

Sabbath School Lessons, 1st Quarter, 2018
General Introduction
'Truth is fallen in the street'

'Prompted by the adversary of all righteousness, they call evil good, and truth falsehood. It is as the prophet has described, "Truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." It is because such is the condition and spirit of the world that God calls upon His people to come out and be separate. Those who mingle with the world will come to view matters from the worldling's stand-point, instead of seeing as God sees. "What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" God's people will see as He sees.' *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, page 236.

'We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns. And they were all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet. Angels were all about us as we marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the city. Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, "You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.'" *Early Writings*, page 16.

COMPILER'S NOTE:

Truth in the context of these Bible lessons refers to the divinely-revealed teachings concerning salvation from sin and our restoration once again to the image of God. Truth is what God has told us about His commandments, sin, repentance, baptism, becoming like Jesus, the work of the sanctuary in heaven, what happens when we die, the judgement, the second coming of Jesus, and the final end of all evil leading to the recreation of the earth, in fact what ever has been revealed by God for us. This is Truth. This is what the Bible is all about. The collected philosophies of the great minds of the world do not constitute truth.

The evil one has taken each statement of God and poured doubt or scorn upon it. Other teachings he has twisted, and others he has subtly corrupted. If we say we love the Lord, then we must know for a certainty the whole system of truth as revealed in the Bible and live it, truly believing what God has said. If we say Jesus is coming again soon, are we living as if we believe it? Truth has fallen in the street, but has truth also fallen in our own experience?

The background to these lessons is the current, very strong dislike for the concept of Truth in the religious world. It is considered divisive and unpleasantly exclusive to declare that one has the Truth. This makes witness for Jesus increasingly difficult. We live today in a world without absolutes but the Truth as revealed through Jesus is an absolute, requiring a strong and definite absolute response from us.

There was a time when one would say that he or she had been baptised 'into the Truth'. Questions would come up in conversation: "How did you find the Truth?" "When did you come into the Truth?" "I am now working for the Cause." (the missionary arm of Truth) "Isn't it sad? He has left the Truth." "They have gone out of the Truth." Only comparatively recently has the newer expression heard, "He joined the church" or "She left the church." And in an ecumenical way, today it is beginning to be said, "She has left the faith," as just a general expression of religion.

In today's climate of ecumenism and unity, it is not 'religiously correct' to say one has the Truth. Instead it is said that we are all, without exception, children of the same God and Father and, as such, none should dare to say that he or she has the Truth. It is taught today that some truth is in the heart of every human being, of whatever culture or persuasion they may be. But, as we use different words, and each perceives things differently, it is said that there is a need to get together, to dialogue, to walk and work together and come to know what the other believes and so form a more complete picture of Truth from each other. It is current thinking to consider the truth as like an elephant in a dark room. The wise men enter and feel in the dark, and find tusks, a trunk, a little rope tail, big feet, leathery skin. Each thinks he has defined the elephant, whereas in reality they each have only discovered a part. So they say, "Truth is too big for any one of us; we see only the part nearest us. Therefore we must dialogue together to discover the greater picture."

In practice, this means compromises to avoid conflict, (which is considered a harmful, negative mind-set) resulting in subjective consensus statements being drawn up and signed. No study is made of the Word of God to discover what God might wish to open up to us. As a result, "Truth is fallen in the street." Satan has placed a multitude of errors in our way to lead away from the one Truth, to lead one away from eternal life, and to take us to destruction with him.

Truth comes to us only from the Holy Spirit sent us of God, the Spirit of Truth who inspired all Scripture. Jesus said that, when He came, the Spirit of Truth would lead us into 'all truth'. We can have confidence in that. There is one Holy Spirit, one God, therefore there is one Truth, with the seventh-day Sabbath declared as the sign of our love and our loyalty to Jesus the Truth.

Lesson 1: December 31-January 6
'What is Truth?'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.' John 14:6.

LESSON AIM: To show that it is only in Jesus that we find Truth.

Introduction

'He [Jesus] presented Himself to the people as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Let these be the themes of Christ's ministers. Present the truth as it is in Jesus. Make plain the requirements of the law and the gospel. Tell the people of Christ's life of self-denial and sacrifice; of His humiliation and death; of His resurrection and ascension; of His intercession for them in the courts of God; of His promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3. Instead of discussing erroneous theories, or seeking to combat the opponents of the gospel, follow the example of Christ. Let fresh truths from God's treasure house flash into life. "Preach the word." "Sow beside all waters." "Be instant in season, out of season." "He that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." "Every word of God is pure.... Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." 2 Timothy 4:2; Isaiah 32:20; Jeremiah 23:28; Proverbs 30:5-6.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 40.

'The same yesterday and to day and for ever'

1. What does the Word of God tell us about Jesus? Hebrews 13:8.

NOTE: 'The consecrated messengers, who in the early days of Christianity carried to a perishing world the glad tidings of salvation, allowed no thought of self-exaltation to mar their presentation of Christ and Him crucified. They coveted neither authority nor pre-eminence. Hiding self in the Saviour, they exalted the great plan of salvation, and the life of Christ, the Author and Finisher of this plan. Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, was the burden of their teaching.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 209.

2. How long are we told that Truth will endure? Psalm 117:2.

NOTE: 'The pure word of God alone must be preached to the people in clear lines, and its convincing, controlling power on heart and life will alone transform the character and save the soul. "The word of the Lord endureth forever." "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."' *Bible Echo*, May 21, 1894.

'Hunger and thirst after righteousness'

3. What should be the quest of our spiritual lives? John 12:21.

NOTE: 'When Christ heard the eager request, "We would see Jesus," echoing the hungering cry of the world, His countenance lighted up, and He said, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." In the request of the Greeks He saw an earnest of the results of His great sacrifice. These men came from the West to find the Saviour at the close of His life, as the wise men had come from the East at the beginning. At the time of Christ's birth the Jewish people were so engrossed with their own ambitious plans that they knew not of His advent. The magicians from a heathen land came to the manger with their gifts to worship the Saviour. So these Greeks, representing the nations, tribes, and peoples of the world, came to see Jesus. So the people of all lands and all ages would be drawn by the Saviour's cross. So shall many "come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 8:11. The Greeks had heard of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Some supposed, and had circulated the report, that He had driven the priests and rulers from the temple, and that He was to take possession of David's throne, and reign as king of Israel. The Greeks longed to know the truth in regard to His mission. "We would see Jesus," they said. Their desire was granted. When the request was brought to Jesus, He was in that part of the temple from which all except Jews were excluded, but He went out to the Greeks in the outer court, and had a personal interview with them. ' *Desire of Ages*, pages 621-622.

4. Can we ever find Truth? John 16:13.

NOTE: 'We must not put our dependence in man. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" You must hang your helpless souls upon Jesus. It does not become us to drink from the fountain of the valley when there is a fountain in the mountain. Let us leave the lower streams; let us come to the higher springs. If there is a point of truth that you do not understand, upon which you do not agree, investigate, compare scripture with scripture, sink the shaft of truth down deep into the mine of God's word. You must lay yourselves and your opinions on the altar of God, put away your preconceived ideas, and let the Spirit of heaven guide into all truth.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 476.

'Buy the truth and sell it not'

5. How do we obtain truth? Proverbs 23:23, first three words.

NOTE: 'We are to seek for the pearl of great price, but not in worldly marts or in worldly ways. The price we are required to pay is not gold or silver, for this belongs to God. Abandon the idea that temporal or spiritual advantages will win for you salvation. God calls for your willing obedience. He asks you to give up your sins. "To him that overcometh," Christ declares, "will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." Revelation 3:21. There are some who seem to be always seeking for the heavenly pearl. But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 117.

6. What warning does Solomon give about betraying the truth or compromising in our handling of truth? Proverbs 23:23.

NOTE: 'The servants of Christ are called to the same work, and they should beware lest, in seeking to prevent discord, they surrender the truth. They are to "follow after the things which make for peace" (Romans 14:19); but real peace can never be secured by compromising principle. And no man can be true to principle without exciting opposition. A Christianity that is spiritual will be opposed by the children of disobedience. But Jesus bade His disciples, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Those who are true to God need not fear the power of men nor the enmity of Satan. In Christ their eternal life is secure. Their only fear should be lest they surrender the truth, and thus betray the trust with which God has honoured them' *Desire of Ages*, page 356.

'Truth is perished'

7. What did Jeremiah say about God's people of old? Jeremiah 7:23-27.

NOTE: 'When men's hearts are softened and subdued by the constraining influence of the Holy Spirit, they will give heed to counsel; but when they turn from admonition until their hearts become hardened, the Lord permits them to be led by other influences. Refusing the truth, they accept falsehood, which becomes a snare to their own destruction.' *Prophets and Kings*, page 425.

8. What was the result of their rejection of the words of God, and their refusal of correction through the prophets? Jeremiah 7:28, 34.

NOTE: 'God's covenant with them had been, "Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." Shamelessly and repeatedly had this covenant been broken. The chosen nation had "walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward." Jeremiah 7:23, 24. "Why," the Lord inquired, "is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?" Jeremiah 8:5. In the language of the prophet, it was because they had obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God and had refused to be corrected. See Jeremiah 5:3. "Truth is perished," he mourned, "and is cut off from their mouth." *Prophets and Kings*, page 414.

'Thou desirest truth in the inward parts'

9. In David's psalm of penitence, where did he say truth should dwell? Psalm 51:6; Psalm 15:1-2.

NOTE: 'Often the question arises, Why, then, are there so many claiming to believe God's word, in whom there is not seen a reformation in words, in spirit, and in character? Why are there so many who cannot bear opposition to their purposes and plans, who manifest an unholy temper, and whose words are harsh, overbearing, and passionate? There is seen in their lives the same love of self, the same selfish indulgence, the same temper and hasty speech, that is seen in the life of the worldling. There is the same sensitive pride, the same yielding to natural inclination, the same perversity of character, as if the truth were wholly unknown to them. The reason is that they are not converted. They have not hidden the leaven of truth in the heart. It has not had opportunity to do its work. Their natural and cultivated tendencies to evil have not been submitted to its transforming power. Their lives reveal the absence of the grace of Christ, an unbelief in His power to transform the character.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 99.

10. How does the Bible instruct us to keep our hearts, so that we may speak the clear words of eternal life as it is in Jesus? Proverbs 4:23.

NOTE: 'Make the Bible the man of your counsel. Your acquaintance with it will grow rapidly if you keep your mind free from the rubbish of the world. The more the Bible is studied, the deeper will be your knowledge of God. The truths of His word will be written in your soul, making an inefaceable impression. Not only will the student himself be benefited by a study of the word of God. His study is life and salvation to all with whom he associates. He will feel a sacred responsibility to impart the knowledge that he receives. His life will reveal the help and strength that he receives from communion with the word. The sanctification of the Spirit will be seen in thought, word, and deed. All that he says and does will proclaim that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. Of such ones the Lord Jesus can indeed say, "Ye are labourers together with God.'" *Counsels on Health*, page 372.

'I will walk in Thy truth'

11. Where will God lead us? Psalm 25:4-5.

NOTE: 'The inexperienced need to be guided by wise counsel when in trial and assailed with temptation; they must be taught that attainments in spiritual things will cost them steadfast, well-directed effort. We must repeat it often to those newly come to the faith, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). These words are to be presented in the spirit of the Master who gave them, for they are of more value than gold or silver or precious stones. Teach the young disciples to put their hands in the hand of Christ, saying, "Lead me, guide me." What comfort and hope and blessing will the needy, perplexed souls receive if they will humbly seek God. The condition is that they come in faith, nothing wavering, asking for guidance in the day of perplexity. This pledge is given to every sincere seeker: "You shall have gracious answers." "You shall receive." The instruction is to be often given that what God has said will never fail.' *Mind, Character and Personality*, volume 2, page 764.

12. What should be our prayer? Psalm 86:11.

NOTE: 'Enoch walked with God three hundred years previous to his translation to heaven, and the state of the world was not then more favourable for the perfection of Christian character than it is today. And how did Enoch walk with God? He educated his

mind and heart to ever feel that he was in the presence of God, and when in perplexity his prayers would ascend to God to keep him. He refused to take any course that would offend his God. He kept the Lord continually before him. He would pray, "Teach me Thy way, that I may not err. What is Thy pleasure concerning me? What shall I do to honour Thee, my God?" Thus he was constantly shaping his way and course in accordance with God's commandments, and he had perfect confidence and trust in his heavenly Father, that He would help him. He had no thought or will of his own. It was all submerged in the will of his Father. Now Enoch was a representative of those who will be upon the earth when Christ shall come, who will be translated to heaven without seeing death.' *Last Day Events*, page 71.

Lesson Insight: The truth of God is unchanging and everlasting. The Holy Spirit is constantly challenging our lives to come onto the side of Christ. When we once give ourselves up to God, He will fill our hearts and minds with His ways of thinking, and give us a new understanding of His Life. We become partakers of His Truth in our hearts. As we guard this treasure it will colour all our words so that we are a blessing of life to all with whom we come in contact.

Lesson 2: January 7-13

'The certainty of the words of truth'

MEMORY VERSE: 'That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee.' Proverbs 22:21.

LESSON AIM: To show that, although we must know the Truth, it is also essential that we love and obey the Truth, so that we speak the Truth.

Introduction

'The truth as it is in Jesus can be experienced, but never explained. Its height and breadth and depth pass our knowledge. We may task our imagination to the utmost, and then we shall see only dimly the outlines of a love that is unexplainable, that is as high as heaven, but that stooped to the earth to stamp the image of God on all mankind.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 129.

'A God of truth and without iniquity'

1. Who claims to be Truth? Deuteronomy 32:3-4.

NOTE: 'Just before us is the "hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." [Revelation 3:10.] All whose faith is not firmly established upon the word of God will be deceived and overcome. But to those who earnestly seek a knowledge of the truth, thus doing what they can to prepare for the conflict, the God of truth will be a sure defence. "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee," is the Saviour's promise. He would sooner send every angel out of Heaven to protect His people, than leave one soul that trusts in Him to be overcome by Satan.' *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, page 377.

2. How has the God of truth revealed Himself to an enfeebled human race? Psalm 46:1-3; Psalm 32:8.

NOTE: 'Not in freedom from trial, but in the midst of it, is Christian character developed. Exposure to rebuffs and opposition leads the follower of Christ to greater watchfulness and more earnest prayer to the mighty Helper. Severe trial endured by the grace of God develops patience, vigilance, fortitude and a deep and abiding trust in God. It is the triumph of the Christian faith that it enables its followers to suffer and be strong; to submit, and thus to conquer; to be killed all the day long, and yet to live; to bear the cross, and thus to win the crown of glory.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 467.

'Quietness and assurance for ever'

3. In these last days before Jesus returns, when so many have lost sight of God, how is their mental state described? Luke 21:25-26.

NOTE: 'Let every one who claims to believe that the Lord is soon coming, search the Scriptures as never before; for Satan is determined to try every device possible to keep souls in darkness, and blind the mind to the perils of the times in which we are living. Let every believer take up his Bible with earnest prayer, that he may be enlightened by the Holy Spirit as to what is truth, that he may know more of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Search for the truth as for hidden treasures, and disappoint the enemy. The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth. For it is the work of every one to whom the message of warning has come, to lift up Jesus, to present Him to the world as revealed in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the revelations of the prophets, as unveiled in the lessons given to His disciples and in the wonderful miracles wrought for the sons of men. Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of Him. If you would stand through the time of trouble, you must know Christ.' *Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892.

4. By contrast, what does the experience of living in God's way give to our hearts? Isaiah 32:17.

NOTE: 'Every man's experience testifies to the truth of the words of Scripture, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest ... There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Isaiah 57:20, 21. Sin has destroyed our peace. While self is unsubdued, we can find no rest. The masterful passions of the heart no human power can control. We are as helpless here as were the disciples to quiet the raging storm. But He who spoke peace to the billows of Galilee has spoken the word of peace for every soul. However fierce the tempest, those who turn to Jesus with the cry, "Lord, save us," will find deliverance. His grace, which reconciles the soul to God, quiets the strife of human passion, and in His love the heart is at rest. "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven." Psalm 107:29, 30. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Romans 5:1; Isaiah 32:17.' *Desire of Ages*, page 336.

'Plenteous in mercy and truth'

5. How does God describe the fullness of His Truth? Exodus 34:5-6.

NOTE: 'From beginning to end, God's requirements set forth His eternal truth. His law is the test of character. His covenant with man declares the immutability of His counsel. God is truth. He declares that He will not alter the thing that has gone out of His mouth.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 19, page 182.

6. Does God have enough truth to answer all the questions and philosophies that arise against the people of God? Psalm 86:15.

NOTE: 'Strengthened by unquestioning faith in Christ, even the illiterate disciple will be able to withstand the doubts and questions that infidelity can produce, and put to blush the sophistries of scorners. The Lord Jesus will give the disciples a tongue and wisdom that their adversaries can neither gainsay nor resist. Those who could not by reasoning overcome Satanic delusions, will bear an affirmative testimony that will baffle supposedly learned men. Words will come from the lips of the unlearned with such convincing power and wisdom that conversions will be made to the truth. Thousands will be converted under their testimony. Why should the illiterate man have this power, which the learned man has not? The illiterate one, through faith in Christ, has come into the atmosphere of pure, clear truth, while the learned man has turned away from the truth. The poor man is Christ's witness. He cannot appeal to histories or to so-called high science, but he gathers from the Word of God powerful evidence. The truth that he speaks under the inspiration of the Spirit, is so pure and remarkable and carries with it a power so indisputable, that his testimony cannot be gainsaid.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 8, page 187.

'The truth of the Lord endureth for ever'

7. How does Scripture reveal that the Creator will not change in His kindness to the fallen human race, but will faithfully keep His intentions towards them? Psalm 146:5-6.

NOTE: 'Christ's love for His children is as tender as it is strong. And it is stronger than death; for He died to purchase our salvation, and to make us one with Him, mystically and eternally one. So strong is His love that it controls all His powers, and employs the vast resources of heaven in doing His people good. It is without variableness or shadow of turning, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Although sin has existed for ages, trying to counteract this love and obstruct its flowing earthward, it still flows in rich currents to those for whom Christ died.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 518-519.

8. How does the Psalmist further stress the everlasting truth of God? Psalm 117:2.

NOTE: 'Jesus knew that whatever was presented that was out of harmony with what He came to earth to unfold, was false and delusive. But He said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice." [John 18:37.] Having stood in the counsels of God, having dwelt in the everlasting heights of the sanctuary, all elements of truth were in Him, and of Him; for He was one with God. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak what We do know, and testify that We have seen; and ye receive not Our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." [John 3:11-13.] "Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." *Christian Education*, page 88.

'I proceeded forth and came from God'

9. How does truth come to us? John 8:45 first part.

NOTE: 'The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work we are to warn the people of the danger they are in. Let not the solemn scenes which prophecy has revealed be left untouched. If our people were half awake, if they realised the nearness of the events portrayed in the Revelation, a reformation would be wrought in our churches, and many more would believe the message. We have no time to lose; God calls upon us to watch for souls as they that must give an account. Advance new principles, and crowd in the clear-cut truth. It will be as a sword cutting both ways. But be not too ready to take a controversial attitude. There will be times when we must stand still and see the salvation of God. Let Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth. But whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the centre of all hope, "the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star." Revelation 22:16.' *Testimonies*, volume 6, page 61.

10. In speaking to Nicodemus where did Jesus say that Truth originates? John 3:12-13.

NOTE: 'The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship Him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony

and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who “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.] He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love not only those who loved them, but those who hated them, who treated them despitefully. In this He was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted His teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul.’ *Christian Education*, page 74.

‘Serve the Lord in truth’

11. In the prayer of Jesus how do we see that truth is not merely an abstract but the Word of God that demands our response? John 17:17. Consider John 2:5.

NOTE: ‘There is truth in Jesus that is full of soothing joy to the obedient. It is the joy of the Holy Ghost. Be persuaded, then, to open the mind and heart that you may see every ray of light shining from the throne of God. This is no time to be indifferent and careless and pleasure loving. Christ is coming with power and great glory. Are you ready? Are you putting away your sins? Are you becoming sanctified through the truth in answer to the prayer of Christ? He prayed concerning His disciples, “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth” (John 17:17).’ *Selected Messages*, volume 1, page 318.

12. Why should we serve the Lord in fear with truth in our hearts? 1 Samuel 12:24.

NOTE: ‘We seek the strength of erring, finite man, when we might have the strength of the unerring, infinite God. You need not go to the ends of the earth for wisdom, for God is near. It is not the capabilities you now possess or ever will have that will give you success. It is that which the Lord can do for you. We need to have far less confidence in what man can do and far more confidence in what God can do for every believing soul. He longs to have you reach after Him by faith. He longs to have you expect great things from Him. He longs to give you understanding in temporal as well as in spiritual matters. He can sharpen the intellect. He can give tact and skill. Put your talents into the work, ask God for wisdom, and it will be given you.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 146.

Lesson Insight: Truth is always an experience, not a philosophy. It is rich enough to meet every situation and doubt. As we buy this truth by the surrender of our wayward lives, and serve the Lord, others will see and know that we have the certainty of the Lord guiding our steps.

Lesson 3: January 14-20

‘Thy word is truth’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘In hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.’ Titus 1:2-3.

LESSON AIM: To show that man-made teachings of science and philosophy are often only corruptions or contradictions of the Truth of the Word.

Introduction

‘Again and again Paul warned the believers against these false teachers. This peril, above all others, they must guard against; for by receiving false teachers, they would open the door to errors by which the enemy would dim the spiritual perceptions and shake the confidence of those newly come to the faith of the gospel. Christ was the standard by which they were to test the doctrines presented. All that was not in harmony with His teachings they were to reject. Christ crucified for sin, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high, this was the science of salvation that they were to learn and teach. 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.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 474.

1. In a world of many philosophies and sacred writings, what is the only source of pure unchanging truth in the world? John 17:17.

NOTE: ‘Through tradition, through false education, these men are exalted as the world’s educators; but in going to them students are in danger of accepting the vile with the precious; for superstition, specious reasoning, and error are mingled with portions of true philosophy and instruction. This mingling makes a potion that is poisonous to the soul, destructive of faith in the God of all truth. Those who have a thirst for knowledge need not go to these polluted fountains; for they are invited to come to the fountain of life and drink freely. Through searching the word of God, they may find the hidden treasure of truth that has long been buried beneath the rubbish of error, human tradition, and opinions of men.’ *Christian Education*, page 102.

2. For how long has God, and the truth He has revealed to us in the Scriptures, existed? Psalm 90:1-2; Psalm 93:2; Isaiah 63:16.

NOTE: 'God always has been. He is the great I AM. The psalmist declares, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. "I am the Lord, I change not," He declares. With Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. He is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." He is infinite and omnipresent.' *Medical Ministry*, page 93.

'After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you'

3. Of what danger, which would come in after his death, did Paul forewarn the elders in Ephesus? Acts 20:29-31.

NOTE: 'The Holy Spirit revealed to the apostle the dangers which would assail the church at Ephesus: "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Paul trembled for the church as he looked forward to the attacks which they must suffer from external and internal foes. It is while the husbandman sleeps that tares are sown; while the shepherds are neglecting their duty, the wolf finds entrance to the fold. With solemn earnestness he bids his brethren guard vigilantly their sacred trust. He points them for an example to his own unwearied labours: "Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day and with tears.'" *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, page 201.

4. What warnings have been given in the Bible against looking to the authority and doctrinal teaching of corrupted angels, and departing from the truths of God that have existed in eternity? 1 Timothy 4:1.

NOTE: 'There will always be in positions of trust men who have never overcome self, professors who flatter the pleasure-lover, and court his approval by uniting with him. They determine not to obey the call to come out and be separate, and as a consequence, iniquity abounds. Anything is more acceptable to them than the putting away of the evil thing. They profess to believe the word of God, but they do it not. With a knowledge of sacred truth before them, they cherish sin in the heart. The will of God is known, but rejected, and their hearts become more hard, their consciences more unimpressible, and their ruin more sure than if they had had no knowledge of the truth.' *Review and Herald*, November 28, 1899.

'Able to make thee wise unto salvation'

5. Where only do we find the wisdom of salvation from sin? 2 Timothy 3:15.

NOTE: 'God has provided abundant means for successful warfare against the evil that is in the world. The Bible is the armoury where we may equip for the struggle. Our loins must be girt about with truth. Our breastplate must be righteousness. The shield of faith must be in our hand, the helmet of salvation on our brow; and with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, we are to cut our way through the obstructions and entanglements of sin. Paul knew that there was before the church a time of great peril. He knew that faithful, earnest work would have to be done by those left in charge of the churches; and he wrote to Timothy, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 502.

6. How much of the written Scriptures do we need to teach us these lessons? 2 Timothy 3:16.

NOTE: 'Many professed Christians throw aside the Old Testament, and shut themselves up to the New. The cry now is, "Away with the law and the prophets, and give us the gospel of Christ." If the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament Scriptures were all that was necessary to establish belief, why did not Jesus upon this occasion merely refer to the doctrines He had taught, the wisdom and purity of His character, and the miracles He had performed, as sufficient evidence of his Messiahship? The history of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, as that of the Son of God, cannot be fully demonstrated without the evidence contained in the Old Testament. Christ is revealed in the Old Testament as clearly as in the New. The one testifies of a Saviour to come, while the other testifies of a Saviour that has come in the manner predicted by the prophets. In order to appreciate the plan of redemption, the Scripture of the Old Testament must be thoroughly understood. It is the glorified light from the prophetic past that brings out the life of Christ and the teachings of the New Testament with clearness and beauty.' *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 3, page 211.

'All the words of this life'

7. Where only may we find the answers to the big questions of life? What subjects does the Bible speak about? Genesis 1:1; Genesis 2:16-17; Genesis 3:23-24; Isaiah 53:5-6; John 14:1-3; Isaiah 65:17.

NOTE: 'Silas and Timothy had "come from Macedonia" to help Paul, and together they laboured for the Gentiles. To the heathen, as well as to the Jews, Paul and his companions preached Christ as the Saviour of the fallen race. Avoiding complicated, far-fetched reasoning, the messengers of the cross dwelt upon the attributes of the Creator of the world, the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Their hearts aglow with the love of God and of His Son, they appealed to the heathen to behold the infinite sacrifice made on man's behalf. They knew that if those who had long been groping in the darkness of heathenism could but see the light streaming from Calvary's cross, they would be drawn to the Redeemer. "I, if I be lifted up," the Saviour had declared, "will draw all men unto Me." John 12:32.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 248.

8. Not only does God speak of origins and how He gave life, but what truth does He explain about death and beyond? Ecclesiastes 9:5-6; John 5:28-29.

NOTE: “Why, mother!” cried I, in astonishment, “this is strange talk for you! If you believe this strange theory, do not let anyone know of it; for I fear that sinners would gather security from this belief, and never desire to seek the Lord.” “If this is sound Bible truth,” she replied, “instead of preventing the salvation of sinners, it will be the means of winning them to Christ. If the love of God will not induce the rebel to yield, the terrors of an eternal hell will not drive him to repentance. Besides, it does not seem a proper way to win souls to Jesus by appealing to one of the lowest attributes of the mind, abject fear. The love of Jesus attracts; it will subdue the hardest heart.” It was some months after this conversation before I heard anything further concerning this doctrine; but during this time my mind had been much exercised upon the subject. When I heard it preached, I believed it to be the truth. From the time that light in regard to the sleep of the dead dawned upon my mind, the mystery that had enshrouded the resurrection vanished, and the great event itself assumed a new and sublime importance. My mind had often been disturbed by its efforts to reconcile the immediate reward or punishment of the dead with the undoubted fact of a future resurrection and judgement. If at death the soul entered upon eternal happiness or misery, where was the need of a resurrection of the poor mouldering body? But this new and beautiful faith taught me the reason why inspired writers had dwelt so much upon the resurrection of the body; it was because the entire being was slumbering in the grave. I could now clearly perceive the fallacy of our former position on this question.’ *Christian Experience and Teachings*, page 41.

‘That I might not sin against thee’

9. What part does the truth of God’s word play in our daily life? Psalm 119:11; 2 Peter 1:3-4.

NOTE: ‘He who would build up a strong, symmetrical character, he who would be a well-balanced Christian, must give all and do all for Christ; for the Redeemer will not accept divided service. Daily he must learn the meaning of self-surrender. He must study the word of God, learning its meaning and obeying its precepts. Thus he may reach the standard of Christian excellence. Day by day God works with him, perfecting the character that is to stand in the time of final test. And day by day the believer is working out before men and angels a sublime experiment, showing what the gospel can do for fallen human beings.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 483.

10. What bracing words could Paul write through trusting in the promises and power of the risen Christ? Philippians 4:13.

NOTE: ‘Wonderful, wonderful words, almost beyond comprehension! Will the teachers in our schools understand this? Will they take the word of God as the lesson book able to make them wise unto salvation? This book is the voice of God speaking to us. The Bible opens to us the words of life; for it makes us acquainted with Christ who is our life. In order to have true, abiding faith in Christ, we must know Him as He is represented in the word. Faith is trustful. It is not a matter of fits and starts, according to the impulse and emotion of the hour; but it is a principle that has its foundation in Jesus Christ. And faith must be kept in constant exercise through the diligent, persevering study of the word. The word thus becomes a living agency; and we are sanctified through the truth.’ *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 433.

‘They will increase unto more ungodliness’

11. What did Paul warn Timothy to avoid? 1 Timothy 6:20. Compare 2 Timothy 2:16.

NOTE: ‘An enlightened judgment compels us to acknowledge that heavenly things are superior to the things of earth, and yet the depraved heart of man leads him to give precedence to the things of the world. The opinions of great men, the theories of science, falsely so-called, are blended with the truths of Holy Writ. But the heart that is surrendered to God, loves the truth of God’s word; for through the truth the soul is regenerated. The carnal mind finds no pleasure in contemplating the word of God, but he who is renewed in the spirit of his mind, sees new charms in the living oracles; for divine beauty and celestial light seem to shine in every passage. That which was to the carnal mind a desolate wilderness, to the spiritual mind becomes a land of living streams. That which to the unrenewed heart appeared a barren waste, to the converted soul becomes the garden of God, covered with fragrant buds and blooming flowers. The Bible has been placed in the background, while the sayings of great men, so-called, have been taken in its stead. May the Lord forgive us the slight we have put upon His word.’ *Christian Education*, page 79.

12. What is our sure foundation? Isaiah 40:8.

NOTE: Centuries before, the prophet Isaiah had written, “The word of our God shall stand forever” (Isaiah 40:8); and Peter, long after the Sermon on the Mount was given, quoting these words of Isaiah added, “This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (1 Peter 1:25). The word of God is the only steadfast thing our world knows. It is the sure foundation. “Heaven and earth shall pass away,” said Jesus, “but My words shall not pass away.” Matthew 24:35.’ *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, page 148.

Lesson Insight: Almost all the errors in Christendom today contradict some aspect of the Three Angel’s Messages, the final warning from heaven. Revelation 14:6-12. These errors are the devil’s ploy to take away our hope of Life. He studies to contradict all that God has said.

- **‘Everlasting gospel’** BUT, they say, many gospels have come in and they are each valid to the one that believes them.
- **‘To every nation, kindred, tongue and people’** BUT, they say, we are taught not disturb people’s own culture and religious traditions.
- **‘Fear God’** BUT, they say, choose any religious thinking or philosophy to suit you.

- **‘Give glory to Him’** BUT, they say, we can never reflect His glory, for we shall always be sinners; we can never be like Jesus; we just do our best.
- **‘The hour of His judgement’** (Here there is a large cluster of contradictions. They began in Spiritualism.) BUT, they say, there is no sin, there is no need of a Saviour, there is no death, there is no judgement. OR The judgement does not apply to Christians for we are already saved and cannot lose our salvation. OR The human spirit, through science, will solve its own problems. There is no afterlife, so join the ‘One life, live it!’ people. There is no Second Coming when God will bring His rewards. We live it now. • **‘The hour is come’** BUT, they say, God has given no time prophecies; they were all written after the event. Nostradamus is as valuable as Daniel.
- **‘Worship Him’** BUT, they say, follow the worship of the pagan sun god in Christian dress.
- **‘Babylon is fallen’** BUT, they say, all the churches and faiths are coming together to put right the divisions. Religions will grow into a glorious world unity. They will not fall.
- **‘Babylon has made all nations drink of the wine’** BUT this openly enrages those who teach differently from the system of Biblical truth.
- **Third Angel’s Message final warning** (i.e. If any man worship according to the command of the beast and his image, which will be Sunday observance, then the wrath of God will be poured upon that person for rejecting the warning of God.) BUT, they say, today we may worship God on Sunday, but the Sabbath, as part of the weekend, has become a family day, a day to protect the planet, a day for community activities, not necessarily sacred time.
- **‘Here are they!’** There will be people who will love and trust and obey God. ‘And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.’ BUT, philosophy says, and the church listens, you cannot worship God until you love yourself.

Where will your feet be placed, on the Rock of God’s will and God’s Truth, or on the sand?

Lesson 4: January 21-27

‘Thy throne is established of old’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Thy throne is established of old; thou art from everlasting.’ Psalm 93:2.

LESSON AIM: To show that the words of God are sure and settled, while human teaching originating from the evil one twists and turns and changes.

Introduction

‘I entreat everyone to be clear and firm regarding the certain truths that we have heard and received and advocated. The statements of God’s Word are plain. Plant your feet firmly on the platform of eternal truth. Reject every phase of error, even though it be covered with a semblance of reality. Many know so little about their Bibles that they are unsettled in the faith. They remove the old landmarks, and fallacies and winds of doctrine blow them hither and thither. Science, falsely so-called, is wearing away the foundation of Christian principle; and those who once were in the faith drift away from the Bible landmarks, and divorce themselves from God, while still claiming to be His. The church needs to awake to an understanding of the subtle powers of satanic agencies that must be met.’ *Evangelism*, page 362.

‘He only is my rock’

1. How does God describe Himself through the words He has inspired? 2 Samuel 22:2; 1 Samuel 2:2-3.

NOTE: ‘Keep a firm hold upon the Lord Jesus, and never let go. Have firm convictions as to what you believe. Let the truths of God’s Word lead you to devote heart, mind, soul, and strength to the doing of His will. Lay hold resolutely upon a plain “Thus saith the Lord.” Let your only argument be “It is written.” Thus we are to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. That faith has not lost any of its sacred, holy character, however objectionable its opposers may think it to be. Those who follow their own mind and walk in their own way will form crooked characters. Vain doctrines and subtle sentiments will be introduced with plausible presentations, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Are church members building upon the Rock? The storm is coming, the storm that will try every man’s faith, of what sort it is. Believers must now be firmly rooted in Christ, or else they will be led astray by some phase of error. Let your faith be substantiated by the Word of God. Grasp firmly the living testimony of truth. Have faith in Christ as a personal Saviour. He has been, and ever will be, our Rock of Ages. The testimony of the Spirit of God is true. Change not your faith for any phase of doctrine, however pleasing it may appear, that will seduce the soul. The fallacies of Satan are now being multiplied, and those who swerve from the path of truth will lose their bearings. Having nothing to which to anchor, they will drift from one delusion to another, blown about by the winds of strange doctrines.’ *Evangelism*, page 361.

2. How did David specifically describe God his Rock? Psalm 62:2, 6-7.

NOTE: ‘The only safety for any of us is to plant our feet upon the Word of God and study the Scriptures, making God’s Word our constant meditation. Tell the people to take no man’s word regarding the Testimonies, but to read them and study them for themselves, and then they will know that they are in harmony with the truth. The Word of God is the truth. Of a good man the psalmist declares, “His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night” (Psalm 1:2). He who puts mind and heart into this work gains a solid, valuable experience. The Holy Spirit is in the Word of God. Here is the living,

undying element so distinctly represented in the sixth chapter of John. Let us believe the Word. He who thus eats the bread of heaven is nourished every day and will know what these words mean, "Needeth not that any man teach you." We have lessons pure from the lips of Him who owns us, who has bought us with the price of His own blood. The precious Word of God is a solid foundation upon which to build. When men come to you with their suppositions, tell them that the Great Teacher has left you His Word, which is of incalculable value, that He has sent a Comforter in His own name, even the Holy Ghost. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." *Our Father Cares*, page 245.

‘To all generations’

3. What is the eternal quality of the revealed truth of God? Psalm 100:5.

NOTE: 'In early ages, with the people who were under God's direction, life was simple. They lived close to the heart of nature. Their children shared in the labour of the parents and studied the beauties and mysteries of nature's treasure house. And in the quiet of field and wood they pondered those mighty truths handed down as a sacred trust from generation to generation. Such training produced strong men. In this age, life has become artificial, and men have degenerated.' *Education*, page 211.

4. How does the enduring creation confirm the unchanging nature of God's words? Psalm 119:89-91.

NOTE: 'Those who doubt the reliability of the records of the Old and New Testaments will be led to go a step farther, and doubt the existence of God; and then, having lost their anchor, they are left to beat about upon the rocks of infidelity. These persons have lost the simplicity of faith. There should be a settled belief in the divine authority of God's holy word. The Bible is not to be tested by men's ideas of science. Human knowledge is an unreliable guide. Sceptics, who read the Bible for the sake of cavilling, may, through an imperfect comprehension of either science or revelation, claim to find contradictions between them; but rightly understood, they are in perfect harmony. Moses wrote under the guidance of the Spirit of God; and a correct theory of geology will never claim discoveries that cannot be reconciled with his statements. All truth, whether in nature or in revelation, is consistent with itself in all its manifestations.' *Christian Education*, page 193.

‘The lip of truth shall be established forever’

5. For how long will the words of truth be established? Proverbs 12:19, first part.

NOTE: 'Promises are estimated by the truth of the one who makes them. Many men make promises only to break them, to mock the heart that trusted in them. Those who lean upon such men lean upon broken reeds. But God is behind the promises He makes. He is ever mindful of His covenant, and His truth endures to all generations. "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant." The gift of God's dear Son makes the promises ours of a surety.' *Youth's Instructor*, February 15, 1900.

6. By contrast, how long is the life of an error before a new deception takes its place? Proverbs 12:19, second part.

NOTE: 'The Christian is required to be diligent in searching the Scriptures, to read over and over again the truths of God's word. Wilful ignorance on this subject endangers the Christian life and character. It blinds the understanding and corrupts the noblest powers. It is this that brings confusion into our lives.' *Testimony Treasures*, volume 2, page 101.

‘Itching ears’

7. What warning does God give about being swept away by new things coming from those lying in wait to deceive? Ephesians 4:14.

NOTE: 'Our people need to understand the oracles of God; they need to have a systematic knowledge of the principles of revealed truth, which will fit them for what is coming upon the earth and prevent them from being carried about by every wind of doctrine. Great changes are soon to take place in the world, and everyone will need an experimental knowledge of the things of God. It is the work of Satan to dishearten the people of God and to unsettle their faith.' *Testimony Treasures*, volume 2, page 101.

8. What warning does Paul give to Timothy about turning from the truth to fables? 2 Timothy 4:3-4.

NOTE: 'Walk firmly, decidedly, your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. You may be sure that pure and undefiled religion is not a sensational religion. God has not laid upon anyone the burden of encouraging an appetite for speculative doctrines and theories. My brethren, keep these things out of your teaching. Do not allow them to enter into your experience. Let not your lifework be marred by them.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 325.

‘Meddle not with them that are given to change’

9. What attitude among the Greeks did Paul encounter in Athens? Acts 17:19-21.

NOTE: 'Wherever the apostle raised up a church, there were some who professed to receive the faith, but who brought in heresies, that, if received, would eventually crowd out the love of the truth. Luther also suffered great perplexity and distress from the course of fanatical persons who claimed that God had spoken directly through them, and who therefore set their own ideas and opinions above the testimony of the Scriptures. Many who were lacking in faith and experience, but who had considerable self-sufficiency, and who loved to hear and tell some new thing, were beguiled by the pretensions of the new teachers, and they joined the agents of Satan in their work of tearing down what God had moved Luther to build up. And the Wesleys, and others who

blessed the world by their influence and their faith, encountered at every step the wiles of Satan in pushing overzealous, unbalanced, and unsanctified ones into fanaticism of every grade.' *Great Controversy*, page 396.

10. What is to be our protection when we meet those who are given to change? Proverbs 24: 21.

NOTE: 'When errors arise and are taught as Bible truth, those who have a connection with Christ will not trust to what the minister says but, like the noble Bereans, they will search the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so. When they discover what is the word of the Lord, they will take their stand on the side of the truth. They will hear the voice of the True Shepherd saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Thus you will be educated to make the Bible the man of your counsel, and the voice of a stranger you will neither hear nor follow.' *Faith and Works*, page 86.

'Neither shadow of turning'

11. In a world that decides what is right by circumstances, how does God show Himself to be a solid foundation among the changes and twists of thinking on issues of right and wrong? Malachi 3:6.

NOTE: 'God always has been. He is the great I AM. The psalmist declares, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. "I am the Lord, I change not," He declares. With Him there "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." He is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." He is infinite and omnipresent. No words of ours can describe His greatness and majesty. The Bible teaching of God is the only teaching that it is safe for human beings to follow. We are to regulate our faith by a plain "Thus saith the Lord." The knowledge of Himself that God desires us to gain from His word will, if brought into the daily life, make men and women strong to resist evil and fit them to represent Him. We need to study the simplicity of Christ's teachings. He urges the need of prayer and humility. These are our safeguards against the erroneous reasoning by which Satan seeks to lead us to turn aside to other gods, and to accept misleading theories, clothed by him in garments of light.' *Medical Ministry*, page 92.

12. How does James describe the timeless consistency of God? James 1:17.

NOTE: 'While there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power to meet the wants of men in the different ages, God's work in all time is the same. The Teacher is the same. God's character and His plan are the same. With Him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17.' *Education*, page 50.

Lesson Insight: Error and heresy are always deceitful and do not follow a straight course. These ploys of Satan are designed for one purpose only, to rob us of Life. The Lord, however, tells us that He is from eternity, as solid as the hills and rocks, but the more so as He is the Creator. His word and His revelations were founded before all the teachings and developing opinions of human beings. The truth of God is from everlasting to everlasting. "I am the Lord, I change not."

Lesson 5: January 28-February 3
'They trusted in thee and were not confounded'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him.' Proverbs 30:5.

LESSON AIM: To show that in looking to experts and friends when seeking Truth, we shall be disappointed or misled. Our only safety is in the Word of God, which will never let us down.

Introduction

'What wonder was it that crowds followed in the footsteps of the Lord, and gave Him homage as they listened to His words! He revealed truths that had been buried under the rubbish of error, and He freed them from the exactions and traditions of men, and bade them stand fast forever. He rescued truth from its obscurity, and set it in its proper framework, to shine in its original lustre. He addressed men in His own name; for authority was vested in Himself, and why should men, professing to be His followers, not speak with authority concerning subjects on which He has given light? Why take inferior sources of instruction when Christ is the great Teacher who knows all things? Why present inferior authors to the attention of students, when He whose words are spirit and life invites, "Come . . . and learn of me"?' Matthew 11:28-29.' *Christian Education*, page 81.

"Put not thy trust in princes"

1. What warning are we given about trusting in people rather than God? Psalm 146:3; 2 Chronicles 32:7-8.

NOTE: 'Everything that causes us to see the weakness of humanity is in the Lord's purpose to help us to look to Him, and in no case put trust in man, or make flesh our arm.' *Our High Calling*, page 248.

2. How does this same warning apply even to friends and family? Psalm 118:8; Micah 7:5.

NOTE: 'Our faith is not to stand in the ability of men but in the power of God. There is danger of trusting in men, even though they may have been used as instruments of God to do a great and good work. Christ must be our strength and our refuge. The best of men may fall from their steadfastness, and the best of religion, when corrupted, is ever the most dangerous in its influence upon

minds. Pure, living religion is found in obedience to every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.' *Faith and Works*, page 89.

'Woe to them that go down to Egypt'

3. What does God say about those who ally themselves with faithless Egypt in the ways and work of God? Isaiah 31:1; Psalm 20:7.

NOTE: Through the influence of false teachers who had arisen among the believers in Jerusalem, division, heresy and sensuality were rapidly gaining ground among the believers in Galatia. These false teachers were mingling Jewish traditions with the truths of the gospel. Ignoring the decision of the general council at Jerusalem, they urged upon the Gentile converts the observance of the ceremonial law. The situation was critical. The evils that had been introduced threatened speedily to destroy the Galatian churches. Paul was cut to the heart, and his soul was stirred by this open apostasy on the part of those to whom he had faithfully taught the principles of the gospel. He immediately wrote to the deluded believers, exposing the false theories that they had accepted.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 383.

'The Lord is testing His people to see who will be loyal to the principles of His truth. Our work is to proclaim to the world the first, second, and third angels' messages. In the discharge of our duties we are neither to despise nor to fear our enemies. To bind ourselves up by contracts with those not of our faith is not in the order of God. We are to treat with kindness and courtesy those who refuse to be loyal to God, but we are never, never to unite with them in counsel regarding the vital interests of His work. Putting our trust in God, we are to move steadily forward, doing His work with unselfishness, in humble dependence upon Him, committing to His providence ourselves and all that concerns our present and future, holding the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.' *Counsels on Health*, page 238.

4. Who has promised to be our Teacher? Jeremiah 33:3; Psalm 32:8.

NOTE: 'The truth of God received into the heart is able to make you wise unto salvation. In believing and obeying it you will receive grace sufficient for the duties and trials of today. Grace for tomorrow you do not need. You should feel that you have only to do with today. Overcome for today; deny self for today; watch and pray for today; obtain victories in God for today. Our circumstances and surroundings, the changes daily transpiring around us, and the written word of God which discerns and proves all things, these are sufficient to teach us our duty and just what we ought to do, day by day. Instead of suffering your mind to run in a channel of thought from which you will derive no benefit, you should be searching the Scriptures daily and doing those duties in daily life which may now be irksome to you, but which must be done by someone. Many fix their eyes upon the terrible wickedness existing around them, the apostasy and weakness on every side, and they talk of these things until their hearts are filled with sadness and doubt. They keep uppermost before the mind the masterly working of the archdeceiver and dwell upon the discouraging features of their experience, while they seem to lose sight of the heavenly Father's power and His matchless love.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 79.

'The testimony of the Lord is sure'

5. What reasons does God give to encourage us to trust His Word? Jeremiah 39:18; Joshua 21:45.

NOTE: [Written concerning the expected coming of Jesus in 1844.] 'I was shown the grievous disappointment of the people of God that they did not see Jesus at the expected time. They knew not why their Saviour did not come; for they could see no evidence that prophetic time had not ended. Said the angel, "Has God's word failed? Has God failed to fulfil His promises? No; He has fulfilled all that He promised. Jesus has risen up and shut the door of the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and has opened a door into the most holy place and entered in to cleanse the sanctuary. All who wait patiently shall understand the mystery. Man has erred; but there has been no failure on the part of God. All was accomplished that God promised; but man erroneously believed the earth to be the sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the prophetic periods. It is man's expectation, not the promise of God, that has failed.'" *Early Writings*, page 250.

6. On what condition will God hear our prayers when we are seeking spiritual understanding? Jeremiah 29:12-13.

NOTE: 'To those who comply with the conditions, His promises will be fulfilled; but all that venture to depart from His instructions, to follow a way of their own choosing, will perish with the wicked when His judgements are visited upon the earth.' *Historical Sketches*, page 217.

'What doth the Lord thy God require of thee?'

7. How should our prayer echo the prayer of David? Psalm 25:5.

NOTE: 'O how thankful I am that the Lord never makes a mistake! Those who follow His leading will never be disappointed. They will never be led astray.' *Review and Herald*, March 17, 1903.

8. What is God's expectation when He reveals His will to us? Deuteronomy 10:12-13.

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 same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God'

9. Which shows that not only the promises and encouragements of God are certain but also His commandments? Genesis 2:16-17.

NOTE: 'Eve really believed the words of Satan, but her belief did not save her from the penalty of sin. She disbelieved the words of God, and this was what led to her fall. In the judgment men will not be condemned because they conscientiously believed a lie, but because they did not believe the truth, because they neglected the opportunity of learning what is truth. Notwithstanding the sophistry of Satan to the contrary, it is always disastrous to disobey God. We must set our hearts to know what is truth. All the lessons which God has caused to be placed on record in His word are for our warning and instruction. They are given to save us from deception. Their neglect will result in ruin to ourselves. Whatever contradicts God's word, we may be sure proceeds from Satan.' *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 55.

10. How is the same certainty of outcome given for our times? Revelation 14:9-10.

NOTE: 'The world and the churches are breaking God's law, and the warning must be given, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation." With such a curse hanging over the transgressors of God's holy Sabbath, should we not show greater earnestness, greater zeal? Why are we so indifferent, so selfish, so engrossed in temporal interests? Is our interest separated from Jesus? Has the truth become too pointed, too close in its application to our souls; and like the disciples of Christ who were offended, have we turned away to the beggarly elements of the world? We spend money for selfish purposes, and gratify our own desires, while souls are dying without a knowledge of Jesus and the truth. How long shall this continue? All should have a living faith, a faith which works by love, and purifies the soul. Men and women are ready to do anything to indulge self, but how little are they willing to do for Jesus, and for their fellow men who are perishing for the want of the truth!' *Christian Stewardship*, page 51.

'Therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed'

11. As we stand in defence of God's Truth, can we have confidence before our enemies? Isaiah 50:7-10.

NOTE: 'If we pray even when our hands are employed, the Saviour's ear is open to hear our petitions. If we are determined not to be separated from the Source of our strength, Jesus will be just as determined to be at our right hand to help us, that we may not be put to shame before our enemies.' *Counsels on Health*, page 427.

12. Who are the ones who will not be let down or put to shame for following God? Psalm 22:3-5.

NOTE: 'Soon I saw the saints suffering great mental anguish. They seemed to be surrounded by the wicked inhabitants of the earth. Every appearance was against them. Some began to fear that God had at last left them to perish by the hand of the wicked. But if their eyes could have been opened, they would have seen themselves surrounded by angels of God. Next came the multitude of the angry wicked, and next a mass of evil angels, hurrying on the wicked to slay the saints. But before they could approach God's people, the wicked must first pass this company of mighty, holy angels. This was impossible. The angels of God were causing them to recede and also causing the evil angels who were pressing around them to fall back. It was an hour of fearful, terrible agony to the saints. Day and night they cried unto God for deliverance. To outward appearance, there was no possibility of their escape. The wicked had already begun to triumph, crying out, "Why doesn't your God deliver you out of our hands? Why don't you go up and save your lives?" But the saints heeded them not. Like Jacob, they were wrestling with God. The angels longed to deliver them, but they must wait a little longer; the people of God must drink of the cup and be baptised with the baptism. The angels, faithful to their trust, continued their watch. God would not suffer His name to be reproached among the heathen. The time had nearly come when He was to manifest His mighty power and gloriously deliver His saints. For His name's glory He would deliver every one of those who had patiently waited for Him and whose names were written in the book.' *Early Writings*, page 283.

Lesson Insight: 'Confounded' is not a word in common usage today, but it has the meaning of being let down, being left feeling, or looking, foolish when you have made great claims about something or someone, or being disappointed in someone. The texts in this lesson show that, when we stand for God, we shall never have to face our enemies, having been let down by God and feeling embarrassed and ashamed. God is Truth, and He never fails.

Lesson 6: February 4-10 'For he is a liar'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.' John 8:44.

LESSON AIM: To show that Truth originated with God, but was contradicted and perverted by a created being that we know as the devil.

Introduction

‘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 [a human judgement on the authenticity of the Bible], evolution, spiritualism [that we have a soul that lives independently of the body], theosophy [mystical and occult teachings about the nature of the soul, derived from Buddhism], and pantheism, [God in everything, rocks, rivers, trees, humans, that we are all part of God], 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.

‘The prince of darkness with his evil angels is working upon the Christian world, inducing those who profess the name of Christ to stand under the banner of darkness, to make war with those who keep the commandments of God, and have the faith of Jesus.’ *Review and Herald*, November 8, 1892.

‘And behold it was very good’

1. How was the world when God made it? Genesis 1:31.

NOTE: ‘Adam and Eve in Eden were noble in stature, and perfect in symmetry and beauty. They were sinless, and in perfect health. What a contrast to the human race now! Beauty is gone. Perfect health is not known. Everywhere we look, we see disease, deformity, and imbecility. I inquired the cause of this wonderful degeneracy, and was pointed back to Eden. The beautiful Eve was beguiled by the serpent to eat of the fruit of the only tree of which God had forbidden them to eat, or even touch it, lest they die.’ *Counsels on Diets and Foods*, page 145.

2. What description is given of Adam and Eve? Genesis 1:27.

NOTE: ‘We were made in the image of God, after His likeness; but because of sin we have lost our resemblance to the Creator and Redeemer. We are out harmony with the will of God; but the Son of God has brought us, at infinite cost to Himself, that we might serve Him, and do the will of Heaven. The moral image of God may be restored in our fallen natures, through faith in Christ, and obedience to the commandments of Jehovah.’ *Review and Herald*, February 14, 1888.

‘Which deceiveth the whole world’

3. Who was the intruder that was found in the garden? Genesis 3:1, first part.

NOTE: ‘It is those who have had the most light that Satan most assiduously seeks to ensnare. He knows that, if he can deceive them, they will, under his control, clothe sin with garments of righteousness, and lead many astray. I say to all: Be on your guard; for as an angel of light Satan is walking in every assembly of Christian workers, and in every church, trying to win the members to his side. I am bidden to give to the people of God the warning: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” Galatians 6:7.’ *Counsels to the Church*, page 324.

4. How do we see that this same being is in the world from the beginning until the end? Revelation 12:9.

NOTE: The titles of Satan in this verse describe his deceit and wickedness from one age to another. The old serpent describes his deception in the Garden of Eden, Satan describes him as the adversary or as the enemy of God in the Old and New Testaments. The devil, the fullness of evil, describes him in the New Testament.

NOTE: ‘Through generation after generation, from age to age, Satan has gathered human agencies through whom to work out his diabolical purposes, and to bring about the enforcement of his plans and devices in the earth. The great putrid fountain of evil has been continually flowing through human society. Though unable to expel God from His throne, Satan has charged God with satanic attributes and has claimed the attributes of God as his own.’ *Christ Triumphant*, page 10.

‘He is a liar and the father of it’

5. How did Jesus describe the devil? John 8:44

NOTE: ‘It was his policy to perplex with subtle arguments concerning the purposes of God. Everything that was simple he shrouded in mystery, and by artful perversion cast doubt upon the plainest statements of Jehovah. The underworking was so subtle that it could not be made to appear before the heavenly host as the thing that it really was; and so there was war in heaven, and Satan was expelled with all who would not stand on the side of loyalty to God’s government. . . . An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. There should be a continual effort to imitate the society we expect soon to join; namely, angels of God who have never fallen by sin. The character should be holy, the manners comely, the words without guile, and thus should we follow on step by step until we are fitted for translation.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 69.

6. What is Satan's purpose in tempting us to sin by his deceptions? 1 Peter 5:8

NOTE: 'In this age of corruption when our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour, I see the necessity of lifting my voice in warning. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." There are many who possess brilliant talents who wickedly devote them to the service of Satan. What warning can I give to a people who profess to have come out from the world and to have left its works of darkness, to a people whom God has made the repositories of His law, but who, like the pretentious fig tree, flaunt their apparently flourishing branches in the very face of the Almighty, yet bear no fruit to the glory of God? Many of them cherish impure thoughts, unholy imaginations, unsanctified desires, and base passions. God hates the fruit borne upon such a tree. Angels, pure and holy, look upon the course of such with abhorrence, while Satan exults.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 107.

'Beguiled Eve through subtlety'

7. By what subtle psychological method did Satan tempt Eve to sin? Genesis 3:1.

NOTE: 'When the devil comes with his doubts and unbeliefs, shut the door of your heart. Shut your eyes so that you will not dwell upon his hellish shadow. Lift them up where they can behold the things which are eternal, and you will have strength every hour. The trial of your faith is much more precious than gold. It makes you valiant to fight the battle of the Lord, "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" Satan claims the world. He claims us as his. Then shall we give him that which he claims? No. I am somebody else's property. I have been bought with a price, and my business is to glorify God in my body and spirit. I have no time to talk unbelief. It is faith that I must talk. I must strengthen faith by exercise. And then my faith grows as I venture upon the promises of God, and I can grasp more and more.' *Mind, Character, Personality*, volume 2, page 676.

8. How do we see the same subtlety in the temptations of Christ? Matthew 4:3.

NOTE: 'The Saviour was faint from hunger, He was craving for food, when Satan came suddenly upon Him. Pointing to the stones which strewed the desert, and which had the appearance of loaves, the tempter said, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Though he appears as an angel of light, these first words betray his character. "If Thou be the Son of God." Here is the insinuation of distrust. Should Jesus do what Satan suggests, it would be an acceptance of the doubt. The tempter plans to overthrow Christ by the same means that were so successful with the human race in the beginning. How artfully had Satan approached Eve in Eden! "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Genesis 3:1. Thus far the tempter's words were truth; but in his manner of speaking them there was a disguised contempt for the words of God. There was a covert negative, a doubt of the divine truthfulness. Satan sought to instil into the mind of Eve the thought that God would not do as He had said; that the withholding of such beautiful fruit was a contradiction of His love and compassion for man. So now the tempter seeks to inspire Christ with his own sentiments.' *Desire of Ages*, page 118.

'Made all nations drink'

9. Whom does Satan work through today? Revelation 14:8.

NOTE: 'Satan works through the ungodly, under cover of a pretended friendship, to allure God's people into sin, that he may separate them from Him; and when their defence is removed, then he will lead his agents to turn against them and seek to accomplish their destruction.' *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 559.

10. How many has he affected? Revelation 14:8; Revelation 18:23-24.

NOTE: 'The great sin charged against Babylon is that she "made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." This cup of intoxication which she presents to the world represents the false doctrines that she has accepted as the result of her unlawful connection with the great ones of the earth. Friendship with the world corrupts her faith, and in her turn she exerts a corrupting influence upon the world by teaching doctrines which are opposed to the plainest statements of Holy Writ.' *Great Controversy*, page 388.

'Take heed'

11. What strong warning did Jesus give for those who would live in the last days of earth? Matthew 24:4.

NOTE 'Christ warned his disciples, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." *Review and Herald*, January 30, 1900.

12. What further warning does Paul give to Christ's flock? 2 Corinthians 11:2-3.

NOTE 'The only safe and sure rule is to do what God says. "The statutes of the Lord are right," and "he that doeth these things shall never be moved." Psalms 19:8; 15:5. It was with the word of God that the apostles met the false theories of their day, saying, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid." 1 Corinthians 3:11.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 475.

Lesson Insight: The devil is a liar, and abode not in the truth. He has many methods. He tells outright lies, he deceives by subtle means, he misrepresents the words of God, he twists the truth.

Lesson 7: February 11-17 **Wolves in sheep's clothing**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.' John 10:5.

LESSON AIM: To teach that the evil one will do all in his power to unsettle the flock by looking like one of the sheep, part of the flock, while drawing the flock away from the Shepherd.

Introduction

'Jesus knew that whatever was presented that was out of harmony with what He came to earth to unfold, was false and delusive. But He said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice."' *Review and Herald*, December 1, 1891.

'The follower of Christ will meet with the "enticing words" against which the apostle warned the Colossian believers. He will meet with spiritualistic interpretations of the Scriptures, but he is not to accept them. His voice is to be heard in clear affirmation of the eternal truths of the Scriptures. Keeping his eyes fixed on Christ, he is to move steadily forward in the path marked out, discarding all ideas that are not in harmony with His teaching. The truth of God is to be the subject for his contemplation and meditation. He is to regard the Bible as the voice of God speaking directly to him. Thus he will find the wisdom which is divine.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 474.

Beware of false prophets

1. How did Jesus describe the danger to God's people of false prophets speaking perverse things? Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:28-31.

NOTE: 'We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world. Unbelievers have a right to expect that those who profess to be keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will do more than any other class to promote and honour, by their consistent lives, by their godly example and their active influence, the cause which they represent. But how often have the professed advocates of the truth proved the greatest obstacle to its advancement! The unbelief indulged, the doubts expressed, the darkness cherished, encourage the presence of evil angels, and open the way for the accomplishment of Satan's devices.' *Last Day Events*, page 156.

2. Against whom in particular does John warn Christians? 1 John 2:18-19; Compare Acts 15:24-27.

NOTE: '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.

'Hail Master, and kissed Him'

3. How was a false display of friendship used by Judas to betray Jesus? Matthew 26:46-50. Consider Matthew 10:36.

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.' *Maranatha*, page 196.

4. What method to subvert the Truth was used in the trial of Jesus? Matthew 26:59-61.

NOTE: 'False witnesses had been bribed to accuse Jesus of inciting rebellion and seeking to establish a separate government. But their testimony proved to be vague and contradictory. Under examination they falsified their own statements. Early in His ministry Christ had said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." In the figurative language of prophecy, He had thus foretold His own death and resurrection. "He spake of the temple of His body." John 2:19, 21. These words the Jews had understood in a literal sense, as referring to the temple at Jerusalem. Of all that Christ had said, the priests could find nothing to use against Him save this. By misstating these words they hoped to gain an advantage.' *Desire of Ages*, page 705.

'It is not fit that he should live'

5. How was Paul also a focus for the same hatred that Jesus faced? Acts 13:49-50; Acts 22:22-23; Acts 23:12-16.

NOTE: 'The unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica, filled with jealousy and hatred of the apostles, and not content with having driven them from their own city, followed them to Berea and aroused against them the excitable passions of the lower class. Fearing that violence would be done to Paul if he remained there, the brethren sent him to Athens, accompanied by some of the Bereans who had newly accepted the faith. Thus persecution followed the teachers of truth from city to city. The enemies of Christ could not

prevent the advancement of the gospel, but they succeeded in making the work of the apostles exceedingly hard.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 232.

6. What four lines of attack show that these men were wolves in sheep’s clothing? Acts 13:44-45.

NOTE: ‘Through the opposition that the disciples met, the message of truth gained great publicity; the Jews saw that their efforts to thwart the work of the new teachers resulted only in adding greater numbers to the new faith. “The multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.” So enraged were the leaders among the Jews by the turn that matters were taking, that they determined to gain their ends by violence. Arousing the worst passions of the ignorant, noisy mob, they succeeded in creating a tumult, which they attributed to the teaching of the disciples. By this false charge they hoped to gain the help of the magistrates in carrying out their purpose. They determined that the apostles should have no opportunity to vindicate themselves and that the mob should interfere by stoning Paul and Barnabas, thus putting an end to their labours.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 178.

‘They creep into houses’

7. What method used by the wolves does Paul warn against? 2 Timothy 3:6

NOTE: ‘Remember that it is not mere men whom you have to meet, but “principalities and powers, and wicked spirits in high places.” Now is the very time when Satan is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. Many are in reality fighting his battles while they profess to serve under the banner of Christ. These traitors in the camp may not be suspected, but they are doing their work to create unbelief, discord, and strife. Such are the most dangerous of foes. While they insinuate themselves into our favour, and gain our confidence and sympathy, they are busy suggesting doubts and creating suspicion. They work in the same manner as did Satan in heaven when he deceived the angels by his artful representations, placing darkness for light, and making the forbearance and mercy of God to appear as harshness and severity. As he worked at the beginning, so he works in the end, only concealing himself more perfectly from view.’ *Our High Calling*, page 360.

8. Do the wolves care for the flock? Ezekiel 34:4-6.

NOTE: ‘Christ warns His followers, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves.” He exhorts us not to be deceived when false shepherds present their doctrines. These men tell us that the commandments of God were done away at the death of Christ. Shall we believe them, these men who claim to be sanctified, while they refuse to obey God? They say the Lord has told them that they need not keep the Ten Commandments; but has the Lord told them this? No, God does not lie.’ *Evangelism*, page 597.

‘In the last days’

9. How did Paul say that Satan would appear in order to deceive people? 2 Corinthians 11:14

NOTE: ‘The world’s Redeemer warned His disciples against the false teaching which was, and would continue to be, the greatest obstacle to the progress of the truth. “There shall arise false christs, and false prophets,” He said, “and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before.” And Peter writes, “There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” The leaven of false doctrine will be accepted in preference to the truth. “Beware,” writes Paul, “lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Under whose banner are we standing? Where are we? And what is Christ to us? By our course of action we decide our own destiny.’ *Bible Echo*, February 1, 1897.

10. What did Paul say concerning the angels that are with Satan in the world? 2 Corinthians 11:15.

NOTE: ‘Could the veil be lifted from before our eyes, we should see evil angels employing all their arts to deceive and to destroy. Wherever an influence is exerted to cause men to forget God, there Satan is exercising his bewitching power. When men yield to his influence, ere they are aware, the mind is bewildered and the soul polluted. The apostle’s admonition to the Ephesian church should be heeded by the people of God today: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” Ephesians 5:11.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 290.

‘The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces’

11. How will the faithful followers of Christ be viewed by the world around them? Zephaniah 3:12.

NOTE: ‘Some of you shall they cause to be put to death.’ John 16:33; Luke 21:12, 16. This prophecy has been fulfilled in a marked manner. Every indignity, reproach, and cruelty that Satan could instigate human hearts to devise has been visited upon the followers of Jesus. And it will be again fulfilled in a marked manner; for the carnal heart is still at enmity with the law of God, and will not be subject to its commands. The world is no more in harmony with the principles of Christ today than it was in the days of the apostles. The same hatred that prompted the cry, “Crucify Him! crucify Him!” the same hatred that led to the persecution of the disciples, still works in the children of disobedience. The same spirit which in the Dark Ages consigned men and women to prison, to exile, and to death, which conceived the exquisite torture of the Inquisition, which planned and executed the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and which kindled the fires of Smithfield, is still at work with malignant energy in unregenerate hearts. The history of truth has ever been the record of a struggle between right and wrong. The proclamation of the gospel has ever been carried forward in this world in the face of opposition, peril, loss, and suffering.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 84.

12. At the final vindication of Truth, what will God do for those who have been maligned and derided for standing up for His honour? Isaiah 25:8.

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

Lesson Insight: It may be that people could come to meetings seeming at one with the truth, yet no-one knows anything of them. Their background seems vague. But kind and hospitable people are polite, thinking the best of people, and so welcome them into their midst. Their manner may appear spiritual, they may know the scriptures and speak with the same love for the things of Christ that we do. They are talented and pleasant. But soon in their conversation, they sow seeds of ideas that are not familiar, or lead into topics of disaffection. It may be that that one brings groups of scriptures together that are very plausible or an appeal is made to the weakest in the congregation or lonely women. This has ever been a technique used by Satan to deceive us. In such situations, it is better to be slow and cautious, seeing if the newcomer handles the Word of God with honesty. We have been warned of wolves coming among the flock, but looking and acting like sheep, and also of the ministers of Satan coming as ministers of righteousness. This is what it could mean. Those who stand against them will be much maligned, but the Lord knows. Let us take these Bible warnings seriously for this is a method of deception of which we have been forewarned.

Lesson 8: February 18-24 'Men of truth'

MEMORY VERSE: 'LORD, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.' Psalm 15:1-2.

LESSON AIM: To show the characteristics of those whom God chooses to lead in His work in the world.

Introduction

'Energy, moral integrity, and strong purpose for the right are qualities that cannot be supplied with any amount of gold. Men possessing these qualifications will have influence everywhere. Their lives will be more powerful than lofty eloquence. God calls for men of heart, men of mind, men of moral integrity, whom He can make the depositories of His truth, and who will correctly represent its sacred principles in their daily life.' *Testimonies*, volume 3, page 23.

'The will of God and our Father'

1. What is the will of God for us? Romans 12:2

NOTE: 'Men have polluted the soul-temple, and God calls upon them to awake, and to strive with all their might to win back their God-given manhood. Nothing but the grace of God can convict and convert the heart; from Him alone can the slaves of custom obtain power to break the shackles that bind them. It is impossible for a man to present his body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, while continuing to indulge habits that are depriving him of physical, mental, and moral vigour. Again the apostle says, "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" Romans 12:2.' *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, page 10.

2. What is the will of God for His followers? Galatians 1:4-5.

NOTE: 'Christ has died for you, and you are to live as unto God. Let your reasoning powers, refined, purified, sanctified, be brought to God. The Lord requires the sanctification of the whole being. The mind, as well as the whole body, is to be elevated and ennobled. God has claims upon mind, soul, and body. It is not in the power of those who have named the name of Jesus to give Him more than is His own. He has bought every human agent with an infinite price, and we are His property for both time and eternity.' *Our High Calling*, page 43.

'Inward parts'

3. How deeply does the Lord require truth to be established in our lives? Psalm 51:6.

NOTE: 'Truth, God's truth, must be cherished in the soul and held in the strength of heaven, or the power of Satan will wrest it from you.' *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, page 486.

4. Where is the principle of truth to be settled in us? Psalm 15:2.

NOTE: 'Truth must reach down to the deepest recesses of the soul, and cleanse away everything unlike the spirit of Christ, and the vacuum be supplied by the attributes of His character who was pure and holy and undefiled, that all the springs of the heart may be as flowers, fragrant with perfume, a sweet smelling savour, a savour of life unto life.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 18.

‘Men of truth’

5. Who, according to the Bible, teach are fit ones to be leaders? Exodus 18:21.

NOTE: ‘The work of God calls for men of high moral powers to engage in its promulgation. Men are wanted whose hearts are nerved with holy fervour, men of strong purpose who are not easily moved, who can lay down every selfish interest and give all for the cross and the crown. The cause of present truth is suffering for men who are loyal to a sense of right and duty, whose moral integrity is firm and whose energy is equal to the opening providence of God. Such qualifications as these are of more value than untold wealth invested in the work and cause of God. God calls for men whose hearts are as true as steel, and who will stand steadfast in integrity, undaunted by circumstances. He calls for men who will remain separate from the enemies of the truth. He calls for men who will not dare to resort to the arm of flesh by entering into partnership with worldlings in order to secure means for advancing His work, even for the building of institutions.’ *Review and Herald*, February 1, 1906.

6. What qualities characterise men of truth? 3 John 1:4.

NOTE: ‘In our business connection with the work of God, and in handling sacred things, we cannot be too careful, to guard against a spirit of irreverence; never, for an instant, should the work of God be used deceitfully, to carry a point which we are anxious to see succeed. Honour, integrity, and truth must be preserved at any cost to self. Our every thought, word, and action should be subject to the will of Christ.’ *Gospel Workers*, page 447.

‘I will walk in Thy truth’

7. Are we naturally inclined to the truth? Jeremiah 17:9.

NOTE: ‘Shall we hear the voice of God and obey, or shall we make halfway work of the matter and try to serve God and mammon? There is earnest work before each one of us. Right thoughts, pure and holy purposes, do not come to us naturally. We shall have to strive for them. In all our institutions, our publishing houses and colleges and sanitariums, pure and holy principles must take root. If our institutions are what God designs they should be, those connected with them will not pattern after worldly institutions. They will stand as peculiar, governed and controlled by the Bible standard. They will not come into harmony with the principles of the world in order to gain patronage. No motives will have sufficient force to move them from the straight line of duty.’

Counsels on Health, page 291.

8. With what choice does our love of the truth begin? Psalm 86:11, first and middle parts.

NOTE: ‘If we believe that the end of all things is at hand, “what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” “Ye are My witnesses,” said Jesus, and in each act of our lives we should inquire: How will our course affect the interests of the Redeemer’s kingdom? If you are indeed Christ’s disciple, you will choose to walk in His footsteps, however painful this may be to your natural feelings. Said Paul: “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”’ *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 367.

‘Arm yourselves with same mind’

9. Who was the world’s example of a Man of Truth? John 14:6; Psalm 146:6; Deuteronomy 32:4.

NOTE: ‘Solemn are the responsibilities resting upon those who are called to act as leaders in the church of God on earth. In the days of the theocracy, when Moses was endeavouring to carry alone burdens so heavy that he would soon have worn away under them, he was counselled by Jethro to plan for a wise distribution of responsibilities. “Be thou for the people to Godward,” Jethro advised, “that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.” Jethro further advised that men be appointed to act as “rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.” These were to be “able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.” They were to “judge the people at all seasons,” thus relieving Moses of the wearing responsibility of giving consideration to many minor matters that could be dealt with wisely by consecrated helpers.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 92.

10. Upon whom are we counselled to model ourselves? 1 Peter 4:1; Philippians 2:5.

NOTE: ‘The psalmist says, “The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” When truth is working only upon the conscience, it creates much uneasiness; but when truth is invited into the heart, the whole being is brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. Even the thoughts are captured, for the mind of Christ works where the will is submitted to the will of God. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” He whom the Lord makes free is free indeed, and he cannot be brought into servile bondage to sin.’ *Mind, Character and Personality*, volume 1, page 324.

‘Valiant for truth’

11. How does Jeremiah describe the enemies of truth? Jeremiah 9:3.

NOTE: ‘That time will soon come, and we shall have to keep hold of the strong arm of Jehovah; for all these great signs and mighty wonders of the devil are designed to deceive God’s people and overthrow them. Our minds must be stayed upon God, and we must not fear the fear of the wicked, that is, fear what they fear, and reverence what they reverence, but be bold and valiant for the truth. Could our eyes be opened, we should see forms of evil angels around us, trying to invent some new way to annoy and destroy us. And we should also see angels of God guarding us from their power; for God’s watchful eye is ever over Israel for

good, and He will protect and save His people, if they put their trust in Him. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. Said the angel, "Remember, thou art on the enchanted ground." I saw that we must watch and have on the whole armour, and take the shield of faith, and then we shall be able to stand, and the fiery darts of the wicked cannot harm us.' *Christian Experience and Teachings*, page 170.

12. How only can we stand against the father of lies who walks abroad in our world? 1 Peter 5:8-10.

NOTE: 'The world is busy, anxious, and devoted. Evil is eagerly followed as though it were righteousness, error as though it were truth, and sin as though it were holiness. Darkness is covering the earth, and gross darkness the people. And shall God's people be asleep at such a time as this? Shall those who hold the truth be silent, as if paralysed? Infidels declare that, if they believed what Christians profess to believe, they would be far more in earnest than they. If we believe that the end of all things is at hand, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Every soul who truly believes the truth will have corresponding works. All will be earnest and solemn, and unwearied in their efforts to win souls to Christ. If the truth is first planted deep in their own souls, then they will seek to plant it in the hearts of others. The truth is kept altogether too much in the outer court. Bring it into the inner temple of the soul, enthrone it in the heart, and let it control the life. The word of God should be studied and obeyed, then the heart will find rest and peace and joy, and the aspirations will tend heavenward; but when truth is kept apart from the life, in the outer court, the heart is not warmed with the glowing fire of God's goodness. The religion of Jesus is, by many, reserved for certain days, or certain occasions, and at other times is laid aside and neglected. The abiding principle of truth is not merely for a few hours on the Sabbath, or for a few acts of charity, but it is to be brought into the heart, refining and sanctifying the character.' *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 547.

Lesson Insight: Truth begins as the Spirit of truth speaks to us. We choose to walk in the ways of truth and speak the words of truth and live a transparent life. We must remember always that the Father of lies is on our track to devour us, but with a mind transformed into the mind of Christ we can be people of truth, valiant for truth. In these last days God is seeking for people of truth whom He can trust to take hold of the responsibility to continue His work in the world.

Lesson 9: February 25-March 3 'The Spirit of Truth'

MEMORY VERSE: 'That they may all be one; as Thou Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also maybe one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.' John 17:21.

LESSON AIM: To show that the Spirit of Truth is the One who can make the Gospel a reality to humanity, thus bringing the people of God into a glorious unity with Him.

Introduction

'The Holy Spirit exalts and glorifies the Saviour. It is His office to present Christ, the purity of His righteousness, and the great salvation that we have through Him. Jesus says, "He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." [John 16:14.] The Spirit of truth is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. How must God esteem the human race, since He gave His Son to die for them, and appoints His Spirit to be man's teacher and continual guide!' *Christian Education*, page 59.

'The Spirit of Truth'

1. After Jesus returned to heaven, whom did He send as another Comforter for us in our salvation from sin? John 16:5-8.

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

2. What did Jesus call the Holy Spirit? John 14:16-17.

NOTE: 'Jesus prayed for His disciples, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us." [John 17:21.] Just before, He said, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." [John 17:17.] And He had given them the promise, "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth." [John 16:13.] Through the Holy Spirit, Christ will open more clearly to those who will believe on Him that which He has inspired holy men to write concerning the truth. And it is thus that the unity for which Christ prayed is to be effected. We are to receive sanctification through obedience to the word and the Spirit of truth. We cannot surrender the truth in order to accomplish this union; for the very means by which it is to be gained is sanctification through the truth. Human wisdom would change all this, thinking this basis of union too narrow. Men would effect a union through conformity to popular opinions, through a compromise with the world. But truth is God's basis for the unity of His people.' *Gospel Workers*, page 391.

'In whom is no guile'

3. What example did Christ leave us of a life filled with the Spirit of Truth? 1 Peter 2:22.

NOTE: 'The world had lost the original pattern of goodness and had sunk into universal apostasy and moral corruption; and the life of Jesus was one of laborious, self-denying effort to bring man back to his first estate by imbuing him with the spirit of divine benevolence and unselfish love. While in the world, He was not of the world. It was a continual pain to Him to be brought in contact with the enmity, depravity, and impurity which Satan had brought in; but He had a work to do to bring man into harmony with the divine plan, and earth in connection with heaven, and He counted no sacrifice too great for the accomplishment of the object. He "was in all points tempted like as we are." Satan stood ready to assail Him at every step, hurling at Him his fiercest temptations; yet He "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." "He ... suffered being tempted," suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness. But the prince of darkness found nothing in Him; not a single thought or feeling responded to temptation. His doctrine dropped as the rain; His speech distilled as the dew. In the character of Christ was blended such majesty as God had never before displayed to fallen man and such meekness as man had never developed. Never before had there walked among men one so noble, so pure, so benevolent, so conscious of His godlike nature; yet so simple, so full of plans and purposes to do good to humanity. While abhorring sin, He wept with compassion over the sinner. He pleased not Himself. The Majesty of heaven clothed Himself with the humility of a child. This is the character of Christ. Are we walking in His footsteps? O my Saviour, how poorly art Thou represented by Thy professed followers!' *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 422.

4. What wonderful testimony did Jesus bear of Nathaniel? John 1:47.

NOTE: 'Never should the Bible be studied without prayer. Before opening its pages, we should ask for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and it will be given. When Nathaniel came to Jesus, the Saviour exclaimed, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Nathaniel said, "Whence knowest Thou me?" Jesus answered, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." And Jesus will see us also in the secret place of prayer, if we will seek him for light, that we may know what is truth. Angels from the world of light will be with those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance. show it unto you.'" *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, June 9, 1909.

'As they were moved by the Holy Ghost'

5. Can the Holy Spirit today ever teach anything contrary to the existing Word of God? 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 1:10-11 2 Peter 1:21.

NOTE: 'He spoke to them also words of hope and courage. "Let not your heart be troubled," He said; "ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." For your sake I came into the world; for you I have been working. When I go away I shall still work earnestly for you. I came to the world to reveal Myself to you, that you might believe. I go to My Father and yours to co-operate with Him in your behalf. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father." John 14:12. By this, Christ did not mean that the disciples would make more exalted exertions than He had made, but that their work would have greater magnitude. He did not refer merely to miracle working, but to all that would take place under the agency of the Holy Spirit. "When the Comforter is come," He said, "whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning." John 15:26, 27. Wonderfully were these words fulfilled. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were so filled with love for Him and for those for whom He died, that hearts were melted by the words they spoke and the prayers they offered. They spoke in the power of the Spirit; and under the influence of that power, thousands were converted.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 22.

6. For what purpose did the Holy Spirit of Truth inspire the written Scriptures? 1 Timothy 3:16, second part -17.

NOTE: "'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is 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.'" [2 Timothy 3:16, 17.] The word of God is like a treasure-house, containing everything that is essential to perfect the man of God. We do not appreciate the Bible as we should. We do not have a proper estimate of the richness of its stores, nor do we realise the great necessity of searching the Scriptures for ourselves. Men neglect the study of the word of God in order to pursue some worldly interest, or to engage in the pleasures of the time. Some trivial affair is made an excuse for ignorance of the Scriptures given by inspiration of God. But anything of an earthly character might better be put off, than this all-important study, that is to make us wise unto eternal life.' *Christian Education*, page 115.

'The wind bloweth where it listeth'

7. Some time after his conversion, where did Paul go to meet with the Lord and to receive divine revelations of Truth? Galatians 1:17.

NOTE: Here, in the solitude of the desert, Paul had ample opportunity for quiet study and meditation. He calmly reviewed his past experience and made sure work of repentance. He sought God with all his heart, resting not until he knew for a certainty that his repentance was accepted and his sin pardoned. He longed for the assurance that Jesus would be with him in his coming ministry. He emptied his soul of the prejudices and traditions that had hitherto shaped his life, and received instruction from the Source of truth. Jesus communed with him and established him in the faith, bestowing upon him a rich measure of wisdom and grace. When the mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite, the effect on body and mind and soul is beyond estimate. In such communion is found the highest education. It is God's own method of development. "Acquaint now thyself with Him" (Job 22:21), is His message to mankind.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 125.

8. What lesson from nature did Jesus use to explain to Nicodemus the working of the Holy Spirit on the heart? John 3:8.

NOTE: 'If the followers of Christ were but earnest seekers after wisdom, they would be led into rich fields of truth as yet wholly unknown to them. He who will give himself fully to God will be guided by the divine hand. He may be lowly and apparently ungifted; yet if with a loving, trusting heart he obeys every intimation of God's will, his powers will be purified, ennobled, energised, and his capabilities will be increased. As he treasures the lessons of divine wisdom, a sacred commission will be entrusted to him; he will be enabled to make his life an honour to God and a blessing to the world. "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm 119:130. There are today many as ignorant of the Holy Spirit's work upon the heart as were those believers in Ephesus; yet no truth is more clearly taught in the word of God. Prophets and apostles have dwelt upon this theme. Christ Himself calls our attention to the growth of the vegetable world as an illustration of the agency of His Spirit in sustaining spiritual life. The sap of the vine, ascending from the root, is diffused to the branches, sustaining growth and producing blossoms and fruit. So the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Saviour, pervades the soul, renews the motives and affections, and brings even the thoughts into obedience to the will of God, enabling the receiver to bear the precious fruit of holy deeds. The Author of this spiritual life is unseen, and the exact method by which that life is imparted and sustained, it is beyond the power of human philosophy to explain. Yet the operations of the Spirit are always in harmony with the written word. As in the natural, so in the spiritual world. The natural life is preserved moment by moment by divine power; yet it is not sustained by a direct miracle, but through the use of blessings placed within our reach. So the spiritual life is sustained by the use of those means that Providence has supplied. If the follower of Christ would grow up "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," he must eat of the bread of life and drink of the water of salvation. He must watch and pray and work, in all things giving heed to the instructions of God in His word.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 284.

'All came to pass'

9. How do we know we can trust the Scriptures? Joshua 21:45;

NOTE: 'Seven years after their entrance into the promised land the whole congregation assembled, and the sacred tabernacle, which had been so long borne with them in their journeyings, was permanently set up at Shiloh. The land was now divided among the several tribes, and the conquest went on with renewed vigour, until "Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war." The glorious promises which God had made to Israel had been fulfilled. "There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.'" *Signs of the Times*, May 12, 1881.

10. The widow of Zarephath had been promised that her meal and oil would never fail, but what more dramatic event did it take before this Gentile woman could accept the Word of the Lord through Elijah as truth? 1 Kings 17: 14-24.

NOTE: 'Christ had said to the nobleman whose son He healed, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." John 4:48. He was grieved that His own nation should require these outward signs of His Messiahship. Again and again He had marvelled at their unbelief. But He marvelled at the faith of the centurion who came to Him. The centurion did not question the Saviour's power. He did not even ask Him to come in person to perform the miracle. "Speak the word only," he said, "and my servant shall be healed." *Desire of Ages*, page 315.

'Speaking the truth in love'

11. In these last days before Jesus returns, what is the work of the Holy Spirit? Ephesians 4:11-12.

NOTE: 'After the close of the canon of the Scripture, the Holy Spirit was still to continue His work, to enlighten, warn, and comfort the children of God. Jesus promised His disciples, "The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: ... and He will show you things to come." John 14:26; 16:13. Scripture plainly teaches that these promises, so far from being limited to apostolic days, extend to the church of Christ in all ages. The Saviour assures His followers, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:20. And Paul declares that the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit were set in the church "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." For the believers at Ephesus the apostle prayed, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and ... what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe." Ephesians 1:17-19. The ministry of the divine Spirit in enlightening the understanding and opening to the mind the deep things of God's holy word, was the blessing which Paul thus besought for the Ephesian church. After the wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, Peter exhorted the people to repentance and baptism in the name of Christ, for the remission of their sins; and he said: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.'" *Great Controversy*, Introduction, page ix.

12. As we live in a time when every wind of doctrine is blowing, find in these verses at least ten things that the Holy Spirit working to achieve? Ephesians 4:13-16.

NOTE: 'If God's professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them from His word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "There is," he says, "one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.'" *Great Controversy*, page 379.

Lesson Insight: When Jesus spoke of the One who would follow Him to bring the Gospel to all the world, He called Him the Spirit of Truth. The teachings of the Bible were inspired by the same Spirit. We can trust the words of the Bible as the Word of God and therefore we can trust the Spirit of Truth to guide us into all Truth. And He will bring those who follow Jesus into the same unity that Jesus spoke of in John 17.

Lesson 10: March 4-10 **‘Truth is fallen in the street’**

MEMORY VERSE: ‘But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.’ Acts 4:19-20.

LESSON AIM: To show how the vital truths given by God in His Word have fallen and mostly have been forgotten.

Introduction

‘Like will attract like. Those who are drinking from the same fountain of blessing will draw nearer together. Truth dwelling in the hearts of believers will lead to blessed and happy assimilation. Thus will be answered the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one even as He is one with the Father. For this oneness every truly converted heart will be striving. With the ungodly there will be a deceptive harmony that but partially conceals a perpetual discord. In their opposition to the will and the truth of God they are united, while on every other point they are rent with hatred, emulation, jealousy, and deadly strife. The pure and the base metal are now so mingled that only the discerning eye of the infinite God can with certainty distinguish between them. But the moral magnet of holiness and truth will attract together the pure metal, while it will repel the base and counterfeit.’ *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 100.

‘Who hath bewitched you?’

1. How strongly did Paul write to the Galatians about the truth as it is in Jesus? Galatians 3:1.

NOTE: ‘Present the truth as it is in Jesus. Make plain the requirements of the law and the gospel. Tell the people of Christ’s life of self-denial and sacrifice; of His humiliation and death; of His resurrection and ascension; of His intercession for them in the courts of God; of His promise, “I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.” John 14:3. Instead of discussing erroneous theories, or seeking to combat the opponents of the gospel, follow the example of Christ. Let fresh truths from God’s treasure house flash into life. “Preach the word.” “Sow beside all waters.” “Be instant in season, out of season.” “He that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.” “Every word of God is pure.... Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” 2 Timothy 4:2; Isaiah 32:20; Jeremiah 23:28; Proverbs 30:5, 6.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 40.

‘The word of God often comes in collision with man’s hereditary and cultivated traits of character and his habits of life. But the good-ground hearer, in receiving the word, accepts all its conditions and requirements. His habits, customs, and practices are brought into submission to God’s word. In his view the commands of finite, erring man sink into insignificance beside the word of the infinite God. With the whole heart, with undivided purpose, he is seeking the life eternal, and at the cost of loss, persecution, or death itself, he will obey the truth.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 60.

2. What response to the truth will lead to our salvation from sin? 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12. Read how Paul’s heart overflowed in love for the wonders of God’s grace. Ephesians 3:14-21.

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.’ *Christian Education*, page 141.

‘The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God’

3. Today it is popular to say, There is no God’, but how does God describe these people? Psalm 14:1; Psalm 53:1-2.

NOTE: ‘Infidel France had silenced the reproving voice of God’s two witnesses. The Word of truth lay dead in her streets, and those who hated the restrictions and requirements of God’s law were jubilant. Men publicly defied the King of Heaven. Like the sinners of old, they cried, “How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?” [Psalm 73:11.] With blasphemous boldness almost beyond belief, one of the priests of the new order said: “God, if you exist, avenge your injured name. I bid you defiance! You remain silent. You dare not launch your thunders! Who, after this, will believe in your existence?” What an echo is this of the Pharaoh’s demand: “Who is Jehovah, that I should obey his voice? . . . I know not Jehovah!” “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God?” And the Lord declares concerning the perverters of the truth, “Their folly shall be manifest unto all.” After France had renounced the worship of the living God, “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,” it was only a little time till she descended to degrading idolatry, by the worship of the Goddess of Reason, in the person of a profligate woman. And

this in the representative assembly of the nation, and by its highest civil and legislative authorities! Says the historian: "One of the ceremonies of this insane time stands unrivalled for absurdity combined with impiety. The doors of the convention were thrown open to a band of musicians, preceded by whom the members of the municipal body entered in solemn procession, singing a hymn in praise of liberty, and escorting, as the object of their future worship, a veiled female whom they termed the Goddess of Reason. Being brought within the bar, she was unveiled with great form, and placed on the right hand of the president, when she was generally recognised as a dancing girl of the opera. To this person, as the fittest representative of that reason which they worshipped, the national convention of France rendered public homage. This impious and ridiculous mummery had a certain fashion; and the installation of the Goddess of Reason was renewed and imitated throughout the nation in such places where the inhabitants desired to show themselves equal to all the heights of the Revolution." *Great Controversy*, page 275.

4. What other three issues are at stake in this assertion that there is no God? Genesis 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:16; Titus 1:13-14.

NOTE: 'Influences that confuse the perception of truth are brought to bear upon the life. In every way possible, Satan strives to turn souls from the narrow path that leads to heaven; and because men love darkness, they follow the voice of strangers, and reject the call of the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep. The plain, authoritative "Thus saith the Lord," is refused for some winding sophistry of errors. Infidelity has increased in proportion as men have questioned the Word and requirements of their Maker. They have taken up the work of cheapening character, and lessening faith in the inspiration of the Bible. Men claiming great wisdom have presumed to criticise and cut and cull the words of the living God, and have started questions to make shipwreck of the happiness of their fellow men and to ruin their hopes of heaven. This is a work that is pleasing to the enemy of all righteousness. The arguments that men bring against the Bible are the result of the counsels of the evil one. The door of their minds was opened to his suggestions; and the more they drifted into error, the greater grew their desire to draw other souls into the same channel of darkness.' *Review and Herald*, September 22, 1910.

'Think to change times and laws'

5. What did Daniel prophesy about the opposition of false religion towards the law of God? Daniel 7:25, middle part.

NOTE: 'Satan well knew that the Holy Scriptures would enable men to discern his deceptions and withstand his power. It was by the Word that even the Saviour of the world had resisted his attacks. At every assault, Christ presented the shield of eternal truth, saying, "It is written." To every suggestion of the adversary, He opposed the wisdom and power of the word. In order for Satan to maintain his sway over men, and establish the authority of the papal usurper, he must keep them in ignorance of the Scriptures. The Bible would exalt God and place finite men in their true position; therefore its sacred truths must be concealed and suppressed. This logic was adopted by the Roman Church. For hundreds of years the circulation of the Bible was prohibited. The people were forbidden to read it or to have it in their houses, and unprincipled priests and prelates interpreted its teachings to sustain their pretensions. Thus the pope came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on earth, endowed with authority over church and state. The detector of error having been removed, Satan worked according to his will. Prophecy had declared that the papacy was to "think to change times and laws." Daniel 7:25. This work it was not slow to attempt.' *Great Controversy*, page 51.

'The prophet Daniel declared that the Roman Church, symbolised by the little horn, was to think to change times and laws, [Daniel 7:25.] while Paul styled it the man of sin, [2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.] who was to exalt himself above God. Only by changing God's law could the papacy exalt itself above God; whoever should understandingly keep the law as thus changed would be giving supreme honour to that power by which the change was made. Such an act of obedience to papal laws would be a mark of allegiance to the pope in the place of God. The papacy has attempted to change the law of God. The second commandment, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law, and the fourth commandment has been so changed as to authorise the observance of the first instead of the seventh day as the Sabbath. But papists urge as a reason for omitting the second commandment, that it is unnecessary, being included in the first, and that they are giving the law exactly as God designed it to be understood. This cannot be the change foretold by the prophet. An intentional, deliberate change is brought to view: "He shall think to change times and laws." The change in the fourth commandment exactly fulfils the prophecy. For this change the only authority claimed is that of the church. Here the papal power openly sets itself above God.' *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4, page 279.

6. Using prophecy, how is God calling the world to come back to Him, to consider the judgement based on His Law, His creatorship and His Sabbath? Revelation 14:7.

NOTE: 'Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared: "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Revelation 18:5. She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and "receive not of her plagues." Hence the movement symbolised by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: "Come out of her, My people." These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth. Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond" (Revelation 13:16), shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death.' *Great Controversy*, page 603.

'The dead know not anything'

7. By what contradictions has Satan opposed the truth of God? Compare Genesis 2:17 with Genesis 3:4. Whereas Saul had once outlawed those with familiar spirits, consider how he was deceived by this lie, once the Spirit of God had departed from him? 1 Samuel 28:7-12.

NOTE: 'Christ is the source of our strength. He is the vine, we are the branches. We must receive nourishment from the living vine. Deprived of the strength and nourishment of the vine, we are as members of the body without a head, and are in the very position Satan wishes us to be in, that he may control these members as pleases himself. He works "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie." Spiritualism is a lie. It is founded upon the great original lie, "Thou shalt not surely die." Thousands are cut off the Head, and the members [limbs] act without Jesus for their head, and the result is, another guides the body. Satan controls them.' *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 4b, page 90.

8. How did the Sadducees, the intellectual wing of the Jewish church, teach God's people contrary to the words of Jesus? See John 11:25 & John 5:28-29, then compare Matthew 22:23 & Acts 17:32.

NOTE: 'Over the rent sepulchre of Joseph, Christ had proclaimed in triumph, "I am the resurrection, and the life." These words could be spoken only by the Deity. All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life. Only He who is one with God could say, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. In His divinity, Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death.' *Desire of Ages*, page 785.

'When they had further threatened them'

9. What was the attitude of the church leaders against those who spoke the truth? Acts 4:17-18; Acts 5:17-18; Acts 5:28-29.

NOTE: 'When the authorities come between us and God, we shall receive help if we only trust in Him, as did the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and with them we shall be able to say, "Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is." But while we trust in God, no one should be presumptuous; and that we may not take an unwise course, we should pray constantly. We should not rush into danger unless God sends us there; nor should we call our brethren cowards because they are cautious in their plans that they may not unnecessarily provoke the rulers and powers of the earth. What was the strength of those who in the past have suffered imprisonment and death for Christ's sake? It was union with God, union with the Holy Spirit, union with Christ.' *Review and Herald*, April 22, 1890.

10. How was Elijah, the prophet of truth and righteousness, referred to by those who wanted neither his words nor his presence? 1 Kings 18:17-18.

NOTE: 'The great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday 'Sabbath'; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favour and temporal prosperity. Thus the accusation urged of old against the servant of God will be repeated and upon grounds equally well established: "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." 1 Kings 18:17, 18. As the wrath of the people shall be excited by false charges, they will pursue a course toward God's ambassadors very similar to that which apostate Israel pursued toward Elijah. The miracle-working power manifested through spiritualism will exert its influence against those who choose to obey God rather than men. Communications from the spirits will declare that God has sent them to convince the rejecters of Sunday of their error, affirming that the laws of the land should be obeyed as the law of God. They will lament the great wickedness in the world and second the testimony of religious teachers that the degraded state of morals is caused by the desecration of Sunday. Great will be the indignation excited against all who refuse to accept their testimony. Satan's policy in this final conflict with God's people is the same that he employed in the opening of the great controversy in heaven. He professed to be seeking to promote the stability of the divine government, while secretly bending every effort to secure its overthrow.' *Darkness before Dawn*, page 34.

'That should be killed as they were'

11. What can happen to those who stand steadfast for truth? Acts 7:51-60.

NOTE: 'As he [Stephen] described the glorious scene upon which his eyes were gazing, it was more than his persecutors could endure. Stopping their ears, that they might not hear his words, and uttering loud cries, they ran furiously upon him with one accord "and cast him out of the city." "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." *Acts of the Apostles*, page 101.

12. Will there be more martyrs before the close of probation? Revelation 6:11.

NOTE: 'As the Spirit of God illuminates the minds of His servants, the truth will be presented in its divine power and preciousness. Those who reject the truth will stand to accuse and oppress the disciples. But under loss and suffering, even unto death, the Lord's children are to reveal the meekness of their divine Example. Thus will be seen the contrast between Satan's agents and the representatives of Christ. The Saviour will be lifted up before the rulers and the people.' The disciples were not

endowed with the courage and fortitude of the martyrs until such grace was needed. Then the Saviour's promise was fulfilled.' *Desire of Ages*, page 354.

Lesson Insight: Truth is that which God has permitted to be revealed for us in His Word. It seems that every major element has been opposed and questioned, and replaced with Satanic substitutes. Truth is indeed fallen in the street. It is our duty to consider everything that we believe so that, when we are called upon to speak for God, we may be filled with the Spirit of Truth and bring honour to Our High Priest.

Lesson 11: March 11-17 **'Established in the present truth'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.' Colossians 2:6-7.

LESSON AIM: To emphasise through Scripture that our understanding of truth must be lived out, settled and sure, both intellectually and spiritually.

Introduction

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

'Strengthening all the disciples'

1. What was one of Paul's reasons for his missionary journeys? Acts 14:21-22; Acts 15:41.

NOTE: 'Before pressing forward into new territory, Paul and his companions visited the churches that had been established in Pisidia and the regions round about. "As they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." The apostle Paul felt a deep responsibility for those converted under his labours. Above all things, he longed that they should be faithful, "that I may rejoice in the day of Christ," he said, "that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." Philippians 2:16. He trembled for the result of his ministry.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 205.

2. What did Paul see as his work beside the initial preaching of the gospel? Acts 18:23.

NOTE: 'The first epistle to the Corinthian church was written by the apostle Paul during the latter part of his stay at Ephesus. For no others had he felt a deeper interest, or put forth more untiring effort, than for the believers in Corinth. For a year and a half he had laboured among them, pointing them to a crucified and risen Saviour as the only means of salvation, and urging them to rely implicitly on the transforming power of His grace. Before accepting into church fellowship those who made a profession of Christianity, he had been careful to give them special instruction as to the privileges and duties of the Christian believer, and he had earnestly endeavoured to help them to be faithful to their baptismal vows. Paul had a keen sense of the conflict which every soul must wage with the agencies of evil that are continually seeking to deceive and ensnare, and he had worked untiringly to strengthen and confirm those who were young in the faith.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 298.

'Rooted and built up in Him'

3. What did Paul stress in his letters to the Colossians? Colossians 1:23.

NOTE: 'I saw that God is purifying and proving His people. He will refine them as gold, until the dross is consumed and His image is reflected in them. All have not that spirit of self-denial and that willingness to endure hardness and to suffer for the truth's sake, which God requires. Their wills are not subdued; they have not consecrated themselves wholly to God, seeking no greater pleasure than to do His will. Ministers and people lack spirituality and true godliness. Everything is to be shaken that can be shaken. God's people will be brought into most trying positions, and all must be settled, rooted, and grounded in the truth, or their steps will surely slide.' *Testimonies*, volume 1, page 355.

4. With what other words did Paul express this same teaching? Colossians 2:7.

NOTE: 'Are those who know the truth for this time anchored in Bible doctrines? Are our weapons, "Thus saith the Lord," "It is written"? Is our anchor cast within the veil? Are we individually rooted and grounded in gospel truth so that we may be established, strengthened, and settled in the faith? Are we, as those who have the knowledge of the mysteries of God, those to whom God has committed the living oracles, loyal and true to our stewardship? Those who are truly converted will reveal, as missionaries for God, what the truth means to them in its transforming efficiency and sanctifying power. If we are weighted with the treasures of eternal truth we shall proclaim to a world perishing in sin what it signifies to have the sanctifying, redeeming love of Christ in the soul. If we are verily and truly united in Christ, it is because truth has taken possession of the soul temple.' *That I May Know Him*, page 129.

‘Not soon shaken’

5. How did Jesus teach that we should not be moved away from the truth and hope of the gospel? Luke 9:62.

NOTE: ‘Everyone who would be a Christian, therefore, may expect at the start to part with all those things which are to be reaped from the treasure fields of the world. He may expect that his career will be counted anything but successful from a worldly point of view. He may expect to identify himself with a company of people who are humble, few in number, and looked down upon by the majority with scorn and derision. He may expect that his whole life will be one of self-denial, of turning away from those pleasures and repeated benefits for which the human heart naturally longs. It is wise for such an one to sit down at the outset and count the costs. There are, as we are told in one of Christ’s parables, a certain class of persons who, when they hear the Word of God, at first receive it joyfully but soon, under the pressure of difficulties and persecutions, become offended and turned back to the world. Matthew 8:20, 21. They start out apparently with no thought but that the way is smooth and easy through to the end; but when it becomes rough and difficult, their courage fails them. They have not counted the cost. And no man, said Christ, who puts his hand to the plough and then turns back, is worthy of the kingdom of God.’ E.J Waggoner, *Present Truth*, April 12, 1894.

6. How did Paul exhort the Thessalonians in his second letter to them? 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2.

NOTE: ‘In later years I have been shown that the false theories advanced in the past have by no means been given up. As favourable opportunities come, they will have a resurrection. Let us not forget that everything is to be shaken that can be shaken. The enemy will be successful in overthrowing the faith of some, but those who are true to principle will not be shaken. They will stand firm amid trial and temptation. The Lord has pointed out these errors; and those who do not discern where Satan has come in will continue to be led in false paths. Jesus bids us be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die. We are not called upon to enter into controversy with those who hold false theories. Controversy is unprofitable. Christ never entered into it. “It is written” is the weapon used by the world’s Redeemer. Let us keep close to the Word.’ *Christian Experience and Teachings*, page 81.

‘Purified your souls in obeying the truth’

7. How important is it to love the truth of Jesus? 2 Thessalonians 2:10.

NOTE: ‘Terrible were the trials that were to beset the true church. Even at the time when the apostle was writing, the “mystery of iniquity” had already begun to work. The developments that were to take place in the future were to be “after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.” Especially solemn is the apostle’s statement regarding those who should refuse to receive “the love of the truth.” “For this cause,” he declared of all who should deliberately reject the messages of truth, “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.” Men cannot with impunity reject the warnings that God in mercy sends them. From those who persist in turning from these warnings, God withdraws His Spirit, leaving them to the deceptions that they love.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 266.

8. How does obeying the Truth as found in the Word of God develop our characters? 1 Peter 1:22-23.

NOTE: ‘What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world, are receiving the worldly mould, and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, these are receiving the heavenly mould, and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth, and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity. Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God, candidates for heaven. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.’ *Christian Experience and Teachings*, page 191.

‘Speaking the truth in love’

9. What words of admonition are recorded in the Book of Proverbs? Proverbs 22:20-21.

NOTE: ‘Were the Sun of Righteousness to withdraw His beams of light from the world, we should be left in the darkness of eternal night. Jesus spake as never man spake. He poured out to men the whole treasure of heaven in wisdom and knowledge. He is the light that lighteth every man who cometh into the world. Every phase of truth was evident to Him. He did not come to utter uncertain sentiments and opinions; but only to speak truth established upon eternal principles. Then why take the unstable words of men as exalted wisdom, when a greater and certain wisdom is at your command?’ *Christian Education*, page 79.

10. What further counsel is given about speaking the truth? Ephesians 4:15.

NOTE: ‘But are there not many who are like a chestnut bur, hurting those with whom they come in contact? Those who represent Christ will not speak harshly. Their words will be pleasant and helpful. “Speaking the truth in love,” we “grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Ephesians 4:15).’ *In Heavenly places*, page 321.

‘Let us hold fast the profession of our faith’

11. How does Paul exhort the early Christians and what is our responsibility one to another? Hebrews 10:23-25.

NOTE: 'The church is God's agency for the proclamation of truth, empowered by Him to do a special work; and if she is loyal to Him, obedient to all His commandments, there will dwell within her the excellency of divine grace. If she will be true to her allegiance, if she will honour the Lord God of Israel, there is no power that can stand against her.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 600.

12. How are we encouraged to hold fast in the Lord, knowing that our work for Him is never lost? 1 Corinthians 15:58.

NOTE: 'Glorious is the triumph awaiting the faithful. The apostle, realising the possibilities before the Corinthian believers, sought to set before them that which uplifts from the selfish and the sensual, and glorifies life with the hope of immortality. Earnestly he exhorted them to be true to their high calling in Christ. "My beloved brethren," he pleaded, "be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." *Acts of the Apostles*, page 321.

Lesson Insight: God desires that the ones who hold the truth for Him in this world will count the cost, then take the truth and live it, speaking and sharing it to His glory with love and with lives that are firmly established and unshakeable. If we do this we can be assured that our labour for Him will not be in vain. If we have put our hand to the plough let us not relinquish our hold on the truth of the Lord.

Lesson 12: March 18-24

'That they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God'

MEMORY VERSE: 'I am the good shepherd and know My sheep, and am known of Mine.' John 10:14.

LESSON AIM: To show that we must know the voice of God, because philosophy and tradition, as destroying parasites, have combined with the truth of God, to nullify its work in the world.

Introduction

'From God, the fountain of wisdom, proceeds all the knowledge that is of value to man, all that the intellect can grasp or retain. The fruit of the tree representing good and evil is not to be eagerly plucked because it is recommended by one who was once a bright angel in glory. He has said that, if men eat thereof, they shall know good and evil; but let it alone. The true knowledge comes not from infidels or wicked men. The word of God is light and truth. The true light shines from Jesus Christ, who "lighteth every man that cometh into the world" John 1:9.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 199.

'The law of truth was in his mouth'

1. For what purpose has God placed truth in the world? Psalm 43:3, last part; Psalm 25:4-5.

NOTE: 'Have we opened the door, and said, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" Are we desirous of the presence of the heavenly guest? Are we willing to be instructed as workers together with God, willing to be educated, trained, and disciplined in his way for His service? Are we willing to lay aside our individual preferences, in order to follow the Lord's way and do the Lord's will? Are we seated at His feet, as learners in His school? Do our lives express the desire, "Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day." *Review and Herald*, May 31, 1906.

2. What is to constitute the words and the work of the servants of God? Malachi 2:5-6

NOTE: 'Here is shown the work of the minister of righteousness: "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." But a solemn charge is made by the God of Israel: "Ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law." *Review and Herald*, December 1, 1896.

'Taught by the precept of men'

3. Sadly, how does God describe those who listen to His prophet and profess to be His true worshippers? Ezekiel 33:31-32.

NOTE: 'Not all who profess His name and wear His badge are Christ's. Many who have taught in My name, said Jesus, will be found wanting at last. "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." There are persons who believe that they are right, when they are wrong. While claiming Christ as their Lord, and professedly doing great works in His name, they are workers of iniquity. "With their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." He who declares God's word is to them "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not." Ezekiel 33:31, 32. A mere profession of discipleship is of no value.' *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, page 146.

'The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances. The warnings that worldly conformity has silenced or withheld must be given under the

fiercest opposition from enemies of the faith. And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending. These apostates will then manifest the most bitter enmity, doing all in their power to oppress and malign their former brethren and to excite indignation against them. This day is just before us. The members of the church will individually be tested and proved. They will be placed in circumstances where they will be forced to bear witness for the truth. Many will be called to speak before councils and in courts of justice, perhaps separately and alone. The experience which would have helped them in this emergency they have neglected to obtain, and their souls are burdened with remorse for wasted opportunities and neglected privileges.’ *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 463.

4. How does the Lord show the futility of our worship when mixed with the traditions and commandments of men? Isaiah 29:13.

NOTE: But “every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.” In place of the authority of the so-called fathers of the church, God bids us accept the word of the eternal Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. Here alone is truth unmixed with error. David said, “I have more understanding than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts.” Psalm 119:99, 100. Let all who accept human authority, the customs of the church, or the traditions of the fathers, take heed to the warning conveyed in the words of Christ, “In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” *Desire of Ages*, page 398.

‘In vain they do worship Me’

5. What human additions to the Holy Scriptures cause us to transgress the commandments of God? Matthew 15:7-9, Colossians 2:8.

NOTE: ‘The banner of truth and religious liberty held aloft by the founders of the gospel church and by God’s witnesses during the centuries that have passed since then, has, in this last conflict, been committed to our hands. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His word. We are to receive this word as supreme authority. We are to recognise human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God’s word must be recognised as above all human legislation. A “Thus saith the Lord” is not to be set aside for a “Thus saith the church” or a “Thus saith the state.” The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 68.

6. How does Jesus make clear that, by adding tradition to the word of God, our worship is worthless and is equal to rejecting the law of God? Mark 7:7,9.

NOTE: ‘Satan well knew that the Holy Scriptures would enable men to discern his deceptions and withstand his power. It was by the word that even the Saviour of the world had resisted his attacks. At every assault, Christ presented the shield of eternal truth, saying, “It is written.” To every suggestion of the adversary, He opposed the wisdom and power of the word. In order for Satan to maintain his sway over men, and establish the authority of the papal usurper, he must keep them in ignorance of the Scriptures. The Bible would exalt God and place finite men in their true position; therefore its sacred truths must be concealed and suppressed.’ *Great Controversy*, page, 52.

‘To a friend of the Reformation Luther wrote: “We cannot attain to the understanding of Scripture either by study or by the intellect. Your first duty is to begin by prayer. Entreat the Lord to grant you, of His great mercy, the true understanding of His word. There is no other interpreter of the word of God than the Author of this word, as He Himself has said, ‘They shall be all taught of God.’ Hope for nothing from your own labours, from your own understanding: trust solely in God, and in the influence of His Spirit. Believe this on the word of a man who has had experience.” Here is a lesson of vital importance to those who feel that God has called them to present to others the solemn truths for this time. These truths will stir the enmity of Satan and of men who love the fables that he has devised. In the conflict with the powers of evil, there is need of something more than strength of intellect and human wisdom. When enemies appealed to custom and tradition, or to the assertions and authority of the pope, Luther met them with the Bible and the Bible only.’ *Great Controversy*, page 132.

‘Making the Word of God of none effect’

7. What is the end result of introducing tradition among the words of God? Mark 7:13.

NOTE: ‘As he pondered these things in his heart, Paul understood more and more clearly the meaning of his call “to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:1. His call had come, “not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father.” Galatians 1:1. The greatness of the work before him led him to give much study to the Holy Scriptures, in order that he might preach the gospel “not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect,” “but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,” that the faith of all who heard “should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:17; 2:4, 5.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 127.

8. What happens to the law and government of God when Christians place man’s teachings and commandments among the teachings of God? Psalm 119:126, last part.

NOTE: ‘The high priest who dared to appear in holy office, and engage in the service of the sanctuary, with a rent robe, was looked upon as having severed himself from God. By rending his garment, he cut himself off from being a representative character. He was no longer accepted by God as an officiating priest. This course of action, as exhibited by Caiaphas, showed human passion, human imperfection. By rending his garments, Caiaphas made of no effect the law of God, to follow the tradition

of men. A man-made law provided that, in case of blasphemy, a priest might rend his garments in horror at the sin, and be guiltless. Thus the law of God was made void by the laws of men.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 709.

9. Why was Cain’s offering rejected? Genesis 4:4-5.

NOTE: ‘So far as birth and religious instruction were concerned, these brothers were equal. Both were sinners, and both acknowledged the claims of God to reverence and worship. To outward appearance their religion was the same up to a certain point, but beyond this the difference between the two was great. “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” Hebrews 11:4. Abel grasped the great principles of redemption. He saw himself a sinner, and he saw sin and its penalty, death, standing between his soul and communion with God. He brought the slain victim, the sacrificed life, thus acknowledging the claims of the law that had been transgressed. Through the shed blood he looked to the future sacrifice, Christ dying on the cross of Calvary; and, trusting in the atonement that was there to be made, he had the witness that he was righteous, and his offering accepted.’ *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 72.

‘Them that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham’

10. What specific example of worship mixed with idolatry are we given in scripture? Zephaniah 1:4-5

NOTE: ‘Satan is not asleep; he is wide awake, to make of no effect the sure word of prophecy. With skill and deceptive power he is working to counterwork the expressed will of God, made plain in His Word. For years Satan has been gaining control of human minds, through subtle sophistries that he has devised to take the place of the truth. In this time of peril, right-doers, in the fear of God, will glorify His name by repeating the words of David, “It is time for thee, O Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law.” Through His prophet Zephaniah the Lord specifies the judgments that He will bring upon evil-doers: ‘I will also stretch out Mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, . . . and them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham; and them that are turned back from the Lord; and those that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for Him.’” *Review and Herald*, October 11, 1906.

11. What is recorded in Scripture as another example of confused worship? Ezekiel 8:15-18

NOTE: ‘At a gate leading from the outer to the inner court he was shown “women weeping for Tammuz,” and within “the inner court of the Lord’s house, . . . at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east.” Verses 13-16. And now the glorious Being who accompanied Ezekiel throughout this astonishing vision of wickedness in high places in the land of Judah, inquired of the prophet: “Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here?”” *Prophets and Kings*, page 448.

‘We will not serve thy gods’

12. What lessons of pure worship can we learn from the three young men on the plain of Dura? Daniel 3:28. Read Daniel 3 in its entirety.

NOTE: ‘In vain were the king’s threats. He could not turn the men from their allegiance to the Ruler of the universe. From the history of their fathers they had learned that disobedience to God results in dishonour, disaster, and death; and that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the foundation of all true prosperity. Calmly facing the furnace, they said, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful [anxious] to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.” Their faith strengthened as they declared that God would be glorified by delivering them, and with triumphant assurance born of implicit trust in God, they added, “But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”” *Prophets and Kings*, page 507.

13. What are the ‘pure words’ that we should keep and teach and preach? Psalm 12:6-7.

NOTE: “Labour not for the meat which perisheth,” Christ admonished, “but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed.” John 6:27. When we obey these words, we shall rightly understand the teachings of the Scriptures, and esteem the truth as the most valuable treasure with which to store the mind. We shall have within us a wellspring of the water of life. We shall pray, as did the psalmist, “Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law;” and we shall find, as he did, that “the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is Thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.”” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 31.

Lesson Insight: The devil can only pervert the truth of God. He cannot create any new concepts. There is therefore a counterfeit or a corruption for every teaching in the Bible, walking alongside it, using the same words and portions of scripture. Only a truth that is lived and loved and obeyed will give us the protection against false theories.

Lesson 13: March 25-31 Truth Triumphant

MEMORY VERSE ‘And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgements are made manifest.’ Revelation 15:3-4.

LESSON AIM: To teach that Truth is that which God has revealed in His Word. Although it has been denied, derided, contradicted or ignored, it remains the Truth of God.

Introduction

‘Let the gospel message ring through our churches, summoning them to universal action. Let the members of the church have increased faith, gaining zeal from their unseen, heavenly allies, from a knowledge of their exhaustless resources, from the greatness of the enterprise in which they are engaged, and from the power of their Leader. Those who place themselves under God’s control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the steady tread of the events ordained by Him to take place. Inspired with the Spirit of Him who gave His life for the life of the world, they will no longer stand still in impotency, pointing to what they cannot do. Putting on the armour of heaven, they will go forth to the warfare willing to do and dare for God, knowing that His omnipotence will supply their need. 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.’ *Christian Service*, page 77.

‘I am the Truth’

1. Who is the Truth that has been set at naught? John 14:6. Compare Exodus 34:6; John 15:26.

NOTE: ‘The Majesty of heaven in tears! the Son of the infinite God troubled in spirit, bowed down with anguish! The scene filled all heaven with wonder. That scene reveals to us the exceeding sinfulness of sin; it shows how hard a task it is, even for Infinite Power, to save the guilty from the consequences of transgressing the law of God. Jesus, looking down to the last generation, saw the world involved in a deception similar to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem. The great sin of the Jews was their rejection of Christ; the great sin of the Christian world would be their rejection of the law of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. The precepts of Jehovah would be despised and set at naught. Millions in bondage to sin, slaves of Satan, doomed to suffer the second death, would refuse to listen to the words of truth in their day of visitation. Terrible blindness! strange infatuation!’ *Great Controversy*, page 22.

2. What does the Bible call the major end-time religious force in the world? 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4; Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:4-6; 1 John 4:3.

Compilers Note: 1 John 4:3 uses the word *antichrist*. The New Testament was written in Greek. The word means one who stands in the place of Christ, an imposter, a supplanter (it is the Latin/Greek hybrid word *antichrist* that means ‘against Christ’.)

- First of all, 2 John 1:7 gives an initial warning of an alternative Christ who did not come like us in our fallen human nature. Compare 1 John 4:2-3.
- The Waldenses pointed to ‘antichrist’ as one who steals the office of Christ.
- Tyndale said Christ had been robbed, for His significance had been claimed by another who calls himself the vicar of Christ (one who stands in the place of Christ) Thus the Pope, and the system he represents, actually calls himself ‘antichrist,’ thus fulfilling the prophecies by his own words.
- All the Bible names given to Christ in relation to his church have been appropriated by the Pope. Vicegerent of Jesus Christ meaning the deputy Jesus Christ. The Pope is also sometimes called: The Sweet Jesus, the Shepherd, the Physician, the Doorkeeper, the Husbandman, Another God on earth. He states that he can modify, explain and interpret divine laws. *Ferrari’s Ecclesiastical Dictionary*.
- According to the Waldenses, Antichrist is defined as ‘falsehood covered with an appearance of Truth’, e.g. the fourth beast of Daniel 7, Babylon, the mother of harlots, the man of sin, the son of perdition. *Reported by H Grattan Guinness*.
- It is interesting to note that those who knew the Bible recognised when the prophecies concerning the coming of ‘the son of perdition’ were fulfilled, and began to teach it from the AD 400s onwards.
- In 1416 Henry 5th of England was admonished to submit to the Pope. He refused saying that the Pope was the great antichrist, the son of perdition, the adversary of God.
- The Pope was also referred to as the first beast of Revelation 13 by the Bishop of Gloucester who was martyred in 1555.

NOTE: ‘The religion of Jesus is endangered. It is being mingled with worldliness. Worldly policy is taking the place of the true piety and wisdom that comes from above, and God will remove His prospering hand from the conference. Shall the ark of the covenant be removed from this people? Shall idols be smuggled in? Shall false principles and false precepts be brought into the sanctuary? Shall antichrist be respected? Shall the true doctrines and principles given us by God, which have made us what we are, be ignored?’ *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, page 96.

‘Shewing himself that he is God’

3. What work is the antichrist doing in the world? 2 Thessalonians 2:3, last part-4, first part.

NOTE: 'There is one pointed out in prophecy as the man of sin. He is the representative of Satan. Taking the suggestions of Satan concerning the law of God, which is as unchangeable as His throne, this man of sin comes in and represents to the world that he has changed that law, and that the first day of the week, instead of the seventh, is now the Sabbath. Professing infallibility, he claims the right to change the law of God to suit his own purposes. By so doing, he exalts himself above God, and leaves the world to infer that God is fallible. If it were indeed true that God had made a rule of government that needed to be changed, it would certainly show fallibility. But Christ declared that not one jot or tittle of the law should fail until heaven and earth should pass away. The very work that He came to do was to exalt that law, and show to the created worlds and to heaven that God is just, and that His law need not be changed. But here is Satan's right-hand man ready to carry on the work that Satan commenced in heaven, that of trying to amend the law of God. And the Christian world has sanctioned his efforts by adopting this child of the Papacy, the Sunday institution.' *SDA Bible Commentary*, volume 7, page 910.

4. How completely has this religious political power attempted to usurp the place of God in this world. 2 Thessalonians 2:4, last part.

NOTE: 'The man of sin has exalted himself against God, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself to be God. He has trampled underfoot God's great memorial of creation, established to commemorate His work; and in its stead he has presented to the world a common working day. This day he has set up as a rival Sabbath, to be observed and honoured. Thus the world has been turned against God; for the Lord declares that He has sanctified the day of His rest. But though every member of the human family should accept this child of the Papacy, in no case would this invalidate the holy Sabbath of Jehovah. Those who accept the false sabbath exalt the man of sin, and assail the government of God. But the man of sin cannot annul what God has declared shall stand fast forever. The work now to be done in our world is to exalt the law of the Lord, and call the attention of the people to it. The time has come when the truth is to be proclaimed against falsehood and error.' *Review & Herald*, July 26, 1898. 'The man of sin was to arise, and do his work of exaltation and blasphemy, before the brethren could look for the coming of Christ. That great event was to be preceded by a falling away. There would be revealed a form of Antichrist, and the leaven of apostasy was to work with increasing power to the end of time.' *Review and Herald*, July 31, 1888.

5. Who gave antichrist his power and his seat and his great authority? Revelation 13:2. Why? Isaiah 14:13-14. When antichrist speaks contrary to God, which leader does he follow? John 8:44.

NOTE: 'Truth is of God; deception in all its myriad forms is of Satan, and whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one. Those who have learned of Christ will "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." Ephesians 5:11. In speech, as in life, they will be simple, straightforward, and true, for they are preparing for the fellowship of those holy ones in whose mouth is found no guile. See Revelation 14:5.' *Prophets and Kings*, page 252.

'Doeth great wonders'

6. What characterises all who act for Satan? 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelation 13:11-14; Revelation 18:21-23; Revelation 19:20. Compare Revelation 20:10.

NOTE: 'The teachers of Spiritualism come in a pleasing, bewitching manner to deceive you and, if you listen to their fables, you are beguiled by the enemy of righteousness, and will surely lose your reward. When once the fascinating influence of the arch-deceiver overcomes you, you are poisoned, and its deadly influence adulterates and destroys your faith in Christ's being the Son of God, and you cease to rely on the merits of His blood.' *Testimonies*, volume 1, page 297.

7. How does this prophetic power work to ensure that the majority of the inhabitants of the world will be on his side? Revelation 13:15-17.

NOTE: 'All things in nature and in the world at large are charged with intense earnestness. Satan, in co-operation with his angels and with evil men, will put forth every effort to gain the victory, and will appear to succeed. But from this conflict, truth and righteousness will come forth triumphant in victory. Those who have believed a lie will be defeated, for the days of apostasy will be ended.' *Selected Messages*, volume 3, page 393.

'The Lamb's book of life'

8. Will there be any who will resist his wiles and threats? Revelation 13:8.

NOTE: 'The book of life contains the names of all who have ever entered the service of God. Jesus bade His disciples: "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Paul speaks of his fellow workers, "whose names are in the book of life." Daniel declares that God's people shall be delivered, "every one that shall be found written in the book." And the revelator says that those only shall enter the City of God whose names "are written in the Lamb's book of life." Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; Daniel 12:1; Revelation 21:27.' *Great Controversy*, page 480.

9. Which Bible examples are given of those who chose to serve God in adverse circumstances? Hebrews 11:36-39.

NOTE: 'How often those who trusted the word of God, though in themselves utterly helpless, have withstood the power of the whole world, Enoch, pure in heart, holy in life, holding fast his faith in the triumph of righteousness against a corrupt and scoffing generation; Noah and his household against the men of his time, men of the greatest physical and mental strength and the most debased in morals; the children of Israel at the Red Sea, a helpless, terrified multitude of slaves, against the mightiest army of the mightiest nation on the globe; David, a shepherd lad, having God's promise of the throne, against Saul, the established monarch, bent on holding fast his power; Shadrach and his companions in the fire, and Nebuchadnezzar on the throne; Daniel among the lions, his enemies in the high places of the kingdom; Jesus on the cross, and the Jewish priests and rulers forcing even the Roman

governor to work their will; Paul in chains led to a criminal's death, under Nero the despot of a world empire.' *Education*, page 255.

'Two or three'

10. How may the faithful remnant, still upholding the Truth as it is in Jesus, have to worship? Matthew 18:20.

NOTE: 'Christ has said: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20. Wherever there are as many as two or three believers, let them meet together on the Sabbath to claim the Lord's promise. The little companies assembled to worship God on His holy day have a right to claim the rich blessing of Jehovah. They should believe that the Lord Jesus is an honoured guest in their assemblies. Every true worshiper who keeps holy the Sabbath should claim the promise: "That ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him by calling his mind from secular labour to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of Him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in His word, and to devote a portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest. When the church is without a minister, someone should be appointed as leader of the meeting. But it is not necessary for him to preach a sermon or to occupy a large part of the time of service. A short, interesting Bible reading will often be of greater benefit than a sermon. And this can be followed by a meeting for prayer and testimony.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 265.

11. With what courage did Daniel worship alone to uphold the true God? Daniel 6:10.

NOTE: 'The whole world perished in the Flood. Only three were saved at the destruction of Sodom, but they had the warning. We must not follow the majority for, if we do, so we shall not see heaven. Daniel and his three companions stood alone, yet they would not yield to the influence that surrounded them. Daniel had purposed in his heart not to partake of the portion allotted. Finally the test came. But when the leading men of the realm had conspired against Daniel, he could not be turned away from God. He prayed as firmly as before, with the window opened towards Jerusalem, and he showed to his enemies that he was no coward because he had learned to depend upon God. Daniel did not try to save his life. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." Matthew 16:25.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 3, page 91.

'And I saw heaven opened'

12. When the world is at its darkest, how will the living Truth of God break through on to a world in complete rebellion? Revelation 19:11-16.

NOTE: 'Men have borne false witness against God's chosen ones. They have bruised their limbs with fetters, and burned them at the stake. The Lord will avenge His children. In proportion as men have carried out the spirit and purposes of Satan in causing pain to human beings, so will they suffer. Thus will they perish who have done all in their power to compel men to transgress the law that God has commanded all to obey. "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse," John writes; "and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." *Review & Herald*, June 19, 1900.

13. How will the last events in heaven and in earth set the record straight for those who have been faithful in life and death for the Truth of the Word of God? Revelation 19:1-6.

NOTE: 'The heirs of God have come from garrets, from hovels, from dungeons, from scaffolds, from mountains, from deserts, from the caves of the earth, from the caverns of the sea. On earth they were "destitute, afflicted, tormented." Millions went down to the grave loaded with infamy because they steadfastly refused to yield to the deceptive claims of Satan. By human tribunals they were adjudged the vilest of criminals. But now "God is judge Himself." Psalm 50:6. Now the decisions of earth are reversed. "The rebuke of His people shall He take away." Isaiah 25:8. "They shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord." He hath appointed "to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Isaiah 62:12; 61:3. They are no longer feeble, afflicted, scattered, and oppressed. Henceforth they are to be ever with the Lord. They stand before the throne clad in richer robes than the most honoured of the earth have ever worn. They are crowned with diadems more glorious than were ever placed upon the brow of earthly monarchs. The days of pain and weeping are forever ended. The King of glory has wiped the tears from all faces; every cause of grief has been removed. Amid the waving of palm branches they pour forth a song of praise, clear, sweet, and harmonious; every voice takes up the strain, until the anthem swells through the vaults of heaven: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." And all the inhabitants of heaven respond in the ascription: "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever." *Great Controversy*, page 650.

14. How are the ways and character of our God extolled in heaven? Revelation 15:3; Revelation 5:12-14; Philippians 2:8-11.

NOTE: "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest." Revelation 15:4. Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan's rule in contrast with the government of God has been presented to

the whole universe. Satan's own works have condemned him. God's wisdom, His justice, and His goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all His dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of His people and the good of all the worlds that He has created.' *Darkness Before Dawn*, page 58.

Lesson Insight: Christ, the Truth, will triumph over Satan and his forces. The pure word of the Lord has spoken. The truth of Christ has been derided, denied, contradicted, ignored and declared to be foolishness, and those who have stood unmoved for that truth have been considered as the filth and off-scourings of the earth, not fit to live. But as this conflict reaches its climax, the heavens will open and Christ, the Truth Himself, will burst through on a scoffing world. His words will ring through the earth, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." In their quiet humility and their upright and patient lives, they will have vindicated their Saviour, and brought glory to His name. Now they are delivered. Truth has triumphed, and the Father of lies, with his hosts, is vanquished forever. Praise be to God!

Speed on Thy truth, Eternal One

Speed on Thy truth, Eternal One, Thy holy law proclaim,
Till every land beneath the sun has heard Jehovah's name.
We own, O Lord, Thy sovereign power, and bow before Thy throne
To sing Thy glories in this hour, Immortal God alone.

Thy truth shall stand, unchanging God, long as the ages roll,
Though trampled oft where sin has trod and error chained the soul.
Arise and shine, ye chosen band, ye people scattered, few!
No work so high, so deep, so grand, as that now given you.

We near that hour of calm surcease from sorrow, death and sin,
That brings the weary one release, and ushers heaven in.
Awake, arise, arise and shine! Proclaim His truth abroad!
It is thy Saviour's work and thine, thou messenger of God.

We sing Thy praise, Eternal Lord, Thy glorious truth proclaim.
Thy mandate is a shield and sword, Thy Word a living flame.
Long as the years of earth shall roll, long as eternity,
We'll bow to Thy benign control, and worship only Thee.

Charles M. Snow

