

## What is a Christian?

### 'By this shall all men know'

#### General Introduction.

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

It is through faith in Jesus Christ that the truth is accepted in the heart, and the human agent is purified and cleansed. He has an abiding principle in the soul that enables him to overcome temptation. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." 1 John 3:6. God has power to keep the soul that is in Christ who is under temptation.

A mere profession of godliness is worthless. It is he that abideth in Christ that is a Christian. Unless the mind of God becomes the mind of men, every effort to purify himself will be useless; for it is impossible to elevate man except through a knowledge of God.

The question you need to put to yourselves is, "Am I a Christian?" To be a Christian is to be far more than many understand. It means more than simply having your name upon the church records. It means to be joined to Christ. It means to have simple faith, unwavering reliance upon God. It means to have child-like confidence in your heavenly Father through the name and merit of His dear Son. Do you love to keep the commandments of God, because the commandments of God are God's precepts, the transcript of His character, and can no more be altered than can the character of God? Do you respect and love the law of Jehovah?

As sons and daughters of God, Christians should strive to reach the high ideal set before them in the gospel. They should be content with nothing less than perfection.

To those who receive Him He gives power to become the sons of God, that at last God may receive them as His, to dwell with Him throughout eternity. If during this life they are loyal to God, they will at last "see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads." Revelation 22:4. And what is the happiness of heaven but to see God? What greater joy could come to the sinner saved by the grace of Christ than to look upon the face of God and know Him as Father?

*The Faith I Live By*, page 130.

#### Compiler's Foreword.

There are many differing views today as to what it means to be a Christian. During the Dark Ages, the commonly accepted assumption was that one was born a Christian; to be born into a Christian nation made you a Christian. This view survives today, particularly in countries where there is an established church, a state church. The same view is found among Muslims and other non-Christian religions. Those who hold this view initiate their children by the rite of christening, which is often called 'baptism'. Thus a Christian was simply someone who had been christened and his name enrolled in the parish register.

Another view, which arose in the so-called 'Enlightenment' of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and is associated with the German philosopher Schleiermacher, is that Christianity is a matter of feeling, intuition and experience. Schleiermacher wrote about faith, but for him faith is not based on an authoritative Bible, on revealed truths. For him religion was a matter of a well-disposed heart and devout feelings. If these are present, it doesn't matter what a man actually believes. From Schleiermacher comes the modern contempt for doctrine. 'It matters not what we believe so long as our hearts are right.' Schleiermacher and his followers did not believe that there is one true religion or that Christianity is the only true religion. 'A religion without God may be better than another with God.' Much of modern Christianity has a great deal in common with the thinking of Schleiermacher.

The so-called 'Reformation Theology' owes much to the writings of John Calvin, Theodore Beza and the theologians of the Dutch Reformed Church. This version of Christianity teaches that salvation is entirely of God's predestination. One is predestined to be saved, regardless of any action on his own part; this salvation can never be lost, no matter what sins the person may subsequently commit, and regardless of any lack of confession and repentance. This view continues to be held by many who describe themselves as 'Evangelicals'. This view is sometimes described as 'once saved, always saved.' Dr R. T. Kendall, a prominent advocate of these views, writes as follows: 'Whoever **once** truly confesses that Jesus was raised from the dead and confesses that Jesus is Lord, will go to heaven when he dies...What if we sin? That is the most obvious question. The question is then often reshaped and put like this: What if a person who is saved falls into sin, stays in sin and is found in that very condition when he dies? Will he still go to heaven? **Answer: yes.** If he was truly saved in the first place, yes. If the answer to this question is no, this book is utterly unnecessary.' R. T. Kendall, *Once Saved, Always Saved*, pages 16 ff. Emphasis added.

Out of Roman Catholicism arose another view, the distinction between the 'visible church' and the 'invisible church,' when Thomas More sought to refute the teachings of William Tyndale, who used the manifest corruption of the Roman Catholic church as an argument against its being God's true church. The 'visible church' is defined by More and his followers as the or-

organisational structure of the church, which contains 'wheat and tares,' those who are righteous and those who are corrupt. The 'invisible church' consists only of those whom God perceives to be righteous. More invented this teaching to excuse the deplorable state of his church, arguing that, since God alone knows who are righteous, human beings can only recognise the visible church. More condemned Tyndale for putting the invisible church before the visible, of effectively acting as if there are two churches. He condemned Tyndale for his strong commitment to the invisible church and his weak (or even non-existent) attachment to the visible church. Wesley and Whitfield later attracted similar condemnation from the Established Church.

Tyndale and his successors, in contrast, taught that the church is the assembly of those who are called out, 'the saints', 'the faithful brethren,' 'the household of faith,' those delivered 'from this present world,' 'the church of the firstborn which are written in heaven.' Without such ones, there is no church. And though the inner life of such ones may be invisible, this church is truly visible in her faith in the Lord and her obedience to the commandments of God. There are not two churches, visible and invisible, but one church with two aspects of visible and invisible. In his translation of the New Testament, Tyndale preferred the word 'congregation', rather than 'church', when he translated the Greek word 'ecclesia.'

A recent view of what it means to be a Christian arose from a practice used by the American evangelist, Charles Finney and made popular by Billy Graham. This is the view that one becomes a Christian by responding to an altar call. The altar call is an essential feature of the Billy Graham crusade meetings and, as a result, many followers of Billy Graham were taught to regard their response to his altar call as identical to being 'born again.'

And so these lessons ask the question: What does it mean to be a Christian?

## Lesson 1: 'The disciples were called Christians'

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

STUDY HELP: *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 157-158.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: John 3:3-17.

LESSON AIM: To begin to consider what it means to be a Christian.

### Introduction

'Even learned persons are hungry to know the ABC of what it means to be a Christian and how they can find Christ, how they can gain Christ. This is the food for which the churches all through the ages are starving.' *Testimonies to Southern Africa*, page 34.

### 'Except a man be born again'

#### 1. What qualification did Jesus say is necessary if we are to be able to see the kingdom of God? John 3:3.

NOTE: 'Do you ask, What shall I do to be saved? You must lay your preconceived opinions, your hereditary and cultivated ideas, at the door of investigation. If you search the Scriptures to vindicate your own opinions, you will never reach the truth. Search in order to learn what the Lord says. If conviction comes as you search, if you see that your cherished opinions are not in harmony with the truth, do not misinterpret the truth in order to suit your own belief, but accept the light given. Open mind and heart that you may behold wondrous things out of God's word. Faith in Christ as the world's Redeemer calls for an acknowledgment of the enlightened intellect controlled by a heart that can discern and appreciate the heavenly treasure. This faith is inseparable from repentance and transformation of character. To have faith means to find and accept the gospel treasure, with all the obligations which it imposes. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. He may conjecture and imagine, but without the eye of faith he cannot see the treasure. Christ gave His life to secure for us this inestimable treasure; but without regeneration through faith in His blood, there is no remission of sins, no treasure for any perishing soul.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 112.

#### 2. How did Peter speak of the experience of being born again? 1 Peter 1:23.

NOTE: 'When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." This new birth is the result of receiving Christ as the word of God. Then by the Holy Spirit divine truths are impressed upon the heart, new conceptions are awakened, and the energies hitherto dormant are aroused to co-operate with God. Christ was the revealer of truth to the world. By Him the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, was sown in the hearts of men. The Word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 19.

### 'The renewing of your mind'

#### 3. How did Paul speak of the experience of being born again? Romans 12:2.

NOTE: 'You need to be converted, transformed by the renewing of your mind. When the truth takes hold of your heart, it will work a reformation in the life. The unbelieving world will then be convinced that there is a power in the truth which has wrought so great a change.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 678.

**4. What further description does Paul give of the one who is born again? 2 Corinthians 5:17.**

NOTE: 'The leaven hidden in the flour works invisibly to bring the whole mass under its leavening process; so the leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up, the life of Christ. The mind is changed; the faculties are roused to action in new lines. Man is not endowed with new faculties, but the faculties he has are sanctified. The conscience is awakened. We are endowed with traits of character that enable us to do service for God. 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.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 98-99.

**'Can the Ethiopian change his skin?'**

**5. Is it possible for a person to work this transformation himself? Jeremiah 13:23.**

NOTE: 'If you see your sinfulness, do not wait to make yourself better. How many there are who think they are not good enough to come to Christ. Do you expect to become better through your own efforts? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jeremiah 13:23. There is help for us only in God. We must not wait for stronger persuasions, for better opportunities, or for holier tempers. We can do nothing of ourselves. We must come to Christ just as we are.' *Steps to Christ*, page 31.

**6. By what power is this transformation accomplished? John 3:5-8.**

NOTE: 'All, high or low, if they are unconverted, are on one common platform. Men may turn from one doctrine to another. This is being done, and will be done. Yet they may know nothing of the meaning of the words, "A new heart also will I give you." Accepting new theories, and uniting with a church, do not bring new life to anyone, even though the church with which he unites may be established on the true foundation. Connection with a church does not take the place of conversion. To subscribe the name to a church creed is not of the least value to anyone if the heart is not truly changed. This question is a serious one, and its meaning should be fully realised. Men may be church members, and may apparently work earnestly, performing a round of duties from year to year, and yet be unconverted. But when the truth is received as truth by the heart, it has passed through the conscience, and has captivated the soul with its pure principles. It is placed in the heart by the Holy Spirit, who reveals its beauty to the mind, that its transforming power may be seen in the character.' *Reflecting Christ*, page 217.

**'A new heart will I give you'**

**7. How was Ezekiel shown what it means to be born again? Ezekiel 36:26. Compare Ezekiel 11:19.**

NOTE: 'The gospel is not without a sign of its divine origin. Is it not a miracle that we can break from the bondage of Satan? Enmity against Satan is not natural to the human heart; it is implanted by the grace of God. When one who has been controlled by a stubborn, wayward will is set free, and yields himself wholeheartedly to the drawing of God's heavenly agencies, a miracle is wrought; so also when a man who has been under strong delusion comes to understand moral truth. Every time a soul is converted, and learns to love God and keep His commandments, the promise of God is fulfilled, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Ezekiel 36:26. The change in human hearts, the transformation of human characters, is a miracle that reveals an ever-living Saviour, working to rescue souls. A consistent life in Christ is a great miracle. In the preaching of the word of God, the sign that should be manifest now and always is the presence of the Holy Spirit, to make the word a regenerating power to those that hear. This is God's witness before the world to the divine mission of His Son.' *Desire of Ages*, page 407.

**8. What was Ezekiel shown as necessary in order to be born again? Ezekiel 18:31.**

NOTE: 'All who live have sins to wash away. They may have good intentions, and good purposes; they may have noble traits of character and live moral lives; notwithstanding, they need a Saviour. Jesus speaks to them as He did to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old?" Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." True repentance of sin, faith in the merits of Jesus Christ, and baptism into His death, to be raised out of the water to live a new life, are the first steps in the new birth which Christ told Nicodemus he must experience in order to be saved.' *Youth's Instructor*, February 1, 1874.

**'Whosoever is born of God'**

**9. How does the apostle John describe the change in the one who has been born again? 1 John 3:9.**

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

**10. How does John emphasise this truth? 1 John 5:18.**

NOTE: 'Many fail to recognise the claims that God has upon them. They profess to be sons and daughters of God, but they do not behave as children of God. They argue that their evil habits and customs which they followed when they served under the black banner of the prince of darkness must be excused on the ground of their weakness, while they claim that "it is their way." Their objectionable hereditary traits of character they choose to retain as idols. When a soul is truly converted, old habits and natural evil besetments are done away in Christ Jesus and all things become new... Let the soul cultivate the habit of contemplating the world's Redeemer. Help has been laid upon One that is mighty. Jesus has given His life, that every soul might have abundant help in Him. Will you who read these words resolve that you will never again seek to excuse your defects of character by saying, "It is my way"? Let no one declare, "I cannot change my natural habits and tendencies." The truth must be admitted into the soul, and it will work the sanctification of the character. It will refine and elevate the life, and fit you for an entrance into the mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love Him.' *That I May Know Him*, page 247.

**'Every one that loveth is born of God'**

**11. What evidence may be seen that a person is born again? 1 John 4:7.**

NOTE: 'All who have been born into the heavenly family are in a special sense the brethren of our Lord. The love of Christ binds together the members of His family, and wherever that love is made manifest there the divine relationship is revealed. "Everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." 1 John 4:7.' *Desire of Ages*, page 638.

**12. What further evidence of conversion may be seen? 1 John 2:29.**

NOTE: 'What a precious privilege is this, that we may be sons and daughters of the Most High, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ! What love, what matchless love, that, sinners and aliens as we are, we may be brought back to God, and adopted into His family! It is sin that alienates from God. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whoso sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." To every one who surrenders fully to God is given the privilege of living without sin, in obedience to the law of heaven. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.'" *Review & Herald*, September 27, 1906.

**13. What fundamental change is seen in the life of the one who has been born again? 1 John 5:4. Compare 1 John 2:15.**

NOTE: 'Through Jesus the fallen sons of Adam become "sons of God." "Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Hebrews 2:11. The Christian's life should be one of faith, of victory, and joy in God. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. Truly spoke God's servant Nehemiah: "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10. And Paul says: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Such are the fruits of Bible conversion and sanctification; and it is because the great principles of righteousness set forth in the law of God are so indifferently regarded by the Christian world that these fruits are so rarely witnessed.' *Great Controversy*, page 478.

**Lesson 2: 'Buried with Him by baptism'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' Romans 6:4.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies*, volume 6, pages 91-99.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Romans 6:1-23.

LESSON AIM: To understand the place of baptism in becoming a Christian.

**Introduction**

'Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God's spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, "The Lord our Righteousness." Jeremiah 23:6.' *Testimonies*, volume 6, page 91.

**'Born of water and of the Spirit'**

**1. How did Jesus stress the importance of baptism? John 3:5.**

NOTE: Jesus 'pressed the truth home with greater assurance, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Nicodemus knew that Christ here referred to water baptism and the renewing of the heart by the Spirit of God.' *Desire of Ages*, page 171.

## **2. How did Jesus explain the relationship of baptism to the new birth? John 3:3-7.**

NOTE: 'True repentance of sin, faith in the merits of Jesus Christ, and baptism into His death, to be raised out of the water to live a new life, are the first steps in the new birth which Christ told Nicodemus he must experience in order to be saved.' *Youth's Instructor*, February 1, 1874

### **'He that believeth and is baptised'**

## **3. How did Jesus stress the vital link between belief and baptism? Mark 16:16.**

NOTE: 'Before baptism there should be a thorough inquiry as to the experience of the candidate. Let this inquiry be made, not in a cold and distant way, but kindly, tenderly, pointing the new converts to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Bring the requirement of the gospel to bear upon the candidates for baptism. Christ is represented as bearing the griefs and sorrows caused by sin, and He does this, not only as our sympathising Friend, but as our Substitute. Therefore our sins of selfishness, of unamiable temper, of indolence, of wrong habits and practices, are to be positively and firmly put away. The one who breaks with Satan is to give no place to his temptations. Let the souls who come to Christ consider that He is the Sin-bearer, "wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." All this is done for the sinner, and as the sinner comes to Christ, helpless, penitent, and humble; as he views the expensive expiation made in his behalf, let the repenting soul lay hold by faith of the provision made to save him, not in his sin, but from his sin. Christ as the sin-bearer must take away the sin and rescue the sinner from his morbid spiritual condition. As he asks for a change of heart, the answer comes, "My son, give Me thine heart." "A new heart will I give thee." I will restore you to a pure, holy atmosphere, that you, being dead to sin, may live unto righteousness. "Thy sins be forgiven thee." These words are spoken to the repentant, believing soul. Wonderful Saviour! All need to understand the process of conversion. The fruit is seen in the changed life.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 6*, page 157.

## **4. What examples are we shown of baptism following belief? Acts 8:12, Acts 18:8.**

NOTE: The link between belief and baptism clearly shows that the so-called baptism of infants is not a valid form of baptism. 'The repentant believer, who takes the steps required in conversion, commemorates in his baptism the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. He goes down into the water in the likeness of Christ's death and burial, and he is raised out of the water in the likeness of his resurrection, not to take up the old life of sin, but to live a new life in Christ Jesus.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 3*, page 204.

### **'Teaching them to observe all things'**

## **5. What preparation for baptism did Jesus command? Matthew 28:19-20.**

NOTE: 'There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. We are not only to say, "I believe," but to practise the truth. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment, our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law, his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts.' *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 91.

## **6. What are we told about the subsequent lives of the ones the apostles baptised? Acts 2:42.**

NOTE: 'Those who submit to the solemn rite of baptism pledge themselves, before the heavenly universe, to come out from the world. They have taken their position under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel, to be labourers together with God, and, as such, to make known His will to those who are perishing in sin. They are to search the Scriptures diligently, feeling that it is of the highest importance for them to understand what saith the Lord. Having learned His will, they are to do it heartily, remembering that the truth is the seed they must sow in order to reap a harvest for God. But many of those who claim to believe the truth are not striving as they should for perfection of character.' *Australasian Union Conference Record*, September 15, 1902.

### **'Dead to sin'**

## **7. How did Paul explain the symbolism of baptism? Romans 6:4.**

NOTE: 'The resurrection of Christ is commemorated by our being buried with Him by baptism, and raised out of the watery grave, in likeness of His resurrection, to live in newness of life.' *Early Writings*, page 217.

Note that the Bible speaks of believers' baptism as commemorating the Resurrection of Christ, not Sunday observance, as many churches teach. Nowhere does the Bible command Sunday observance, or link this practice with the Resurrection of Christ.

**8. What then should be the attitude of the baptised person to sin? Romans 6:1-2.**

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

**'Newness of life'**

**9. How does Paul write concerning the life of the one who has been baptised? Romans 6:4, 12-13.**

NOTE: 'As Christians submit to the solemn rite of baptism, He registers the vow that they make to be true to Him. This vow is their oath of allegiance. They are baptised in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thus they are united with the three great powers of heaven. They pledge themselves to renounce the world and to observe the laws of the kingdom of God. Henceforth they are to walk in newness of life. No longer are they to follow the traditions of men. No longer are they to follow dishonest methods. They are to obey the statutes of the kingdom of heaven. They are to seek God's honour. If they will be true to their vow, they will be furnished with grace and power that will enable them to fulfil all righteousness. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.' *Evangelism*, page 307.

**10. What, according to Paul, does sinning reveal about us? Romans 6:16.**

NOTE: 'All who enter upon the new life should understand, prior to their baptism, that the Lord requires the undivided affections. The practising of the truth is essential. The bearing of fruit testifies to the character of the tree. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts. There is need of a thorough conversion to the truth.' *Evangelism*, page 308.

**'Born of water and of the Spirit'**

**11. Does baptism have any power to change the life? Consider John 3:5, Mark 1:8.**

NOTE: 'Baptism may be repeated over and over again, but of itself it has no power to change the human heart. The heart must be united with Christ's heart, the will must be submerged in His will, the mind must become one with His mind, the thoughts must be brought into captivity to Him. The regenerated man has a vital connection with Christ. As the branch derives its sustenance from the parent stock and, because of this, bears much fruit, so the true believer, united with Christ, reveals in his life the fruits of the Spirit. The branch becomes one with the vine; storm cannot carry it away; frost cannot destroy its vital properties. Nothing is able to separate it from the vine. It is a living branch, and it bears the fruit of the vine. So with the believer. By good words and good actions he reveals the character of Christ.' In *Heavenly Places*, page 56.

**12. What warning does Paul give concerning those who have been born again but return to their former lives of sin? Hebrews 6:4-6.**

NOTE: 'The vows which we take upon ourselves in baptism embrace much. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. He is to make all worldly considerations secondary to this new relation. Publicly he has declared that he will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. He is no longer to live a careless, indifferent life. He has made a covenant with God. He has died to the world. He is to live to the Lord, to use for Him all his entrusted capabilities, never losing the realization that he bears God's signature, that he is a subject of Christ's kingdom, a partaker of the divine nature. He is to surrender to God all that he is and all that he has, employing all his gifts to His name's glory.' *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 98.

**Lesson 3: 'The household of faith'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.' Acts 2:47, last part.

STUDY HELP: *The Upward Look*, page 315.

LESSON SCRIPTURES: Acts 2:41-47, Acts 4:31-35.

LESSON AIM: To examine the relationship between the Christian and the church.

## Introduction

‘God has a church. It is not the great cathedral, neither is it the national establishment, neither is it the various denominations; it is the people who love God and keep His commandments. “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20). Where Christ is even among the humble few, this is Christ’s church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church.’ *The Upward Look*, page 315.

### ‘The church’

#### 1. What Greek word is translated as ‘church’ in English Bibles and what does this word mean?

NOTE: The word ‘church’ in the King James Bible translates the Greek word ‘ecclesia’ which means ‘those who have been summoned out’. The word implies that these people have been called, i.e. by Christ Himself, and that they gather for a definite purpose. When William Tyndale, the first to translate the New Testament from Greek to English, met this word, he translated it as ‘congregation,’ not ‘church.’ In the majority of instances, the New Testament writers use the word to refer to a particular congregation, but sometimes it is used for the whole body of Christians

‘The English word ‘church’ (compare Scottish ‘kirk’, Dutch ‘kerk’, German ‘kirche’) is generally derived from the Greek ‘kuriakon’ ‘the Lord’s house’, a building for Christian worship. ‘Kuriakon’ does not occur in this sense in the Bible... ‘Church’ in the New Testament translates the Greek word ‘ecclesia’, which always means an assembly of people, and cannot mean a building.’ Taken from Alan Richardson, ed., *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, page 46.

#### 2. In what ways does the New Testament refer to the church? Colossians 1:2, Galatians 1:4, Galatians 6:10, Hebrews 12:23.

NOTE: ‘Where Christ is, even among the humble few, this is Christ’s church, for the presence of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity can alone constitute a church. Where two or three are present who love and obey the commandments of God, Jesus there presides, let it be in the desolate places of the earth, in the wilderness, in the city, or enclosed in prison walls. The glory of God has penetrated the prison walls, flooding with glorious beams of heavenly light the darkest dungeon. His saints may suffer, but their sufferings will, like the apostles’ of old, spread their faith and win souls to Christ and glorify His holy name. The bitterest opposition expressed by those who hate God’s great moral standard of righteousness should not and will not shake the steadfast soul who trusts fully in God.’ *Manuscript Releases, volume 17*, page 81.

### ‘Not forsaking not the assembling’

#### 3. What counsel does Paul give regarding the meetings of the church? Hebrews 10:25.

NOTE: ‘Those who are of the household of faith should never neglect the assembling of themselves together; for this is God’s appointed means of leading His children into unity, in order that in Christian love and fellowship they may help, strengthen, and encourage one another. As brethren of our Lord, we are called with a holy calling to a holy, happy life. Having entered the narrow path of obedience, let us refresh our minds by communion with one another and with God. As we see the day of God approaching, let us meet often to study His Word and to exhort one another to be faithful unto the end. These earthly assemblies are God’s appointed means by which we have opportunity to speak with one another and to gather all the help possible to prepare, in the right way, to receive in the heavenly assemblies the fulfilment of the pledges of our inheritance.’ *Our High Calling*, page 166.

#### 4. How are we shown the eagerness of the early church in Jerusalem to assemble together? Acts 2:46.

NOTE: ‘Many think they have so much to do, that they cannot attend religious meetings, and their voices are seldom heard in the congregation of the saints. They act as if they were now so far advanced that they needed not to engage in fervent prayer to God. They do not feel their constant need of education and training in the school of Christ, that they may learn His meekness and lowliness of heart, and they become lifted up in self. Traits of character are manifested by them which are unchristlike. They must be transformed, or they will do harm; for with these unchristlike characteristics they are not qualified for the place. They need to bring their powers under the control of the Spirit of God, that they may realise the necessity of seeking spiritual help, of “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Those who desire wisdom from God, who wish to follow Jesus at every step, will seek for the light, and it will shine in their hearts.’ *Review & Herald*, January 24, 1893.

### ‘They that feared the Lord’

#### 5. How did Malachi picture the assembling of God’s people? Malachi 3:16.

NOTE: ‘If Christians would associate together, speaking to each other of the love of God, and of the precious truths of redemption, their own hearts would be refreshed, and they would refresh one another. We may be daily learning more of our heavenly Father, gaining a fresh experience of His grace; then we shall desire to speak of His love; and as we do this, our own hearts will be warmed and encouraged. If we thought and talked more of Jesus and less of self, we should have far more of His presence. Let small companies assemble in the evening, at noon, or in the early morning to study the Bible. Let them have a season of prayer, that they may be strengthened, enlightened, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. If you yourselves will open the door to receive it, a great blessing will come to you. Angels of God will be in your assembly. You will feed upon the leaves of the tree of life.’ *In Heavenly Places*, page 92.

**6. How does the Lord regard those who assemble together in this way? Malachi 3:17.**

NOTE: 'The words to which God and the angels listen with delight are words of appreciation for the great gift that has been made to the world in the only-begotten Son of God. Every word of praise for the blessing of the light of truth is written in the heavenly records. Every word that acknowledges the merciful kindness of our heavenly Father in giving Jesus to take away our sins, and to impute to us His righteousness, is recorded in the book of His remembrance. Testimonies of this kind "shew forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 Peter 2:9. The time and season are very precious. The assembled believers are in the audience chamber of the universe of heaven. They are to witness for God and the Lord Jesus Christ who gave His life for the world. What deep and grave importance is attached to these little assemblies! Jesus Christ has paid the ransom money of His own blood for their souls, and He is in the midst of them when they meet to worship God. The Majesty of heaven identifies His interests with those of the believers, however humble may be their circumstances. And wherever they are privileged to meet together, it is appropriate that they speak often one to another, giving utterance to the gratitude and love that results from thinking upon the name of the Lord. Thus shall God be glorified as He hearkens and hears, and the testimony meeting will be considered the most precious of all meetings.' *Our High Calling*, page 168.

**'A holy convocation'**

**7. How is the Sabbath described? Leviticus 23:3.**

NOTE: 'Convocation,' an assembly of people called or summoned to meet together.

'This holy convocation affords a precious opportunity to draw near to God. We should improve this privilege to search our own hearts, to compare our life and character with the divine law, and see what would hinder the Spirit of God from abiding with us. We should begin the meeting aright, that God may impart to us His blessing. We must carefully shun any violation of the Sabbath, making all needful preparation on Friday. We are not to consult our own pleasure or convenience, but to consider how we can best honour our Creator. One day in the week God claims as His own; He has set it apart for religious worship.' *Signs of the Times*, May 25, 1882.

**8. What responsibility do we have towards our brothers and sisters in the congregation? Hebrews 3:13.**

NOTE: 'One of the strongest evidences of true conversion is love to God and man. Those who accept Jesus as their Redeemer have a deep, sincere love for others of like precious faith. Thus it was with the believers at Thessalonica. "As touching brotherly love," the apostle wrote, "ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more...The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end He may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 263.

**'I have a few things against thee'**

**9. How does the Lord regard those congregations that tolerate false doctrine being taught among them? Revelation 2:14-15.**

NOTE: 'Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth.' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 46.

'The great deceiver has many agents ready to present any and every kind of error to ensnare souls, heresies prepared to suit the varied tastes and capacities of those whom he would ruin. It is his plan to bring into the church insincere, unregenerate elements that will encourage doubt and unbelief, and hinder all who desire to see the work of God advance and to advance with it. Many who have no real faith in God or in His word assent to some principles of truth and pass as Christians, and thus they are enabled to introduce their errors as Scriptural doctrines. The position that it is of no consequence what men believe is one of Satan's most successful deceptions. He knows that the truth, received in the love of it, sanctifies the soul of the receiver; therefore he is constantly seeking to substitute false theories, fables, another gospel. From the beginning the servants of God have contended against false teachers, not merely as vicious men, but as inculcators of falsehoods that were fatal to the soul.' *Great Controversy*, page 520.

**10. What counsel does Paul give about Christians joining with unbelievers? 2 Corinthians 6:14-17.**

NOTE: 'It required a desperate struggle for those who would be faithful to stand firm against the deceptions and abominations which were disguised in sacerdotal garments and introduced into the church. The Bible was not accepted as the standard of faith. The doctrine of religious freedom was termed heresy, and its upholders were hated and proscribed. After a long and severe conflict, the faithful few decided to dissolve all union with the apostate church if she still refused to free herself from falsehood and idolatry. They saw that separation was an absolute necessity if they would obey the word of God. They dared not tolerate errors fatal to their own souls, and set an example which would imperil the faith of their children and children's children. To secure peace and unity they were ready to make any concession consistent with fidelity to God; but they felt that even peace would be too dearly purchased at the sacrifice of principle. If unity could be secured only by the compromise of truth and righteousness, then let there be difference, and even war.' *Great Controversy*, page 45.

'The believers found themselves in a position of great trial and perplexity. They loved their churches and were loath to separate from them; but as they saw the testimony of God's word suppressed and their right to investigate the prophecies denied, they

felt that loyalty to God forbade them to submit. Those who sought to shut out the testimony of God's word they could not regard as constituting the church of Christ, "the pillar and ground of the truth." Hence they felt themselves justified in separating from their former connection. In the summer of 1844 about fifty thousand withdrew from the churches.' *Great Controversy*, page 376.

### **'They were not of us'**

#### **11. Though the church may appear to contain unbelievers, are these unbelievers truly members of God's church? 1 John 2:19.**

NOTE: 'There are those who listen with open ears and quickened understanding for the words of reproof and encouragement addressed to them. But Satan is ever on the alert to make these words of counsel of none effect. He seeks to close every avenue through which people receive truth. Unto those that have shall more be given, but from those that have not, shall be taken away even that which they have. If the ears are dull of hearing, if the eyes are closed to the light which God flashes into the pathway, the light previously received is so mingled with supposition, uncertainty, and darkness, that light cannot be distinguished from darkness. There are those whom we have loved in the faith who have turned from it, and given heed to seducing spirits. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 John 2:19).' *Manuscript Releases, volume 11*, pages 86-87.

#### **12. How does Paul describe a genuine church? 1 Timothy 3:15.**

NOTE: 'In the days of the Reformation, the gentle and pious Melancthon declared, "There is no other church than the assembly of those who have the word of God, and who are purified by it.'" *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4*, page 237.

'It is not theory that they need; it is the sacred teachings of the Bible, which are not uncertain, disconnected doctrines, but are living truths, that involve eternal interests that centre in Christ. In Him is the complete system of divine truth. The salvation of the soul, through faith in Christ, is the ground and pillar of the truth. Those who exercise true faith in Christ make it manifest by holiness of character, by obedience to the law of God. They realise that the truth as it is in Jesus reaches heaven, and compasses eternity. They understand that the Christian's character should represent the character of Christ, and be full of grace and truth. To them is imparted the oil of grace, which sustains a never-failing light. The Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer, makes him complete in Christ. It is not a decided evidence that a man or a woman is a Christian because he manifests deep emotion when under exciting circumstances. He who is Christlike has a deep, determined, persevering element in his soul, and yet has a sense of his own weakness, and is not deceived and misled by the Devil, and made to trust in himself. He has a knowledge of the word of God, and knows that he is safe only as he places his hand in the hand of Jesus Christ, and keeps firm hold upon Him.' *Review & Herald*, September 17, 1895.

## **Lesson 4: 'All one in Christ Jesus'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.' Acts 10:34-35.

STUDY HELP: *Reflecting Christ*, page 29.

LESSON SCRIPTURES: Galatians 3:26-29.

LESSON AIM: To show that distinctions of wealth, race and nationality are of no account with God and should not exist in His church.

### **Introduction**

'As the children of God are one in Christ, how does Jesus look upon caste, upon society distinctions, upon the division of man from his fellow man, because of colour, race, position, wealth, birth, or attainments? The secret of unity is found in the equality of believers in Christ. The reason for all division, discord, and difference is found in separation from Christ. Christ is the centre to which all should be attracted; for the nearer we approach the centre, the closer we shall come together in feeling, in sympathy, in love, growing into the character and image of Jesus. With God there is no respect of persons.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 259.

### **'Gentiles shall come to thy light'**

#### **1. What was God's purpose for His church in Old Testament times? Isaiah 60:1-3.**

NOTE: 'Through the Jewish nation it was God's purpose to impart rich blessings to all peoples. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His light to the whole world. The nations of the world, through following corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. Yet in His mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him through His church. He designed that the principles revealed through His people should be the means of restoring the moral image of God in man.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 286.

#### **2. How did Jesus emphasise this purpose? Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8, Mark 16:15.**

NOTE: 'The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organised for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvellous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 9.

### **'An house of prayer for all people'**

#### **3. How was the success of this mission prophesied? Isaiah 56:6-7.**

NOTE: "'The sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, everyone that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer.'" Isaiah 56:1, 2, 6, 7. These words apply in the Christian age, as shown by the context: "The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him." Verse 8. Here is foreshadowed the gathering in of the Gentiles by the gospel. And upon those who then honour the Sabbath a blessing is pronounced. Thus the obligation of the fourth commandment extends past the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, to the time when His servants should preach to all nations the message of glad tidings.' *Great Controversy*, page 451.

#### **4. What provision did the Lord make for believing Gentiles to become part of His chosen people? Genesis 17:12-13, Exodus 12:48-49.**

NOTE: 'God had made provision that all who would renounce heathenism, and connect themselves with Israel, should share the blessings of the covenant. They were included under the term, "the stranger that sojourneth among you," and with few exceptions this class were to enjoy equal favours and privileges with Israel.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 122.

### **'Thou shalt love him as thyself'**

#### **5. What was to be the attitude of the people of Israel to foreigners? Leviticus 19:33-34.**

NOTE: 'Jesus, enshrouded in the pillar of cloud and fire, had taught them a very different lesson from the lesson they had received from bigoted and exclusive teachers. The merciful Saviour of the Gospels was the One who had instructed the Hebrews in the wilderness; and, had they read the Scriptures correctly, and practised the teaching He had given, they would have pursued a very different course of action from the one they did pursue. The weightier matters of the law were judgment, mercy, and love. The stranger was to be treated with kindness, and it was to be understood that strangers were under God's special protection.' *Signs of the Times*, July 16, 1894.

#### **6. How did the Jews in New Testament times regard Gentiles? Acts 11:2-3. Compare Acts 10:28.**

NOTE: 'As yet none of the disciples had preached the gospel to the Gentiles. In their minds the middle wall of partition, broken down by the death of Christ, still existed, and their labours had been confined to the Jews, for they had looked upon the Gentiles as excluded from the blessings of the gospel.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 135.

### **'Heirs according to the promise'**

#### **7. Are the covenant promises for the Jews only? Galatians 3:28-29.**

NOTE: 'God had not cast off the seed of Abraham; the glorious purposes which He had undertaken to accomplish through Israel were to be fulfilled. All who through Christ should become the children of faith were to be counted as Abraham's seed; they were inheritors of the covenant promises; like Abraham, they were called to guard and to make known to the world the law of God and the gospel of His Son.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 476.

#### **8. In what way did Paul express the truth that God does not regard distinctions of race or nationality? Romans 10:12-13.**

NOTE: 'Christ recognised no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of the gifts of heaven, and to exclude the rest of God's family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth. The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life.' *Gospel Workers*, page 46.

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

#### **9. How did Peter come to understand that God does not distinguish between Jew and Gentile? Acts 10:34-35.**

NOTE: 'Now the Lord was seeking to teach Peter the world-wide extent of the divine plan. Many of the Gentiles had been interested listeners to the preaching of Peter and the other apostles, and many of the Greek Jews had become believers in Christ, but the conversion of Cornelius was to be the first of importance among the Gentiles. The time had come for an entirely new

phase of work to be entered upon by the church of Christ. The door that many of the Jewish converts had closed against the Gentiles was now to be thrown open. And the Gentiles who accepted the gospel were to be regarded as on an equality with the Jewish disciples, without the necessity of observing the rite of circumcision. How carefully the Lord worked to overcome the prejudice against the Gentiles that had been so firmly fixed in Peter's mind by his Jewish training! By the vision of the sheet and its contents He sought to divest the apostle's mind of this prejudice and to teach the important truth that in heaven there is no respect of persons; that Jew and Gentile are alike precious in God's sight; that through Christ the heathen may be made partakers of the blessings and privileges of the gospel.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 136.

**10. How did Paul express this same truth? Acts 17:26-27.**

NOTE: 'In that age of caste, when the rights of men were often unrecognised, Paul set forth the great truth of human brotherhood, declaring that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." In the sight of God all are on an equality, and to the Creator every human being owes supreme allegiance. Then the apostle showed how, through all God's dealings with man, His purpose of grace and mercy runs like a thread of gold. He "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 238.

'Walls of separation have been built up between the whites and the blacks. These walls of prejudice will tumble down of themselves, as did the walls of Jericho, when Christians obey the Word of God, which enjoins on them supreme love to their Maker and impartial love to their neighbours.' *Review & Herald*, December 17, 1895.

**11. What incident shows that this unchristlike prejudice lingered in the early church? Galatians 2:11-13.**

NOTE: 'When Peter, at a later date, visited Antioch, he won the confidence of many by his prudent conduct toward the Gentile converts. For a time he acted in accordance with the light given from heaven. He so far overcame his natural prejudice as to sit at table with the Gentile converts. But when certain Jews who were zealous for the ceremonial law, came from Jerusalem, Peter injudiciously changed his deportment toward the converts from paganism. A number of the Jews "dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." This revelation of weakness on the part of those who had been respected and loved as leaders left a most painful impression on the minds of the Gentile believers. The church was threatened with division. But Paul, who saw the subverting influence of the wrong done to the church through the double part acted by Peter, openly rebuked him for thus disguising his true sentiments. In the presence of the church, Paul inquired of Peter, "If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Galatians 2:13, 14. Peter saw the error into which he had fallen, and immediately set about repairing the evil that had been wrought, so far as was in his power.' *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 197-198.

### **'Respect of persons'**

**12. What other form of prejudice did James condemn? James 2:2-4.**

NOTE: 'If you have the spirit of Christ, you will love as brethren; you will honour the humble disciple in his poor home, because God loves him as much as He loves you, and it may be more. He recognises no caste. He places His own signet upon men, not by their rank, not by their wealth, not by intellectual greatness, but by their oneness with Christ. It is purity of heart, singleness of purpose, that constitutes the true value of human beings. All who are living in daily communion with Christ will place His estimate upon men. They will reverence the good and pure, although these are poor in this world's goods.' *Our High Calling*, page 180.

**13. How did even Jesus' enemies testify to His impartial treatment of people? Matthew 22:16.**

NOTE: 'The religion of Christ uplifts the receiver to a higher plane of thought and action, while at the same time it presents the whole human race as alike the objects of the love of God, being purchased by the sacrifice of His Son. At the feet of Jesus, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, meet together, with no thought of caste or worldly pre-eminence. All earthly distinctions are forgotten as we look upon Him whom our sins have pierced. The self-denial, the condescension, the infinite compassion of Him who was highly exalted in heaven, puts to shame human pride, self-esteem, and social caste. Pure, undefiled religion manifests its heaven-born principles in bringing into oneness all who are sanctified through the truth. All meet as blood-bought souls, alike dependent upon Him who has redeemed them to God.' *Gospel Workers*, page 330.

## **Lesson 5: 'Enter into thy closet'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.' 1 Samuel 16:7.

STUDY HELP: *God's Amazing Grace*, page 111.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 3:14-21.

LESSON AIM: To show the importance of the inner life in Christian experience.

### **Introduction**

'The life of the soul depends upon habitual communion with God. Its wants are made known, and the heart is open to receive fresh blessings. Gratitude flows from unfeigned lips; and the refreshing that is received from Jesus is manifested in words, in

deeds of active benevolence, and in public devotion. There is love to Jesus in the heart; and where love exists, it will not be repressed, but will express itself. Secret prayer sustains the inner life. The heart that loves God will desire to commune with Him, and will lean on Him in holy confidence.' *Gospel Workers, 1892 ed.*, page 426.

### **'Yet hath he not root in himself'**

#### **1. What parable did Jesus tell to explain the different experiences of those who hear the truth? Matthew 13:3-9.**

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.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 355.

#### **2. How did Jesus describe the deficiency of the 'stony-ground' hearers? Matthew 13:21, first part.**

NOTE: 'The roots of the plant strike down deep into the soil and, hidden from sight, nourish the life of the plant. So with the Christian; it is by the invisible union of the soul with Christ, through faith, that the spiritual life is nourished. But the stony-ground hearers depend upon self instead of Christ. They trust in their good works and good impulses, and are strong in their own righteousness. They are not strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Such a one "hath not root in himself"; for he is not connected with Christ.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 47.

### **'Spreadeth out her roots by the river'**

#### **3. How is the experience of the genuine believer described? Jeremiah 17:7-8.**

NOTE: 'Your work being always urgent, it is difficult for you to secure time for meditation and prayer; but this you must not fail to do. The blessing of Heaven, obtained by daily supplication, will be as the bread of life to your soul and will cause you to increase in spiritual and moral strength, like a tree planted by the river of waters, whose leaf will be always green, and whose fruit will appear in due time.' *Counsels on Health*, page 368.

'Not by its name, but by its fruit, is the value of a tree determined.' *Desire of Ages*, page 107.

#### **4. What contrasting experience will not endure in times of temptation and trial? Jeremiah 17:5-6. Compare Proverbs 12:3.**

NOTE: 'Every soul must have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will and ways of God. In all who are under the training of God is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, its practice, or its experiences. Through study of the Scriptures, through earnest prayer, they may hear His message to them, "Be still, and know that I am God." When every other voice is hushed, when every earthly interest is turned aside, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. Here rest is found in him. The peace, the joy, the life of the soul, is God.' *Special Testimonies on Education*, page 163.

### **'Let him come to Me and drink'**

#### **5. What is the water that the Christian's roots seek after? John 7:37.**

NOTE: 'Let faith, like the palm tree, strike its penetrating roots beneath the things which do appear, and obtain spiritual refreshment from the living springs of God's grace and mercy. There is a well of water which springeth up into everlasting life. You must draw your life from this hidden spring. If you divest yourselves of selfishness and strengthen your souls by constant communion with God, you may promote the happiness of all with whom you come in contact. You will notice the neglected, inform the ignorant, encourage the oppressed and desponding, and, as far as possible, relieve the suffering. And you will not only point the way to heaven, but will walk in that way yourselves.' *Counsels on Health*, page 383.

#### **6. What will be the result of drinking in this water of life? John 4:14.**

NOTE: 'The sky may be as brass, the desert sand may beat about the palm tree's roots, and pile itself in heaps about its trunk. Yet the tree lives as an evergreen, fresh and vigorous amid the burning desert sands. Remove the sand till you reach the rootlets of the palm tree, and you discover the secret of its life; it strikes down deep beneath the surface, to the secret waters hidden in the earth. Christians indeed may be fitly represented by the palm tree. They are like Enoch; although surrounded by corrupting influences, their faith takes hold of the Unseen. They walk with God, deriving strength and grace from Him to withstand the moral pollution surrounding them. Like Daniel in the courts of Babylon, they stand pure and uncontaminated; their life is hid with Christ in God. They are virtuous in spirit amid depravity; they are true and loyal, fervent and zealous, while surrounded by infidels, hypocritical professors, godless and worldly men. Their faith and life are hid with Christ in God. Jesus is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Faith, like the rootlets of the palm tree, penetrates beneath the things which are seen, drawing spiritual nourishment from the Fountain of life.' *Signs of the Times*, July 8, 1886.

### **'Ask, and it shall be given you'**

#### **7. Where may we seek daily supplies of strength? Luke 11:9-13.**

NOTE: 'Remember that He was often in prayer, and His life was constantly sustained by fresh inspirations of the Holy Spirit. Let your thoughts, your inner life, be such that you will not be ashamed to meet its record in the day of God. Heaven is not closed against the fervent prayers of the righteous. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, yet the Lord heard, and in a most striking manner answered his petitions. The only reason for our lack of power with God is to be found in ourselves. If the inner life of many who profess the truth were presented before them, they would not claim to be Christians. They are not growing in grace. A hurried prayer is offered now and then, but there is no real communion with God. We must be much in prayer if we would make progress in the divine life.' *My Life Today*, page 17.

**8. In what promise may we base our confidence in prayer? 1 John 5:14-15.**

NOTE: 'Prayer and faith are closely allied, and they need to be studied together. In the prayer of faith there is a divine science; it is a science that everyone who would make his lifework a success must understand. Christ says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received. We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realised when we need it most.' *Education*, pages 257-258.

**'Enter into thy closet'**

**9. What counsel did Jesus give concerning our prayers? Matthew 6:6. Compare Mark 1:35.**

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

**10. What other important consideration should form a vital part of our inner life? 2 Timothy 3:15-17.**

NOTE: 'Place yourself more habitually in that part of the temple of inspiration where the Holy Spirit of God will lavish upon you the richest currents of wisdom, which will then flow forth from you to others, magnifying God and increasing your love and hope and joy in the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Make no special effort, thinking by outward display to attract. Just work out the principles of the Word of the living God; this will be your wisdom and your greatness and your strength. Time must be redeemed from things which are seen and temporal to meditate upon things unseen and eternal. You must resist an encroaching world, which if allowed will so press upon you as to separate you from the source of your strength. Put on Christ. In the closet commune with Him who seeth in secret. Lay hold by faith on His might. Make peace with Him, and you shall make peace with Him. Nothing else will carry you through the closing scenes of this earth's history, and give you the victory and the crown of life that fadeth not away. Press toward the mark of the prize.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 21, page 42.

**11. How did the Psalmist express his consciousness of the importance of the Word of God? Psalm 119:105. Compare verse 11.**

NOTE: 'There is but little benefit derived from a hasty reading of the Scriptures. One may read the whole Bible through, and yet fail to see its beauty or comprehend its deep and hidden meaning. One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind, and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained. Keep your Bible with you. As you have opportunity, read it; fix the texts in your memory. Even while you are walking the streets, you may read a passage, and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in the mind. We cannot obtain wisdom without earnest attention and prayerful study. Some portions of Scripture are indeed too plain to be misunderstood; but there are others whose meaning does not lie on the surface, to be seen at a glance. Scripture must be compared with scripture. There must be careful research and prayerful reflection. And such study will be richly repaid. As the miner discovers veins of precious metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will he who perseveringly searches the word of God as for hid treasure, find truths of the greatest value, which are concealed from the view of the careless seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as streams flowing from the fountain of life. 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.' *Christian Education*, page 58.

**'Fill the face of the world with fruit'**

**12. What is God's desire for His people? Isaiah 27:5-6.**

NOTE: 'It is God's purpose that His people shall be a sanctified, purified, holy people, communicating light to all around them. It is His purpose that, by exemplifying the truth in their lives, they shall be a praise in the earth. The grace of Christ is sufficient to bring this about. But let God's people remember that only as they believe and work out the principles of the gospel can He make them a praise in the earth. Only as they use their God-given capabilities in His service will they enjoy the fullness and power of the promise whereon the church has been called to stand. If those who profess to believe in Christ as their Sav-

our reach only the low standard of worldly measurement, the church fails to bear the rich harvest that God expects. "Found wanting" is written upon her record.' *Testimonies, volume 8*, page 14.

**13. In what way did Isaiah describe the experience that the Lord looks for in His people? Isaiah 37:31.**

NOTE: "The result of the internal operation of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated in the outward conduct. The life of the Christian is hid with Christ in God, and God acknowledges those who are His, declaring, "Ye are my witnesses." They testify that divine power is influencing their hearts and shaping their conduct. Their works give evidence that the Spirit is moving upon the inward man; those who are associated with them are convinced that they are making Jesus Christ their pattern. Those who are in connection with God are channels for the power of the Holy Spirit. The inner life of the soul will reveal itself in the outward conduct.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 22.

## Lesson 6: 'Sound doctrine'

MEMORY VERSE: 'He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.' 2 John 1:9, last part.

STUDY HELP: *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, pages 33-42.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:8.

LESSON AIM: To study the part played by sound doctrine in the life of the Christian and the church.

### Introduction

'Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion. The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what.' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, pages 38-39.

### 'Go ye therefore and teach'

**1. What task did Jesus give to His people? Matthew 28:19-20.**

NOTE: 'In the commission to His disciples, Christ not only outlined their work, but gave them their message. Teach the people, He said, "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The disciples were to teach what Christ had taught. That which He had spoken, not only in person, but through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament, is here included. Human teaching is shut out. There is no place for tradition, for man's theories and conclusions, or for church legislation. No laws ordained by ecclesiastical authority are included in the commission. None of these are Christ's servants to teach. "The law and the prophets," with the record of His own words and deeds, are the treasure committed to the disciples to be given to the world. Christ's name is their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing that does not bear His superscription is to be recognized in His kingdom. The gospel is to be presented, not as a lifeless theory, but as a living force to change the life. God desires that the receivers of His grace shall be witnesses to its power.' *Desire of Ages*, page 826.

**2. How are we shown that the early Christians did what Christ commanded them? Acts 5:28.**

NOTE: "'When He [the Spirit of truth] is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.'" The preaching of the word will be of no avail without the continual presence and aid of the Holy Spirit. This is the only effectual teacher of divine truth. Only when the truth is accompanied to the heart by the Spirit will it quicken the conscience or transform the life. One might be able to present the letter of the word of God, he might be familiar with all its commands and promises; but unless the Holy Spirit sets home the truth, no souls will fall on the Rock and be broken. No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the co-operation of the Spirit of God. The sowing of the gospel seed will not be a success unless the seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven. Before one book of the New Testament was written, before one gospel sermon had been preached after Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit came upon the praying apostles. Then the testimony of their enemies was, "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." Acts 5:28.' *Desire of Ages*, page 671.

### 'They will not endure sound doctrine'

**3. How did Paul warn of a coming time when doctrine would be despised by professed Christians? 2 Timothy 4:3-4.**

NOTE: The Ecumenical movement places unity above doctrine. These words were spoken of Billy Graham, perhaps the most effective promoter of the Ecumenical movement: "Those who know Billy best say that it is his amiable personality that makes

him believe that he can become a sort of pontiff – or bridge-builder – between Bible-believing Christians and those attractive personalities who are proponents of the non-redemptive gospel... Not making war on some things, he has gone to the other extreme, and made peace, not with the doctrines of apostasy, but with those who preach the doctrines of apostasy. This, I believe, is deadly and will one day defeat the whole cause for which this man of God is labouring.’ W. W. Ayer, quoted in W. Martin: *Prophet With Honour*, page 223.

‘We must cherish carefully the words of our God lest we be contaminated by the deceptive workings of those who have left the faith. We are to resist their spirit and influence with the same weapon our Master used when assailed by the prince of darkness, “It is written.” We should learn to use the Word of God skilfully. The exhortation is, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” There must be diligent work and earnest prayer and faith to meet the winding error of false teachers and seducers; for “in the last days perilous times shall come.”’ *Review and Herald*, Jan. 10, 1888.

#### **4. How did Paul describe those professed Christians who have no time for sound doctrine? 2 Timothy 3:2-5, 7.**

NOTE: ‘The apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days: “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.” 2 Timothy 4:3. That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love.’ *Great Controversy*, page 594.

### **‘Only believe’**

#### **5. What verses are used to justify this form of Christianity without doctrine? Acts 8:36-37, Acts 16:30-31.**

NOTE: The ‘only believe’ doctrine, sometimes known as ‘once saved, always saved,’ also goes under the name of ‘the assurance of salvation.’ Here is a typical expression of this ‘only believe’ form of religion: ‘Whoever **once** truly confesses that Jesus was raised from the dead and confesses that Jesus is Lord, will go to heaven when he dies... What if we sin? That is the most obvious question. The question is then often reshaped and put like this: What if a person who is saved falls into sin, stays in sin and is found in that very condition when he dies? Will he still go to heaven? **Answer: yes.** If he was truly saved in the first place, yes. If the answer to this question is no, this book is utterly unnecessary.’ R. T. Kendall, *Once Saved, Always Saved*, pages 16 ff. [Emphasis added.]

‘In every congregation in the land there are souls unsatisfied, hungering and thirsting for salvation. By day and by night the burden of their hearts is: What shall I do to be saved? They listen eagerly to popular discourses, hoping to learn how they may be justified before God. But too often they hear only a pleasing speech, an eloquent declamation. There are sad and disappointed hearts in every religious gathering. The minister tells his hearers that they cannot keep the law of God. “It is not binding upon man in our day,” he says. “You must believe in Christ; He will save you; only believe.” Thus he teaches them to make feeling their criterion and gives them no intelligent faith. That minister may profess to be very sincere, but he is seeking to quiet the troubled conscience with a false hope.’ *Faith & Works*, page 32.

#### **6. What did James say about that form of Christianity which makes no change in the life? James 2:20.**

NOTE: ‘The faith in Christ that saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. “Believe, believe,” is their cry; “only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do.” While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. Faith is manifested by works. And the apostle John declares, “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:4).’ *Faith & Works*, page 52.

### **‘They were astonished at His doctrine’**

#### **7. What was especially memorable about Christ’s Sermon on the Mount? Matthew 7:28.**

NOTE: The word ‘doctrine’ (Greek: ‘didache’) means teaching, instruction. (Paul also uses the Greek word ‘didaskalia’ which likewise means teaching, instruction.)

‘Jesus’ manner of teaching was beautiful and attractive, and it was ever characterized by simplicity. He unfolded the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven through the use of figures and symbols with which His hearers were familiar, and the common people heard Him gladly; for they could comprehend His words. There were no high-sounding words used, to understand which it was necessary to consult a dictionary. He illustrated the glories of the kingdom of God by the use of the experiences and occurrences of earth. In compassionate love and tenderness He cheered and comforted and instructed all who heard Him; for grace was poured upon His lips that He might convey to men in the most attractive way the treasures of truth.’ *Christian Education*, page 126.

#### **8. How did Jesus express the vital importance of obedience to the will of God? Matthew 7:21-23.**

NOTE: ‘How many are pursuing a similar course. While they refuse to believe and obey some requirement of the Lord, they persevere in offering up to God their formal services of religion. There is no response of the Spirit of God to such service. No matter how zealous men may be in their observance of religious ceremonies, the Lord cannot accept them if they persist in wilful violation of one of His commands.’ *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 634.

### **‘Profitable for doctrine’**

#### **9. What is the basis for sound doctrine? 2 Timothy 3:16-17.**

NOTE: 'It is the privilege and the duty of all to closely investigate the doctrine presented to them before they receive it. And the most effectual way to find access to those whom we wish to educate in the truth, is to have them bring their Bibles, and point them to the chapter and verse, that they may see for themselves that these things are so. The people are so utterly deceived in regard to what the Bible does teach, that they will say, "It does not read so in my Bible." But ask them to bring their Bibles and show them the very chapter and verse you wish to impress upon their minds, and they will be surprised at the plain statements of revealed truth which they read out of their own Bibles.' *Gospel Workers, 1892 ed.*, page 410.

**10. What did Paul tell Timothy was to be the foundation of his preaching? 2 Timothy 4:2, first part.**

NOTE: 'Neither is it the object of preaching to amuse. Some ministers have adopted a style of preaching that has not the best influence. It has become a habit with them to weave anecdotes into their discourses. The impression thus made upon the hearers is not a savour of life unto life. Ministers should not bring amusing stories into their preaching. The people need pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from the chaff. "Preach the word," was the charge that Paul gave to Timothy, and this is our commission also. The minister who mixes story-telling with his discourses is using strange fire. God is offended, and the cause of truth is dishonoured, when His representatives descend to the use of cheap, trifling words.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 318.

**'That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour'**

**11. What counsel does John give concerning the Christian's attitude to those who preach false doctrine? 2 John 1:10.**

NOTE: 'Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth. There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."' *Testimonies, volume 5*, pages 292-293.

**12. What is to be the effect on sound doctrine on the lives of Christians? Titus 2:10, last part.**

NOTE: 'To adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour, we must have the mind that was in Christ. Our likes and dislikes, our desire to be first, to favour self to the disadvantage of others, must be overcome. The peace of God must rule in our hearts. Christ must be in us a living, working principle.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 66.

**Lesson 7: 'Things that accompany salvation'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.' Hebrews 5:12-13.

STUDY HELP: *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, pages 28-32.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 3:14-21.

LESSON AIM: To examine the concept of the irreducible minimum of Christianity and whether Christians should be satisfied with this.

**Introduction**

'The word of God is "a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams of Lebanon" (Song of Solomon 4:15). The heart that has once tasted the love of Christ, cries out continually for a deeper draft, and as you impart you will receive in richer and more abundant measure. Every revelation of God to the soul increases the capacity to know and to love. The continual cry of the heart is, "More of Thee," and ever the Spirit's answer is, "Much more." Romans 5:9,10. For our God delights to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Ephesians 3:20.' *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, page 20.

**'Every wind of doctrine'**

**1. What is one of the reasons for the gifts of the Spirit being found in the church? Ephesians 4:14.**

NOTE: 'Restless minds who want to be seeing and believing something new continually are constantly rising, some in one place and some in another, all doing a special work for the enemy, yet claiming to have the truth... This class do not know what they really believe, or the reasons for their belief. They are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. One man arises with wild, erroneous views, and claims that God has sent him with new and glorious light, and all must believe what he brings.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, pages 417-418.

**2. By what simple principle may we evaluate the many different beliefs and doctrines taught in the various churches? Isaiah 8:20.**

NOTE: 'Have you been grasping the precious truths point after point as they have been presented? Or have you been thinking that you follow your own ideas and opinions, and read and judge the Word of God by your opinions and theories? Or will you

take your ideas and theories to the Word of God and let the living oracles reveal to you where the deficiencies and defects are in your ideas and theories? We cannot take a position that we will judge the Word of God because we believed thus and so. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).' *Faith & Works*, page 66.

'Do not cherish a spirit of controversy. Little good is accomplished by denunciatory speeches. The surest way to destroy false doctrine is to preach the truth. Keep to the affirmative. Let the precious truths of the gospel kill the force of evil. Show a tender, pitiful spirit toward the erring. Come close to hearts.' *Evangelism*, page 304.

### **'Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord'**

#### **3. How does Paul speak of the true basis of Christian unity? Ephesians 4:2-6.**

NOTE: In recent years, as the Ecumenical movement has gained momentum, several strategies have been employed to cope with the differing teachings of the various churches. One is to seek an agreed form of words which parties holding different points of view can agree to, without having to change their doctrines. A whole industry has grown up, engaged in the manufacture of statements which are sufficiently ambiguous to allow of widely varying interpretations on such topics as the Lord's Supper/the Mass, baptism/christening, free will/predestination, etc. Thus churches may agree to the same form of words while still holding opposing opinions. A consequence of this strategy is that parties agreeing to the same form of words are encouraged to hold in respect teachings quite opposite to their own. Thus, for example, by agreeing on a form of words concerning baptism, Baptists will respect the validity of infant christening, while Catholics or Anglicans will respect the validity of believer's baptism.

'Jesus prayed that His followers might be one; but we are not to sacrifice the truth in order to secure this union, for we are to be sanctified through the truth. Here is the foundation of all true peace. Human wisdom would change all this, pronouncing this basis too narrow. Men would try to effect unity through concession to popular opinion, through compromise with the world, a sacrifice of vital godliness. But truth is God's basis for the unity of His people.' *Our High Calling*, page 329.

#### **4. What did Jesus say about those whose 'irreducible minimum' is calling Him 'Lord'? Matthew 7:22-23.**

NOTE: Perhaps the most minimalist form of Christianity is that proposed by the World Council of Churches, the acceptance of the statement: 'Jesus is Lord.'

'Those who claim modern sanctification would have come boastingly forward, saying, "Lord, Lord, do you not know us? Have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" The people here described, who make these pretentious claims, apparently weaving Jesus into all their doings, fitly represent those who claim modern sanctification, but who are at war with the law of God. Christ calls them workers of iniquity, because they are deceivers, having on the garments of righteousness to hide the deformity of their characters, the inward wickedness of their unholy hearts. Satan has come down in these last days, to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. His satanic majesty works miracles in the sight of false prophets, in the sight of men, claiming that he is indeed Christ Himself. Satan gives his power to those who are aiding him in his deceptions; therefore those who claim to have the great power of God can only be discerned by the great detector, the law of Jehovah. The Lord tells us if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. The sheep's clothing seems so real, so genuine, that the wolf cannot be discerned only as we go to God's great moral standard and there find that they are transgressors of the law of Jehovah.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 5*, page 1087.

#### **5. What was missing in the Christianity of these people, which caused Christ to repudiate them? Matthew 7:21.**

NOTE: 'Many say that all we have to do is to believe, but they make the service of Christ altogether too superficial. They are satisfied with a nominal belief in Christ; but it is not enough to merely assert that Jesus is the Son of God. We must abide in Him as the branch abides in the vine. We must have an experimental faith, a faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Then we have evidence that we bear fruit to the glory of God. What is it to bear fruit to the glory of God? It is to manifest the love of Jesus in our daily life, to be kind and courteous and forbearing to those around us, and to try to lead them to the Saviour. The divine light that shines in the face of Jesus shines also in the heart of the believers, and they walk in the light as He is in the light.' *Signs of the Times*, March 3, 1890.

### **'The first principles'**

#### **6. How did Paul describe some of the fundamentals of Christian doctrine? Hebrews 6:1-2.**

NOTE: 'It is by beholding Christ upon the cross of Calvary that the sinner is drawn to his Saviour; and as he realises that Christ has died for him, his heart is melted into contrition and tenderness. He repents toward God because he has transgressed the divine law, and he has faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ as his Substitute and Surety. This is the work that is before every soul who has transgressed the law of God, repentance toward God for breaking His commandments, which has caused the death of His Son, and faith toward Him who imputeth His righteousness unto us. But there is a great misapprehension in regard to what is genuine faith. It is not a mere intellectual assent to truth, or a nominal acceptance of the fact that Christ has died for the salvation of men. Genuine faith works by love, and purifies the soul. There are some who declare that all we have to do is to believe in Jesus, and they think it makes no difference if we trample upon the divine precepts. These statements show that this class do not understand the fundamental principles of the plan of salvation. Genuine faith in Christ will not lead a man to transgress the law; for Christ is not a minister of sin.' *Review & Herald*, July 5, 1892.

#### **7. How did Paul make clear that Christians need to study further than these fundamentals? Hebrews 5:12-14.**

NOTE: 'Whenever the church at any period have forsaken their sins, and believed and walked in the truth, they have been honoured of God. There is in faith and humble obedience a power that the world cannot withstand. The order of God's providence in relation to His people is progression, continual advancement in the perfection of Christian character, in the way of holiness, rising higher and higher in the clear light and knowledge and love of God, to the very close of time. Oh! why are we ever learning only the first principles of the doctrine of Christ?' *Lift Him Up*, page 338.

'Will you have a stunted Christian growth, or will you make healthy progress in the divine life? Where there is spiritual health there is growth. The child of God grows up to the full stature of a man or woman in Christ. There is no limit to his improvement. Some who ought to be strong and established in Christ are as babes in understanding and experimental knowledge of the workings of the Spirit of God. After years of experience they are able to comprehend only the first principles of that grand system of faith and doctrine that constitutes the Christian religion. They do not comprehend that perfection of character which will receive the commendation: "Well done." *Maranatha*, page 75.

### **'He will guide you into all truth'**

#### **8. Is the Christian at liberty to accept some truths and reject others? 2 Thessalonians 2:10-13.**

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

#### **9. What counsel are we given about the source of truth? John 16:13-14. Compare James 3:11-12.**

NOTE: 'Both teachers and pupils have thought that in order to obtain an education, it was necessary to study the productions of writers who teach infidelity, because their works contain some bright gems of thought. But who was the originator of these gems of thought? It was God and God alone; for He is the source of all light. Are not all things essential for the health and growth of the spiritual and moral nature found in the pages of Holy Writ? Is not Christ our living head? And are not we to grow up in Him to the full stature of men and women? Can an impure fountain send forth sweet waters? Why should we wade through the mass of error contained in the works of pagans and infidels, for the sake of obtaining the benefit of a few intellectual truths, when all truth is at our command?' *Christian Education*, page 98

### **'The times of this ignorance'**

#### **10. What did Paul explain about how God regards those who are in ignorance as to His will? Acts 17:30.**

NOTE: 'There are many today who are in the same position as Cornelius. They are living up to the light they have received, and God speaks to them, as He spoke to Cornelius, and brings them by His appointed agencies to the place where they will receive the truth into good and honest hearts. God reveals Himself to those who are striving to form characters that He can approve. The prayers of those who fear Him, who recognise their obligations to Him, are heard and answered. The Lord takes special notice of those who walk in the light that He has given them, who testify by their deeds that they are trying to honour God. Through a Peter He will present the pearl of great price, and through a Cornelius and his family many souls will be brought to the light.' *Review & Herald*, August 8, 1899.

#### **11. What is required of those whose knowledge of God's will is limited? Romans 2:14-16.**

NOTE: 'Some will plead that they lived up to the best light that they had, and did not know that they were sinners before God. Therefore they claim that they were guiltless, and have nothing to repent of. But the word of God was plain, and all who had a prayerful anxious desire to understand it might have known what was truth; and for this sin of ignorance God will demand an offering as truly as in the days of Moses, even the offering of a broken and contrite heart. With the Bible in our hands we ought all to know and practise the truth. But some do not wish to change their faith or course of action, and argue that if they are only honest they will be saved. Such will be in great danger of committing the sin of presumption, of not living up to all the light they have. Critical self-examination, united with a diligent searching of the Scriptures and earnest prayer, is essential, not that some way may be found to evade the cross, but that they may be led into all truth however much self-denial it may cost, and however inconvenient it may be to obey.' *Signs of the Times*, July 22, 1880.

### **'Hereby we do know that we know Him'**

#### **12. How does John show that obedience to God's commandments is part of the 'irreducible minimum'? 1 John 2:3-5.**

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

### **13. How was John shown the irreducible minimum that God seeks? Revelation 14:12.**

NOTE: 'God has placed in our hands a banner upon which is inscribed, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. This is a distinct, separating message, a message that is to give no uncertain sound. It is to lead the people away from the broken cisterns that contain no water, to the unfailing Fountain of the water of life.' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 11.

## **Lesson 8: 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.' Romans 12:5.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 304.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 3:14-21.

LESSON AIM: To consider whether there is one church or many.

### **Introduction**

'The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church. Every heavenly intelligence is interested in the assemblies of the saints who on earth meet to worship God. In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimony of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on earth, and the praise and thanksgiving from the worshipers below is taken up in the heavenly anthem, and praise and rejoicing sound through the heavenly courts because Christ has not died in vain for the fallen sons of Adam. While angels drink from the fountainhead, the saints on earth drink of the pure streams flowing from the throne, the streams that make glad the city of our God. Oh, that we could all realise the nearness of heaven to earth! In every assembly of the saints below are angels of God, listening to the testimonies, songs, and prayers. Let us remember that our praises are supplemented by the choirs of the angelic host above.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 75.

### **'He is the head of the body, the church'**

#### **1. Who is the Head of the Church? Colossians 1:18. (Read verse 13 to confirm the identity of the one spoken of in verse 18.)**

NOTE: 'It is one of the leading doctrines of Romanism that the pope is the visible head of the universal church of Christ, invested with supreme authority over bishops and pastors in all parts of the world. More than this, the pope has been given the very titles of Deity. He has been styled "Lord God the Pope", and has been declared infallible. He demands the homage of all men. The same claim urged by Satan in the wilderness of temptation is still urged by him through the Church of Rome, and vast numbers are ready to yield him homage. But those who fear and reverence God meet this heaven-daring assumption as Christ met the solicitations of the wily foe: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Luke 4:8. God has never given a hint in His word that He has appointed any man to be the head of the church.' *Great Controversy*, page 51.

#### **2. Just as Christ is the head, how many bodies of Christians are there to be? 1 Corinthians 12:13. Compare Romans 12:4-5, Colossians 3:15.**

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

### **'Ecclesia'**

#### **3. What is the origin of our English word 'church'?**

NOTE: There is a Greek word 'kuriakon' which is the origin of our word 'church,' the Scottish word 'kirk', and the German word 'kirche'. This word always means the Lord's house, a building for religious worship. The New Testament never uses this word for God's people.

**4. What is the word used in the New Testament which has been translated as 'church' in English Bibles?**

NOTE: The Greek word 'ecclesia', translated 'church' in the King James Bible, actually means 'the called out ones,' those summoned to come together. The Greek word 'ecclesia' pictures an association of individual believers. When Tyndal translated the New Testament into English, one of the words he had to grapple with was this Greek word 'ecclesia.' The Roman Catholics had always translated this word as 'church' and applied it to the papal institution. For them, the church is an organisation, an institution, a corporate structure. Its buildings are symbols of its power. (For this reason, the Waldenses and other faithful Christians described these mighty cathedrals as 'heaps of rocks.')

In his translation of the New Testament, Tyndal always preferred the word 'congregation' to church, as a more accurate translation of 'ecclesia'. But one of the fourteen rules laid down by the king for the King James translators was that they had to use the words in traditional use when they were translating the Bible: 'The old ecclesiastical words to be kept: as the word Church not to be translated Congregation, etc.' (Likewise they had to translate 'agape' as 'charity', not love.) And so in this way they took a step backwards towards Roman Catholicism.

**5. What does the Bible teach about becoming part of the 'ecclesia'? John 3:3, 5. Compare Matthew 28:19.**

NOTE: One of the principal disputes which the Reformation did not resolve was the question of entry into the 'church'. Nearly all the Reformers continued the Roman Catholic practice of uniting church and state, thus assuming that one was born both a citizen and a church member. The rite of entry for both church membership and citizenship was infant christening, when you received your name, which was enrolled in the parish register. This document did duty as a record both of church members and citizens. The true church, having undergone terrible persecution from the papacy during the Dark Ages, then began to be persecuted by the Reformers, because it had always taught that entry to the church came through the New Birth, signified by believer's baptism. Those who practised this Biblical teaching were ridiculed as 'anabaptists' which means re-baptisers, since christening was regarded as true baptism, both by the Catholics and the Reformers. Terrible slanders were circulated about the re-baptisers and, as these falsehoods were widely accepted as true, it became easier to organise persecution of these faithful ones.

### **'All ye are brethren'**

**6. What term is used by the Bible for members of the church? Acts 9:30, Acts 11:1, Acts 11:29.**

NOTE: 'Those who, in the spirit and love of Jesus, will become one with Him, will be in close fellowship one with another, bound up by the silken cords of love. Then the ties of human brotherhood would not be always on the strain, ready at any provocation to snap asunder. "All ye are brethren" will be the sentiment of every child of faith. When the followers of Christ are one with Him, there will be no first and last, no less respected or less important ones. A blessed brotherly fellowship one with another will bind all who truly receive the Lord Jesus Christ in a firm loyalty that cannot be broken. All will be equally one with Christ.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 5, page 1097.*

**7. What meaning did Christ attach to the word 'brethren'? Matthew 23:8. Compare Mark 10:42-44.**

NOTE: 'If a man is sanguine of his own powers and seeks to exercise dominion over his brethren, feeling that he is invested with authority to make his will the ruling power, the best and only safe course is to remove him, lest great harm be done, and he lose his own soul, and imperil the souls of others. "All ye are brethren." This disposition to lord it over God's heritage will cause a reaction unless these men change their course. Those in authority should manifest the spirit of Christ. They should deal as He would deal with every case that requires attention,' *Testimonies to Ministers, page 362.*

### **'The saints'**

**8. What other term is used in the New Testament to describe Christian congregations? Acts 9:13, 32.**

NOTE: 'There were companies of saints who had faith in Jesus Christ. As members of the church of Christ, they are said to be "sanctified in Christ Jesus," and "called to be saints." By baptism they pledged themselves to a ministry of good works in seeking to save others who knew not the truth.' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 6, page 1082.*

**9. How are the saints described? Revelation 14:12.**

NOTE: 'These truths, as presented in Revelation 14 in connection with "the everlasting gospel," will distinguish the church of Christ at the time of His appearing. For as the result of the threefold message it is announced: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." And this message is the last to be given before the coming of the Lord. Immediately following its proclamation the Son of man is seen by the prophet, coming in glory to reap the harvest of the earth.' *Great Controversy, page 453.*

**10. What other terms are used to describe Christians? Ephesians 1:1, Colossians 1:2, Galatians 6:10.**

NOTE: 'All, high or low, if they are unconverted, are on one common platform. Men may turn from one doctrine to another. This is being done, and will be done. Papists may change from Catholicism to Protestantism; yet they may know nothing of the meaning of the words, "A new heart also will I give you." Accepting new theories and uniting with a church do not bring new

life to anyone, even though the church with which he unites may be established on the true foundation. Connection with a church does not take the place of conversion. To subscribe the name to a church creed is not of the least value to anyone if the heart is not truly changed.' *Evangelism*, page 290.

### **'I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman'**

#### **11. What is the Bible symbol of God's church? Consider the following: 2 Corinthians 11:2, Jeremiah 6:2, Isaiah 54:5-6, Hosea 2:1-20, John 3:29, Revelation 19:7-8.**

NOTE: 'In the Bible the sacred and enduring character of the relation that exists between Christ and His church is represented by the union of marriage. The Lord has joined His people to Himself by a solemn covenant, He promising to be their God, and they pledging themselves to be His and His alone. He declares: "I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." Hosea 2:19. And, again: "I am married unto you." Jeremiah 3:14. And Paul employs the same figure in the New Testament when he says: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:2.' *Great Controversy*, page 381.

#### **12. When God's people are unfaithful to Him, what symbolism does the Bible use? Isaiah 1:21, Jeremiah 3:6-8, 1 Corinthians 6:15-16.**

NOTE: 'The unfaithfulness of the church to Christ in permitting her confidence and affection to be turned from Him, and allowing the love of worldly things to occupy the soul, is likened to the violation of the marriage vow. The sin of Israel in departing from the Lord is presented under this figure; and the wonderful love of God which they thus despised is touchingly portrayed: "I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest Mine." "And thou wast exceeding beautiful and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee. . . . But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown." "As a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord;" "as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband!" Ezekiel 16:8, 13-15, 32; Jeremiah 3:20.' *Great Controversy*, page 381.

### **Two women-two churches**

#### **13. How is God's faithful church pictured in prophecy? Revelation 12:1.**

NOTE: 'The gloriously arrayed woman, with the sun as her garment, the moon as her footstool, and twelve stars for a crown, is in some ways the most attractive of all the prophetic symbols. A woman in prophecy represents a church. The pure, true church of God is represented by a virtuous woman. Jeremiah 6:2; Isaiah 54:5, 6; Hosea 2:19, 20; John 3:39; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7, 8. The apostate, corrupt church is represented by a lewd woman. Revelation 17:1-5; Jeremiah 3:1, 8; Ezekiel 16:26-29; Isaiah 50:1. Christ has only one body, His church, and this has existed in all ages.' R. A. Anderson: *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 113.

#### **14. What contrasting picture is shown in prophecy? Revelation 17:1-6.**

NOTE: 'In Revelation 17, Babylon is represented as a woman, a figure which is used in the Scriptures as the symbol of a church. A virtuous woman represents a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church. Babylon is said to be a harlot; and the prophet beheld her drunken with the blood of saints and martyrs. The Babylon thus described represents Rome, that apostate church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ. But Babylon the harlot is the mother of daughters who follow her example of corruption. Thus are represented those churches that cling to the doctrines and traditions of Rome and follow her worldly practices, and whose fall is announced in the second angel's message.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4*, page 233.

'It is by the gospel that election takes effect; that God adds to the church; and therefore where that gospel is obscured or denied, and where the Biblical terms of admission and membership are no longer upheld, the external may become 'church' in name only. When that happens there are two churches: not the 'visible' and the 'invisible', but the true and the false.' Iain H. Murray, *Evangelicalism Divided*, page 275.

## **Lesson 9: 'The carnal mind... is not subject to the law of God'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' Romans 7:12.

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 314-315.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Romans 7:7-14.

LESSON AIM: To consider the question of obedience for the Christian and whether the Bible distinguishes between the law of God and the law of Christ.

**The reason for this lesson:** It is a popular teaching today that Christians are under the law, but the law they are under is the Law of Christ, not the Law of God. Dr R. T. Kendall, for example, says: The Moral Law is not the Christian's code of conduct, for true godliness is never to be achieved by being under the Moral Law. It will make you a legalist, long-faced, grouchy, without joy or peace... That doesn't mean that the law has no place. We as Christians are not under the Moral Law, but we are under the Law of Christ. See R. T. Kendall: *Antinomianism Exposed & Antinomianism and the Law*. Such teaching seeks to

drive a wedge between the Father and the Son. In contrast, John Wesley wrote: 'Keep close to the law, if thou wilt keep close to Christ. Martin Lloyd Jones said: 'Holiness is not an experience you have: holiness is keeping the law of God.'

## Introduction

'The law of God is destructive of nothing but sin. It is opposed only to the carnal, sinful practices of men. It was given to keep mankind from becoming like the depraved inhabitants of the old world. Obeyed, it becomes a rule of life that keeps the character pure. Those who adopt it as it was given by God are not mourners for sin, nor morally sickly and diseased.' *Bible Echo*, July 29, 1895.

### 'One jot or one tittle'

#### 1. Who was the One who gave the Ten Commandments? Nehemiah 9:6, 13. Compare John 1:1-3, 14.

NOTE: 'It was Christ who spoke the law on Mount Sinai, and He knew the bearing of all its precepts, the glory and majesty of the law of heaven. In His sermon on the mount, Christ defines the law, and seeks to inculcate in the minds of His hearers the far-reaching claims of the precepts of Jehovah. His instructions came as a new revelation to the people; and the teachers of the law, the scribes and the Pharisees, as well as the common people, were astonished at His doctrine. The words of Christ were not new, and yet they came with the force of revelation; for they presented the truth in its proper light, and not in the light in which the teachers had set it before the people. He showed no regard for the traditions and commandments of men, but opened the eyes of their understanding to behold wondrous things out of the law of God, which is the foundation of His throne from the beginning of the world; and as long as the heavens and the earth remain, through the ceaseless ages of eternity, it will be the great standard of righteousness, holy and just and good.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 237.

#### 2. Did Christ announce that He was to replace the Ten Commandments with a new law? Matthew 5:17-19.

NOTE: 'The "jot" was the smallest of the Hebrew letters; the "tittle" a very little mark by which one letter was known from another.' Walsham How: *Commentary on the New Testament, The Four Gospels*, on Matthew 5:18.

'There are many who claim that by the death of Christ the law was abrogated; but in this they contradict Christ's own words, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. . . . Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Matthew 5:17, 18. It was to atone for man's transgression of the law that Christ laid down His life. Could the law have been changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died. By His life on earth He honoured the law of God. By His death He established it. He gave His life as a sacrifice, not to destroy God's law, not to create a lower standard, but that justice might be maintained, that the law might be shown to be immutable, that it might stand fast forever.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 314.

### 'The first and great commandment'

#### 3. When Jesus asked what the writings of Moses say about is necessary for eternal life, what reply did the lawyer give Him? Luke 10:25-28.

NOTE: "'This do, and thou shalt live," Christ said. In His teaching He ever presented the law as a divine unity, showing that it is impossible to keep one precept and break another; for the same principle runs through all. Man's destiny will be determined by his obedience to the whole law. Christ knew that no one could obey the law in his own strength. He desired to lead the lawyer to clearer and more critical research that he might find the truth. Only by accepting the virtue and grace of Christ can we keep the law. Belief in the propitiation for sin enables fallen man to love God with his whole heart and his neighbour as himself.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 377-378.

#### 4. What were the sources of the lawyer's answer to Christ's question? Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18.

NOTE: It is commonly taught in many churches that these two commandments were newly created by Christ to replace the Ten Commandments. It is clear from Luke's account that they were already known to the lawyer because he had read them in the 'Torah', 'the law', as Jews describe the writings of Moses.

'The Old Testament Scriptures were the lesson book of Israel. When the lawyer came to Christ with the question "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" . . . the Saviour said, "What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." Christ said, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:25-28).' *The Upward Look*, page 215.

#### 5. How are we shown that these two commandments are not replacements for the Ten Commandments? Romans 13:8-10, 2 John v.6.

NOTE: 'He who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, will reflect the purity and love which exist in Jehovah, and which Christ represented in our world. He who has the love of God in his heart has no enmity against the law of God, but renders willing obedience to all His commandments, and this constitutes Christianity. He who has supreme love to God will reveal love to his fellow-men, who belong to God both by creation and redemption. Love is the fulfilling of the law; and it is the duty of every child of God to render obedience to His commandments.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 51.

## **‘By the law is the knowledge of sin’**

### **6. What is one of the reasons why God gave man His law? Romans 3:20, last part. Compare Romans 5:20, first part.**

NOTE: ‘The written law was given to increase awareness of sin.’ Romans 5:20 in Blanco, *The Clear Word Paraphrase*, page 1171.

‘While we are to be in harmony with God’s law, we are not saved by the works of the law, yet we cannot be saved without obedience. The law is the standard by which character is measured. But we cannot possibly keep the commandments of God without the regenerating grace of Christ. Jesus alone can cleanse us from all sin. He does not save us by law, neither will He save us in disobedience to law. Our love to Christ will be in proportion to the depth of our conviction of sin, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. But as we see ourselves, let us look away to Jesus, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity. By faith take hold of the merits of Christ, and the soul-cleansing blood will be applied. The more clearly we see the evils and perils to which we have been exposed, the more grateful shall we be for deliverance through Christ. The gospel of Christ does not give men license to break the law, for it was through transgression that the floodgates of woe were opened upon our world.’ *Faith & Works*, page 96.

### **7. How did Paul explain this in his own experience? Romans 7:13.**

NOTE: ‘There is no safety nor repose nor justification in transgression of the law. Man cannot hope to stand innocent before God, and at peace with Him through the merits of Christ, while he continues in sin. He must cease to transgress, and become loyal and true. As the sinner looks into the great moral looking glass, he sees his defects of character. He sees himself just as he is, spotted, defiled, and condemned.’ *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 213.

## **‘He will reprove the world of sin’**

### **8. What is the Bible’s sole definition of sin? 1 John 3:4.**

NOTE: ‘A terrible doom awaits the sinner, and therefore it is necessary that we know what sin is, in order that we may escape from its power. John says, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). Here we have the true definition of sin; it is “the transgression of the law.” How often the sinner is urged to leave his sins, and come to Jesus; but has the messenger who would lead him to Christ clearly pointed out the way? Has he clearly pointed out the fact that “sin is the transgression of the law,” and that he must repent and forsake the breaking of God’s commandments?’ *Faith & Works*, page 117.

Other alternative definitions of sin have been proposed. Some are based on manmade explanations of the meanings of Greek words, rather than Bible teaching, e.g. ‘hamartia’: missing the mark. Others turn out to be examples of particular types of sin, rather than definitions, e.g. ‘whatsoever is not of faith is sin.’

### **9. What did Jesus describe as the first work of the Holy Spirit? John 16:8.**

NOTE: ‘To those who urged that “the preaching of the gospel answers all the ends of the law,” Wesley replied: “This we utterly deny. It does not answer the very first end of the law, namely, the convincing men of sin, the awakening those who are still asleep on the brink of hell.” The apostle Paul declares that “by the law is the knowledge of sin;” “and not until man is convicted of sin, will he truly feel his need of the atoning blood of Christ. . . . “They that be whole,” as our Lord Himself observes, ‘need not a physician, but they that are sick.’ It is absurd, therefore, to offer a physician to them that are whole, or that at least imagine themselves so to be. You are first to convince them that they are sick; otherwise they will not thank you for your labour. It is equally absurd to offer Christ to them whose heart is whole, having never yet been broken.”’ *Great Controversy*, page 264.

A Puritan preacher said: ‘The scarlet thread of the gospel is attached to the sharp needle of the law.’

## **‘I have kept My Father’s Commandments’**

### **10. Did Christ keep the commandments? John 15:10.**

NOTE: ‘Christ was obedient to every requirement of the law. He said of Himself, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Ps. 40:8. When on earth, He said to His disciples, “I have kept My Father’s commandments.” John 15:10. By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 312.

### **11. What warning did Jesus give concerning those who regard even one of the commandments as unimportant and who teach others to act as they do? Matthew 5:19.**

NOTE: ‘Many ministers are teaching their people, and many professors and teachers are instructing their students, that the law of God has been changed or abrogated; and those who regard its requirements as still valid, to be literally obeyed, are thought to be deserving only of ridicule or contempt. The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering.’ *Conflict & Courage*, page 210.

'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.

### **'Keep My commandments'**

#### **12. When Christ commanded His disciples to 'keep My Commandments', was He speaking of different commandments from those He had given on Sinai? Consider Mark 10:17-19.**

NOTE: 'The glory of Christ is revealed in the law, which is a transcript of His character, and His transforming efficacy is felt upon the soul until men become changed to His likeness. They are made partakers of the divine nature, and grow more and more like their Saviour, advancing step by step in conformity to the will of God, till they reach perfection. The law of God was not given to the Jews alone. It is of world-wide and perpetual obligation. Its ten precepts are like a chain of ten links. If one is broken, the chain becomes worthless. Not a single precept can be revoked or changed to save the transgressor.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 80.

#### **13. What is Christ's 'new' commandment? John 15:12. See 2 John v.5; 1 John 2:7-10. Compare Leviticus 19:18.**

NOTE: 'Jesus said to His disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." This was really an old commandment, which had been given in the Old Testament scriptures, but it had been lost. It had not been practised. The command that they should love one another as Christ had loved them was indeed new to the disciples. But the revealing of this love would give to the world an unmistakable evidence that they were God's children.' *1888 Materials*, page 140.

## **Lesson 10: 'That they all may be one'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' Psalm 133:1.

STUDY HELP: *Conflict & Courage*, page 288.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: John 17:11-23.

LESSON AIM: To study what Christian unity really means.

### **Introduction**

'The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. Those who have not been living in Christian fellowship will draw close to one another. One member working in right lines will lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit. There will be no confusion, because all will be in harmony with the mind of the Spirit. The barriers separating believer from believer will be broken down, and God's servants will speak the same things. The Lord will co-operate with His servants. All will pray understandingly the prayer that Christ taught His servants: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).' *Ye Shall Receive Power*, page 285.

### **'All with one accord in one place'**

#### **1. In what state were the early Christians when the power of the Holy Spirit was poured out on them? Acts 2:1. Compare Acts 1:14.**

NOTE: 'The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit. It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The same work, only in greater degree, must be done now. Then the human agent had only to ask for the blessing, and wait for the Lord to perfect the work concerning him. It is God who began the work, and He will finish His work, making man complete in Jesus Christ. But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognise the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 507.

#### **2. Had the disciples always been in accord? Mark 9:34, Luke 22:24.**

NOTE: 'When you are wearing Christ's yoke, all your complaining and dissension will cease. When Christ's disciples fell into controversy by the way, He asked them. "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. . . . And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me." Now let us be like children before God. Let us be teachable, willing to learn, and then the Spirit of God will cement our hearts together, and we shall be one in Christ Jesus. Then the Father will love us, even as He loves His Son. Let this thought fill the soul with thankfulness, and go on your way to Zion, making melody in your hearts to God.' *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, April 13, 1891.

## **‘Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit’**

### **3. Can unity be maintained without effort? Ephesians 4:3.**

NOTE: ‘Strive earnestly for unity. Pray for it, work for it. It will bring spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly-mindedness, enabling you to overcome selfishness and evil surmisings, and to be more than conquerors through Him that loved you and gave Himself for you. Crucify self; esteem others better than yourselves. Thus you will be brought into oneness with Christ. Before the heavenly universe, and before the church and the world, you will bear unmistakable evidence that you are God’s sons and daughters. God will be glorified in the example that you set.’ *Testimonies, volume 9*, page 188.

### **4. If Christians are to dwell in unity, what kind of character must they possess? Ephesians 4:2.**

NOTE: ‘In our daily lives, before our brethren and before the world, we are to be living interpreters of the Scriptures, doing honour to Christ by revealing His meekness and His lowliness of heart. Christ’s teachings are to be to us as the leaves of the tree of life. As we eat and digest the bread of life, we shall reveal a symmetrical character. By our unity, by esteeming others better than ourselves, we are to bear to the world a living testimony of the power of the truth.’ *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 5*, page 1135.

### **5. What is one purpose for the gifts of the Spirit being in the church? Ephesians 4:13, first part.**

NOTE: ‘God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite; each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. If one man takes his views of Bible truth without regard to the opinion of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ? And if another and still another arises, each asserting his right to believe and talk what he pleases, without reference to the faith of the body, where will be that harmony which existed between Christ and His Father, and which Christ prayed might exist among His brethren?’ *Christian Experience & Teachings*, page 201.

## **‘One fold and one Shepherd’**

### **6. What is Christ’s aim for His people? John 10:16.**

NOTE: ‘As trials thicken around us, both separation and unity will be seen in our ranks. Some who are now ready to take up weapons of warfare will in time of real peril make it manifest that they have not built upon the solid rock; they will yield to temptation. Those who have had great light and precious privileges, but have not improved them, will, under one pretext or another, go out from us. Not having received the love of the truth, they will be taken in the delusions of the enemy; they will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and will depart from the faith. But, on the other hand, when the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd’s voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. In view of the common peril, strife for supremacy will cease; there will be no disputing as to who shall be accounted greatest. No one of the true believers will say: “I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas.” The testimony of one and all will be: “I cleave unto Christ; I rejoice in Him as my personal Saviour.”’ *Lift Him Up*, page 211.

### **7. What call will bring Christ’s people into the one fold? Revelation 18:1-4.**

NOTE: ‘Among earth’s inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan’s supreme effort is made to cause “all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,” to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones, “blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke,” will “shine as lights in the world.” Revelation 13:16; Philippians 2:15. The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine.’ *Prophets & Kings*, page 188.

## **‘There is one body’**

### **8. How did Paul describe the doctrinal basis of Christian unity? Ephesians 4:4-6.**

NOTE: ‘The first angel’s message of Revelation 14, announcing the hour of God’s judgment and calling upon men to fear and worship Him, was designed to separate the professed people of God from the corrupting influences of the world and to arouse them to see their true condition of worldliness and backsliding. In this message, God has sent to the church a warning, which, had it been accepted, would have corrected the evils that were shutting them away from Him. Had they received the message from heaven, humbling their hearts before the Lord and seeking in sincerity a preparation to stand in His presence, the Spirit and power of God would have been manifested among them. The church would again have reached that blessed state of unity, faith, and love which existed in apostolic days, when the believers “were of one heart and of one soul,” and “spoke the word of

God with boldness,” when “the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Acts 4:32, 31; 2:47. If God’s professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them from His word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” “There is,” he says, “one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Ephesians 4:3-5. Such were the blessed results experienced by those who accepted the advent message. They came from different denominations, and their denominational barriers were hurled to the ground; conflicting creeds were shivered to atoms; the unscriptural hope of a temporal millennium was abandoned, false views of the second advent were corrected, pride and conformity to the world were swept away; wrongs were made right; hearts were united in the sweetest fellowship, and love and joy reigned supreme. If this doctrine did this for the few who did receive it, it would have done the same for all if all had received it.’ *Great Controversy*, page 379.

**9. What course of action was followed when doctrinal division arose in the early church? Acts 15:1-2.**

NOTE: ‘The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armour of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted. “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” I Corinthians 14:33. He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 95-96.

**‘Of one accord, of one mind’**

**10. What advice did Paul give to the Christians in Philippi? Philippians 2:2-3.**

NOTE: ‘We may safely seek to be of one accord in doctrine and spirit, and if this were done, we would be in harmony with God’s will. If selfishness and pride and vanity and evil surmising were put away, we would become strong in God, and the door of our heart would be open for the entrance of Christ; the baptism of the Holy Ghost would fall upon us, and we should be filled with all the fullness of God. Then we should know what is the length and depth and breadth and height of the love of God which passeth knowledge; we should know something of the mystery of godliness. We would be able to speak, as did Peter and John, of the things which we had seen and heard. What we need is a living experience in the things of God. We need the transforming grace of Christ to bring into subjection every thought of the mind, every power of the intellect. The physical, mental, and spiritual powers should be under the control of the God of heaven who gives us life, who gives us food, who gives us every blessing.’ *Review & Herald*, April 22, 1890.

**11. What did Paul hope to see in these Christians? Philippians 2:4.**

NOTE: ‘When persons meet together for the investigation of points of faith concerning which there is a difference of opinion, the spirit which controls them will be manifested. Those who are standing in defence of truth should be calm and self-possessed. If they have the mind of Christ, they will be kind and courteous. They will not be betrayed into the use of harsh language. They will not regard themselves as infallible, nor look with contempt upon those who differ with them. They will not regard them as enemies, nor meet them with ridicule or jesting.’ *Gospel Workers, 1892 ed.*, page 389.

‘We must make it appear essential to be united, not that we are to require others to come to our ideas, but if all are seeking the meekness and lowliness of Christ they will have the mind of Christ. Then there will be unity of spirit. I urge those who claim to believe the truth to walk in unity with their brethren. Do not seek to give to the world occasion to say that we are extremists, that we are disunited, that one teaches one thing, and one another. Avoid dissension.’ *Last Day Events*, page 92.

**‘That they all may be one’**

**12. How did Jesus describe the unity He wishes to see in His church? John 17:11.**

NOTE: ‘In these first disciples was presented marked diversity. They were to be the world’s teachers, and they represented widely varied types of character. In order successfully to carry forward the work to which they had been called, these men, differing in natural characteristics and in habits of life, needed to come into unity of feeling, thought, and action. This unity it was Christ’s object to secure. To this end He sought to bring them into unity with Himself.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 20.

**13. What purpose will the unity of Christ’s followers serve? John 17:21-23.**

NOTE: ‘All true labourers for God will work in harmony with this prayer. In their efforts to advance the work, all will manifest that oneness of sentiment and practice which reveals that they are God’s witnesses, that they love one another. To a world that is broken up by discord and strife, their love and unity will testify to their connection with heaven. It is the convincing evidence of the divine character of their mission.’ *Testimonies, volume 7*, pages 156-157.

**Lesson 11: ‘Striving against sin’**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.' James 4:7.

STUDY HELP: *Ministry of Healing*, pages 452-453.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 6:10-18.

LESSON AIM: To study the good fight of faith.

**The reason for this lesson.** It is becoming common among Evangelicals to insist that the work of salvation was completed on the cross and therefore if only Christians would stop struggling against sin and temptation, and hand over everything to Christ, He will take over and win the victory for them. Their part is passive, to lie as clay in the Potter's hands, to accept the imputed righteousness of Christ and thus claim the assurance of salvation. Hearing this teaching, Dr Alexander Whyte commented: 'Och, it's a sair fecht tae the end!' [It's a sore fight to the end.]

## Introduction

'The Christian life is a battle and a march. In this warfare there is no release; the effort must be continuous and persevering. It is by unceasing endeavour that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. Christian integrity must be sought with resistless energy and maintained with a resolute fixedness of purpose.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 453.

## 'Ye shall live'

### 1. What warning did Paul give to those who continue to indulge the flesh? Romans 8:13.

NOTE: The Greek word translated 'mortify' in the King James Bible literally means 'keep on putting to death'.

'There are many, too many, who claim to be servants of God, but who have no experimental knowledge of Him. Their acknowledgement of Christ is misleading, because they have not faith to believe that He will give them power to overcome their sins. They do not receive Him as their personal Saviour, and their characters reveal hereditary and cultivated defects. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God, but is influenced by their own inclinations. Selfishness binds them hand and foot. God looks with sorrow upon their bondage.' *Signs of the Times*, March 11, 1897.

### 2. How did Paul explain that surrender to God requires the Christian no longer to submit to temptation and sin? Romans 6:12-14.

NOTE: 'God is ever seeking to impress our hearts by His Holy Spirit that we shall be convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. We may place our will on the side of God's will and in His strength and grace resist the temptations of the enemy. As we yield to the influence of the Spirit of God, our conscience becomes tender and sensitive, and sin that we have passed by with little thought, becomes exceeding sinful. God calls upon men to oppose the powers of evil. He says: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Romans 6:13, 14. In this conflict of righteousness against unrighteousness, we can be successful only by divine aid. Our finite will must be brought into submission to the will of the Infinite; the human will must be blended with the divine. This will bring the Holy Spirit to our aid; and every conquest will tend to the recovery of God's purchased possession, to the restoration of His image in the soul.' *Our High Calling*, page 153.

John Owen wrote: 'Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you.'

## 'Put off all these'

### 3. What counsel did Paul give to the Colossian Christians? Colossians 3:5-9.

NOTE: 'Because this experience [justification] is his, the Christian is not therefore to fold his hands, content with that which has been accomplished for him. He who has determined to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil. Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong, will strive for the mastery, and against these he is to be ever on guard, striving in Christ's strength for victory.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 476.

### 4. How did James give similar counsel? James 1:21-22.

NOTE: 'There are few who really taste the sweetness of communion with the risen Saviour. All are too largely occupied with the things of this earth. Worldly things are too much thought of and talked of. We are too well satisfied with breathing the atmosphere of earth. Self is too often consulted, and it sways the perception and judgment into wrong channels. There must be more beholding of our Saviour and more talking of heavenly things. Our secular work must be done, but every business transaction needs the closest criticism, else we shall find interwoven with it threads of selfishness, and it will become a snare to our feet. The Lord will not serve with our sins. There is no virtue in judging others. Our time and work are too important for this. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." 2 Corinthians 13:5.' *General Conference Bulletin*, April 23, 1901.

## 'I was alive without the law'

### 5. How did Jesus show that sin begins in a thought? Matthew 5:21-22, first part, 27-28.

NOTE: 'An impure thought tolerated, an unholy desire cherished, and the soul is contaminated, its integrity compromised. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." If we would not commit sin, we must shun its very beginnings. Every emotion and desire must be held in subjection to reason and conscience. Every unholy thought must be instantly repelled. To your closet, followers of Christ. Pray in faith and with all the heart. Satan is watching to ensnare your feet. You must have help from above if you would escape his devices.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 177.

**6. How did Paul come to understand this truth? Romans 7:7-8.**

NOTE: 'This daily review of our acts, to see whether conscience approves or condemns, is necessary for all who wish to arrive at the perfection of Christian character. Many acts which pass for good works, even deeds of benevolence, will, when closely investigated, be found to be prompted by wrong motives. Many receive applause for virtues which they do not possess. The Searcher of hearts inspects motives, and often the deeds which are highly applauded by men are recorded by Him as springing from selfish motives and base hypocrisy. Every act of our lives, whether excellent and praiseworthy or deserving of censure, is judged by the Searcher of hearts according to the motives which prompted it.' *Gospel Workers, 1892 ed.*, page 110.

**'Bringing into captivity every thought'**

**7. What are we admonished to do with our thoughts? 2 Corinthians 10:5.**

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

**8. How are we to bring our thoughts into captivity? Philippians 4:8.**

NOTE: 'All are free moral agents, and as such they must train their thoughts to run in the right channel. The first work of those who would reform is to purify the imagination. Our meditations should be such as will elevate the mind. " whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." [Philippians 4:8.] Here is a wide field in which the mind can safely range. If Satan seeks to turn it to low and sensual things, bring it back. When corrupt imaginings seek to gain possession of your mind, flee to the throne of grace, and pray for strength from heaven. By the grace of Christ it is possible for us to reject impure thoughts. Jesus will attract the mind, purify the thoughts, and cleanse the heart from every secret sin. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God." *Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene*, page 136.

**'A roaring lion'**

**9. How does Peter describe our enemy? 1 Peter 5:8.**

NOTE: 'From the days of Adam to our own time, our great enemy has been exercising his power to oppress and destroy. He is now preparing for his last campaign against the church. All who seek to follow Jesus will be brought into conflict with this relentless foe. The more nearly the Christian imitates the divine Pattern, the more surely will he make himself a mark for the attacks of Satan.' *Great Controversy*, page 510.

**10. What did Peter counsel the Christian to do about this 'roaring lion'? 1 Peter 5:9.**

NOTE: 'He who overcomes must watch; for, with worldly entanglements, error, and superstition, Satan strives to win Christ's followers from Him. It is not enough that we avoid glaring dangers and perilous, inconsistent moves. We are to keep close to the side of Christ, walking in the path of self-denial and sacrifice. We are in an enemy's country. He who was cast out of heaven has come down with great power. With every conceivable artifice and device he is seeking to take souls captive. Unless we are constantly on guard we shall fall an easy prey to his unnumbered deceptions.' *Maranatha*, page 90.

**'They all slumbered and slept'**

**11. How does Christ picture His church awaiting His coming? Matthew 25:5.**

NOTE: 'Not one of us should be tardy in seeking a preparation for the coming of Christ. Let none follow the example of the foolish virgins, and think that it will be safe to wait until the crisis comes before gaining a preparation of character to stand in that time. It will be too late to seek for the righteousness of Christ when the guests are called in and examined. Now is the time to put on the righteousness of Christ, the wedding garment that will fit you to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb. In the parable, the foolish virgins are represented as begging for oil, and failing to receive it at their request. This is symbolic of

those who have not prepared themselves by developing a character to stand in a time of crisis. It is as if they should go to their neighbours and say, Give me your character, or I shall be lost. Those that were wise could not impart their oil to the flickering lamps of the foolish virgins. Character is not transferable. It is not to be bought or sold; it is to be acquired. The Lord has given to every individual an opportunity to obtain a righteous character through the hours of probation; but He has not provided a way by which one human agent may impart to another the character which he has developed by going through hard experiences, by learning lessons from the great Teacher, so that he can manifest patience under trial, and exercise faith so that he can remove mountains of impossibility. It is impossible to impart the fragrance of love, to give to another gentleness, tact, and perseverance. It is impossible for one human heart to pour into another the love of God and humanity.' *Youth's Instructor*, January 16, 1896.

## **12. What warning are we given about sleeping when we should be awake? Proverbs 6:9-11.**

NOTE: 'Many of those who know the truth, who claim to believe that the last message of mercy is being given to the world, are fast asleep. Many like the sluggard are folding their hands in inactivity. The Lord has a work for everyone to do. There are those who suppose that they can be saved by merely assenting to the truth. But this cannot be. True conversion acts like leaven, permeating every part of the being, filling the man with a desire to serve Christ. Received into the heart, the truth transforms the entire being, bringing it into conformity to the Spirit of Christ.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 20, page 327.

## **Lesson 12: 'Let him be holy still'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.' 1 Peter 1:15-16.

STUDY HELP: *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 47-56.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Revelation 22:10-15.

LESSON AIM: To study whether holiness is a requirement or optional for eternal life.

**The reason for this lesson.** In many churches today, it is being taught that Christians can opt out of holiness, that they can choose to be justified but may regard sanctification as optional. Some churches actually teach that there will be two distinct classes in heaven: the 'carnal Christian' will get to heaven but be outside 'the kingdom,' 'as one escaping the flames' and therefore without reward. They teach that the salvation (i.e. eternal life) of these carnal Christians is secure; it is just that they will miss out on the rewards that Jesus brings when He comes. Another way of expressing this separating justification from sanctification is to teach that 'we shall be sinning until Jesus comes.'

### **Introduction**

'Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13), the Saviour declared. If men are willing to be moulded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 52.

### **'Be ye holy'**

#### **1. What admonition did Peter give to the church? 1 Peter 1:15-16.**

NOTE: 'Those who would not fall a prey to Satan's devices, must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. The mind must not be left to dwell at random upon every subject that the enemy of souls may suggest. The heart must be faithfully sentinelled, or evils without will awaken evils within, and the soul will wander in darkness. "Gird up the loins of your mind," Peter wrote, "be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; . . . not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 518.

#### **2. What were those who served God in His sanctuary commanded to do? Leviticus 10:10.**

NOTE: 'In the lessons of Christ the true and the false are set in contrast. We need not hesitate to find our delight in what is pure and heavenly, to talk upon what is good, to bring the brightness that God has given before our minds. We should earnestly desire to be like the perfect Model. We should thank God that through the aid of His Spirit, we can distinguish between the pure and holy, and the impure and unholy. By beholding and copying the perfect Model, we shall present to the world a character that is Christlike. We have much desired that others should possess such a character, and have been greatly perplexed because they did not manifest Christlikeness in their life; but let us see to it that others are not perplexed at seeing this same lack in our own character.' *Review & Herald*, August 8, 1893.

### **'Shall we continue in sin?'**

**3. What solemn question did Paul pose and what answer did he give? Romans 6:1-2.**

NOTE: 'Christ imputes His perfection and righteousness to the believing sinner when he does not continue in sin, but turns from transgression to obedience of the commandments. While God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ's righteousness while practising known sins, or neglecting known duties.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 115.

**4. What simple principle did Paul set forth? Romans 6:16.**

NOTE: "'Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Very many who profess to be servants of Christ are none of His. They are deceiving their souls to their own destruction. While they profess to be servants of Christ, they are not living in obedience to His will; they are obeying another master, working daily against the Master whom they profess to serve. "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Earthly and selfish interests engage the soul, mind, and strength of God's professed followers. To all intents and purposes, they are servants of mammon. They have not experienced a crucifixion to the world. But few among the many who profess to be Christ's followers can say in the language of the apostle, "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.'" *Review & Herald*, May 5, 1885.

**'Let no man deceive you'**

**5. How did Paul make clear that we cannot inherit eternal life and cling to our sins? 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:5.**

NOTE: "Toward those who fall into sin, the church has a duty, to warn, to instruct, and if possible to restore. "Reprove, rebuke, exhort," the Lord says, "with all long-suffering and doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:2. Deal faithfully with wrongdoing. Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbath-breaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:21. If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God's word is pronounced upon them in heaven. In choosing to sin, they disown Christ; the church must show that she does not sanction their deeds, or she herself dishonours her Lord. She must say about sin what God says about it. She must deal with it as God directs, and her action is ratified in heaven. He who despises the authority of the church despises the authority of Christ Himself.' *Desire of Ages*, page 805.

**6. What warning did Paul give against deceptions of this kind? Ephesians 5:6-7.**

NOTE: 'Human inventions please the carnal mind, and pacify the conscience as it clings to sin. It was not palatable to men to see and practise the faith that works by love and sanctifies the soul. Sin was not forsaken and despised, and in order to excuse it a means had to be devised by which the edge of the sword of truth might be blunted; so men brought in human reasonings and assertions. If men had permitted the word of God to do its work upon the heart and intellect, they would have distinguished and separated the spurious from the true. If they had received the Scriptures in their simplicity, they would not have given themselves up to worldly pursuits, to fulfilling their temporal hopes. But they made of none effect the word of God through their traditions, and wrested the Scripture from its true meaning. The Lord says that the word of truth is able to make men wise unto salvation. It is a safeguard and shield, and protects men from the delusions of the enemy. "Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light; for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.'" *Signs of the Times*, June 4, 1894.

**'Let him be holy still'**

**7. What verdict will mark the close of the judgement? Revelation 22:11.**

NOTE: 'We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold today are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgment. We are preparing to meet Him who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our character, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honour, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy, will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects, and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.' *Counsels on Health*, page 43.

**8. When Christ comes, are His rewards only for some, or for all? On what basis is a man's reward determined? Revelation 22:12. Compare Psalm 91:8, Isaiah 3:11.**

NOTE: 'All must hear the final decision of a righteous Judge, when every case will be decided, and every man rewarded according to his works. The loyal and believing children of God will then be separated from the children of the wicked one, as

the sheep are divided from the goats. The righteous will be placed on the right hand of God, while the transgressors will be placed on his left hand.' *Youth's Instructor*, December 20, 1900.

## **'Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord'**

### **9. What are we told is essential if we are to meet the Lord? Hebrews 12:14.**

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

### **10. What did God call sinners to be? 1 Thessalonians 4:7.**

NOTE: "'By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20), the Saviour declared. All the true followers of Christ bear fruit to His glory. Their lives testify that a good work has been wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and their fruit is unto holiness. Their lives are elevated and pure. Right actions are the unmistakable fruit of true godliness, and those who bear no fruit of this kind reveal that they have no experience in the things of God. They are not in the Vine.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents & Students*, page 329.

## **'Blessed and holy'**

### **11. What does the Bible say of those who will be raised in the first resurrection when Jesus comes? Revelation 20:6.**

NOTE: 'We are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We may not be living when Christ shall come in power and great glory, for all are subject to death at any time, but if we are righteous, in harmony with the law of God, we shall respond to the voice that will call the people of God from their graves, and shall come forth to receive immortality. It is only the blessed and holy who will be ready for the first resurrection; for when Christ comes, He will not change the character. The change that will take place will be that change spoken of by Paul when he says: "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." The word of God declares that we must be found blameless, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Now we are to learn obedience, submission to the divine will, that God may work in us to will and to do of His good-pleasure, and that we may work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.' *Signs of the Times*, February 9, 1891.

### **12. What does the Bible say of those Christians who will live to see Jesus come? 1 John 3:2-3. Compare 2 Peter 3:11, 14.**

NOTE: 'We are living in the last days. Soon Christ is coming for His people to take them to the mansions He is preparing for them. But nothing that defiles can enter those mansions. Heaven is pure and holy, and those who pass through the gates of the City of God must here be clothed with inward and outward purity.' *Counsels on Health*, page 103.

'When Christ shall come the earth will tremble before Him, and the heavens will be rolled together as a scroll, and every mountain and every island will be moved out of its place. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself" (Psalm 50:3-6). In view of the great day of God, we can see that our only safety will be found in departing from all sin and iniquity. Those who continue in sin will be found among the condemned and perishing.' *Faith & Works*, page 116.

## **Lesson 13: 'Without spot or wrinkle'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' Hebrews 12:14.

STUDY HELP: *Early Writings*, pages 69-71.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3:1-17.

LESSON AIM: To study whether it is safe to accept the idea that we can be sinning until Jesus comes.

### **Introduction**

'I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful and were looking to the time of "refreshing" and the "latter rain" to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation; therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God... I saw that none could share the "refreshing" unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and

nearer to the Lord and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence.' *Early Writings*, page 71.

### **'Thou art holy'**

#### **1. What are we told about God? Psalm 22:3, Revelation 15:4.**

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

#### **2. What hymn of praise do the angels sing? Isaiah 6:3. Compare Revelation 4:8.**

NOTE: 'Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The crowning glory of Christ's attributes is His holiness. The angels bow before Him in adoration, exclaiming, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." Revelation 4:8. He is declared to be glorious in His holiness. Study the character of God. By beholding Christ, by seeking Him in faith and prayer, you may become like Him.' *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 402.

### **'They shall see God'**

#### **3. What was the reaction of Isaiah to the presence of God? Isaiah 6:5. Compare 1 Kings 19:13, Exodus 3:6.**

NOTE: 'Never before had Isaiah realised so fully the greatness of Jehovah or His perfect holiness; and he felt that in his human frailty and unworthiness he must perish in that divine presence. "Woe is me!" he cried; "for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.'" *Conflict & Courage*, page 232.

#### **4. What truth was Habakkuk aware of? Habakkuk 1:13, first part.**

NOTE: 'It is not because He is unwilling to forgive that He turns from the transgressor; it is because the sinner refuses to make use of the abundant provisions of grace, that God is unable to deliver from sin. "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Isaiah 59:1, 2.' *Prophets & Kings*, page 323.

#### **5. What change must take place if we are to see the Lord? Hebrews 12:14. Compare Matthew 5:8.**

NOTE: 'Into the city of God there will enter nothing that defiles. All who are to be dwellers there will here have become pure in heart. In one who is learning of Jesus, there will be manifest a growing distaste for careless manners, unseemly language, and coarse thought. When Christ abides in the heart, there will be purity and refinement of thought and manner. But the words of Jesus have a deeper meaning, not merely pure in the sense in which the world understands purity, free from that which is sensual, pure from lust, but true in the hidden purposes and motives of the soul, free from pride and self-seeking, humble, unselfish, childlike. Only like can appreciate like. Unless you accept in your own life the principle of self-sacrificing love, which is the principle of His character, you cannot know God.' *Maranatha*, page 88.

### **'We should be holy and without blame'**

#### **6. What is God's plan for His people? Ephesians 1:4.**

NOTE: 'Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the covenant was made that all who were obedient, all who should through the abundant grace provided, become holy in character, and without blame before God, by appropriating that grace, should be children of God. This covenant, made from eternity, was given to Abraham hundreds of years before Christ came. With what interest and what intensity did Christ in humanity study the human race to see if they would avail themselves of the provision offered.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 403.

#### **7. In what other way did Paul express this divine plan? Romans 8:29.**

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

### **'That He might redeem us from all iniquity'**

#### **8. What was the purpose of Christ's death? Titus 2:13-14, 2 Corinthians 5:15.**

NOTE: 'Christ has become our sacrifice and surety. He has become sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Through faith in His name He imputes unto us His righteousness, and it becomes a living principle in our life. Christ imputes to us His sinless character and presents us to the Father in His own purity. We cannot provide a robe of righteousness for ourselves, for the prophet says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). There is nothing in us from which

we can clothe the soul so that its nakedness shall not appear. We are to receive the robe of righteousness woven in the loom of heaven, even the spotless robe of Christ's righteousness.' *That I May Know Him*, page 302.

**9. In what way did Paul explain this truth to the Ephesians? Ephesians 5:25-27. Compare Revelation 19:8, Revelation 7:14.**

NOTE: 'We are to say, "He died for me." He bore my soul's disgrace, that in His name I might be an overcomer, and be exalted to His throne. Tell of His power, sing of His matchless love. In every trial He will be near you, and will give grace and power according to your need.' *Review & Herald*, July 19, 1892.

**'Christ liveth in me'**

**10. What is to be the Christian's response to the sacrifice of Christ on His behalf? Galatians 2:20.**

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

**11. How does Paul explain the result of Christians living sinful lives? Hebrews 6:4-6.**

NOTE: 'As I saw the dreadful fact that God's people were conformed to the world, with no distinction, except in name, between many of the professed disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, and unbelievers, my soul felt deep anguish. I saw that Jesus was wounded and put to an open shame. Said the angel, as with sorrow he saw the professed people of God loving the world, partaking of its spirit, and following its fashions, "Cut loose! Cut loose! lest He appoint you your portion with hypocrites and unbelievers outside the city. Your profession will only cause you greater anguish, and your punishment will be greater, because ye knew His will, but did it not.'" *Messages to Young People*, page 129.

**'Ye shall appear with Him in glory'**

**12. How is the Christian to live his life? Colossians 3:1-4.**

NOTE: 'We should rejoice in the prospect of soon being with Jesus in the mansions He has gone to prepare for us. Jesus can supply your every need, if you will look to Him and trust in Him. As you behold Him, you will be charmed with the riches of the glory of His divine love. The idolatrous love of things that are seen will be superseded by a higher and better love for things that are imperishable and precious. You may contemplate eternal riches until your affections are bound to things above, and you may be an instrument in directing others to set their affections on heavenly treasures.' *Review and Herald*, June 23, 1896

**13. What counsel does Paul give to Christians? Romans 13:11-14.**

NOTE: 'These words plainly set forth our duty. Every year is shortening our probation, and bringing us nearer the coming of our Lord. We should now put forth every energy to prepare for the great event. This life at the longest is represented as a vapour, which soon passes away. Its treasures, its honours, and its joys are transitory and uncertain. If we live for God and the immortal future, we shall secure all that is worth the having. Only by our life can we prove to the world the genuineness of our solemn faith. But if the coming of Christ is indeed nearer than when we believed, why has there been such a change in the conduct of many? Why are they so careless, so indifferent to the teachings of God's word, so regardless of his claims upon them? Why are they seeking to unite with those whose influence would divert their minds from God, and from a preparation for eternity? It is the love of the world that leads to the neglect of eternal interests. "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." This is our work. Let us not be diverted from it by the world's allurements, nor disheartened by its revilings. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." We have not long to work. Our time, our talents, are too precious to be buried in the world.' *Review & Herald*, March 28, 1882.

**Afterwords:** 'Christ did not send His angels to this fallen world, while He remained in heaven; but He Himself went without the camp, bearing the reproach. He became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; Himself took our infirmities, and bore our weaknesses. And the absence of self-denial in His professed followers, God regards as a denial of the Christian name. Those who profess to be one with Christ, and indulge their selfish desires for rich and expensive clothing, furniture, and food, are Christians only in name. **To be a Christian is to be Christlike.**

'And yet how true are the words of the apostle: "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." Many Christians do not have works corresponding to the name they bear. They act as if they had never heard of the plan of redemption wrought out at infinite cost. The majority aim to make a name for themselves in the world; they adopt its forms and ceremonies, and live for the indulgence of self. They follow out their own purposes as eagerly as do the world, and thus they cut off their power to help in establishing the kingdom of God.

'The work of God, which should be going forward with tenfold its present strength and efficiency, is kept back, like a spring season held by the chilling blast of winter, because some of God's professed people are appropriating to themselves the means

that should be dedicated to His service. Because Christ's self-sacrificing love is not interwoven in the life practices, the church is weak where it should be strong. By its own course it has put out its light, and robbed millions of the gospel of Christ.' [Emphasis added.]

*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 54.