit will not remain in darkness as to the meaning of the word. "If any man willeth to do His will," Christ said, "he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself." John 7:17, R.V. All who come to Christ for a clearer knowledge of the truth will receive it. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 35.

'What is truth?'

1. What has God given to mankind to enable us to know what is truth? Psalm 119:142.

NOTE: 'The Lord is full of loving-kindness, mercy, and truth. His law is holy, just, and good, and must be obeyed by parents and children. The rules which should regulate the lives of parents and children flow from a heart of infinite love, and God's rich blessings will rest upon those parents who administer His law in their homes, and upon the children who obey this law. The combined influence of mercy and justice is to be felt. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Households under this discipline will walk in the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.' *Child Guidance*, page 261.

2. How may we find and know truth most clearly? John 14:6. Compare Ephesians 4:21.

NOTE: 'No one can search the Scriptures in the Spirit of Christ without being rewarded. When a man is willing to be instructed as a little child, when he submits wholly to Christ, he will find the truth in His Word. If men would be obedient, they would understand the plan of God's government. The heavenly world would open its treasures of grace and glory for exploration. Human beings would be altogether different from what they are now; for by exploring the mines of truth, men would be ennobled. The mystery of redemption, the incarnation of Christ, His atoning sacrifice, would not be, as they are now, vague in our minds. They would be, not only better understood, but altogether more highly appreciated.' *My Life Today*, page 108.

'Hereby know we that we are of the truth'

3. What is the evidence that a person is of the truth? 1 John 3:18-19.

NOTE: "Let us not love in word," the apostle writes, "but in deed and in truth." The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. It is the atmosphere of this love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savour of life unto life and enables God to bless his work. Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another, this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us." In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 551.

4. Who are the ones who will receive eternal life? Psalm 15:1-2. (Read the whole psalm.)

NOTE: 'The apostle, seeing the inclination to abuse the gift of speech, gives direction concerning its use. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth," he says, "but that which is good to the use of edifying." The word "corrupt" means here any word that would make an impression detrimental to holy principles and undefiled religion, any communication that would eclipse the view of Christ, and blot from the mind true sympathy and love. It includes impure hints, which, unless instantly resisted, lead to great sin. Upon everyone is laid the duty of barring the way against corrupt communications. It is God's purpose that the glory of Christ shall appear in His children. In all His teaching Christ presented pure, unadulterated principles. He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Constantly there flowed from His lips holy, ennobling truths. He spoke as never man spoke, with a pathos that touched the heart. The truth never languished on His lips. With fearlessness He exposed the hypocrisy of priest and ruler, Pharisee and Sadducee. The great responsibility bound up in the use of the gift of speech is plainly made known in the Word of God. "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:37), Christ declared.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 175.

'The truth shall make you free'

5. What is one result of knowing the truth? John 8:32.

NOTE: 'Arise in your God-given dignity, living the truth in its purity. Christ is ready to pardon you, to take away your sins and make you free. He is ready to purify your heart and give you the sanctification of His Spirit. As you commit yourself to His service, He will be at your right hand to help you. Day by day you will be strengthened and ennobled. Looking to the Saviour for help, you will be a conqueror, yes, more than a conqueror, over the temptations that beset you. You will become more and more like Christ. The angels of heaven will rejoice to see you standing on the Lord's side, in righteousness and true holiness.' *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 490.

6. What else will the truth do for those who believe the truth? John 17:19. Compare 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

NOTE: 'John and Judas are representatives of those who profess to be Christ's followers. Both these disciples had the same opportunities to study and follow the divine Pattern. Both were closely associated with Jesus and were privileged to listen to His teaching. Each possessed serious defects of character; and each had access to the divine grace that transforms character. But while one in humility was learning of Jesus, the other revealed that he was not a doer of the word, but a hearer only. One, daily dying to self and overcoming sin, was sanctified through the truth; the other, resisting the transforming power of grace and indulging selfish desires, was brought into bondage to Satan. Such transformation of character as is seen in the life of John is ever the result of communion with Christ. There may be marked defects in the character of an individual, yet when he becomes a true disciple of Christ, the power of divine grace transforms and sanctifies him. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed from glory to glory, until he is like Him whom he adores.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 558-559.

'Them that do not obey the truth'

7. What results from rejection of truth? Hebrews 10:26.

NOTE: 'God works by the manifestation of His Spirit to reprove and convict the sinner; and if the Spirit's work is finally rejected, there is no more that God can do for the soul. The last resource of divine mercy has been employed. The transgressor has cut himself off from God, and sin has no remedy to cure itself. There is no reserved power by which God can work to convict and convert the sinner. "Let him alone" (Hosea 4:17) is the divine command. Then "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Hebrews 10:26, 27.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 405.

8. How does Paul describe the fate of those who choose to disobey the truth? Romans 2:8-9.

NOTE: 'It is a fearful thing to have great light and blessing, to have many opportunities and privileges, and yet make no saving use of them. Those who do not make a saving use of their opportunities, will be condemned by the privileges God has granted to them; but those who walk in the light will have increased light. Those who have had the light of truth, and yet have failed to walk in the light, are under the same sentence of condemnation as were Chorazin and Bethsaida. Shall not these warnings be heeded? Shall not these admonitions have weight with us? In the near future it will be seen just who have been walking humbly with God, and who have been obeying His orders. Those who have been walking in the sparks of their own kindling will lie down in sorrow. It will be seen that they have made a terrible mistake. O let us awake! Light is now shining; let the windows of the mind and heart be open to welcome the heaven-sent rays. Shall Jesus say of those who profess to obey the truth, and yet who fail to walk in its light, "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear,

and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them"? [Matthew 13:14, 15.] *Christian Education*, page 140.

9. What does Paul say of those who knew the truth but did not love it? 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

NOTE: 'Men cannot with impunity reject the warning which God in mercy sends them. A message was sent from heaven to the world in Noah's day, and their salvation depended upon the manner in which they treated that message. Because they rejected the warning, the Spirit of God was withdrawn from the sinful race, and they perished in the waters of the Flood. In the time of Abraham, mercy ceased to plead with the guilty inhabitants of Sodom, and all but Lot with his wife and two daughters were consumed by the fire sent down from heaven. So in the days of Christ. The Son of God declared to the unbelieving Jews of that generation: "Your house is left unto you desolate." Matthew 23:38. Looking down to the last days, the same Infinite Power declares, concerning those who "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved": "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12. As they reject the teachings of His word, God withdraws His Spirit and leaves them to the deceptions which they love.' *Great Controversy*, page 431.

'Worship Him that made heaven and earth'

10. What evidence will there be to identify one who does not have the truth in him? 1 John 2:4.

NOTE: 'There are those who profess holiness, who declare that they are wholly the Lord's, who claim a right to the promises of God, while refusing to render obedience to His commandments. These transgressors of the law claim everything that is promised to the children of God; but this is presumption on their part, for John tells us that true love for God will be revealed in obedience to all His commandments. It is not enough to believe the theory of truth, to make a profession of faith in Christ, to believe that Jesus is no impostor, and that the religion of the Bible is no cunningly devised fable. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments," John wrote, "is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him." 1 John 2:4, 5; 3:24. John did not teach that salvation was to be earned by obedience; but that obedience was the fruit of faith and love.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 562.

11. What other evidences reveal a lack of truth in the life? 1 John 1:6 & 8.

NOTE: 'We are authorised to hold in the same estimation as did the beloved disciple those who claim to abide in Christ, to be sanctified, while living in transgression of God's law. He met with just such a class as we have to meet. He said, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." Here the apostle speaks in plain terms, as he deemed the subject demanded. The epistles of John breathe a spirit of love. But when he comes in contact with that class who break the law of God and yet claim that they are living without sin, he does not hesitate to warn them of their fearful deception. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us" (1 John 1:6-10).' *The Sanctified Life*. page 68.

'I will walk in Thy truth'

12. What should be the Christian's response to the truth? Consider the following verses: Titus 1:1, 3 John 1:8, Ephesians 4:15, 1 Peter 1:22, Psalm 86:11.

NOTE: 'Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion. There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time. Not a few are dissatisfied with their present condition and are longing for clearer light. They look in vain for the image of Christ in the churches with which they are connected. As these bodies depart further and further from the truth, and ally themselves more closely with the world, the difference between the two classes will widen, and it will finally result in separation. The time will come when those who love God supremely can no longer remain in connection with such as are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Revelation 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of Revelation 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work.' *Great Controversy*, page 390.

13. Who are the ones who will respond to the voice of Jesus? John 18:37.

NOTE: 'As a flower turns to the sun that its bright rays may aid in perfecting its beauty and symmetry, so should Christ's followers turn to the Sun of Righteousness, that heaven's light may shine upon them, perfecting their characters, and giving them a deep and abiding experience in the things of God. It is beyond our power to conceive the blessings that are brought within our reach through Christ, if we will but unite our human effort with divine grace.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 26.

Lesson 4: April 17-23

‘Hereby know we the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error’ 1 John 4:6

MEMORY VERSE: ‘We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.’ 1 John 4:6.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 18.

LESSON AIM: To see how our response to truth reveals our character

Introduction

‘Jesus said, “I am come in My Father’s name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” The Jews rejected the divine Son of God; but they were ready to accept many an impostor who came in his own name, making empty boasts of his power and authority. And so it is in our day. Men turn away their ears from hearing the truth and are turned unto fables.’ *Review & Herald*, May 29, 1888.

‘They shall turn away their ears’

1. How did Paul describe the attitude of many religious people in the last days? 2 Timothy 4:3-4.

NOTE: ‘By the pride of human wisdom, by contempt for the influence of the Holy Spirit, and by disrelish for the truths of God’s word, many who profess to be Christians, and who feel competent to teach others, will be led to turn away from the requirements of God. Paul declared to Timothy, “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” The apostle does not here refer to the openly irreligious, but to the professing Christians who make inclination their guide, and thus become enslaved by self. Such are willing to listen to those doctrines only that do not rebuke their sins or condemn their pleasure-loving course. They are offended by the plain words of the faithful servants of Christ and choose teachers who praise and flatter them. And among professing ministers there are those who preach the opinions of men instead of the word of God. Unfaithful to their trust, they lead astray those who look to them for spiritual guidance.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 504.

2. What is the result of rejecting the truth? Titus 1:14-16.

NOTE: ‘With some, the knowledge of their true state seems to be hidden from them. They see the truth, but perceive not its importance, or its claims. They hear the truth, but do not fully understand it, because they do not conform their lives to it, and therefore are not sanctified through obeying it. And yet they rest as unconcerned, and well satisfied, as though the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, as tokens of God’s favour, went before them. They profess to know God, but in works deny Him. They reckon themselves as His chosen, peculiar people, yet His presence and power to save to the uttermost are seldom manifested among them. How great is the darkness of such! Yet they know it not. The light shines, but they do not comprehend it. No stronger delusion can deceive the human mind, than that which makes them believe that they are right, and that God accepts their works, when they are sinning against Him. They mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof. They suppose that they are rich, and have need of nothing, when they are poor, wretched, blind, and naked, and need all things.’ *Spiritual Gifts, volume 4B*, page 148.

‘Willingly ignorant’

3. What is one fable that has been accepted today by people who reject the truth? 2 Peter 3:5.

NOTE: The opening chapter of the Bible, with its account of how the Word of God made the heavens and the earth in six days, has been rejected by the majority of Christians. Instead they have accepted, on the flimsiest of evidence, all manner of ‘just-so’ stories as to how the universe began and how life began on earth. Today some of the strongest advocates of Darwinian evolution, or its variants, are Christian ministers. But how can people come to trust a book when those who are supposed to believe in it dismiss its opening pages as mere mythology?

‘The warnings of the word of God regarding the perils surrounding the Christian church belong to us today. As in the days of the apostles, men tried by tradition and philosophy to destroy faith in the Scriptures, so today, by the pleasing sentiments of higher criticism, evolution, spiritualism, theosophy, and pantheism, the enemy of righteousness is seeking to lead souls into forbidden paths. To many the Bible is as a lamp without oil, because they have turned their minds into channels of speculative belief that bring misunderstanding and confusion. The work of higher criticism, in dissecting, conjecturing, reconstructing, is destroying faith in the Bible as a divine revelation. It is robbing God’s word of power to control, uplift, and inspire human lives. By spiritualism, multitudes are taught to believe that desire is the highest law, that license is liberty, and that man is accountable only to himself.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 474.

4. What is the reason for rejecting the truth of creation? 2 Peter 3:5. See also Romans 1:19-20.

NOTE: ‘Man will be left without excuse. God has given sufficient evidence upon which to base faith if he wish to believe. In the last days the earth will be almost destitute of true faith. Upon the merest pretence, the Word of God will be considered unreliable, while human reasoning will be received, though it be in opposition to plain Scripture facts. Men will endeavour to explain from natural causes the work of creation, which God has never revealed. But human science cannot search out the

secrets of the God of heaven, and explain the stupendous works of creation, which were a miracle of Almighty power, any sooner than it can show how God came into existence.' *Lift Him Up*, page 59.

'When they shall say unto you'

5. What other fable will deceive those who refuse to accept the truth? Isaiah 8:19.

NOTE: 'If men had been willing to receive the truth so plainly stated in the Scriptures concerning the nature of man and the state of the dead, they would see in the claims and manifestations of spiritualism the working of Satan with power and signs and lying wonders. But rather than yield the liberty so agreeable to the carnal heart, and renounce the sins which they love, multitudes close their eyes to the light and walk straight on, regardless of warnings, while Satan weaves his snares about them, and they become his prey. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," therefore "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thessalonians 2:10, 11.' *Great Controversy*, page 559.

6. What is the only sure way of distinguishing truth from error? Isaiah 8:20.

NOTE: 'Our watchword is to be, 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' We have a Bible full of the most precious truth. It contains the alpha and the omega of knowledge. The Scriptures, given by inspiration of God, are 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' Take the Bible as your study book.' *Christian Experience and Teachings*, page 249.

'The love of the truth'

7. What will preserve God's people from being deceived? 2 Thessalonians 2:10-11.

NOTE: 'Those who are unwilling to accept the plain, cutting truths of the Bible are continually seeking for pleasing fables that will quiet the conscience. The less spiritual, self-denying, and humiliating the doctrines presented, the greater the favour with which they are received. These persons degrade the intellectual powers to serve their carnal desires. Too wise in their own conceit to search the Scriptures with contrition of soul and earnest prayer for divine guidance, they have no shield from delusion. Satan is ready to supply the heart's desire, and he palms off his deceptions in the place of truth. It was thus that the papacy gained its power over the minds of men; and by rejection of the truth because it involves a cross, Protestants are following the same path. All who neglect the word of God to study convenience and policy, that they may not be at variance with the world, will be left to receive damnable heresy for religious truth. Every conceivable form of error will be accepted by those who wilfully reject the truth. He who looks with horror upon one deception will readily receive another. The apostle Paul, speaking of a class who "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," declares: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12. With such a warning before us it behoves us to be on our guard as to what doctrines we receive.' *Great Controversy*, page 523.

8. How did Jesus describe those who rejected the truth? John 8:32, 40, 44-45.

NOTE: 'The fact that, although they could find no sin in Christ, the Jews would not receive Him proved that they themselves had no connection with God. They did not recognise His voice in the message of His Son. They thought themselves passing judgment on Christ; but in rejecting Him they were pronouncing sentence upon themselves. "He that is of God," said Jesus, "heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." The lesson is true for all time. Many a man who delights to quibble, to criticise, seeking for something to question in the word of God, thinks that he is thereby giving evidence of independence of thought, and mental acuteness. He supposes that he is sitting in judgment on the Bible, when in truth he is judging himself. He makes it manifest that he is incapable of appreciating truths that originate in heaven, and that compass eternity.' *Desire of Ages*, page 468.

'In spirit and in truth'

9. How does Jesus describe the essence of true worship? John 4:23-24.

NOTE: The Jews and the Samaritans emphasised the importance of holy places in worship. The same is true today. For most religions, including Christendom, religion is about performing religious acts in a holy place. Jesus indicated that the time for such worship was already passing at the time He was speaking. For Jesus true worship is an individual spiritual response to God, a matter of faith and love, not ritual and liturgy.

'The religion that comes from God is the only religion that can lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will lead to watchfulness. It will purify the heart and renew the mind and give us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship.' *Counsels on Health*, page 129.

10. What sort of worship will be imposed by those who have turned from the truth? Revelation 13:15-17.

NOTE: 'Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 7*, page 976.

‘Sanctify them through Thy truth’

11. What will be the effect of the love of the truth upon character? John 17: 17 & 19.

NOTE: ‘The truth of heavenly origin never degrades the receiver, never leads him to the least approach to undue familiarity; on the contrary, it sanctifies the believer, refines his taste, elevates and ennobles him, and brings him into a close connection with Jesus. It leads him to regard the apostle Paul’s injunction to abstain from even the appearance of evil, lest his good should be evil spoken of.’ *Evangelism*, page 680.

‘I warn you to beware of these side issues, whose tendency is to divert the mind from the truth. Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth.’ *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 46.

12. How did Jesus show that truth is active and practical? John 3:21. Compare 1 John 1:6. See also, in contrast, Romans 2:8.

NOTE: ‘He that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God, while many who have a form of godliness and not the power, may be content to speak the truth in a spirit of contention, engaging in controversy, talking long and loud in a bitter spirit. Such reflect no light, while the servant of God who has kindled his taper from the divine altar and is obeying the truth is a living, walking, working representative of the power of the truth upon the heart. He is a living epistle known and read of all men. Such a life is the light of the world; of such Jesus is not ashamed to call them brethren. He will say of them as of Nathanael “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.”’ *Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1880.

Lesson 5: April 24-30

‘Ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins’ 1 John 3:5

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.’ 1 John 3:5.

STUDY HELP: *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 562-567.

LESSON AIM: To study what the Bible means by taking away our sins.

Introduction

‘The Son of God was given that we might be renewed, refined, elevated, ennobled, that God might see His image restored in the heart of man. But the Lord cannot take away our sin unless we shall co-operate with Him in the work. The inquiry of each should be, “Am I cleansed from sin? Do I hate sin, and love righteousness? Am I prepared to make any and every sacrifice for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord?”’ *Review & Herald*, August 31, 1897.

‘He shall save His people from their sins’

1. How did the angel of the Lord explain the significance of the name ‘Jesus’? Matthew 1:21.

NOTE: ‘Christ invites all to come to Him, but when they come, they are to lay aside their sins. All their vices and follies, all their pride and worldliness, are to be laid at [the foot of] His cross. This He requires because He loves them, and desires to save them, not in their sins but from their sins. He who accepts the truth longs for transformation, and the light comes to him in bright rays.’ *The Upward Look*, page 169.

2. How complete may this salvation be? Hebrews 7:25.

NOTE: ‘The Saviour took upon Himself the infirmities of humanity, and lived a sinless life, that men might have no fear that because of the weakness of human nature they could not overcome. “The prince of this world cometh,” said Jesus, “and hath nothing in me.” John 14:30. There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan’s sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ’s humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. We need not retain one sinful propensity. As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character, and we are made a living power for good. Ever learning of the divine Teacher, daily partaking of His nature, we co-operate with God in overcoming Satan’s temptations.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 23.

3. What degree of purity is this salvation to accomplish? 1 John 3:3.

NOTE: ‘What does it mean to purify himself? It means to look upon the Lord’s great moral standard of righteousness, the holy law of God, and see that he is a sinner in the light of that law. “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sin; and in Him is no sin.” It is through faith in Jesus Christ that the truth is accepted in the heart and the human agent is purified and cleansed. Jesus 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.” Is it possible to be healed, while knowingly committing sin? No; it is genuine faith that says, I know that I have committed sin, but that Jesus has pardoned my sin; and hereafter I will resist temptation in and through His might. “Every man

that hath this hope in him [abiding in him] purifieth himself, even as He is pure." He has an abiding principle in the soul, that enables him to overcome temptation. "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not." God has power to keep the soul who is in Christ, when that soul is under temptation. "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." That is, every one who is a true believer is sanctified through the truth, in life and character. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth [not **profeseth** to do] righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; . . . because he is born of God. In this children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." Now mark where the distinction is made: "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither is he that loveth not his brother." "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." *Youth's Instructor*, February 15, 1894.

'Who is a God like unto Thee?'

4. What has God promised to do about the sins that we have committed? Micah 7:18-19.

NOTE: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:34. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:7. "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jeremiah 50:20. What assurance here, of God's willingness to receive the repenting sinner! Have you, reader, chosen your own way? Have you wandered far from God? Have you sought to feast upon the fruits of transgression, only to find them turn to ashes upon your lips? And now, your substance spent, your life-plans thwarted, and your hopes dead, do you sit alone and desolate? Now that voice which has long been speaking to your heart but to which you would not listen comes to you distinct and clear, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest; because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction." Micah 2:10. Return to your Father's house. He invites you, saying, "Return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee." Isaiah 44:22.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 204-205.

5. What does God ask of us, if He is to take away the sins we have committed? Psalm 32:5.

NOTE: 'When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrongdoer does not discern the defects of his character nor realise the enormity of the evil he has committed; and unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere and in earnest. To every acknowledgment of his guilt he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that if it had not been for certain circumstances he would not have done this or that, for which he is reproved. After Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was how to excuse their sin and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord inquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God and partly upon his companion: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The woman put the blame upon the serpent, saying, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Genesis 3: 12, 13. Why did You make the serpent? Why did You suffer him to come into Eden? These were the questions implied in her excuse for her sin, thus charging God with the responsibility of their fall. The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit and will not be acceptable to God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy. Like the poor publican, not lifting up so much as his eyes unto heaven, he will cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and those who do acknowledge their guilt will be justified, for Jesus will plead His blood in behalf of the repentant soul. The examples in God's word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin or attempt at self-justification. Paul did not seek to shield himself; he paints his sin in its darkest hue, not attempting to lessen his guilt.' *Steps to Christ*, page 40.

'Of sin, and of righteousness and of judgement'

6. How does the Holy Spirit work to convict our hearts? John 16:7-8.

NOTE: 'It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements. To the repentant sinner, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, the Holy Spirit reveals the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you," Christ said. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 16:14; 14:26. The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 52.

7. What is the response of the convicted heart? Psalm 51:1-4.

NOTE: 'When the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God, the conscience will be quickened, and the sinner will discern something of the depth and sacredness of God's holy law, the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth. The "Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," illumines the secret chambers of the soul, and the hidden things of darkness are made manifest. John 1:9. Conviction takes hold upon the mind and heart. The sinner has a sense of the righteousness of Jehovah and feels the terror of appearing, in his own guilt and uncleanness, before the Searcher of hearts. He sees the love of God, the beauty of holiness, the joy of purity; he longs to be cleansed and to be restored to communion with Heaven. The prayer of David after his fall, illustrates the nature of true sorrow for sin. His repentance was sincere and deep. There was no effort to palliate his guilt; no desire to escape the judgment threatened, inspired his prayer. David saw the enormity of his transgression; he saw the defilement of his soul; he loathed his sin. It was not for pardon only that he prayed,

but for purity of heart. He longed for the joy of holiness, to be restored to harmony and communion with God.' *Steps to Christ*, page 24.

'God is faithful'

8. What promises does the Lord make to ensure that we need not fall in times of temptation? 1 Corinthians 10:13.

NOTE: 'God has not left us to battle with evil in our own finite strength. Whatever may be our inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong, we can overcome through the power that He is ready to impart.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 254.

'Although the promises of God are not to be rashly claimed by us when we recklessly rush into danger, violating the laws of nature, and disregarding prudence, and the judgment with which God has endowed us, we should not lose courage when temptations come upon us. If we do not knowingly place ourselves in the way of temptation, it is our privilege to claim the promise of the inspired word: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'" *Historical Sketches*, page 134.

9. What part must we play in order to be overcomers in times of temptation? James 4:7.

NOTE: 'Will man take hold of divine power, and with determination and perseverance resist Satan, as Christ has given him example in His conflict with the foe in the wilderness of temptation? God cannot save man against his will from the power of Satan's artifices. Man must work with his human power, aided by the divine power of Christ, to resist and to conquer at any cost to himself. In short, man must overcome as Christ overcame. And then, through the victory that it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ. This could not be the case if Christ alone did all the overcoming. Man must do his part; he must be victor on his own account, through the strength and grace that Christ gives him. Man must be a co-worker with Christ in the labour of overcoming.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 254.

'It is written'

10. What was the secret of the Saviour's victory over the tempter? Matthew 4:4, 7, 10.

NOTE: 'How this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. By what means did He overcome in the conflict with Satan? By the Word of God. Only by the Word could He resist temptation. "It is written," He said. And unto us are given "exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." Every promise in God's Word is ours. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the Word. All its strength is yours. Grasp His promises as leaves from the tree of life: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. As you come to Him, believe that He accepts you, because He has promised. You can never perish while you do this, never.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 23.

11. What are some of these exceeding great and precious promises? Jude v.24, 2 Peter 2:9, Isaiah 30:21, Revelation 3:10.

NOTE: 'Even Christ during His life on earth sought His Father daily for fresh supplies of needed grace; and from this communion with God He went forth to strengthen and bless others. Behold the Son of God bowed in prayer to His Father! Though He is the Son of God, He strengthens His faith by prayer, and by communion with heaven gathers to Himself power to resist evil and to minister to the needs of men. As the Elder Brother of our race He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith, faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work, will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against sin.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 56.

'That your sins may be blotted out'

12. What promise are we given that our sins will be finally blotted out? Acts 3:19.

NOTE: 'At the time appointed for the judgment, the close of the 2300 days, in 1844, began the work of investigation and blotting out of sins. All who have ever taken upon themselves the name of Christ must pass its searching scrutiny. Both the living and the dead are to be judged "out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Revelation 20:12. Said the Judge: "All will be justified by their faith and judged by their works." Sins that have not been repented of and forsaken will not be pardoned, and blotted out of the books of record, but will stand to witness against the sinner in the day of God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 211.

13. With whom will this work of judgement begin? 1 Peter 4:17-18.

NOTE: 'The work of the investigative judgment and the blotting out of sins is to be accomplished before the second advent of the Lord. Since the dead are to be judged out of the things written in the books, it is impossible that the sins of men should be blotted out until after the judgment at which their cases are to be investigated. But the apostle Peter distinctly states that the sins of believers will be blotted out "when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ." Acts 3:19, 20. When the investigative judgment closes, Christ will come, and His reward will be with Him to give to every man as his work shall be.' *Great Controversy*, page 485.

Lesson 6: May 1-7

‘We know we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘We know we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.’ 1 John 3:14.

STUDY HELP: *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 520.

LESSON AIM: To study what is the evidence of true conversion.

Introduction

‘One of the strongest evidences of true conversion is love to God and man. Those who accept Jesus as their Redeemer have a deep, sincere love for others of like precious faith. Thus it was with the believers at Thessalonica. As touching brotherly love, the apostle [Paul] wrote, ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 262.

‘The message that ye heard from the beginning’

1. What did John describe as one of the foundations of the Christian message? 1 John 3:11.

NOTE: The marginal reading for ‘message’ is commandment.

‘There is need of far more childlike sympathy. Addressing His disciples as little children, Christ said to them, A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this manifestation of love shall all men know that ye are My disciples. This love God now demands His disciples to show for one another. He is greatly dishonoured because His professed followers are drawing in selfish lines, closing their hearts to the softening, subduing influence of Christ’s Spirit, as if to show love for one another were a species of weakness. Instead of exerting the pure, holy, uplifting influence that dwelt in Christ, many are manifesting Satan’s attributes.’ *Review & Herald*, March 27, 1900.

2. What distinguishes the children of God from the children of the devil? 1 John 3:10.

NOTE: ‘It is not the opposition of the world that most endangers the church of Christ. It is the evil cherished in the hearts of believers that works their most grievous disaster and most surely retards the progress of God’s cause. There is no surer way of weakening spirituality than by cherishing envy, suspicion, faultfinding, and evil surmising. On the other hand, the strongest witness that God has sent His Son into the world is the existence of harmony and union among men of varied dispositions who form His church. This witness it is the privilege of the followers of Christ to bear.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 549.

‘We know we have passed from death to life’

3. What is evidence of a true conversion? 1 John 4:7.

NOTE: Jesus ‘prays for their unity. The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, then easy to be entreated by the invitation of the Holy Spirit, which Christ’s true disciples shall receive in large measure, because they are assimilated to His image, partakers of the divine nature. But shall not this prayer be answered by those who claim to believe the truth? Those who are truly joined to the Lord are controlled by one Spirit. They are stamped with the same image and superscription, and they give evidence that they are influenced by the same power, because they are joined to the Lord by the infinite Sacrifice made by Christ, that they might be knit together through the sanctification of the truth, in the bonds of love, perfect, heaven-born love. They have exchanged the heart of selfishness and sin for the heart that God gives. They are partakers of the divine nature. They may differ in speech and attitude, but they are guided by the same Spirit. No vainglory, no independent I comes in to take possession. The quarrelsome spirit ceases, and the world is given evidence of the power of true conversion.’ *Manuscript Releases*, volume 8, page 292.

4. How does John explain the fruitage of true conversion? 1 John 3:16.

NOTE: ‘A spirit of careless indifference toward our brethren has been coming into our churches, and the religion of many has become cold, selfish, loveless Pharisaism. The True Counsellor has spoken words of the utmost importance to all our souls, Thou hast left thy first love. What a loss is this! Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works. O, how many have failed to grow up into Christ, their living head! Instead of growing up into Christ, they have grown away from Christ, and have nourished the elements of character that have been like those of Satan. These characteristics of evil excluded Satan from the royal courts above, and they will exclude you from the family of God, except thou repent. Your heart must be softened and made susceptible to the influence of the Spirit of God, that you may grow up into a spiritual temple in Christ. The saints on earth must love as Christ loved, or they will not be saints in heaven.’ *Review & Herald*, February 10, 1891.

‘This is His commandment’

5. How did John explain the importance of love for our brethren? 1 John 4:21.

NOTE: 'God's law plainly reveals to us the duty of man to his fellow man. All who neglect their fellow creatures, the very least of those whom Christ calls His brethren, are recorded in the books of heaven as weighed in the balances and found wanting. In disregarding His special commandment, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; in passing by the suffering, the needy, and the wounded, they have left the side of Christ, their example, and taken the side of the enemy of God... By their failure to appreciate their brethren here, they plainly reveal the fact that they could not appreciate God, His Son, or the saints in the kingdom of heaven.' *Pastoral Ministry*, page 140.

6. From whom did this commandment come? 1 John 3:23. Compare John 13:34.

NOTE: 'Christ abiding in the soul will not quarrel with Christ in another soul. We must learn to bear with the peculiarities of those around us. If our will is under the control of Christ's will, how can we be at variance with our brethren? If we are at variance, we may know that it is because self needs to be crucified. He whom Christ makes free is free indeed. We are not complete in Christ unless we love one another as Christ has loved us. When we do this, as Christ has given us commandment, we shall give evidence that we are complete in Him.' *This Day With God*, page 262.

'In deed and in truth'

7. How does John describe the kind of love that is to be manifested among Christians? 1 John 3:18.

NOTE: 'This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. We love Him, because He first loved us. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 551.

8. What practical example does John give to explain this kind of love? 1 John 3:17.

NOTE: 'The Lord has made us His almoners. He places in our hands His gifts, in order that we shall divide with those who are needy, and it is this practical giving that will be to us a sure panacea for all selfishness. By thus expressing love to those who need help, you will cause the hearts of the needy to give thanksgiving unto God because He has bestowed the grace of benevolence upon the brethren, and has caused them to relieve the necessities of the needy. It is through the exercise of this practical love that the churches draw nearer together in Christian unity. Through the love of the brethren, love to God is increased, because He has not forgotten those who were in distress, and thus thank offerings ascend to God for His care.' *Counsels on Stewardship*, page 343.

'He is a liar'

9. What does a lack of love for any of our brethren reveal about us? 1 John 4:20.

NOTE: 'When the children of God manifest mercy, kindness, and love toward all men, they also are witnessing to the character of the statutes of heaven. They are bearing testimony to the fact that the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Psalm 19:7. And whoever fails to manifest this love is breaking the law which he professes to revere. For the spirit we manifest toward our brethren declares what is our spirit toward God.' *Desire of Ages*, page 505.

10. What does John say about the spiritual state of the person who does not love one of his brethren? 1 John 3:14.

NOTE: 'Read the whole of the third chapter of Revelation, and seek to understand the work to be done. Those whom Christ warns have some excellent qualifications; but these are neutralised by self-love, and self-deception, self-justification for gross neglect to help their brethren in the service of God by encouraging words and deeds. There is a dead fly in the ointment. They are being weighed by One who never makes a mistake. He tells the result of actions that show that the love of Christ is not an abiding principle in the soul. The Holy Spirit has come with convicting power to God's people; but though some stir has been made, the work of true conversion has not been perfected. Self has not yet been crucified; and until it is, hardness of heart, lack of love for one another, will be seen. You will hold to your own opinion, you will not bend from your self-exaltation to study the necessities that you should relieve. Men's hearts become like flint when they seek to grasp all for themselves, refusing to relieve the necessities of those who are doing a severe and trying work. God calls upon you to put away your faculty for seeing the mistakes of others. Turn your attention to your own defects. Your self-righteousness is nauseating to the Lord Jesus.' *Review & Herald*, March 27, 1900.

'God in him'

11. What does John say is evidence that Christ lives in the heart? 1 John 4:12 & 16.

NOTE: 'Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within, when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance. Connected with Christ, we are connected with our fellow men by the golden links of the chain of love. Then the pity and compassion of Christ will be manifest in our life. We shall not wait to have the needy and unfortunate brought to us. We shall not need to be entreated to feel for the woes of others. It will be as natural for us to minister to the needy and suffering as it was for Christ to go about doing good.' *Maranatha*, page 101.

12. What is the motive for loving our brothers and sisters? 1 John 4:11.

NOTE: '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, discourteous and loveless... Unless we practise Christ's ways, and receive His Spirit, we are none of His. He desires us to reveal His love in word and action. All that we do should flow from a deep, abiding principle of love, a principle that is after the similitude of Christ, who is love and light and peace. But how little, how very little, of Christ's character is revealed! The spirit of self-denial is becoming a rare thing. Yet there is love in our churches. There are those who love God supremely and their neighbours as themselves. Their prayers and their alms come up before God as a memorial. The Lord does not lose sight of them. He is watching those who are walking in the light as fast as they receive it. They are the objects of His special care.' *Review & Herald*, April 3, 1900.

Lesson 7: May 8-14

'We know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.' 1 John 3:24.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies*, volume 8, pages 19-23.

LESSON AIM: What it means to have the Spirit of God abiding in us.

Introduction

'A true knowledge of the Bible can be gained only through the aid of that Spirit by whom the word was given. And in order to gain this knowledge we must live by it. All that God's word commands, we are to obey. All that it promises, we may claim. The life which it enjoins is the life that, through its power, we are to live. Only as the Bible is thus held can it be studied effectively.' *Education*, page 189.

'The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him.'

1. To whom is the Holy Spirit given? Acts 5:32.

NOTE: 'Those who have put on Christ will relate their experience, tracing step by step the leadings of the Holy Spirit, their hungering and thirsting for the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, the results of their searching of the Scriptures, their prayers, their soul agony, and the words of Christ to them, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." It is unnatural for any to keep these things secret, and those who are filled with the love of Christ will not do so. In proportion as the Lord has made them the depositaries of sacred truth will be their desire that others shall receive the same blessing. And as they make known the rich treasures of God's grace, more and still more of the grace of Christ will be imparted to them. They will have the heart of a little child in its simplicity and unreserved obedience. Their souls will pant after holiness, and more and more of the treasures of truth and grace will be revealed to them to be given to the world.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 125.

2. How does the Bible emphasise the importance of obedience to God? Hebrews 5:8-9.

NOTE: 'If our souls are saved at last, we must look to Him who has given His rich and abundant promises to be our strength and our salvation. All His approaches to our hearts, all His blessed agencies within, are for our renovation. Thus He would uplift us, and restore in us the moral image of God. The Holy Spirit is promised to illuminate, purify, elevate, and transform all who believe, into the likeness of Christ. He finds in us the spirit of the world, selfishness, pride, and rebellion against God. The Lord Jesus would detach us from the world, and recall us to be His children, and as His children, to obedience, to be doers of His word and will. This is His purpose.' *Gospel Herald*, May 14, 1902.

'So is everyone that is born of the Spirit'

3. What distinction did Jesus make concerning the lives of those who are born of the Spirit from those who are not? John 3:6.

NOTE: 'By nature the heart is evil, and "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Job 14:4. No human invention can find a remedy for the sinning soul. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Romans 8:7; Matthew 15:19. The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.' *Desire of Ages*, page 172.

4. How does Jesus describe the experience of being born of the Spirit? John 3:7-8

NOTE: 'The wind is heard among the branches of the trees, rustling the leaves and flowers; yet it is invisible, and no man knows whence it comes or whither it goes. So with the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart. It can no more be explained than

can the movements of the wind. A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place, or to trace all the circumstances in the process of conversion; but this does not prove him to be unconverted. By an agency as unseen as the wind, Christ is constantly working upon the heart. Little by little, perhaps unconsciously to the receiver, impressions are made that tend to draw the soul to Christ. These may be received through meditating upon Him, through reading the Scriptures, or through hearing the word from the living preacher. Suddenly, as the Spirit comes with more direct appeal, the soul gladly surrenders itself to Jesus. By many this is called sudden conversion; but it is the result of long wooing by the Spirit of God, a patient, protracted process. While the wind is itself invisible, it produces effects that are seen and felt. So the work of the Spirit upon the soul will reveal itself in every act of him who has felt its saving power. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven. No one sees the hand that lifts the burden, or beholds the light descend from the courts above. The blessing comes when by faith the soul surrenders itself to God. Then that power which no human eye can see creates a new being in the image of God.' *Desire of Ages*, pages 172-173.

'The fruit of the Spirit'

5. What evidence will be seen in the lives of those who are filled with the Holy Spirit? Galatians 5:22-23.

NOTE: 'Nothing but divine power can regenerate the human heart and imbue souls with the love of Christ, which will ever manifest itself with love for those for whom He died. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. When a man is converted to God, a new moral taste is supplied, a new motive power is given, and he loves the things that God loves. Love, joy, peace, and inexpressible gratitude will pervade the soul, and the language of him who is blessed will be, "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (Psalm 18:35). But those who are waiting to behold a magical change in their characters without determined effort on their part to overcome sin will be disappointed. We have no reason to fear while looking to Jesus, no reason to doubt but that He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto Him; but we may constantly fear lest our old nature will again obtain the supremacy, that the enemy shall devise some snare whereby we shall again become his captives. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. We are to grow daily in spiritual loveliness. We shall fail often in our efforts to copy the divine pattern. We shall often have to bow down to weep at the feet of Jesus, because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be discouraged; we are to pray more fervently, believe more fully, and try again with more steadfastness to grow into the likeness of our Lord. As we distrust our own power, we shall trust the power of our Redeemer, and render praise to God, who is the health of our countenance, and our God. By beholding we are to become changed; and as we meditate upon the perfections of the divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of His purity. It is by faith in the Son of God that transformation takes place in the character, and the child of wrath becomes the child of God. *God's Amazing Grace*, page 302.

6. How did Jesus explain the importance of this fruit in distinguishing between those who follow God and those who do not? Matthew 7:16-20.

NOTE: 'Fanaticism, false excitement, false talking in tongues, and noisy exercises have been considered gifts which God has placed in the church. Some have been deceived here. The fruits of all this have not been good. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Fanaticism and noise have been considered special evidences of faith. Some are not satisfied with a meeting unless they have a powerful and happy time. They work for this and get up an excitement of feeling. But the influence of such meetings is not beneficial. When the happy flight of feeling is gone, they sink lower than before the meeting because their happiness did not come from the right source. The most profitable meetings for spiritual advancement are those which are characterised with solemnity and deep searching of heart, each seeking to know himself and, earnestly and in deep humility, seeking to learn of Christ.' *Last Day Events*, page 159.

'All the true followers of Christ bear fruit to His glory. Their lives testify that a good work has been wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and their fruit is unto holiness. Their lives are elevated and pure. Right actions are the unmistakable fruit of true godliness, and those who bear no fruit of this kind reveal that they have no experience in the things of God. They are not in the Vine. Said Jesus, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." John 15:4, 5.' *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 329.

'He gave gifts unto men'

7. What practical results of the Holy Spirit's presence will be seen in the church? 1 Corinthians 12:7-11.

NOTE: 'It is the absence of the Spirit that makes the gospel ministry so powerless. Learning, talent, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but, without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them channels for the outflowing of the highest influence in the universe. Why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit, since this is the means by which we are to receive power? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to us than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the baptism of the Spirit every worker should be pleading with God. Companies should be gathered together to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should men pray that God will baptise His missionaries with the Holy Spirit.' *Testimonies*, volume 8, pages 21-22.

8. Why does the Holy Spirit bring gifts to the people of God? Ephesians 4:12-15.

NOTE: 'The object of spiritual gifts is to maintain the living work of God in the church. They enable the Spirit of God to speak in the correction of wrongs, and in the exposure of iniquity. They are the means whereby God teaches His people when they are in danger of taking wrong steps. They are the means by which the Spirit of God sheds light upon church difficulties, when otherwise their adjustment would be impossible. They also constitute the means whereby God preserves His people from confusion by pointing out errors, by correcting false interpretations of the Scriptures, and causing light to shine out upon that which is in danger of being wrongly understood, and therefore of being the cause of evil and division to the people of God. In short, their work is to unite the people of God in the same mind and in the same judgment upon the meaning of the Scriptures.' J. N. Andrews, *Review & Herald*, Feb. 15, 1870.

'He shall guide you into all truth'

9. How did Jesus describe the work of the Holy Spirit? John 16:13. Compare John 14:16-17.

NOTE: 'The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures. Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13), the Saviour declared. If men are willing to be moulded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 52.

10. How does Paul express this same truth? Ephesians 5:8-11.

NOTE: 'When one is fully emptied of self, when every false god is cast out of the soul, the vacuum is supplied by the inflowing of the Spirit of Christ. Such a one has the faith which works by love and purifies the soul from every moral and spiritual defilement. The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, can work upon the heart, influencing and directing, so that he enjoys spiritual things. He is "after the Spirit," and he minds the things of the Spirit. He has no confidence in self; Christ is all and in all. Truth is constantly being unfolded by the Holy Spirit; he receives with meekness the engrafted word, and he gives the Lord all the glory, saying, "God has revealed them to us by His Spirit." "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God." The Spirit that reveals also works in him the fruits of righteousness. Christ is in him "a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." He is a branch of the True Vine, and bears rich clusters of fruit to the glory of God. What is the character of the fruit borne? "The fruit of the Spirit is love." Mark the words, love, not hatred; it is joy, not discontent and mourning; peace, not irritation, anxiety and manufactured trials. It is "long-suffering gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.'" *The Home Missionary*, November 1, 1893.

'Being born again'

11. What warning does Paul give concerning who have received the Holy Spirit and then fallen away from the truth? Hebrews 6:4-6.

NOTE: 'The hour will come; it is not far distant, and some of us who now believe will be alive upon the earth, and shall see the prediction verified, and hear the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God echo from mountain and plain and sea, to the uttermost parts of the earth. All creation will hear that voice, and those who have lived and died in Jesus, will respond to the call of the Prince of life. It will be heard in the dungeons of men, in the caverns of the deep, in the rocks and caves of the earth, only to be obeyed. It is the same voice that said, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest," the same voice which said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." All those who have obeyed that voice when it said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me," will hear the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." To them, that voice will mean, rest, peace, and everlasting life. They will recognise it as the voice of one who has been touched with the feeling of their infirmities. Shall any one become weary now? Shall any one say, "The city is a great way off"? Shall we give up our faith, and draw back unto perdition, when we are nearing the eternal world? No; no. God lives and reigns. "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." Give up our faith? lose our confidence? become impatient? No; no. We will not think of such a thing. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.'" *Review & Herald*, July 31, 1888.

12. How did Peter describe the results of the Holy Spirit's work in the heart? 1 Peter 1:22-23. Compare 1 Peter 1:2.

NOTE: 'It is time for us to practice the truth we claim to believe. It is time for us to lie as clay in the hands of the potter, that we may be made vessels unto honour. Our former habits, which are termed "lusts in our ignorance," must pass away, and grace and truth must make us peaceable, kind, and courteous, in thought, word, and action. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Hereditary and cultivated tendencies are no longer to control us, but we are to be under the control of Christ. "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born

again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” The grace of God is to work a transformation in our life, and all our professions of faith, all our forms of devotion, are valueless unless this work of transformation of character is wrought. We are to become like Him who is meek and lowly in heart. “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” *Review & Herald*, June 12, 1894.

Lesson 8: May 15-21

‘We know Him if we keep His commandments’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’ 1 John 2:2-3.

STUDY HELP: *Faith & Works*, pages 51-54.

LESSON AIM: To show the importance of obedience for those who profess to be followers of Christ.

Introduction

‘There are those who profess holiness, who declare that they are wholly the Lord’s, who claim a right to the promises of God, while refusing to render obedience to His commandments. These transgressors of the law claim everything that is promised to the children of God; but this is presumption on their part, for John tells us that true love for God will be revealed in obedience to all His commandments.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 359.

‘By the law is the knowledge of sin’

1. Why did God give mankind His commandments? Romans 3:20, last part.

NOTE: ‘The soul must first be convicted of sin before the sinner will feel a desire to come to Christ. “Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). “I had not known sin, but by the law” (Romans 7:7). When the commandment came home to Saul’s conscience, sin revived, and he died. He saw himself condemned by the law of God. The sinner cannot be convinced of his guilt unless he understands what constitutes sin. It is impossible for an individual to experience Bible sanctification while he holds that if he believes in Christ it is immaterial whether he obeys God’s law or disobeys it.’ *Faith & Works*, page 31.

2. How does Paul clarify the problem concerning right and wrong understandings of the purpose for God’s law? Romans 3:20.

NOTE: ‘Christ did not come to excuse sin, nor to justify a sinner while he continued to transgress that law for which the Son of God was to give His life to vindicate and exalt. Had it been possible for the law to be repealed, Christ would have had no need to come to our earth, and to die, the just for the unjust. God could have taken the sinner back into favour by annulling the law. But this could not be. The law holds the transgressor in bondage, but the obedient are free. The law cannot cleanse from sin; it condemns the sinner. The sinner may stand justified before God only through repentance toward Him, and faith in the merits of Jesus Christ. The law is a great mirror by means of which the sinner may discern the defects in his moral character. But the mirror cannot remove those defects. The gospel points to Christ as the only one able to remove the stains of sin by his blood. Though the law has no pardoning power, it is the only means by which to explain to the sinner what sin really is. By the law is the knowledge of sin. Without the law, Paul tells us sin is dead.’ *Signs of the Times*, July 18, 1878.

‘The transgression of the law’

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

NOTE: It is instructive that some of the popular modern versions, produced by groups which claim that God has abolished His law, prefer to render the last part of this verse as: ‘Sin is lawlessness.’ The Oxford Dictionary defines ‘lawless’ as without law, or ignorant of law, exempt from law, above or beyond the reach of the law. Whichever of these meanings is adopted for lawlessness, none of them expresses the simple clarity of the words: ‘sin is the transgression of the law.’

‘Our only definition of sin is that given in the Word of God; it is “the transgression of the Law.”’ *Great Controversy*, page 492.

‘The only definition given in God’s Word is: “Sin is the transgression of the Law,” and the apostle Paul declares, “Where no law is, there is no transgression.”’ *Signs of the Times*, November 24, 1887.

‘The only definition we find in the Bible for sin is that “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).’ *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 320.

‘The apostle gives the true definition of sin: “Sin is the transgression of the Law.”’ *Confrontation*, page 75.

‘Now we want to understand what sin is; that it is the transgression of God’s Law. This is the only definition given in the Scriptures.’ *Faith & Works*, page 56.

‘The only definition given in the Word of God as to what is sin is found in 1 John 3:4.’ *Signs of the Times*, January 8, 1894.

‘John says: “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” Here we have the true definition of sin. It is the transgression of the Law.’ *Faith & Works*, page 117.

4. What verses are sometimes quoted as alternative definitions of sin? Romans 14:23, James 4:17.

NOTE: In the case of Romans 14:23, those who use this verse as a definition of sin are not thinking logically. When the Bible says, 'Sin is...' we are likely [though not always] to be looking at a definition. When the Bible says, '... is sin,' we are more probably looking at an example of sin. To make this distinction clear, consider the following: committing adultery with your neighbour's wife is sin. Here is an example of one particular kind of sin. But it would be nonsense to say that committing adultery with your neighbour's wife is the definition of sin. People commit many sins, yet this may not be one of them. James 4:17 is likewise an example of a particular type of sin, showing that sin may not only be committed in action, but also in inaction, failing to respond when action is needed. The principle of love, which underpins God's law, has been violated.

'Hath God said?'

5. How did mankind come to forfeit eternal life in the first place? Compare Genesis 2:16-17 with Genesis 3:2-3 & 6.

NOTE: 'Man divorced himself from God by transgression. Then he was no longer entitled to a breath of air, a ray of sunshine, or a particle of food. And the reason why man was not annihilated was because God so loved him that He made the gift of His dear Son that He should suffer the penalty of his transgression. Christ proposed to become man's surety and substitute, that man, through matchless grace, should have another trial, a second probation, having the experience of Adam and Eve as a warning not to transgress God's law as they did.' *Faith & Works*, page 21.

6. How does Paul explain the importance of God's law in defining sin? Romans 7:7.

NOTE: 'The law and the gospel are in perfect harmony. Each upholds the other. In all its majesty the law confronts the conscience, causing the sinner to feel his need of Christ as the propitiation for sin. The gospel recognises the power and immutability of the law. "I had not known sin, but by the law" (Romans 7:7), Paul declares. The sense of sin, urged home by the law, drives the sinner to the Saviour.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 15.

'Think not that I am come to destroy the law'

7. Does faith in the blood of Christ, shed on Calvary for us, remove the obligation to obey God's law? Romans 3:31.

NOTE: Paul employs no stronger negative expression than the one translated as 'God forbid.'

'The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. "Believe, believe," is their cry; "only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do." While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. There are two errors against which the children of God, particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace, especially need to guard. The first is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy. The opposite and no less dangerous error is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption. But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. As Jesus was in human nature, so God means His followers to be. In His strength we are to live the life of purity and nobility which the Saviour lived.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 93.

8. How did Jesus express the enduring nature of God's law? Matthew 5:17-18.

NOTE: Some may argue that Jesus obeyed the law perfectly and therefore all has been fulfilled, according to verse 18. But fulfilled does not mean abolished, brought to an end or done away with. Read the following verses to understand the Biblical use of the word 'fulfil.' In Matthew 3:15 was Christ abolishing righteousness (or baptism)? Acts 13:22 talks of David as a man after God's own heart because he **fulfilled** God's will. Surely, David didn't abolish God's will. In Romans 2:27, Romans 13:14, Galatians 5:16, Galatians 6:2, Colossians 4:17, James 2:8 & Revelation 17:17 'fulfil' means 'carry out' or 'do'.

'In the precepts of His holy law, God has given a perfect rule of life; and He has declared that until the close of time this law, unchanged in a single jot or tittle, is to maintain its claim upon human beings. Christ came to magnify the law and make it honourable. He showed that it is based upon the broad foundation of love to God and love to man, and that obedience to its precepts comprises the whole duty of man. In His own life He gave an example of obedience to the law of God. In the Sermon on the Mount He showed how its requirements extend beyond the outward acts and take cognisance of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The law, obeyed, leads men to deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts," and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Titus 2:12. But the enemy of all righteousness has taken the world captive and has led men and women to disobey the law. As Paul foresaw, multitudes have turned from the plain, searching truths of God's word and have chosen teachers who present to them the fables they desire. Many among both ministers and people are trampling under their feet the commandments of God. Thus the Creator of the world is insulted, and Satan laughs in triumph at the success of his devices.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 505.

'The truth is not in him'

9. What warning did Jesus give to those who try to teach people that some of God's commandments are no longer binding? Matthew 5:19.

NOTE: While most churches today have no problem with nine of the Ten Commandments, one of them, the 4th, they regard as superseded, unnecessary to be observed by Christians. Christ stated that the attitude manifested by the commandment-breaker towards the commandment he breaks, and teaches others to break, will be identical to the attitude manifested by God towards those who teach their fellow-believers to break that commandment.

'What reason have men for thinking that God is not particular whether they obey Him implicitly or take their own course? Adam and Eve lost Eden for one transgression of His command; and how dare we trifle with the law of the Most High, and frame deceitful apologies to our souls? We do this at a terrible peril. We must keep all the law, every jot and tittle; for he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all. Every ray of light must be received and cherished, or we shall become bodies of darkness. The Lord Jesus declares: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.'" *Reflecting Christ*, page 54.

10. How does the apostle John describe those who profess to know Christ but refuse to obey the commandments? 1 John 2:4.

NOTE: 'Let none deceive themselves with the belief that they can become holy while wilfully violating one of God's requirements. The commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit and separates the soul from God. "Sin is the transgression of the law." And "whosoever sinneth [transgresseth the law] hath not seen Him, neither known Him." 1 John 3:6. Though John in his epistles dwells so fully upon love, yet he does not hesitate to reveal the true character of that class who claim to be sanctified while living in transgression of the law of God. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." 1 John 2:4, 5. Here is the test of every man's profession. We cannot accord holiness to any man without bringing him to the measurement of God's only standard of holiness in heaven and in earth. If men feel no weight of the moral law, if they belittle and make light of God's precepts, if they break one of the least of these commandments, and teach men so, they shall be of no esteem in the sight of Heaven, and we may know that their claims are without foundation.' *Great Controversy*, page 472.

'If ye love Me'

11. What is the Christian's reason for wanting to obey the Ten Commandments? John 14:15, 21, John 15:10, 2 John 6. Compare Deuteronomy 11:1, Joshua 22:5, Daniel 9:4.

NOTE: 'The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely, because he is required to do so, will never enter into the joy of obedience. **He does not obey.** When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right, because right doing is pleasing to God.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 97. (Emphasis added.)

12. How does John define the practical outworking of love to our fellowmen? 1 John 5:2-3.

NOTE: '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. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7. Without the law, men have no just conception of the purity and holiness of God or of their own guilt and uncleanness. They have no true conviction of sin and feel no need of repentance. Not seeing their lost condition as violators of God's law, they do not realise their need of the atoning blood of Christ. The hope of salvation is accepted without a radical change of heart or reformation of life. Thus superficial conversions abound, and multitudes are joined to the church who have never been united to Christ.' *Great Controversy*, page 468.

Lesson 9: May 22-28

'Ye may know that ye have eternal life.'

MEMORY VERSE: 'These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.' 1 John 5:13.

STUDY HELP: *Faith & Works*, pages 41-46.

LESSON AIM: How we may have eternal life.

Introduction

'Great evil will follow the neglect of co-operating with God; for eternal life will be lost. Our success as candidates for heaven will depend on our earnestness in fulfilling the conditions upon which eternal life is granted. We must receive and obey the word of God; we cannot be idlers, and float with the current.' *Review and Herald*, February 14, 1893.

'The gift of God'

1. How are we shown that man does not naturally possess eternal life? Romans 6:23.

NOTE: 'The doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is one error with which the enemy is deceiving man. This error is well-nigh universal. But who told men that they would not die? Who told them that God has reserved a portion of His universe where the wicked are to suffer, through the ceaseless ages of eternity, without a particle of hope? It was the serpent. God said that sinners would die. Satan declares that they will not die. Many believe the oft-repeated lies of the serpent to be genuine truth.' *Bible Echo*, February 1, 1897.

2. What three things will be seen in the lives of those who receive the gift of everlasting life? Romans 6:22.

NOTE: 'To those that ask Him, Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit; for it is necessary that every believer should be delivered from pollution, as well as from the curse and condemnation of the law. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the sanctification of the truth, the believer becomes fitted for the courts of heaven; for Christ works within us, and His righteousness is upon us. Without this no soul will be entitled to heaven. We would not enjoy heaven unless qualified for its holy atmosphere by the influence of the Spirit and the righteousness of Christ. In order to be candidates for heaven we must meet the requirement of the law: "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; and thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27). We can do this only as we grasp by faith the righteousness of Christ. By beholding Jesus we receive a living, expanding principle in the heart, and the Holy Spirit carries on the work, and the believer advances from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from character to character. He conforms to the image of Christ, until in spiritual growth he attains unto the measure of the full stature in Christ Jesus. Thus Christ makes an end of the curse of sin, and sets the believing soul free from its action and effect.' *Ye Shall Receive Power*, page 65.

'Whosoever believeth in Him'

3. What did Jesus say was the qualification for eternal life? John 3:15-16, 36 John 5:24, John 6:40, 47.

NOTE: '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 re-instated to the favour of God. Do you know that a holy and just God will accept your efforts to keep His law, through the merits of His own beloved Son who died for your rebellion and sin? You may say that you believe in Jesus, when you have an appreciation of the cost of salvation. You may make this claim, when you feel that Jesus died for you on the cruel cross of Calvary; when you have an intelligent, understanding faith that His death makes it possible for you to cease from sin, and to perfect a righteous character through the grace of God, bestowed upon you as the purchase of Christ's blood.' *Review & Herald*, July 24, 1888.

4. What types of belief does the Bible warn against? Why will some come to believe things which are not true? James 2:19, 2 Thessalonians 2:10-11.

NOTE: 'The faith in Christ that saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. "Believe, believe," is their cry; "only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do." While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. Faith is manifested by works. And the apostle John declares, "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). It is unsafe to trust to feelings or impressions; these are unreliable guides. God's law is the only correct standard of holiness. It is by this law that character is to be judged.' *Faith & Works*, page 52.

'What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?'

5. When Jesus was asked what was necessary for man to do to have eternal life, how did He reply? Luke 10:25-28.

NOTE: 'If any are in perplexity to know whether they will be saved or not, they will find the query settled here. The world's Redeemer has plainly specified the conditions of eternal life. Both the conditions and the promise are positive. Christ must be the centre. We must love Him with every power of our being, and our neighbours as ourselves. And if we do love our neighbour as ourselves, we shall labour earnestly to present to him the truth in its beauty and simplicity.' *Historical Sketches*, page 149.

'If an inquirer after salvation were to ask, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" the modern teachers of sanctification would answer, "Only believe that Jesus saves you." But when Christ was asked this question, He said, "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" And when the questioner replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbour as thyself," Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:25-29). True sanctification will be evidenced by a conscientious regard for all the commandments of God, by a careful improvement of every talent, by a circumspect conversation, by revealing in every act the meekness of Christ.' *Faith & Works*, pages 52-53.

6. How did Jesus answer this same question on another occasion? Matthew 19:16-17.

NOTE: 'The sanctification now gaining prominence in the religious world carries with it a spirit of self-exaltation and a disregard for the law of God that mark it as foreign to the religion of the Bible. Its advocates teach that sanctification is an instantaneous work, by which, through faith alone, they attain to perfect holiness. "Only believe," say they, "and the blessing is yours." No further effort on the part of the receiver is supposed to be required. At the same time they deny the authority of the law of God, urging that they are released from obligation to keep the commandments. But is it possible for men to be holy, in accord with the will and character of God, without coming into harmony with the principles which are an expression of His nature and will, and which show what is well pleasing to Him? The desire for an easy religion that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine; but what saith the word of God? Says the apostle James: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? . . . Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?' *Great Controversy*, pages 471-472.

'This do, and thou shalt live'

7. What promise did Christ give to those who are willing to sacrifice in this life for His sake? Matthew 19:29.

NOTE: 'Christ meant something when He said, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." He intended to impress upon us the fact that we must make eternal things of first importance, and so relate ourselves to the cause and work of God that we shall not be hindered by things of a temporal nature. Everything of this character must come in secondary. The armour of God, once put on, is not to be laid off for slight excuses.' *Historical Sketches*, page 128.

8. What condition did Christ speak of for those who wish to receive eternal life? What did He mean by this? John 6:54, 63.

NOTE: 'To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to receive Him as a personal Saviour, believing that He forgives our sins and that we are complete in Him. It is by beholding His love, by dwelling upon it, by drinking it in, that we are to become partakers of His nature. What food is to the body, Christ must be to the soul. Food cannot benefit us unless we eat it, unless it becomes a part of our being. So Christ is of no value to us if we do not know Him as a personal Saviour. A theoretical knowledge will do us no good. We must feed upon Him, receive Him into the heart, so that His life becomes our life. His love, His grace, must be assimilated. It is not enough even that we believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sin; we must by faith be constantly receiving spiritual strength and nourishment from Him through His word. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Jesus accepted His Father's law, wrought out its principles in His life, manifested its spirit, and showed its beneficent power in the heart. The followers of Christ must be partakers of His experience. They must receive and assimilate the Word of God so that it shall become the motive power of life and action. By the power of Christ they must be changed into His likeness, and reflect the divine attributes. It is by receiving the life for us poured out on Calvary's cross that we can live the life of holiness. And this life we receive by receiving His word, by doing those things which He has commanded. Thus we become one with Him.' *My Life Today*, page 275.

9. How did Peter show his understanding of Christ's words? John 6:68-69.

NOTE: 'Spiritual life must be sustained by communion with Christ through His Word. The mind must dwell upon it; the heart must be filled with it. The Word of God laid up in the heart and sacredly cherished and obeyed, through the power of the grace of Christ can make man right, and keep him right; but every human influence, every earthly invention, is powerless to give strength and wisdom to man. It cannot restrain passion, or correct deformity of character. Unless the truth of God controls the heart, the conscience will be warped. But in these worldly societies the mind is turned away from the Word of God. Men are not led to make it the study and the guide of life.' *Selected Messages, book 2*, page 124.

'My sheep hear My voice and follow Me'

10. How did Jesus explain the Christian life and its reward? John 10:27-28.

NOTE: 'Christ is the Good Shepherd. He leads the way, calling upon His sheep to follow him. Those who hear and obey His voice will follow His example in all things. Becoming acquainted with Him, they will grow daily more and more like Him. They will be meek and lowly, free from jealousy and envy. Do we hear Christ's voice? Are we following Him? It is of great importance that we know whether we are following the True Shepherd. In order to know this, we must search His Word; for it is His voice speaking to us. "What saith the Scriptures?" is to be our watchword at every step. In God's word we may find an answer to every question. From it light shines upon our pathway, revealing the Good Shepherd as He goes before us.' *Youth's Instructor*, October 3, 1901.

11. What has Jesus promised to those who follow Him? 1 John 2:25.

NOTE: 'It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centred. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Hebrews 10:35-37. Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early

and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” James 5:7, 8.’ *Christian Experience & Teachings*, page 236.

‘Fight the good fight of faith’

12. What characteristics will be found in those who receive eternal life? Romans 2:7. Compare Revelation 14:12.

NOTE: ‘Patient continuance in well-doing will lead you through this world of sorrow and strife to glory and honour and eternal life. Have God within and God overhead and you have nothing to fear. The Bible is a light to those who are in darkness. In the prospect of a blissful immortality held out to those who endure unto the end, you will find an elevating power, a strength which you need to resist evil. Be steadfast in the hour of trial, and you will gain at last a crown which will never fade away.’ *This Day With God*, page 194.

13. What battle must all those engage in who will receive eternal life? 1 Timothy 6:12.

NOTE: ‘Let us arouse! The battle is waging. Truth and Error are nearing their final conflict. Let us march under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel, and fight the good fight of faith, and win eternal honours; for the truth will triumph, and we may be more than conquerors through Him who has loved us. The precious hours of probation are closing. Let us make sure work for eternal life, that we may glorify our Heavenly Father, and be the means of saving souls for whom Christ died.’ *Review & Herald*, March 13, 1888.

Lesson 10: June 12-18

‘We know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.’ 1 John 5:14-15.

STUDY HELP: *Steps to Christ*, pages 93-104.

LESSON AIM: The conditions for answered prayer.

Introduction

‘Prayer is heaven’s ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, “Ye shall receive.”’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 564.

‘Ask and it shall be given unto you’

1. What precious promises did Jesus make concerning prayer? Matthew 7:7-8.

NOTE: ‘Wait on the Lord, and again I say, Wait on the Lord. We may ask of the human agents and not receive. We may ask of God and He says, Ye shall receive. Therefore you know to whom to look; you know in whom to trust. You must not trust in man or make flesh your arm. Lean as heavily as you please upon the Mighty One who hath said, “Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.” Then wait and watch and pray and work, keeping your face constantly turned to the Sun of Righteousness.’ *Reflecting Christ*, page 119.

2. What attitude must we bring with our requests? Mark 11:24.

NOTE: ‘We must show a firm, undeviating trust in God. Often He delays to answer us in order to try our faith or test the genuineness of our desire. Having asked according to His word, we should believe His promise and press our petitions with a determination that will not be denied. God does not say, Ask once, and you shall receive. He bids us ask. Unwearyingly persist in prayer. The persistent asking brings the petitioner into a more earnest attitude, and gives him an increased desire to receive the things for which he asks. Christ said to Martha at the grave of Lazarus, “If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God.” John 11:40. But many have not a living faith. This is why they do not see more of the power of God. Their weakness is the result of their unbelief. They have more faith in their own working than in the working of God for them. They take themselves into their own keeping. They plan and devise, but pray little, and have little real trust in God. They think they have faith, but it is only the impulse of the moment. Failing to realise their own need, or God’s willingness to give, they do not persevere in keeping their requests before the Lord.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 145.

‘The Lord will not hear me’

3. Are there conditions to answered prayer? Psalm 66:18

NOTE: ‘God’s promises are all made upon conditions. If we do His will, if we walk in truth, then we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. While we earnestly endeavour to be obedient, God will hear our petitions; but He will not bless us in disobedience. If we choose to disobey His commandments, we may cry, “Faith, faith, only have faith,” and the response will

come back from the sure Word of God, "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:20). Such faith will only be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. In order to have the benefits of God's grace we must do our part; we must faithfully work and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.' *Faith & Works*, page 47.

4. What other condition did John explain? 1 John 5:14-15.

NOTE: 'There is a condition to this promise, that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 141.

'Christ should be the theme of our thoughts, the object of our tenderest affection. We should let our minds dwell upon the precious characteristics of our Lord; we should contemplate the rich promises of His Word; we should meditate upon the glories of heaven. We should not be satisfied with but occasional glimpses of our Redeemer, but our minds should be stayed upon God by continual trust in His Word. We should search the Scriptures diligently in order that we may have an understanding of the claims that Christ has upon us, and that we may have right views of the truth. Our wills must be subdued, and brought into harmony with the will of God.' *Lift Him Up*, page 238.

'Ye ask and receive not'

5. What prayers will God not answer? Why is this? James 4:3.

NOTE: 'There are thousands of prayers daily offered that God does not answer. There are faithless prayers. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hebrews 11:6. There are selfish prayers, proceeding from a heart that is cherishing idols. There are petulant, fretful prayers, murmuring because of the burdens and cares of life, instead of humbly seeking grace to lighten them. Those who offer such petitions are not abiding in Christ. They have not submitted their will to the will of God. They do not comply with the condition of the promise, and it is not fulfilled to them.' *Our High Calling*, page 147.

'If we know God's requirements and claim to love Him, yet cherish sin, God will not hear us when we ask for His blessing; for He does not minister to sin. There are those whose conscience is hardened by habitual sin. They bear no rich clusters of precious fruit, because they are not branches of the true vine. Their prayers rise no higher than their heads, because they are in their prayers presenting only a form of words, whether offered in the church, in the family, or in secret. They receive no strength, because they ask amiss.' *1888 Materials*, page 143.

6. What example in prayer did Jesus give? Luke 22:42.

NOTE: 'God knows the end from the beginning. He is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He reads every secret of the soul. . . This is one reason why, while presenting our petitions with earnestness, we should say, "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done." [Luke 22:42.] Jesus added these words of submission to the wisdom and will of God when in the garden of Gethsemane He pleaded, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." [Matthew 26:39.] And if they were appropriate for Him, the Son of God, how much more are they becoming on the lips of finite, erring mortals! The consistent course is to commit our desires to our all-wise heavenly Father, and then, in perfect confidence, trust all to Him. We know that God hears us if we ask according to His will. But to press our petitions without a submissive spirit is not right; our prayers must take the form, not of command, but of intercession.' *Gospel Workers*, page 218.

'I besought the Lord thrice'

7. What experience of apparently unanswered prayer is given? Deuteronomy 3:23-26.

NOTE: 'When you pray for temporal blessings, remember that the Lord may see that it is not for your good or for His glory to give you just what you desire. But He will answer your prayer, giving you just what is best for you... Make your requests known to your Maker. Never is one repulsed who comes to Him with a contrite heart. Not one sincere prayer is lost. Amid the anthems of the celestial choir, God hears the cries of the weakest human being. We pour out our heart's desire in our closets, we breathe a prayer as we walk by the way, and our words reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. They may be inaudible to any human ear, but they cannot die away into silence, nor can they be lost through the activities of business that are going on. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the confusion of the multitude, to the heavenly courts. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard. You who feel the most unworthy, fear not to commit your case to God. There is a mighty power in prayer.'

8. Will God always heal the sick when we pray for them? 2 Corinthians 12:7-9. Consider Matthew 13:58 and the lessons of 2 Kings 20:1-6 & 2 Chronicles 32:24-25.

NOTE: 'When Paul prayed that the thorn in his flesh might be removed, the Lord answered his prayer, not by removing the thorn, but by giving him grace to bear the trial. "My grace," He said, "is sufficient for thee." Paul rejoiced at this answer to his prayer, declaring, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9). When the sick pray for the recovery of health, the Lord does not always answer their prayer in just the way they desire. But even though they may not be immediately healed, He will give them that which is of far more value, grace to bear their sickness.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 82.

'Praying for the sick is a most solemn thing, and we should not enter into this work in any careless, hasty way. Examination should be made as to whether those who would be blessed with health have indulged in evil-speaking, alienation, and dissension. Have they sowed discord among the brethren and sisters of the church? If these things have been committed they

should be confessed before God and the church. When wrongs have been confessed the subjects for prayer may be presented before God in earnestness and faith, as the Spirit of God may move upon you. But it is not always safe to ask for unconditional healing. Let your prayer include this thought: "Lord, Thou knowest every secret of the soul. Thou art acquainted with these persons; for Jesus, their advocate, gave His life for them. He loves them better than we possibly can. If, therefore, it is for Thy glory and the good of these afflicted ones to raise them up to health, we ask Thee in the name of Jesus, that health may be given them at this time." In a petition of this kind, no lack of faith is manifested.' *Counsels on Health*, page 375.

'God will not work a miracle to keep those from sickness who have no care for themselves, but are continually violating the laws of health and make no efforts to prevent disease. When we do all we can on our part to have health, then may we expect that the blessed results will follow, and we can ask God in faith to bless our efforts for the preservation of health. He will then answer our prayer, if His name can be glorified thereby. But let all understand that they have a work to do. God will not work in a miraculous manner to preserve the health of persons who are taking a sure course to make themselves sick, by their careless inattention to the laws of health. Those who will gratify their appetite, and then suffer because of their intemperance, and take drugs to relieve them, may be assured that God will not interpose to save health and life which are so recklessly periled. The cause has produced the effect. Many, as their last resort, follow the directions in the word of God, and request the prayers of the elders of the church for their restoration to health. God does not see fit to answer prayers offered in behalf of such, for He knows that if they should be restored to health, they would again sacrifice it upon the altar of unhealthy appetite.' *Medical Ministry*, pages 13-14.

'Not to faint'

9. What lesson was Christ's parable of the widow and the unjust judge designed to teach? Luke 18:1.

NOTE: 'The judge yielded to the widow's request merely through selfishness, that he might be relieved of her importunity. He felt for her no pity or compassion; her misery was nothing to him. How different is the attitude of God toward those who seek Him. The appeals of the needy and distressed are considered by Him with infinite compassion.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 165.

'We all desire immediate and direct answers to our prayers, and are tempted to become discouraged when the answer is delayed or comes in an unlooked-for form. But God is too wise and good to answer our prayers always at just the time and in just the manner we desire. He will do more and better for us than to accomplish all our wishes. And because we can trust His wisdom and love, we should not ask Him to concede to our will, but should seek to enter into and accomplish His purpose. Our desires and interests should be lost in His will.' *Gospel Workers*, page 219.

10. What precious quality is the Lord seeking to develop in His people? Revelation 14:12, first part. See Hebrews 10:36.

NOTE: 'Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him, this is our need. We may bring Him our little cares and perplexities as well as our greater troubles. Whatever arises to disturb or distress us, we should take it to the Lord in prayer. Calmly, yet fervently, the soul is to reach out after God; and sweet and abiding will be the influence emanating from Him who sees in secret, whose ear is open to the prayer arising from the heart. He who in simple faith holds communion with God will gather to himself divine rays of light to strengthen and sustain him in the conflict with Satan. If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Often there will come to us a sweet, joyful sense of the presence of Jesus. Prayer turns aside the attacks of Satan.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 225.

'The Spirit maketh intercession for us'

11. How does the Holy Spirit help us when we pray? Romans 8:26.

NOTE: 'The prayer of Christ in behalf of lost humanity cleaved its way through every shadow that Satan had cast between man and God, and left a clear channel of communication to the very throne of glory. The voice of God was heard in answer to the petition of Christ, and this tells the sinner that his prayer will find a lodgement at the throne of the Father. The Holy Spirit will be given to those who seek for its power and grace, and will help our infirmities when we would have audience with God. Heaven is open to our petitions, and we are invited to come "boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16. With all our sins and weakness we are not cast aside as worthless. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." Ephesians 1:6. The glory that rested upon Christ is a pledge of the love of God for us. It tells of the power of prayer, how the human voice may reach the ear of God, and our petitions find acceptance in the courts of heaven. The light that fell from the open portals upon the head of our Saviour will fall upon us as we pray for help to resist temptation. The voice that spoke to Jesus says to every believing soul, "This is My beloved child, in whom I am well pleased.'" *Our High Calling*, page 156.

12. What precious privilege is offered to those who place their faith in the high priestly ministry of Christ? Hebrews 4:14-16.

NOTE: 'In the courts above, Christ is pleading for His church, pleading for those for whom He has paid the redemption price of His blood. Centuries, ages, can never lessen the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice. Neither life nor death, height nor depth, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because we hold Him so firmly, but because He holds us so fast. If our salvation depended on our own efforts, we could not be saved; but it depends on the One who is behind all the promises. Our grasp on Him may seem feeble, but His love is that of an elder brother; so long as we maintain our union with

Him, no one can pluck us out of His hand. Jesus, precious Jesus, “merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty” (Exodus 34:6, 7). O how privileged we are that we may come to Jesus just as we are and cast ourselves upon His love! We have no hope but in Jesus. He alone can reach us with His hand to lift us up out of the depths of discouragement and hopelessness and place our feet upon the Rock. Although the human soul may cling to Jesus with all the desperate sense of his great need, Jesus will cling to the souls bought by His own blood with a firmer grasp than the sinner clings to Him.’ *That I May Know Him*, page 80.

‘In my morning devotions I have regarded it my privilege to close my petition with the prayer that Christ taught to His disciples. There is so much that I really must have to meet the needs of my own case that I sometimes fear that I shall ask amiss; but when in sincerity I offer the model prayer that Christ gave to His disciples I cannot but feel that in these few words all my needs are comprehended. This I offer after I have presented my special private prayer. If with heart and mind and soul I repeat the Lord’s Prayer, then I can go forth in peace to my work, knowing that I have not asked amiss.’ *That I May Know Him*, page 261.

Lesson 11: June 5-11

‘We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.’ 1 John 5:18.

STUDY HELP: *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 297.

LESSON AIM: How does God make it possible to overcome sin?

Introduction

‘To us has been entrusted the truth of the gospel for this time. It is a wonderful, wonderful treasure, and the Lord desires us to have our eyes enlightened and our hearts quickened. He desires us to be nerved and strengthened by the power that He will give us if we will only be true to Him. He desires every one of us to perfect a character after the divine similitude. The Christian who does not do this casts reflection on God. He dishonours his Saviour.’ *Review & Herald*, June 22, 1905.

‘Sin is the transgression of the law’

1. How did Adam and Eve sin? Compare Genesis 2:16-17 with Genesis 3:1-6.

NOTE: ‘The law of God was unalterable. It could not be abolished, nor yield the smallest part of its claim, to meet man in his fallen state. Man was separated from God by transgression of His expressed command, notwithstanding He had made known to Adam the consequences of such transgression. The sin of Adam caused a deplorable state of things. Satan would now have unlimited control over the race unless a mightier being than was Satan before his fall, should take the field, conquer him, and ransom man.’ *Confrontation*, page 17.

2. What single definition does the Bible give for sin? 1 John 3:4.

NOTE: ‘Now, we want to understand what sin is, that it is the transgression of God’s law. This is the only definition given in the Scriptures. Therefore we see that those who claim to be led of God, and go right away from Him and His law do not search the Scriptures. But the Lord will lead His people; for He says that His sheep will follow if they hear His voice, but a stranger will they not follow. Then it becomes us to thoroughly understand the Scriptures. And we will not have to inquire whether others have the truth, for it will be seen in their characters.’ *Faith & Works*, page 56.

‘All have sinned’

3. How many of the human race have sinned? Romans 3:23, Romans 5:12.

NOTE: ‘The only definition we find in the Bible for sin is that “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). The Word of God declares, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). “There is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Romans 3:12). Many are deceived concerning the condition of their hearts. They do not realise that the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. They wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, and are satisfied in reaching their own human standard of character; but how fatally they fail when they do not reach the divine standard, and of themselves they cannot meet the requirements of God. We may measure ourselves by ourselves, we may compare ourselves among ourselves, we may say we do as well as this one or that one, but the question to which the judgment will call for an answer is: Do we meet the claims of high heaven? Do we reach the divine standard? Are our hearts in harmony with the God of heaven?’ *Selected Messages, book 1*, pages 320-321.

4. How does Paul describe the spiritual condition of the human race? Romans 3:10-12.

NOTE: 'The human family have all transgressed the law of God, and as transgressors of the law, man is hopelessly ruined; for he is the enemy of God, without strength to do any good thing. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). Looking into the moral mirror, God's holy law, man sees himself a sinner, and is convicted of his state of evil, his hopeless doom under the just penalty of the law. But he has not been left in a state of hopeless distress in which sin has plunged him; for it was to save the transgressor from ruin that He who was equal with God offered up His life on Calvary. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 321.

'Ye must be born again'

5. What experience must be ours if we are to be saved? John 3:3

NOTE: 'There are very many who claim to serve God, but who have no experimental knowledge of Him. Their desire to do His will is based upon their own inclination, not upon the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God. They profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, but they do not believe that He will give them power to overcome their sins. They have not a personal relation with a living Saviour, and their characters reveal defects both hereditary and cultivated. It is one thing to assent in a general way to the agency of the Holy Spirit, and another thing to accept His work as a reprover, calling to repentance. Many feel a sense of estrangement from God, a realisation of their bondage to self and sin; they make efforts for reform; but they do not crucify self. They do not give themselves entirely into the hands of Christ, seeking for divine power to do His will. They are not willing to be moulded after the divine similitude. In a general way they acknowledge their imperfections, but they do not give up their particular sins. With each wrong act the old selfish nature is gaining strength. The only hope for these souls is to realise in themselves the truth of Christ's words to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God." John 3:7, 3, margin.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 48.

6. How is this experience described elsewhere in the Scriptures? Ezekiel 18:31, Ezekiel 36:26, Jeremiah 31:33

NOTE: 'Contact with Christ brings currents of divine power into the soul, so that the old cherished, natural tendencies, habits, and practices, are changed by the Spirit of God. What [sinners] need is a genuine conversion. When they have this experience these weak, tempted souls will look unto Jesus and say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." They need to appreciate every ray of light that comes from the throne of God into their pathway. They need to catch the Spirit and principle of the holy law of God, and conform their life to the character of Christ. A new power takes possession of the new heart. Man can never work out this change for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into weak and wicked human nature. This power will cast out the devils that possessed the mind and will, and whose power has been revealed even in the words and works of those who claim to be children of God.' *1888 Materials*, page 1319.

'Power to become the sons of God'

7. What is promised to those who place their trust in Christ? John 1:12.

NOTE: In some of the popular versions, the power of God is changed to 'right.' Thus is taught the idea that a mere declaration of one's rights is sufficient to make a person a son or daughter of God.

'The truth is to be planted in the heart. It is to control the mind and regulate the affections. The whole character must be stamped with the divine utterances. Every jot and tittle of the word of God is to be brought into the daily practice. He who becomes a partaker of the divine nature will be in harmony with God's great standard of righteousness, His holy law. This is the rule by which God measures the actions of men. This will be the test of character in the judgment. There are many who claim that by the death of Christ the law was abrogated; but in this they contradict Christ's own words, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. . . . Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Matthew 5:17, 18. It was to atone for man's transgression of the law that Christ laid down His life. Could the law have been changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died. By His life on earth He honoured the law of God. By His death He established it. He gave His life as a sacrifice, not to destroy God's law, not to create a lower standard, but that justice might be maintained, that the law might be shown to be immutable, that it might stand fast forever. Satan had claimed that it was impossible for man to obey God's commandments; and in our own strength it is true that we cannot obey them. But Christ came in the form of humanity, and by His perfect obedience He proved that humanity and divinity combined can obey every one of God's precepts.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 314.

8. What name is given to this power? Romans 1:16.

NOTE: 'We have only a little longer 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. I desire if possible to impress upon the hearts of Christians the importance of giving so pure and righteous a representation of God that the world shall see Him in His beauty. I desire them to be so filled with the Spirit that dwells in Him that the world shall have no power to divert them from the work of presenting to men the wonderful possibilities before every soul who receives Christ.' *Southern Watchman*, March 12, 1907.

'God is faithful'

9. What promises are available to those who lay hold on the power of the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 10:13, Jude 1:24-25, 2 Peter 2:9, first part. Compare Matthew 6:13.

NOTE: 'Our heavenly Father measures and weighs every trial before He permits it to come upon the believer. He considers the circumstances and the strength of the one who is to stand under the proving and test of God, and He never permits the temptations to be greater than the capacity of resistance. If the soul is overborne, the person overpowered, this can never be charged to God, but the one tempted was not vigilant and prayerful and did not appropriate by faith the provisions God had abundantly in store for him. Christ never failed a believer in His hour of combat. The believer must claim the promise and meet the foe in the name of the Lord.' *Our High Calling*, page 323.

10. What is the evidence that a person is truly born again? 1 John 3:9.

NOTE: 'Genuine faith is followed by love, and love by obedience. All the powers and passions of the converted man are brought under the control of Christ. His Spirit is a renewing power, transforming to the divine image all who will receive it. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." He feels that he is the purchase of the blood of Christ and bound by the most solemn vows to glorify God in his body and in his spirit, which are God's. The love of sin and the love of self are subdued in him. He daily asks: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"' *Maranatha*, page 73.

'It is through faith in Jesus Christ that the truth is accepted in the heart and the human agent is purified and cleansed. Jesus 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." Is it possible to be healed, while knowingly committing sin? No; it is genuine faith that says, I know that I have committed sin, but that Jesus has pardoned my sin; and hereafter I will resist temptation in and through His might. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." He has an abiding principle in the soul that enables him to overcome temptation. "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not." God has power to keep the soul who is in Christ, when that soul is under temptation. "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." That is, every one who is a true believer is sanctified through the truth, in life and character. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth [not 'professeth to do'] righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; . . . because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." Now mark where the distinction is made: "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither is he that loveth not his brother." "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 297.

11. Is being born again to be a once-in-lifetime experience? Luke 9:23.

NOTE: 'There is no such thing in the Word of God as unconditional election, once in grace, always in grace. [Today this teaching is called 'Once saved, always saved'] In the second chapter of Second Peter the subject is made plain and distinct. After a history of some who followed an evil course, the explanation is given: "Which have forsaken the right way, . . . following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." 2 Peter 2:15. Here is a class of whom the apostle warns, "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." 2 Peter 2:21. There is truth to be received if souls are saved. The keeping of the commandments of God is life eternal to the receiver. But the Scriptures make it plain that those who once knew the way of life and rejoiced in the truth are in danger of falling through apostasy, and being lost. Therefore there is need of a decided, daily conversion to God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 157.

'Every man that hath this hope in Him'

12. What special counsel is given to those who expect to live to see the Lord's return? 1 John 3:3. Compare 2 Peter 3:11, 14.

NOTE: 'The sanctification of the church is God's object in all His dealings with His people. He has chosen them from eternity, that they might be holy. He gave His Son to die for them, that they might be sanctified through obedience to the truth, divested of all the littleness of self. From them He requires a personal work, a personal surrender. God can be honoured by those who profess to believe in Him, only as they are conformed to His image and controlled by His Spirit. Then, as witnesses for the Saviour, they may make known what divine grace has done for them.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 559.

13. What promise are we given that the work of purification from every sin will be successful? 1 John 3:4. Compare Hebrews 7:25 & Matthew 5:8.

NOTE: 'When God gave His Son to the world, He made it possible for men and women to be perfect by the use of every capability of their beings to the glory of God. In Christ He gave to them the riches of His grace, and a knowledge of His will. As they would empty themselves of self, and learn to walk in humility, leaning on God for guidance, men would be enabled to fulfil God's high purpose for them. Perfection of character is based upon that which Christ is to us. If we have constant dependence on the merits of our Saviour, and walk in His footsteps, we shall be like Him, pure and undefiled. Our Saviour does not require impossibilities of any soul. He expects nothing of His disciples that He is not willing to give them grace and strength to perform. He would not call upon them to be perfect if He had not at His command every perfection of grace to bestow on the ones upon whom He would confer so high and holy a privilege. Our work is to strive to attain in our sphere of action the perfection that Christ in His life on the earth attained in every phase of character. He is our example. In all things we are to strive to honour God in character. We are to be wholly dependent on the power that He has promised to give us. Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was. Our Saviour is a Saviour for the perfection of the whole man. He is not the God of part of the being only. The grace of Christ works to the disciplining of the whole human fabric. He made all. He has redeemed all. He has made the mind, the strength, the body as well as the soul, partaker of the divine nature, and all is His purchased possession. He must be served with the whole mind, heart, soul, and strength. Then

the Lord will be glorified in His saints in even the common, temporal things with which they are connected. "Holiness unto the Lord" will be in the inscription placed upon them.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 230.

Lesson 12: June 12-18

'We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him'

MEMORY VERSE: '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.' 1 John 3:2.

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 65-69.

LESSON AIM: To study the importance of Christlikeness.

Introduction

'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 Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 429.

'We should live godly'

1. Why has God manifested His grace to the world? Titus 2:11-12.

NOTE: 'Higher than the highest human thought can reach is God's ideal for His children. Godliness, godlikeness, is the goal to be reached. Before the student there is opened a path of continual progress. He has an object to achieve, a standard to attain, that includes everything good, and pure, and noble. He will advance as fast and as far as possible in every branch of true knowledge. But his efforts will be directed to objects as much higher than mere selfish and temporal interests as the heavens are higher than the earth.' *Education*, page 18.

2. How does Peter describe the process of sanctification? 2 Peter 1:5-7.

NOTE: 'Every unholy passion must be kept under the control of sanctified reason through the grace abundantly bestowed of God in every emergency. But let no arrangement be made to create an emergency, let there be no voluntary act to place one where he will be assailed with temptation or give the least occasion for others to think him guilty of indiscretion. Do not see how close you can walk upon the brink of a precipice and be safe. Avoid the first approach to danger. The soul's interests cannot be trifled with. Your capital is your character. Cherish it as you would a golden treasure. Moral purity, self-respect, a strong power of resistance, must be firmly and constantly cherished. Let no one think he can overcome without the help of God. You must have the energy, the strength, the power, of an inner life developed within you. You will then bear fruit unto godliness and will have an intense loathing of vice. You need to constantly strive to work away from earthliness, from cheap conversation, from everything sensual, and aim for nobility of soul and a pure and unspotted character. Your name may be kept so pure that it cannot justly be connected with anything dishonest or unrighteous but will be respected by all the good and pure, and it may be written in the Lamb's book of life.' *Mind, Character & Personality, volume 1*, page 237.

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

3. By what standard is the Christian's life to be measured? Ephesians 4:13.

NOTE: 'The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to "go on unto perfection;" to grow up "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Says the apostle Paul: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13, 14. And Peter sets before us the steps by which Bible sanctification is to be attained: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. . . . If ye do these things, ye shall never fall." 2 Peter 1:5-10. Those who experience the sanctification of the Bible will manifest a spirit of humility. Like Moses, they have had a view of the awful majesty of holiness, and they see their own unworthiness in contrast with the purity and exalted perfection of the Infinite One.' *Great Controversy*, page 470.

4. How does Paul show that this is achieved by a process of spiritual growth? Ephesians 4:13-15.

NOTE: 'Every provision has been made that the piety, purity, and love of the Christian shall ever increase, that his talents may double and his ability increase in the service of his divine Master. But though this provision has been made, many who profess to believe in Jesus do not make it manifest by growth that testifies to the sanctifying power of the truth upon life and character. When we first receive Jesus into our hearts, we are as babes in religion; but we are not to remain babes in experience. We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; we are to attain to the full measure of the stature

of men and women in Him. We are to make advances, to gain new and rich experiences through faith, growing in trust and confidence and love, knowing God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous one. Day by day God labours for man's sanctification, and man is to co-operate with Him, putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. He is to add grace to grace; and as he thus works on the plan of addition, God works for him on the plan of multiplication. Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them. Glorious is the hope before the believer as he advances by faith toward the heights of Christian perfection!' *My Life Today*, page 101.

'He gave gifts unto men'

5. What has God given to each of His faithful children to enable them to grow into His likeness? Ephesians 4:8-16.

NOTE: 'The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counsellor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace. The men and women who through the long centuries of persecution and trial enjoyed a large measure of the presence of the Spirit in their lives have stood as signs and wonders in the world. Before angels and men they have revealed the transforming power of redeeming love. Those who at Pentecost were endued with power from on high were not thereby freed from further temptation and trial. As they witnessed for truth and righteousness, they were repeatedly assailed by the enemy of all truth, who sought to rob them of their Christian experience. They were compelled to strive with all their God-given powers to reach the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Daily they prayed for fresh supplies of grace, that they might reach higher and still higher toward perfection. Under the Holy Spirit's working, even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined and ennobled. As in humility they submitted to the moulding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 49.

6. How does the Bible portray the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart? Zechariah 10:1.

NOTE: 'The plant grows by receiving that which God has provided to sustain its life. It sends down its roots into the earth. It drinks in the sunshine, the dew, and the rain. It receives the life-giving properties from the air. So the Christian is to grow by co-operating with the divine agencies. Feeling our helplessness, we are to improve all the opportunities granted us to gain a fuller experience. As the plant takes root in the soil, so we are to take deep root in Christ. As the plant receives the sunshine, the dew, and the rain, we are to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. The work is to be done "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:6. If we keep our minds stayed upon Christ, He will come unto us "as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:3. As the Sun of Righteousness, He will arise upon us "with healing in His wings." Malachi 4:2. We shall "grow as the lily." We shall "revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." Hosea 14:5, 7. By constantly relying upon Christ as our personal Saviour, we shall grow up into Him in all things who is our head.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 66.

'Without Me ye can do nothing'

7. What must be maintained in order for spiritual growth to occur? John 15:4-5.

NOTE: 'Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness, all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly, by abiding in Him, that we grow in grace. He is not only the author, but the finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. David says, "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8).' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 293.

8. How is union with Christ to be maintained? 1 John 2:3-6.

NOTE: 'Do you ask, "How am I to abide in Christ?" In the same way as you received Him at first. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Colossians 2:6). You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour. You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart, but having given yourself to God, you believed that He for Christ's sake did all this for you. By faith you became Christ's, and by faith you are to grow up in Him, by giving and taking. You are to give all, your heart, your will, your service, give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must take all, Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper, to give you power to obey.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 293.

'By this shall all men know'

9. Why is it important that those who follow Christ resemble Him in character? John 13:34-35.

NOTE: 'It is our own character and experience that determine our influence upon others. In order to convince others of the power of Christ's grace, we must know its power in our own hearts and lives. The gospel we present for the saving of souls

must be the gospel by which our own souls are saved. Only through a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour is it possible to make our influence felt in a sceptical world. If we would draw sinners out of the swift-running current, our own feet must be firmly set upon the Rock, Christ Jesus. The badge of Christianity is not an outward sign, not the wearing of a cross or a crown, but it is that which reveals the union of man with God. By the power of His grace manifested in the transformation of character, the world is to be convinced that God has sent His Son as its Redeemer. No other influence that can surround the human soul has such power as the influence of an unselfish life. The strongest argument in favour of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 276.

10. What role does Christ design that His people should play in the world? 1 John 4:17, last part.

NOTE: 'It is God's purpose to manifest through His people the principles of His kingdom. That in life and character they may reveal these principles, He desires to separate them from the customs, habits, and practices of the world. By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in His church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognise the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people in the world.' *Maranatha*, page 113.

'I am glorified in them'

11. What conviction will be brought when the world sees the sanctified lives of His followers? John 17:21-23.

NOTE: 'Christ's prayer for His disciples was: "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 17:21. All true labourers for God will work in harmony with this prayer. In their efforts to advance the work all will manifest that oneness of sentiment and practice which reveals that they are God's witnesses, that they love one another. To a world that is broken up by discord and strife, their love and unity will testify to their connection with heaven. It is the convincing evidence of the divine character of their mission.' *Testimonies, volume 7*, page 156.

12. What blessing does the sanctified lives of His people bring to Christ? John 17:10.

NOTE: 'The sons and daughters of God have a great work to do in the world. They are to accept the Word of God as the man of their counsel and to impart it to others. They are to diffuse light. All who have received the engrafted word will be faithful in giving that word to others. They will speak the words of Christ. In conversation and in deportment they will give evidence of a daily conversion to the principles of truth. Such believers will be a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men, and God will be glorified in them.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 67.

Lesson 13: June 19-25

'We know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.' 1 John 5:20.

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 124-134.

LESSON AIM: To understand how important knowledge is.

Introduction

'The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 114.

'The LORD is a God of knowledge'

1. To whom will God give knowledge and how is it to be acquired? Isaiah 28:9-10.

NOTE: 'People are suffering for want of the knowledge of truth. They do not understand what they must do to be saved. Unless the gospel is preached clearly, simply, over and over again, line upon line, precept upon precept, Satan will cast his shadow between the sinner and God. God will be represented as a stern, unforgiving Judge. Christ did not sermonise. He gave instruction as a divine Teacher. He taught in simplicity, and thus His ambassadors are to present the truth, making everything connected with the salvation of the soul plain and easy to be understood. The message must be given to the world that the way of repentance and faith is now made plain through Him who had power to lay down His life and to take it again. "He that believeth on Me," Christ declared, "though he were dead, yet shall he live.'" *The Voice in Speech & Song*, page 233.

2. Is there any limit to the knowledge we can acquire of God? Romans 11:33, Colossians 2:3.

NOTE: 'Natural science is a treasure house of knowledge from which every student in the school of Christ may draw. As we contemplate the beauty of nature, as we study its lessons in the cultivation of the soil, in the growth of the trees, in all the wonders of earth and sea and sky, there will come to us a new perception of truth. And the mysteries connected with God's

dealings with men, the depths of His wisdom and judgment as seen in human life, these are found to be a storehouse rich in treasure. But it is in the written Word that a knowledge of God is most clearly revealed to fallen man. This is the treasure house of the unsearchable riches of Christ. The truths of redemption are capable of constant development and expansion. Though old, they are ever new, constantly revealing to the seeker for truth a greater glory and a mightier power.' *Lift Him Up*, page 112.

'That I might know Him'

3. What value should we place on knowledge? Proverbs 2:3-6, Philippians 3:8, 10-11.

NOTE: 'The importance of seeking a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures can hardly be estimated. "Given by inspiration of God" able to make us "wise unto salvation," rendering the man of God "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:15-17), the Bible has the highest claim to our reverent attention. We should not be satisfied with a superficial knowledge, but should seek to learn the full meaning of the words of truth, to drink deep of the spirit of the Holy Oracles.' *Child Guidance*, page 512.

4. What is needed in addition to knowledge? 1 Corinthians 13:2. Compare 1 Corinthians 8:1 & 2 Peter 1:5-8.

NOTE: 'There is great danger of losing our interest in one another, losing our love for those for whom Christ died, because we do not live in the light of the Sun of righteousness. Brethren, shall we manifest cold indifference toward those whom we know to be in ignorance of the truth that is to make them wise unto salvation? If our own hearts were touched with His divine love, hearts would be melted with the love of Christ, but it is impossible to communicate to others that of which we have no experimental knowledge. This hard-heartedness is of Satan. There are many ways in which he works. He seeks to make men who claim to believe the truth, faithless, loveless, proud, selfish, haughty, tyrannical. He well knows that those who possess such characteristics can never be a savour of life unto life. They exert no fragrant influence, but rather wound and bruise the souls of those whom they might relieve and comfort.' *Review & Herald*, July 14, 1891.

'This is life eternal'

5. What is the most important knowledge of all? John 17:3. Compare Proverbs 9:10.

NOTE: 'The Word of God presents the most potent means of education, as well as the most valuable source of knowledge, within the reach of man. The understanding adapts itself to the dimensions of the subjects with which it is required to deal. If occupied with trivial, commonplace matters only, never summoned to earnest effort to comprehend great and eternal truths, it becomes dwarfed and enfeebled. Hence the value of the Scriptures, as a means of intellectual culture. They lead directly to the contemplation of the most exalted, the most ennobling, and the most stupendous truths that are presented to the mind of man. They direct our thoughts to the infinite Author of all things. We see revealed the character of the Eternal, and listen to His voice as He communes with patriarchs and prophets. We see explained the mysteries of His providence, the great problems which have engaged the attention of every thoughtful mind, but which, without the aid of revelation, human intellect seeks in vain to solve. They open to our understanding a simple yet sublime system of theology, presenting truths which a child may grasp, but which are yet so far reaching as to baffle the powers of the strongest mind. The more closely God's Word is searched, and the better understood, the more vividly will the student realise that there is, beyond, infinite wisdom, knowledge, and power.' *That I May Know Him*, page 8.

6. How has God revealed knowledge concerning Himself? 2 Corinthians 4:6.

NOTE: 'The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. This is the knowledge that works transformation of character. Received into the life, it will re-create the soul in the image of Christ. This is the knowledge that God invites His children to receive, beside which all else is vanity and nothingness.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 475.

'Because thou hast rejected knowledge'

7. What are some important areas of knowledge? Romans 3:20, Luke 1:77, 1 Timothy 2:4.

NOTE: 'While the knowledge of science is a power, the knowledge which Jesus in person come to impart to the world was the knowledge of the gospel. The light of truth was to flash its bright rays into the uttermost parts of the earth, and the acceptance or rejection of the message of God involved the eternal destiny of souls. The plan of salvation had its place in the counsels of the Infinite from all eternity. The gospel is the revelation of God's love to men, and means everything that is essential to the happiness and well-being of humanity. The work of God in the earth is of immeasurable importance, and it is Satan's special object to crowd it out of sight and mind, that he may make his specious devices effectual in the destruction of those for whom Christ died. It is his purpose to cause the discoveries of men to be exalted above the wisdom of God. When the mind is engrossed with the conceptions and theories of men to the exclusion of the wisdom of God, it is stamped with idolatry. Science, falsely so-called, has been exalted above God, nature above its Maker, and how can God look upon such wisdom?' *Christian Education*, page 83.

8. What danger awaits those who lack the knowledge God offers? Hosea 4:6. See also Proverbs 19:2, Hebrews 10:26. Compare Job 21:14-15.

NOTE: 'All should see the necessity of understanding the truth for themselves individually... There is among our people a great lack of knowledge in regard to the rise and progress of the third angel's message. There is great need to search the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation, and learn the texts thoroughly that we may know what is written. The light given me has

been very forcible that many would go out from us, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. The Lord desires that every soul who claims to believe the truth shall have an intelligent knowledge of what is truth. False prophets will arise and will deceive many. Everything is to be shaken that can be shaken. Then does it not become everyone to understand the reasons for our faith? In place of having so many sermons, there should be a more close searching of the Word of God, opening the Scriptures text by text, and searching for the strong evidences that sustain the fundamental doctrines that have brought us where we now are, upon the platform of eternal truth.' *Evangelism*, page 363.

'The beginning of knowledge'

9. What is the foundation of all true knowledge? Proverbs 1:7. Compare 2 Corinthians 10:5.

NOTE: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." Proverbs 1:7. One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments. Those who refuse to follow God's way will finally receive the sentence, "Depart from Me." But when we submit to God's way, the Lord Jesus guides our minds and fills our lips with assurance. We may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Receiving Christ, we are clothed with power. An indwelling Saviour makes His power our property. The truth becomes our stock in trade. No unrighteousness is seen in the life. We are able to speak words in season to those who know not the truth. Christ's presence in the heart is a vitalizing power, strengthening the entire being.' *Testimonies*, volume 7, page 71.

10. What warning does God give to those who reject knowledge? Proverbs 1:28-31. See also Romans 1:28-32.

NOTE: 'Accumulated light has shone upon God's people, but many have neglected to follow the light, and for this reason they are in a state of great spiritual weakness. It is not for lack of knowledge that God's people are now perishing. They will not be condemned because they do not know the way, the truth, and the life. The truth that has reached their understanding, the light which has shone on the soul, but which has been neglected or refused, will condemn them. Those who never had the light to reject, will not be in condemnation. What more could have been done for God's vineyard than has been done? Light, precious light, shines upon God's people; but it will not save them, unless they consent to be saved by it, fully live up to it, and transmit it to others in darkness.' *Testimonies*, volume 2, page 123.

'The Spirit of God is departing from many among His people. Many have entered into dark, secret paths, and some will never return. They will continue to stumble to their ruin. They have tempted God, they have rejected light. All the evidence that will ever be given them they have received, and have not heeded. They have chosen darkness rather than light, and have defiled their souls... The only remedy is belief in the truth, acceptance of the light. Yet many have listened to the truth spoken in demonstration of the Spirit, and they have not only refused to accept the message, but they have hated the light. These men are parties to the ruin of souls. They have interposed themselves between the heaven-sent light and the people. They have trampled upon the word of God and are doing despite to His Holy Spirit.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 90.

'The Son of God hath given us an understanding'

11. What was Paul's desire for Christian believers? Romans 15:14, 1 Corinthians 1:5, Ephesians 1:17, Philippians 1:9, Colossians 1:9-10.

NOTE: 'Strength comes by exercise. All who put to use the ability which God has given them will have increased ability to devote to His service. Those who do nothing in the cause of God will fail to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. A man who would lie down and refuse to exercise his limbs would soon lose all power to use them. Thus the Christian who will not exercise his God-given powers, not only fails to grow up into Christ, but he loses the strength which he already had; he becomes a spiritual paralytic. It is those who, with love for God and their fellow men, are striving to help others, that become established, strengthened, settled, in the truth. The true Christian works for God, not from impulse, but from principle; not for a day or a month, but during the entire period of life.' *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 393.

12. What are John's closing words concerning knowledge? 1 John 5:20.

NOTE: 'Everyone who is chosen of God should improve his intellectual powers. Jesus came to represent the character of the Father, and He sent His disciples into the world to represent the character of Christ. He has given us His word to point out the way of life, and He has not left us simply to carry that word, but has also promised to give it efficiency by the power of the Holy Spirit. Is there need, then, that any should walk in uncertainty, grieving that they do not know and experience the movings of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts? Are you hungering and thirsting for instruction in righteousness? Then you have the sure promise that you shall be filled. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." The Lord would have us in possession of the spirit of heavenly wisdom. Are we all being impressed to pray to the Lord humbly and earnestly as our necessities require, importuning Him for the spirit of wisdom? Do we pray, saying, "Show me the secrets which I know not, teach Thou me"? Oh, for humble, earnest prayer to go forth from unfeigned lips praying for the counsel that is of God! He says, Counsel is Mine, and sound wisdom.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 199-200.