

Lessons for the 3rd quarter 2010

Lessons from the experience of the pioneers

General Introduction

Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ are becoming conformed to this world and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal churches from which they but a short time since separated. The words addressed to the Laodicean church describe their present condition perfectly. (See Revelation 3:14-20.) They are “neither cold nor hot,” but “lukewarm”. And unless they heed the counsel of the “faithful and true Witness,” and zealously repent and obtain “gold tried in the fire,” “white raiment,” and “eye-salve,” He will spew them out of His mouth.

The time has come when a large portion of those who once rejoiced and shouted aloud for joy in view of the immediate coming of the Lord are on the ground of the churches and the world who once derided them for believing that Jesus was coming, and circulated all manner of falsehoods to raise prejudice against them and destroy their influence. Now, if any one longs after the living God, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and God gives him to feel His power, and satisfies his longing soul by shedding abroad His love in his heart, and if he glorifies God by praising Him, he is, by these professed believers in the soon coming of the Lord, often considered deluded, and charged with being mesmerised or having some wicked spirit.

Many of these professed Christians dress, talk, and act like the world, and the only thing by which they may be known is their profession. Though they profess to be looking for Christ, their conversation is not in heaven, but on worldly things. “What manner of persons” ought those to be “in all holy conversation and godliness,” who profess to be “looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God.” 2 Peter 3:11, 12. “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” 1 John 3:3. But it is evident that many who bear the name of Adventist study more to decorate their bodies and to appear well in the eyes of the world than they do to learn from the Word of God how they may be approved of Him.

What if the lovely Jesus, our pattern, should make His appearance among them and the professors of religion generally, as at His first advent? He was born in a manger. Follow Him through His life and ministry. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. These professed Christians would be ashamed of the meek and lowly Saviour who wore a plain, seamless coat, and had not where to lay His head. His spotless, self-denying life would condemn them; His holy solemnity would be a painful restraint upon their lightness and vain laughter; His guileless conversation would be a check to their worldly and covetous conversation; His declaring the unvarnished, cutting truth would manifest their real character, and they would wish to get the meek pattern, the lovely Jesus, out of the way as soon as possible. They would be among the first to try to catch Him in His words, and raise the cry, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”

Let us follow Jesus as He so meekly rode into Jerusalem, when “the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, . . . saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto Him, Master, rebuke Thy disciples. And He answered and said unto them, I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” A large portion of those who profess to be looking for Christ would be as forward as the Pharisees were to have the disciples silenced, and they would doubtless raise the cry, “Fanaticism! Mesmerism! Mesmerism!” And the disciples, spreading their garments and branches of palm trees in the way, would be thought extravagant and wild. But God will have a people on the earth who will not be so cold and dead but that they can praise and glorify Him. He will receive glory from some people, and if those of His choice, those who keep His commandments, should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out.’ *Early Writings*, pages 107-109.

Compiler’s note: In this series of lessons, we will try to answer Peter’s question: ‘Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?’ Our inspiration for this study came from studying the characteristics of those who were prominent in the early Second Advent Movement. Among the qualities noted were: *zeal and commitment, earnestness, enthusiasm for God’s cause, a willingness to sacrifice, a love for souls, a willingness to deal with fanaticism, patience in waiting for God’s guidance, a desire to move forward in unity, a group study approach to Bible study, an awareness of the system of truth, placing new light within the system, a realisation that God is desiring to separate His people from worldly influences, the need for a revival of true godliness, the importance of a reform in health and lifestyle, that the Bible, and the Bible only, is the foundation of all truth and doctrine, and the need for God’s people to be organised in the Lord’s work.*

While these were fallible men and women, we may gain inspiration from those qualities and practices that enabled God to use them to arouse the world to the almost forgotten news that Jesus is coming again. Those who live on the very brink of that momentous event should not come behind them ‘in all holy conversation and godliness.’ It is the compiler’s hope and prayer that God will raise up again ‘a peculiar [special] people, zealous of good works’ whom He might redeem from all iniquity and purify unto Himself. [Titus 2:14.]

Lesson 1: June 27-July 3 ‘Be zealous therefore and repent’

MEMORY VERSE: 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.' Zechariah 4:6, last part.

STUDY HELP: *Christian Service*, pages 35-45.

LESSON SCRIPTURES: Revelation 3:14-22.

LESSON AIM: To study the need for a revival of zeal among God's people today.

Introduction

'The church at this time should have the faith once delivered to the saints, which will enable them to say boldly: "God is mine helper"; "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The Lord bids us arise and go forward. 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.

'Neither cold nor hot'

1. What does Christ diagnose as the chief problem with His end-time church? Revelation 3:15.

NOTE: 'As a people we are deficient. Our works are not in accordance with our faith. Our faith testifies that we are living under the proclamation of the most solemn and important message that was ever given to mortals. Yet in full view of this fact, our efforts, our zeal, our spirit of self-sacrifice, do not compare with the character of the work. We should awake from the dead, and Christ will give us life.' *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 114.

2. What is a principal reason for the church's lukewarmness? Matthew 24:48.

NOTE: 'Let there be an earnest consideration of these words. Let none say, "That does not mean me; I am a Christian." Who says this, yourself, or He who reads the heart? The unfaithful steward had solemn responsibilities entrusted to him; before the world he appeared as a servant of Christ, but O, how deplorable for himself, and for all connected with him, he is an evil servant! He is imperilling his Lord's goods. He is teaching souls to trample upon the holy law of God. He calls Christ, my Lord. But he says, "My Lord delayeth His coming." He does not say that Christ will not come; he does not scoff at the idea of His second coming; but he tells the people that His coming is delayed. He is removing from the minds of others the conviction that the Lord is coming quickly. His influence leads men to presumptuous, careless delay. Thus they are off their watch and they echo the words of the unfaithful watcher; still others catch them up, and the evil spirit, and men are confirmed in their worldliness and stupor. Their course is downward, not upward; they are not looking for and hastening unto the day of God. Earthly passions, corrupt thoughts, take possession of the mind.' *Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers, No. 4*, page 9.

3. What will this attitude lead to? Matthew 24:49.

NOTE: 'There are many who have outgrown their advent faith. They are living for the world, and while saying in their hearts, as they desire it shall be, "My Lord delayeth His coming," they have beaten their fellow servants. They do this for the same reason that Cain killed Abel. Abel was determined to worship God according to the direction God had given. This displeased Cain. He thought that his own plans were best, and that the Lord would come to his terms. . . He became so angry that he slew his brother. The Lord has a controversy with all who by their unbelief and doubt have been saying that He delays His coming, and who have been smiting their fellow servants.' *Manuscript Releases, volume 14*, pages 115-116.

'I will spew thee out of my mouth'

4. What will Christ do to those who remain in this lukewarm state? Revelation 3:16.

NOTE: 'Half-hearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and noncommittal position lead many astray. The infidel shows his colours. The lukewarm Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldling nor a good Christian. Satan uses him to do a work that no one else can do.' *Our High Calling*, page 348.

'God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children.' *Selected Messages, book I*, page 127.

5. How did God give a similar warning to His people of old? Hosea 4:6.

NOTE: 'The words of God to ancient Israel have a solemn warning to the church and its leaders today. Of Israel the Lord said, "I have written to him the great things of My law; but they were counted as a strange thing." Hosea 8:12. And to the priests and teachers He declared, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee; . . . seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children." Hosea 4:6. Shall the warnings from God be passed by unheeded? Shall the opportunities for service be unimproved? Shall the world's scorn, the pride of reason, conformity to human customs and traditions, hold the professed followers of Christ from service to Him? Will they reject God's word as the Jewish leaders rejected Christ? The result of Israel's sin is before us. Will the church of today take warning?' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 306.

‘Be zealous therefore and repent’

6. What exhortation does God give to His end-time church? Revelation 3:19.

NOTE: ‘In the trust given to the first disciples, believers in every age have shared. Everyone who has received the gospel has been given sacred truth to impart to the world. God’s faithful people have always been aggressive missionaries, consecrating their resources to the honour of His name and wisely using their talents in His service. The unselfish labour of Christians in the past should be to us an object lesson and an inspiration. The members of God’s church are to be zealous of good works, separating from worldly ambition and walking in the footsteps of Him who went about doing good. With hearts filled with sympathy and compassion, they are to minister to those in need of help, bringing to sinners a knowledge of the Saviour’s love. Such work calls for laborious effort, but it brings a rich reward. Those who engage in it with sincerity of purpose will see souls won to the Saviour, for the influence that attends the practical carrying out of the divine commission is irresistible. Not upon the ordained minister only rests the responsibility of going forth to fulfil this commission. Everyone who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men. “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.” Revelation 22:17. The charge to give this invitation includes the entire church. Everyone who has heard the invitation is to echo the message from hill and valley, saying, “Come.”’ *Acts of the Apostles*, pages 109-110.

7. Of what do God’s people need to repent? Revelation 3:17, first part.

NOTE: ‘The professed followers of Christ are on trial before the heavenly universe; but the coldness of their zeal and the feebleness of their efforts in God’s service, mark them as unfaithful. If what they are doing were the best they could do, condemnation would not rest upon them; but were their hearts enlisted in the work, they could do much more. They know, and the world knows, that they have to a great degree lost the spirit of self-denial and cross-bearing. Many there are against whose names will be found written in the books of heaven, Not producers, but consumers. By many who bear Christ’s name, His glory is obscured, His beauty veiled, His honour withheld. There are many whose names are on the church books, but who are not under Christ’s rule. They are not heeding His instruction or doing His work. Therefore they are under the control of the enemy. They are doing no positive good, therefore they are doing incalculable harm. Because their influence is not a savour of life unto life, it is a savour of death unto death.’ *Christian Service*, page 43.

‘By My Spirit’

8. What is the work which Christ has called His end-time church to carry out? Revelation 14:6-12. Compare Matthew 24:14, Matthew 28:18-20.

NOTE: ‘The commission given to the disciples is given also to us. Today, as then, a crucified and risen Saviour is to be uplifted before those who are without God and without hope in the world. The Lord calls for pastors, teachers, and evangelists. From door to door His servants are to proclaim the message of salvation. To every nation, kindred, tongue, and people the tidings of pardon through Christ are to be carried. Not with tame, lifeless utterances is the message to be given, but with clear, decided, stirring utterances. Hundreds are waiting for the warning to escape for their lives. The world needs to see in Christians an evidence of the power of Christianity. Not merely in a few places, but throughout the world, messages of mercy are needed. When Jesus ascended to heaven, He committed His work on earth to those who had received the light of the gospel. They were to carry the work forward to completion. He has provided no other agency for the promulgation of His truth. “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” “And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” This solemn commission reaches us in this age. God leaves with His church the responsibility of receiving or rejecting it. Upon us is laid a sacred charge. The commission has been given us: “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:19, 20, margin. You are dedicated to the work of making known the gospel of salvation. Heaven’s perfection is to be your power.’ *Christian Service*, pages 23-24.

9. In engaging upon this work, what must God’s people never forget? Zechariah 4:6.

NOTE: ‘For the carrying on of His work, Christ did not choose the learning or eloquence of the Jewish Sanhedrin or the power of Rome. Passing by the self-righteous Jewish teachers, the Master Worker chose humble, unlearned men to proclaim the truths that were to move the world. These men He purposed to train and educate as the leaders of His church. They in turn were to educate others and send them out with the gospel message. That they might have success in their work they were to be given the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or human wisdom was the gospel to be proclaimed, but by the power of God.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 17.

‘The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ’s parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfilment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 50.

‘A zeal of God but not according to knowledge’

10. Against what kind of zeal are we warned? Romans 10:2.

NOTE: 'The "one thing" that Martha needed was a calm, devotional spirit, a deeper anxiety for knowledge concerning the future, immortal life, and the graces necessary for spiritual advancement. She needed less anxiety for the things which pass away, and more for those things which endure forever. Jesus would teach His children to seize every opportunity of gaining that knowledge which will make them wise unto salvation. The cause of Christ needs careful, energetic workers. There is a wide field for the Marthas, with their zeal in active religious work. But let them first sit with Mary at the feet of Jesus. Let diligence, promptness, and energy be sanctified by the grace of Christ; then the life will be an unconquerable power for good.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 304.

11. What may this kind of zeal lead to? Philippians 3:6, first part.

NOTE: 'Saul had an abundance of energy and zeal to work out an erroneous faith in persecuting the saints of God, confining them in prisons and putting them to death. Although his hand did not do the work of murder, yet he had a voice in the decisions and zealously sustained them. He prepared the way, and gave up the believers of the gospel into hands that took their lives. In reference to his zeal Paul himself says, I was "exceedingly mad against them." "I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women."' *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 6*, page 1057.

'The message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The labourers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power, all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven. As the people go to their former teachers with the eager inquiry, Are these things so? the ministers present fables, prophesy smooth things, to soothe their fears and quiet the awakened conscience. But since many refuse to be satisfied with the mere authority of men and demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord," the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it.' *Great Controversy*, page 606.

'They strengthened their hands for this good work'

12. When Nehemiah called his people to finish a neglected work, how did they respond? Nehemiah 2:18. Compare Nehemiah 4:6.

NOTE: 'There is need of Nehemiahs in the church today, not men who can pray and preach only, but men whose prayers and sermons are braced with firm and eager purpose. The success attending Nehemiah's efforts shows what prayer, faith, and wise, energetic action will accomplish. The spirit manifested by the leader will be, to a great extent, reflected by the people. If the leaders, professing to believe the solemn, important truths that are to test the world at this time, manifest no ardent zeal to prepare a people to stand in the day of God, we must expect the church to be careless, indolent, and pleasure-loving.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 264.

13. What contrasting attitude was shown by some of the professed people of God? Nehemiah 3:5. Compare Judges 5:23.

NOTE: 'Many of the professed followers of Christ feel no more burden for souls than do the world. The lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, the love of display, the love of ease, separate the professed Christians from God, and the missionary spirit in reality exists in but few. What can be done to open the eyes of these sinners in Zion, and make hypocrites tremble? There is a class that are represented by Meroz. The missionary spirit has never taken hold of their souls. The calls of foreign missions have not stirred them to action. What account will those render to God, who are doing nothing in His cause, nothing to win souls to Christ? Such will receive the denunciation, "Thou wicked and slothful servant."' *Christian Service*, pages 35-36.

Lesson 2: July 4-10

'Those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.' Psalm 50:5 .

STUDY HELP: *Conflict & Courage*, page 349.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matthew 10:32-42

LESSON AIM: To study the importance of self-sacrifice and self-denial in the Christian's life.

Introduction

'There was a time when there were but few who listened to and embraced the truth, and they had not much of this world's goods. Then it was necessary for some to sell their houses and lands, and obtain cheaper, while their means were freely lent to

the Lord to publish the truth, and otherwise aid in advancing the cause of God. These self-sacrificing ones endured privations; but if they endure unto the end, great will be their reward. God has been moving upon many hearts. The truth for which a few sacrificed so much has triumphed, and multitudes have laid hold of it. In the providence of God, those who have means have been brought into the truth, that, as the work increases, the wants of His cause may be met. God does not now call for the houses His people need to live in; but if those who have an abundance do not hear His voice, cut loose from the world, and sacrifice for God, He will pass them by, and will call for those who are willing to do anything for Jesus, even to sell their homes to meet the wants of the cause. God will have freewill offerings. Those who give must esteem it a privilege to do so.' *Counsels on Stewardship*, page 215.

'A living sacrifice'

1. What is the first and principal sacrifice that God requires of His people? Romans 12:1.

NOTE: 'Sacrifice all to God. Lay all upon His altar, self, property, and all, a living sacrifice. It will take all to enter glory. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where no thief can approach or rust corrupt. Ye must be partakers of Christ's sufferings here if ye would be partakers with Him of His glory hereafter. Heaven will be cheap enough, if we obtain it through suffering. We must deny self all along the way, die to self daily, let Jesus alone appear, and keep His glory continually in view. I saw that those who of late have embraced the truth would have to know what it is to suffer for Christ's sake, that they would have trials to pass through that would be keen and cutting, in order that they may be purified and fitted through suffering to receive the seal of the living God, pass through the time of trouble, see the King in His beauty, and dwell in the presence of God and of pure, holy angels.' *Early Writings*, pages 66-67.

2. What kind of sacrifice did God abhor? Malachi 1:7-8.

NOTE: 'Specific directions were given to ancient Israel that no defective or diseased animal should be presented as an offering to God. Only the most perfect were to be selected for this purpose. The Lord, though the prophet Malachi, most severely reproved His people for departing from these instructions. . . Though addressed to ancient Israel, these words contain a lesson for the people of God today. When the apostle appeals to his brethren to present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," he sets forth the principles of true sanctification. It is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living, active principle, entering into the everyday life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies, not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.'" *The Sanctified Life*, page 27.

'I lay down My life'

3. What example of sacrifice are we given by our Lord? John 10:17-18.

NOTE: 'We are only the instruments in His hands to do His will, not our own. We look at those who are doing despite to the Spirit of grace, and tremble for them. We feel sorry, and are disappointed, that they prove untrue to God and the truth; but we feel a deeper sorrow as we think of Jesus, who has purchased them with His own blood. We would give all our possessions to save one, but we find we cannot do this. We would give life itself to save one soul unto life eternal, but even this sacrifice would not do the work. The one great sacrifice has been made in the life, the mission, and the death of Jesus Christ. Oh, that minds would contemplate the greatness of that sacrifice! Then might they be better able to comprehend the greatness of salvation.' *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 626.

4. How did the disciples manifest the spirit of sacrifice? Acts 4:18-20.

NOTE: 'As the disciples waited for the fulfilment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. As they called to remembrance the words that Christ had spoken to them before His death they understood more fully their meaning. Truths which had passed from their memory were again brought to their minds, and these they repeated to one another. They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour. Like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them. As they meditated upon His pure, holy life they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ's character. Oh, if they could but have the past three years to live over, they thought, how differently they would act! If they could only see the Master again, how earnestly they would strive to show Him how deeply they loved Him, and how sincerely they sorrowed for having ever grieved Him by a word or an act of unbelief! But they were comforted by the thought that they were forgiven. And they determined that, so far as possible, they would atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Him before the world.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 36.

'One thing thou lackest'

5. What lesson of self-sacrifice did Jesus seek to teach the rich young ruler? Matthew 19:21.

NOTE: 'Only one thing he lacked, but that was a vital principle. He needed the love of God in the soul. This lack, unless supplied, would prove fatal to him; his whole nature would become corrupted. By indulgence, selfishness would strengthen. That he might receive the love of God, his supreme love of self must be surrendered. Christ's words were verily to the ruler the invitation, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15. The choice was left with him. Jesus was yearning for his conversion. He had shown him the plague spot in his character, and with what deep interest He watched the issue as the young

man weighed the question! If he decided to follow Christ, he must obey His words in everything.’ *A Call To Stand Apart*, page 15.

6. Why did the young man need this lesson and why was he unwilling to accept it? Matthew 19:22-24.

NOTE: ‘The ruler’s possessions were entrusted to him that he might prove himself a faithful steward; he was to dispense these goods for the blessing of those in need. So God now entrusts men with means, with talents and opportunities, that they may be His agents in helping the poor and the suffering. He who uses his entrusted gifts as God designs becomes a co-worker with the Saviour. He wins souls to Christ, because he is a representative of His character. To those who, like the young ruler, are in high positions of trust and have great possessions, it may seem too great a sacrifice to give up all in order to follow Christ. But this is the rule of conduct for all who would become His disciples. Nothing short of obedience can be accepted. Self-surrender is the substance of the teachings of Christ. Often it is presented and enjoined in language that seems authoritative, because there is no other way to save man than to cut away those things which, if entertained, will demoralise the whole being.’ *A Call To Stand Apart*, page 15.

‘We have left all, and have followed thee’

7. What sacrifice had the disciples made in order to follow Jesus? Luke 18:28. Compare Luke 5:27-28.

NOTE: ‘Matthew “left all, rose up, and followed Him.” There was no hesitation, no questioning, no thought of the lucrative business to be exchanged for poverty and hardship. It was enough for him that he was to be with Jesus, that he might listen to His words, and unite with Him in His work. So it was with the disciples previously called. When Jesus bade Peter and his companions follow Him, immediately they left their boats and nets. Some of these disciples had friends dependent on them for support; but when they received the Saviour’s invitation, they did not hesitate, and inquire, How shall I live, and sustain my family? They were obedient to the call; and when afterward Jesus asked them, “When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything?” they could answer, “Nothing.” Luke 22:35.’ *A Call To Stand Apart*, page 16.

8. What assurance does Jesus give concerning those who sacrifice for His service? Mark 10:29-30. Compare Matthew 19:29.

NOTE: ‘Here is the reward for those who sacrifice for God. They receive a hundredfold in this life, and shall inherit everlasting life. “But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.” I was shown those who receive the truth, but do not live it. They cling to their possessions, and are not willing to distribute of their substance to advance the cause of God. They have not faith to venture and trust God. Their love of this world swallows up their faith. God calls for a portion of their substance, but they heed it not. They reason that they have laboured hard to obtain what they have, and they cannot lend it to the Lord, for they may come to want. “O ye of little faith.” That God who cared for Elijah in the time of famine will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who has numbered the hairs of their head, will care for them, and in days of famine they will be satisfied. While the wicked are perishing all around them for want of bread, their bread and water will be sure. Those who still cling to their earthly treasure, and will not make a right disposition of that which is lent them of God, will lose their treasure in heaven, lose everlasting life.’ *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 173.

‘Many are strongly convinced of the truth, but either husband or wife prevents their stepping out. How can one who is in fellowship with Christ’s sufferings refuse to obey His will and do His work? It is by following in the path of obedience in simple faith that the character attains perfection.’ *That I May Know Him*, page 116.

‘As many as were willing hearted’

9. How did the Israelites respond when asked to support the building of the tabernacle? Exodus 36:5-7. Compare Exodus 35:21.

NOTE: ‘When the Lord invited Israel to contribute for the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness, there was a hearty response. The people “came, everyone whose heart stirred him up, and everyone whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord’s offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.” They came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted. Men came with their gifts of gold and silver, choice fabrics, and valuable wood. The rulers brought precious stones, costly spices, and oil for the lights. “And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun.” They brought “free offerings every morning,” until the report was given to Moses: “The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make.” Exodus 35:21-25; 36:3,5. This generous-hearted, willing service was pleasing to God; and when the tabernacle was completed, He signified His acceptance of the offering. “A cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.” Exodus 40:34.’ *Testimonies, volume 6*, page 468.

10. What self-sacrifice did Jesus call for from those who claim to follow Him? Luke 9:23-25.

NOTE: ‘Self-denial and the cross lie directly in the path of every Christian who is truly following Christ. Jesus says: “If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” Will every soul consider the fact that Christian discipleship includes self-denial, self-sacrifice, even to the laying down of life itself, if need be, for the sake of Him who has given His life for the life of the world?’ *Counsels on Stewardship*, page 288.

‘All that she had’

11. What example of self-denial are we given to encourage us? Mark 12:41-44.

NOTE: 'The poor widow who cast her two mites into the Lord's treasury little knew what she was doing. Her example of self-sacrifice has acted and reacted upon thousands of hearts in every land and in every age. It has brought to the treasury of God gifts from the high and the low, the rich and the poor. It has helped to sustain missions, to establish hospitals, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, and preach the gospel to the poor. Multitudes have been blessed through her unselfish deed.' *Testimonies, volume 6, page 310.*

12. What assurance are we given that our acts of self-sacrifice will not be forgotten? Matthew 10:39-42.

NOTE: 'The poor man's gift, the fruit of self-denial, comes up before God as fragrant incense. And every act of self-sacrifice strengthens the spirit of beneficence in the giver's heart, allying him more closely to the One who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. The act of the widow who cast two mites, all that she had, into the treasury, is placed on record for the encouragement of those who, struggling with poverty, still desire by their gifts to aid the cause of God. Christ called the attention of the disciples to this woman, who had given "all her living." Mark 12:44. He esteemed her gift of more value than the large offerings of those whose alms did not call for self-denial. From their abundance they had given a small portion. To make her offering, the widow had deprived herself of even the necessities of life, trusting God to supply her needs for the morrow. Of her the Saviour declared, "Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury." Verse 43. Thus He taught that the value of the gift is estimated not by the amount, but by the proportion that is given and the motive that actuates the giver.' *Acts of the Apostles, pages 341-342.*

Lesson 3: July 11-17 **'Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.' John 9:4.

STUDY HELP: *Steps to Christ, pages 77-83.*

LESSON SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 9:16-22.

LESSON AIM: To study the church's need of a love for souls.

Introduction

'The true missionary spirit has deserted the churches that make so exalted a profession; their hearts are no longer aglow with love for souls, and a desire to lead them into the fold of Christ. We want earnest workers. Are there none to respond to the cry that goes up from every quarter, "Come over and help us"?' *Testimonies, volume 4, page 156.*

'Why stand ye here all the day idle?'

1. What story did Jesus tell to illustrate the need for workers in His vineyard? Matthew 20:1-7.

NOTE: 'Hundreds, yea, thousands, who have heard the message of salvation are still idlers in the market place, when they might be engaged in some line of active service. To these Christ is saying, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" and He adds, "Go ye also into the vineyard." Matthew 20:6, 7. Why is it that many more do not respond to the call? Is it because they think themselves excused in that they do not stand in the pulpit? Let them understand that there is a large work to be done outside the pulpit by thousands of consecrated lay members. Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfilment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.' *Acts of the Apostles, pages 110-111.*

2. What should be the theme of every sermon? 1 Timothy 4:1-2. Compare Acts 8:35, Acts 2:38, Acts 3:19.

NOTE: 'There are souls in every congregation who are hesitating, almost persuaded to be wholly for God. The decision is being made for time and for eternity; but it is too often the case that the minister has not the spirit and power of the message of truth in his own heart, hence no direct appeals are made to those souls that are trembling in the balance. The result is that impressions are not deepened upon the hearts of the convicted ones; and they leave the meeting feeling less inclined to accept the service of Christ than when they came. They decide to wait for a more favourable opportunity; but it never comes. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear, and some will never again be so situated that they can have the chain of truth brought before them, and a practical application made of it to their hearts. That golden opportunity lost, is lost forever. Had Christ and His redeeming love been exalted in connection with the theory of truth, it might have balanced them on His side. With an unction of the Holy Spirit upon him, giving him a burden for souls, he will not dismiss a congregation without presenting before them Jesus Christ, the sinner's only refuge, making earnest appeals that will reach their hearts. He should feel that he may never meet these hearers again until the great day of God.' *Evangelism, pages 279-280.*

‘That I might by all means save some’

3. How did Paul express his determination to save souls for eternity? 1 Corinthians 9:19-22.

NOTE: ‘In a town in New England a well was being dug. When the work was nearly finished, while one man was still at the bottom, the earth caved in and buried him. Instantly the alarm was sent out, and mechanics, farmers, merchants, lawyers, hurried breathlessly to the rescue. Ropes, ladders, spades, and shovels were brought by eager, willing hands. “Save him, O save him!” was the cry. Men worked with desperate energy, till the sweat stood in beads upon their brows and their arms trembled with the exertion. At length a pipe was thrust down, through which they shouted to the man to answer if he were still alive. The response came, “Alive, but make haste. It is fearful in here.” With a shout of joy they renewed their efforts, and at last he was reached and saved, and the cheer that went up seemed to pierce the very heavens. “He is saved!” echoed through every street in the town. Was this too great zeal and interest, too great enthusiasm, to save one man? It surely was not; but what is the loss of temporal life in comparison with the loss of a soul? If the threatened loss of a life will arouse in human hearts a feeling so intense, should not the loss of a soul arouse even deeper solicitude in men who claim to realize the danger of those apart from Christ? Shall not the servants of God show as great zeal in labouring for the salvation of souls as was shown for the life of that one man buried in a well?’ *Gospel Workers*, pages 31-32.

4. How did Paul express the motivation that led him to preach the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 9:16.

NOTE: ‘It is the privilege of the watchmen on the walls of Zion to live so near to God, and to be susceptible to the impressions of His Spirit, that He can work through them to tell men and women of their peril and point them to the place of safety. Faithfully are they to warn them of the sure result of transgression, and faithfully are they to safeguard the interests of the church. At no time may they relax their vigilance. Theirs is a work requiring the exercise of every faculty of the being. In trumpet tones their voices are to be lifted, and never are they to sound one wavering, uncertain note. Not for wages are they to labour, but because they cannot do otherwise, because they realize that there is a woe upon them if they fail to preach the gospel. Chosen of God, sealed with the blood of consecration, they are to rescue men and women from impending destruction. *Acts of the Apostles*, page 361.

‘He that winneth souls is wise’

5. What are we told concerning those who win souls? Proverbs 11:30.

NOTE: ‘If you will go to work as Christ designs that His disciples shall, and win souls for Him, you will feel the need of a deeper experience and a greater knowledge in divine things, and will hunger and thirst after righteousness. You will plead with God, and your faith will be strengthened, and your soul will drink deeper draughts at the well of salvation. Encountering opposition and trials will drive you to the Bible and prayer. You will grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ, and will develop a rich experience. The spirit of unselfish labour for others gives depth, stability, and Christlike loveliness to the character, and brings peace and happiness to its possessor. The aspirations are elevated. There is no room for sloth or selfishness. Those who thus exercise the Christian graces will grow, and will become strong to work for God. They will have clear spiritual perceptions, a steady, growing faith, and an increased power in prayer. The Spirit of God, moving upon their spirit, calls forth the sacred harmonies of the soul, in answer to the divine touch. Those who thus devote themselves to unselfish effort for the good of others are most surely working out their own salvation. The only way to grow in grace is to engage, to the extent of our ability, in helping and blessing those who need the help we can give them.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 305.

6. What promise is made concerning those who turn sinners to righteousness? Daniel 12:3.

NOTE: “‘He that winneth souls is wise.’ [Proverbs 11:30.] “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.” [Daniel 12:3.] What is done through the co-operation of men with God is a work that shall never perish, but endure through the eternal ages. He that makes God his wisdom, that grows up into the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, will stand before kings, before the so-called great men of the world, and show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into His marvellous light. Science and literature cannot bring into the darkened mind of men the light which the glorious gospel of the Son of God can bring. The Son of God alone can do the great work of illuminating the soul. No wonder Paul exclaims, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” [Romans 1:16.] The gospel of Christ becomes personality in those who believe, and makes them living epistles, known and read of all men. In this way the leaven of godliness passes into the multitude. The heavenly intelligences are able to discern the true elements of greatness in character; for only goodness is esteemed as efficiency with God.’ *Christian Education*, page 97.

‘The labourers are few’

7. What sad cry did the Master make? Matthew 9:37.

NOTE: ‘Those who profess to believe the truth, but feel no burden for the souls of others, will be continually backsliding, and it will require time and strength on the part of the minister to keep them from making shipwreck of faith, when they should be labouring with all their might to present the way of life and salvation to their friends and neighbours. Hundreds of men and women who at the present time are professedly engaged in the work of God, are not doing one-tenth that they might do if they would only improve all the powers God has given them. Some are doing literally nothing for the truth, and by their example of

indifference are bringing others into the same position of uselessness, and thus are scattering from Christ. This latter class includes by far the greater number. They are thinking and planning only for themselves. Fathers and mothers with their little ones around them make their little circle their world. Every power of their being is centred on "me and mine," and they are becoming narrower and more circumscribed every year of their lives. They do not open their hearts to the grace and love of Christ, and liberalise their nature and ennoble their being by placing themselves in sympathy with their fellow-men.' *Review & Herald*, June 10, 1880.

8. What prayer does Christ ask us to pray? Matthew 9:38.

NOTE: 'In these first few disciples the foundation of the Christian church was being laid by individual effort. John first directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these finds a brother, and brings him to Christ. He then calls Philip to follow Him, and he went in search of Nathaniel. Here is an instructive lesson for all the followers of Christ. It teaches them the importance of personal effort, making direct appeals to relatives, friends, and acquaintances. There are those who profess to be acquainted with Christ for a life time who never make personal effort to induce one soul to come to the Saviour. They have left all the work with the minister. He may be well qualified for his work; but he cannot do the work which God has left upon the members of the church. Very many excuse themselves from being interested in the salvation of those who are out of Christ, and are content to selfishly enjoy the benefits of the grace of God themselves, while they make no direct effort to bring others to Christ. In the vineyard of the Lord there is a work for all to do, and unselfish, interested, faithful workers will share largely of His grace here, and of the reward He will bestow hereafter. Faith is called into exercise by good works, and courage and hope are in accordance with working faith. The reason many professed followers of Christ have not a bright and living experience, is because they do nothing to gain it. If they would engage in the work which God would have them do, their faith would increase, and they would advance in the divine life.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 2*, page 66.

'The night cometh'

9. How did Jesus express the urgency He felt concerning the work He had been entrusted by His Father? John 9:4. Compare John 4:34.

NOTE: 'The world's greatest need is consecrated effort for the conversion of souls. Thousands upon thousands are perishing without a knowledge of the truth. My soul is sometimes stirred to its very depths as I see the terrible picture. I would urge our people to seek to bring every thought into subjection to Christ, that all their powers may be employed in the work of saving souls. There should be no sleeping now. It is time for us to awake, and to watch for souls as they that must give account. Will our churches now arise, and awake to the situation? The representatives of Christ are to carry a burden for souls. Every nation and kindred and tongue and people is to hear the last message of mercy to the world.' *Reflecting Christ*, page 204.

10. What desperate cry will come from those who realise too late that the day of salvation is ended? Jeremiah 8:20.

NOTE: 'Oh, how many who have not sought their souls' salvation will soon make the bitter lamentation: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved"! We are living in the closing scenes of this earth's history. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The hours of probation are fast passing. We have no time, not a moment, to lose. Let us not be found sleeping on guard. Let no one say in his heart or by his works: "My Lord delayeth His coming." Let the message of Christ's soon return sound forth in earnest words of warning. Let us persuade men and women everywhere to repent and flee from the wrath to come. Let us arouse them to immediate preparation, for we little know what is before us. Let ministers and lay members go forth into the ripening fields to tell the unconcerned and indifferent to seek the Lord while He may be found. The workers will find their harvest wherever they proclaim the forgotten truths of the Bible. They will find those who will accept the truth and will devote their lives to winning souls to Christ.' *Counsels for the Church*, page 356.

'If thou warn the wicked'

11. What precious promise did Christ give to those willing to play their part in His work? Matthew 28:20, last part.

NOTE: 'There is a great work to be done in the earth, and the Lord Jesus has taken men into co-partnership with Himself, in order that heavenly agencies may co-operate with human agencies. Christ was in travail of soul for the redemption of the world, and those who are labourers together with God are representatives of Christ to our world and will have compassion for the lost and will travail in soul for the redemption of men. Unless the church awakes and attends to her post of duty, God will charge the loss of souls to her account.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 198.

12. What solemn warning does the Lord give to those who fail to give the message of warning? Ezekiel 3:18-19.

NOTE: 'John Welch, a minister of the gospel, felt so great a burden for souls that he often rose in the night to send up to God his supplication for their salvation. On one occasion his wife pleaded with him to regard his health, and not venture on such exposure. His answer was, "O woman, I have the souls of three thousand to answer for, and I know not how it is with them."' *Gospel Workers*, page 31.

Lesson 4: July 18-24

‘Take heed that no man deceive you’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.’ 1 Timothy 4:1.

STUDY HELP: *Testimonies, volume 5* pages 289-297.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12.

LESSON AIM: To study the dangers of deception and fanaticism and how to avoid them.

Introduction

‘Like the serpent gliding stealthily along, fanaticism has been stealing in to cause variance and strife, to take the attention of the people of God from elevating, eternal truth. I charge my brethren and sisters not to give heed to fables. Do not put into the minds of others the erroneous theories which should never be entertained. Teach what Christ taught. He said, “Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:29). His lessons contain just what is needed in these last days. There is no need to bring in a mass of rubbish which in the end will be consumed. Let us not give to the world the impression that we are a body of fanatics.’ *Manuscript Releases, volume 20*, page 339.

‘By good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts’

1. What warnings did Christ give concerning deceptions in the last days? Matthew 24:4, 11, 24.

NOTE: ‘Those who are living amid the perils of the last days, days which are characterised by the masses turning from the truth of God to fables, will have close work to turn from the fables which are prepared for them on every hand, and have an appetite to feast upon unpopular truth. Those who turn from these fables to truth are despised, hated, and persecuted by those who are presenting fables to the people for their reception. Satan is at war with the remnant who are endeavouring to keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. Evil angels are commissioned to employ men as their agents upon the earth. These can the most successfully exert an influence to make Satan’s attacks effective against the remnant whom God calls “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” This, Satan is determined to hinder. He will employ everyone who will engage in his service to hinder the chosen people of God from showing forth the praises of Him who has called them from darkness into His marvellous light. To hide, to cover up this light, to cause people to distrust it, to disbelieve it, is the work of the great rebel and his host. While Jesus is purifying His people unto Himself, redeeming them from all iniquity, Satan will employ his forces to hinder the work and prevent the perfection of the saints. He does not exert his power upon those who are all covered up with deception and walled in by fables and error, and who make no effort to receive and obey the truth. He knows he is sure of them; but those who are seeking for truth, that they may obey it in the love of it, are the ones who excite his malice and stir his ire. He can never weaken them while they keep close to Jesus; therefore he is pleased when he can lead them in a course of disobedience.’ *Testimonies, volume 2*, page 105.

2. What counsel did Paul give concerning those who teach things which bring division among God’s people? Romans 16:17-18.

NOTE: ‘Satan is ever seeking to divide the faith and hearts of God’s people. He well knows that union is their strength, and division their weakness. It is important and essential that all of Christ’s followers understand Satan’s devices and with a united front meet his attacks and vanquish him. They need to make continual efforts to press together even if it be at some sacrifice to themselves.’ *Testimonies, volume 3*, page 434.

‘That spirit of antichrist’

3. What specific warning of deception did John give? 1 John 4:1-3.

NOTE: As a result of dialogue with Calvinists, some have taken the view that Christ did not come ‘in the flesh,’ that is with the heredity of His human ancestors, but claim that He was granted ‘the nature of Adam before the fall.’ Since He could not have inherited this nature from His human ancestors (Adam was not able to pass on such a nature), to make this claim is effectively to deny that Christ came ‘in the flesh,’ that is, as a genuine human being. Calvinists, of course, do not even accept that Christ came in the nature of Adam before the fall. Instead they teach that His divine nature took a sort of composite humanity, which was not the nature that Mary had, that His humanity was merely an outer covering over His perfect, unsinnable higher nature. Here is a typical Calvinist expression of this view: ‘He was the God-man. Adam was created a being subject to fall. Jesus Christ was the God-man, not subject to fall.’ Words of Donald Barnhouse, May 16, 1958.

‘The Son of God was assaulted at every step by the powers of darkness. After His baptism He was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness, and suffered temptation for forty days. Letters have been coming in to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations. If He did not have man’s nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man’s behalf. His temptation and victory tell us that humanity must copy the Pattern; man must become a partaker of the divine nature.’ *Selected Messages, book 1*, book 408.

4. What alternative attack on Christ is increasingly being made today? John 10:33.

NOTE: An increasing number, while prepared to accept the genuineness of Christ's humanity, are denying His deity. Some sects, like the Jehovah's Witnesses, make this a central teaching. It is not coincidental that all the Bible verses asserting Christ's deity are changed in one or other of the plethora of recent Bible versions. In studying this question, consider the following verses: Matthew 1:23, John 1:1-3, Philippians 2:5-6, John 8:58, John 20:28, Hebrews 1:8, 1 Timothy 3:16, etc. 'In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life.' *Desire of Ages*, page 530.

'Private interpretation'

5. What warning did Peter give concerning those who come up with individual interpretations of Bible prophecy? 2 Peter 1:20.

NOTE: '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." Men and women will arise professing to have some new light or some new revelation whose tendency is to unsettle faith in the old landmarks. Their doctrines will not bear the test of God's Word, yet souls will be deceived. False reports will be circulated, and some will be taken in this snare. We cannot be too watchful against every form of error, for Satan is constantly seeking to draw men from the truth. 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*, pages 91-92.

6. What did Paul warn about those who teach falsely? Acts 20:29-30.

NOTE: 'God has not passed His people by and chosen one solitary man here and another there as the only ones worthy to be entrusted with His truth. He does not give one man new light contrary to the established faith of the body. In every reform men have arisen making this claim. Let none be self-confident, as though God had given them special light above their brethren. One accepts some new and original idea which does not seem to conflict with the truth. He dwells upon it until it seems to him to be clothed with beauty and importance, for Satan has power to give this false appearance. At last it becomes the all-absorbing theme, the one great point around which everything centres, and the truth is uprooted from the heart. I warn you to beware of these side issues, whose tendency is to divert the mind from the truth. Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension.' *Last Day Events*, pages 90-91.

'Sheep's clothing'

7. Against what kind of deceiver did Jesus especially warn His people? Matthew 7:15-16.

NOTE: 'Teachers of falsehood will arise to draw you away from the narrow path and the strait gate. Beware of them; though concealed in sheep's clothing, inwardly they are ravening wolves. We are not bidden to prove them by their fair speeches and exalted professions. They are to be judged by the Word of God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 322.

'There are in our schools persons who are corrupt at heart, who yet have a pleasing address, and who are successful in fascinating a certain class of people, and before the unwary are aware of it, the influence of these persons has changed their sentiments, and fashioned them after the objectionable characters of these corrupt persons. But those who wear the garb of Christianity, and yet who are governed by the fashions and maxims of the world, are moral corrupters. They claim to be seeking heavenly treasures, but the atmosphere with which their souls are surrounded is one that is charged with a deadly spiritual miasma, and they should be shunned by those who would remain unspotted by the world.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 298.

'As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbath-keepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.' *Great Controversy*, page 608.

8. What kind of personality will never achieve anything in the kingdom of God? Genesis 49:4, first part.

NOTE: 'Many are changed by every current. They wait to hear what some one else thinks, and his opinion is accepted as altogether true. If they would lean wholly upon God, they would grow strong in His strength; but they do not say to the Lord, I cannot make any decision until I know Thy will. Their natural inclination is to allow another to be conscience for them; and they speak after he has spoken, saying what he says, and acting as he acts. When these persons are placed in circumstances where they must think and act for themselves, they dare not express any decided opinion. Yet often, like Aaron, they have much ability. God pity such weaklings. When men connected with the work of God allow themselves to be bought and sold, when they violate truth in order to gain the favour and approval of men, God records them as betrayers of sacred trust. Let every man stand in moral independence, resolved that his mind shall be moulded only by the Holy Spirit. God calls for minute-

men, who are not ready to echo the words of unconverted men. In an emergency such men are sure to lead into false paths. The Lord desires us to follow on step by step to know Him.' *Review & Herald*, May 9, 1899.

'Decently and in order'

9. What warning did Paul give concerning the influence of evil spirits among Christians in the last days? 1 Timothy 4:1.

NOTE: 'Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming. The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavour to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvellously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world.' *Great Controversy*, page 464.

10. What warning did Paul give about noisy and disorderly church services? 1 Corinthians 14:23.

NOTE: 'A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working. Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted. Let us give no place to strange exercisings, which really take the mind away from the deep movings of the Holy Spirit. God's work is ever characterised by calmness and dignity. Fanaticism, false excitement, false talking in tongues, and noisy exercises have been considered gifts which God has placed in the church. Some have been deceived here. The fruits of all this have not been good. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Fanaticism and noise have been considered special evidences of faith. Some are not satisfied with a meeting unless they have a powerful and happy time. They work for this and get up an excitement of feeling. But the influence of such meetings is not beneficial. When the happy flight of feeling is gone they sink lower than before the meeting because their happiness did not come from the right source.' *Last Day Events*, page 159.

'Except ye abide in Me'

11. What is our only safety from fanaticism and deception? John 15:4-6.

NOTE: 'Our only safety is to be shielded by the grace of God every moment, and not put out our own spiritual eyesight so that we will call evil, good, and good, evil. Without hesitation or argument we must close and guard the avenues of the soul against evil. Every Christian must stand on guard continually, watching every avenue of the soul where Satan might find access. He must pray for divine help and at the same time resolutely resist every inclination to sin. By courage, by faith, by persevering toil, he can conquer. But let him remember that to gain the victory Christ must abide in him and he in Christ.' *The Adventist Home*, page 403.

12. What precious promise may we depend on when faced with perplexities and confusing questions? Isaiah 30:21.

NOTE: 'Some who stand in the pulpit make the heavenly messengers in the audience ashamed of them. The precious gospel, which it has cost so much to bring to the world, is abused. There is common, cheap talk; grotesque attitudes and workings of the features. There is, with some, rapid talking, with others a thick, indistinct utterance. Every one who ministers before the people should feel it a solemn duty to take himself in hand. He should first give himself to the Lord in complete self-renunciation, determined that he will have none of self, but all of Jesus. The word is the preacher's light, and as the golden oil flows from the heavenly olive trees into the bowl, it makes the lamp of life flash with a clearness and power that all will discern. Those who have the privilege of sitting under such a ministry, if their hearts are susceptible to the Holy Spirit's influence, will feel an inner life. The fire of God's love will be kindled within them. The Bible, the word of God, is the bread of life. He who feeds the flock of God must himself first eat of the bread which came down from heaven. He will see the truth on every side. He will not venture to come before the people until he has first communed with God. Then he is led to work as Christ worked. He respects the varied minds that compose his audience. He has a word that touches the case of all, not worldly, confusing ideas. He has no right to introduce the worldly perplexities. The bread of life will satisfy every soul hunger.' *Special Testimonies, series A, No. 8*, page 26.

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

Lesson 5: July 25-31

‘Unto all patience and longsuffering’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.’ Hebrews 10:36.

STUDY HELP: *God’s Amazing Grace* page 248.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Psalm 37:1-11.

LESSON AIM: To study the importance of patience in the lives of God’s people.

Introduction

‘Those who are trying to purify their souls through obedience to the truth, yet who have had no opportunity of making special efforts and sacrifices for Christ and His cause, should find consolation in the thought that it is not necessarily the self-surrender of the martyr that is the most acceptable to God; it may not be the missionary whose life has been one of trial and endurance, that stands highest in heaven’s record; but that the Christian who is such in his private life, in his daily struggle with self, in the control of his passions, in cleanness of purpose, in purity of thought, in patience, meekness, and long-suffering under the test of provocation, in piety, in devotion, in holy faith and trust in God, in faithfulness in little things, representing in the home life the character of Jesus, — that such a one may be more precious in the sight of God than the man who goes as a missionary to heathen lands, or ascends the scaffold to die for his faith.’ *Gospel Workers, 1892 ed.*, page 217.

‘In your patience possess ye your souls’

1. What warning did Christ give concerning the trials that will come upon Christians, what promise did He make and what quality did He urge upon those who suffer such trials? Luke 21:16-19.

NOTE: ‘Those who profess the truth should hold the standard high, and induce others to come up to it. I saw that some would have to walk the straight path alone. Their companions and children will not walk the self-denying pathway with them. Patience and forbearance should ever characterise the lives of those lone pilgrims, following the example of their blessed Master. They will have many trials to endure, but they have a hope that makes the soul strong, that bears them up above the trials of earth, that elevates them above scorn, derision and reproach. Those who possess a hope like this should never indulge a harsh, unkind spirit. This will only injure their own souls, and drive their friends farther from the truth. Treat them tenderly. Give them no occasion to reproach the cause of Christ; but never yield the truth to please any one. Be decided, be fixed, be established, be not of a doubtful mind. But if your companions and children will not come, if you cannot win them to yield to the claims of truth, make their lives here as pleasant as possible; for all they will ever enjoy will be this poor world. But let not your duty to them interfere with your duty to God.’ *Spiritual Gifts, volume 2*, page 266.

2. What attitude did Paul recommend that we take towards our tribulations? Romans 5:3-4. Compare James 1:2-3.

NOTE: ‘The Word does not say, “Count it all joy when ye fall under temptations,” but “when ye fall into temptations.” It is not necessary, because you fall into temptations, that you should fall under them. But it is a comfort to know when you fall into temptation that you are sons and daughters of God, and that the trying of your faith worketh - ill will, murmuring, fretfulness? No, patience! And this is an evidence to us that we are sons and daughters of God, if the trying of our faith worketh patience. But Jesus will help us because we look to God for our support and strength in every emergency. We learn a lesson in these trials. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:1-5).’ *The Upward Look*, page 282.

‘Be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient’

3. What attitude should the true follower of Christ show towards others? 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

NOTE: ‘Jesus, who died for us, loves us with a love that is infinite; and we must love one another. We must put away all selfishness, and work together in love and unity. We have loved and petted ourselves, and excused ourselves in our waywardness; but we have been unmerciful toward our brethren, who are not as faulty as ourselves. The Lord loves us, and bears with us, even when we are ungrateful to Him, forgetful of His mercies, wickedly unbelieving; but consider, brethren, how relentless we are to one another, how pitiless; how we hurt and wound one another when we should love as Christ has loved us. Let us make a complete change. Let us cultivate the precious plant of love, and delight to help one another. We must be kind, forbearing, patient with one another’s errors; we must keep our sharp criticisms for ourselves, but hope all things, believe all things, of our brethren.’ *Review & Herald*, April 22, 1884.

4. In exhorting Christians to be in unity, to what divine characteristics does Paul especially draw our attention? Romans 15:5

NOTE: ‘Let your holy example lead the sympathies of your friends heavenward; “for he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let

every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen on Me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Jesus Christ: that ye may with one mind and with one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." *Review & Herald*, May 14, 1901.

'The patience of the saints'

5. What promise does Christ make to those who keep His word with patience? Revelation 3:10. Consider Romans 2:7.

NOTE: 'In the near future we shall understand something of what it is to be tested. There will be laws of the land that will interfere with our obedience to the laws of God, and then the test will come as to whose side we are on, on the side of God or the side of those who are against God. We want, every one of us, to be prepared for that which is coming upon our world. You cannot, any one of you, at once jump into the position to stand the test of God. It is by patient continuance in well-doing that you gain the element of character that will enable you to stand the test at last. It is by persevering integrity of soul day by day, and by calling upon God, that we get strength to stand the test.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 60.

6. What quality of character was singled out as marking God's remnant people? Revelation 14:12. Compare Revelation 13:10, last part.

NOTE: 'Every follower of Christ will find opportunity to show Christian kindness and love; and in so doing he will prove that he is a possessor of the religion of Jesus Christ. This religion teaches us to exercise patience and long-suffering when brought into places where we receive treatment that is harsh and unjust. "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that we should inherit a blessing" (1 Peter 3:9). When Christ was reviled, He reviled not again. His religion brings with it a meek and quiet spirit. There is constant need of patience, gentleness, self-denial, and self-sacrifice in the exercise of Bible religion. But if the word of God is made an abiding principle in our lives, everything with which we have to do, each word, each trivial act, will reveal that we are subject to Jesus Christ. If the word of God is received into the heart, it will empty the soul of self-sufficiency and self-dependence. Our lives will be a power for good, because the Holy Spirit will fill our minds with the things of God.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 248.

'The servant of the Lord must not strive'

7. When faced with opposition, how must the servant of Christ respond? 2 Timothy 2:24-25.

NOTE: 'When perplexities crowd upon you, and the people oppose the truth, you are not to say indifferently or impatiently, "Well, there is no use, I can do them no good." Come to them in the Spirit of Christ, "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;" for "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient." You are to come to the people in sympathy, and be clothed with humility as with a garment. The Lord has set His people to be a light to others, and the grace of God should be seen in all your conversation and conduct. The spirit of kindness must characterise your dealings with all men.' *Review & Herald*, April 26, 1892.

8. What did the Lord find to commend about the way the church in Ephesus responded to false teaching? Revelation 2:2-3.

NOTE: 'We shall have to meet crooked elements in the world and in the church. Men will come claiming to have great light; but those who have experience in the cause of God will see that what they present as light is great darkness. Men of this class will have to be treated according to the specifications of the word of God. Those who are in error may become excited in advocating their views, but those who are walking in the light can afford to be calm, gentle with the erring, "apt to teach," making manifest the fact that they have asked and received wisdom of God. They will have no occasion to move excitedly, but occasion to move wisely, patiently, "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.'" *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 164.

'Let patience have her perfect work'

9. What failure led to Moses being denied entry into the Promised Land? Numbers 20:7-12.

NOTE: 'Moses revealed great weakness before the people. He showed a marked lack of self-control, a spirit similar to that possessed by the murmurers. He should have been an example of forbearance and patience before that multitude, who were ready to excuse their failures, disaffections, and unreasonable murmurings, on account of this exhibition of wrong on his part.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 109.

10. What will be the outcome in the character of the person who practises patience? James 1:4.

NOTE: 'The temptations of Satan are manifold; but those to which our attention is called in the text are unbelief and impatience. "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." Impatience, then, is the result of a lack of faith. "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." If we do not maintain the grace of patience, we shall never reach a state of perfection. Some of us have a nervous temperament, and are naturally as quick as a flash to think and to act; but let no one think that he cannot learn to become patient. Patience is a plant that will make rapid

growth if carefully cultivated. By becoming thoroughly acquainted with ourselves, and then combining with the grace of God a firm determination on our part, we may be conquerors, and become perfect in all things, wanting in nothing. Patience pours the balm of peace and love into the experiences of the home life. Patience will seek for unity in the church, in the family, and in the community. This grace must be woven into our lives.' *Historical Sketches*, page 134.

'Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord'

11. As we await the coming of our Saviour, what are we told that we have need of? Hebrews 10:35-37. Compare 2 Thessalonians 3:5.

NOTE: 'It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centred. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Verses 35-37. Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed.' *Testimonies, volume 9*, page 287.

12. What comparison does James make in order to teach the importance of patience? James 5:7-8.

NOTE: 'Fellow pilgrim, we are still amid the shadows and turmoil of earthly activities; but soon our Saviour is to appear to bring deliverance and rest. Let us by faith behold the blessed hereafter as pictured by the hand of God. He who died for the sins of the world is opening wide the gates of Paradise to all who believe on Him. Soon the battle will have been fought, the victory won. Soon we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centred. And in His presence the trials and sufferings of this life will seem as nothingness. The former things "shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." "Israel shall be saved . . . with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." Isaiah 65:17; Hebrews 10:35-37; Isaiah 45:17. Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5:7, 8.' *Prophets & Kings*, pages 731-732.

Lesson 6: August 1-7

'The unity of the faith'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.' Philippians 2:2.

STUDY HELP: *Last Day Events*, pages 90-93.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 15:1-29.

LESSON AIM: To study how to preserve unity when facing new teachings.

Introduction

'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."' *Last Day Events*, page 91.

'Who hath bewitched you?'

1. How did Paul express his dismay at those who turn away from the truth? Galatians 3:1.

NOTE: 'Men and women will arise professing to have some new light or some new revelation whose tendency is to unsettle faith in the old landmarks. Their doctrines will not bear the test of God's Word, yet souls will be deceived. False reports will be circulated, and some will be taken in this snare. We cannot be too watchful against every form of error, for Satan is constantly seeking to draw men from the truth. 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*, pages 91-92.

2. How did Paul express his condemnation of those who preach an alternative gospel? Galatians 1:9.

NOTE: 'Those who engage in the work of God's cause today will meet just such trials as Paul endured in his work. By the same boastful and deceptive work Satan will seek to draw converts from the faith. Theories will be brought in that it will not be wise for us to handle. Satan is a cunning worker, and he will bring in subtle fallacies to darken and confuse the mind and root out the doctrines of salvation. Those who do not accept the Word of God just as it reads, will be snared in his trap. Today we need to speak the truth with holy boldness. The testimony borne to the early church by the Lord's messenger, His people are to hear in this time: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8).' *Selected Messages, book 2*, page 52.

'No small dissension'

3. What was the result of men proclaiming their own ideas in the church? Acts 15:1-2, first part.

NOTE: 'The times were full of peril for the church. Satanic delusions existed everywhere. By misrepresentation and falsehood the emissaries of Satan sought to arouse opposition against the doctrines of Christ, and in consequence dissensions and heresies were imperilling the church. Some who professed Christ claimed that His love released them from obedience to the law of God. On the other hand, many taught that it was necessary to observe the Jewish customs and ceremonies; that a mere observance of the law, without faith in the blood of Christ, was sufficient for salvation. Some held that Christ was a good man, but denied His divinity. Some who pretended to be true to the cause of God were deceivers, and in practice they denied Christ and His gospel. Living themselves in transgression, they were bringing heresies into the church. Thus many were being led into the mazes of scepticism and delusion.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 553.

4. What is the source of false teaching and what is the purpose in introducing false doctrine into the church? 1 Timothy 4:1.

NOTE: 'Let the truths that are the foundation of our faith be kept before the people. Some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. They talk science, and the enemy comes in and gives them an abundance of science; but it is not the science of salvation. It is not the science of humility, of consecration, or of the sanctification of the Spirit. We are now to understand what the pillars of our faith are, the truths that have made us as a people what we are, leading us on step by step.' *Review & Herald*, May 25, 1905.

'Every wind of doctrine'

5. How did the early church respond to the challenge of those bringing in new teachings? Acts 15:2, last part.

NOTE: 'We need to counsel together over difficult matters. It is right that brother should consult with brother. And it is our privilege after we have done this, to bow together in prayer and ask for divine wisdom and counsel. But for one human voice to be a controlling power is a sad mistake.' *Evangelism* page 97.

'You are not to be self-centred. Take heed how you hear, how you understand, and how you appropriate the Word of God. The Lord will bless you in drawing in even lines with your brethren. Those whom He has sent forth to proclaim the third angel's message have been working in unison with the heavenly intelligences. The Lord does not lay upon you a burden to proclaim a message that will bring discord into the ranks of believers. I repeat, He is not leading anyone by His Holy Spirit to frame a theory that will unsettle faith in the solemn messages He has given His people to bear to our world.' *Selected Messages, book 2*, page 115.

6. What warning are we given concerning false teachers in the church? Acts 20:30.

NOTE: 'One will arise and still another with new light which contradicts the light that God has given under the demonstration of His Holy Spirit. . . We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. They gather together a mass of Scripture, and pile it as proof around their asserted theories. This has been done over and over again during the past fifty years. And while the Scriptures are God's Word, and are to be respected, the application of them, if such application moves one pillar of the foundation that God has sustained these fifty years, is a great mistake. He who makes such an application knows not the wonderful demonstration of the Holy Spirit that gave power and force to the past messages that have come to the people of God.' *A Call to the Watchmen*, page 14.

'Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think'

7. What warning are we given to guard against undue reliance on our own opinions and judgement? Romans 12:3.

NOTE: 'Some have a natural independence which leads them to think more highly of their own judgment than of that of their brethren. In so doing they place themselves where they fail to obtain much knowledge that God would have them gain. The history of God's work in the past shows that some have an understanding of one thing, others of another. It is his plan that there should be a counselling together. In the multitude of counsellors there is safety. There should be harmony in sentiment and action among the workers. Doctrines and plans should be compared with the law and the testimony. We should never feel too independent to learn of one another. While it is not according to God's plan that one man's mind shall control all other minds, he is not pleased to have individuals strike out on a new track, and present new theories independent of the body.' *Historical Sketches*, page 125.

8. What was Christ's great desire for all those who follow Him? John 17:20-21, 23.

NOTE: ‘God designs that His people shall be a unit, that they shall see eye to eye and be of the same mind and of the same judgment. This cannot be accomplished without a clear, pointed, living testimony in the church. The prayer of Christ was that His disciples might be one as He was one with His Father. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.” *Testimonies, volume 3, page 361.*

‘Every wind of doctrine’

9. What is one important reason why spiritual gifts were placed in the church? Ephesians 4:14.

NOTE: ‘The voice of God is speaking to us through His Word, and there are many voices that we will hear; but Christ has said we should beware of them who will say, Here is Christ or there is Christ. Then how shall we know that they have not the truth, unless we bring everything to the Scriptures? Christ has warned us to beware of false prophets who will come to us in His name, saying that they are Christ. Now, if you should take the position that it is not important for you to understand the Scriptures for yourselves, you will be in danger of being led away with these doctrines. Christ has said that there will be a company who in the day of retributive judgment will say, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?” But Christ will say, “Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22, 23). The time is coming when Satan will work miracles right in your sight, claiming that he is Christ; and if your feet are not firmly established upon the truth of God, then you will be led away from your foundation. The only safety for you is to search for the truth as for hid treasures. Dig for the truth as you would for treasures in the earth, and present the Word of God, the Bible, before your heavenly Father, and say, Enlighten me; teach me what is truth. And when His Holy Spirit shall come into your hearts, to impress the truth into your souls, you will not let it go easily.’ *Ye Shall Receive Power, page 128.*

10. What promise did Christ make concerning the Holy Spirit? John 16:13.

NOTE: “‘Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper.” Isaiah 8:20. “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Two texts are here set before God's people: two conditions for success. The law spoken by Jehovah himself and the Spirit of prophecy are the two sources of wisdom to guide His people in every experience. Deuteronomy 4:6. “This is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, who shall say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” The law of God and the Spirit of prophecy go hand in hand to guide and counsel the church, and whenever the church has recognised this by obeying His law, the Spirit of prophecy has been sent to guide her in the way of truth.’ *Loma Linda Messages, page 33.*

‘That ye all speak the same thing’

11. What will ensure unity of doctrine in Christ's church? John 10:4-5.

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

12. What earnest desire did Paul have for a deeply divided church? 1 Corinthians 1:10.

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. The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God's people together in Christian love. It needs to see the Lord's people sitting together in heavenly places in Christ. Will you not give in your lives an evidence of what the truth of God can do for those who love and serve Him? God knows what you can be. He knows what divine grace can do for you if you will be partakers of the divine nature. “I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” 1 Corinthians 1:10.’ *Counsels for the Church, pages 290-291.*

Lesson 7: August 8-14

‘The multitude of counsellors’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.’ Proverbs 11:14.

STUDY HELP: *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, pages 43-51.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Colossians 2:1-8.

LESSON AIM: To study how, by counselling together, God’s people may be preserved from false teachings.

Introduction

‘The evils of self-esteem and an unsanctified independence, which most impair our usefulness, and which will prove our ruin if not overcome, spring from selfishness. “Counsel together” is the message which has been again and again repeated to me by the angel of God. By influencing one man’s judgment, Satan may endeavour to control matters to suit himself. He may succeed in misleading the minds of two persons; but when several consult together, there is more safety.’ *Counsels to Parents, Teachers & Students*, page 92.

‘Where two or three are gathered’

1. Upon what promise of Christ may God’s people rely? Matthew 18:20.

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. All should have something to say for the Lord, for by so doing they will be blest. A book of remembrance is written of those who do not forsake the assembling of themselves together, but speak often one to another. The remnant are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. We should not come together to remain silent; those only are remembered of the Lord who assemble to speak of His honour and glory and tell of His power; upon such the blessing of God will rest, and they will be refreshed.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 246.

2. What principle should God’s people follow in evaluating new ideas presented to them? Isaiah 8:20.

NOTE: ‘Our brethren should be willing to investigate in a candid way every point of controversy. If a brother is teaching error, those who are in responsible positions ought to know it; and if he is teaching truth, they ought to take their stand at his side. We should all know what is being taught among us; for if it is truth, we need it. We are all under obligation to God to know what He sends us. He has given directions by which we may test every doctrine, “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.] If the light presented meets this test, we are not to refuse to accept it because it does not agree with our ideas. No one has said that we shall find perfection in any man’s investigations; but this I do know, that our churches are dying for the want of teaching on the subject of righteousness by faith in Christ, and on kindred truths. No matter by whom light is sent, we should open our hearts to receive it with the meekness of Christ. But many do not do this. When a controverted point is presented, they pour in question after question, without admitting a point when it is well sustained. O, may we act as men who want light! May God give us His Holy Spirit day by day, and let the light of His countenance shine upon us, that we may be learners in the school of Christ.’ *Gospel Workers*, pages 300-301.

‘How good and how pleasant it is!’

3. What spirit is desirable among those who profess to be God’s people? Psalm 133:1-3.

NOTE: ‘Those who belong to Christ’s army must work with concerted action. They cannot be faithful soldiers unless they obey orders. United action is essential. An army in which every part acts without reference to the other parts, has no real strength. In order to add new territory to Christ’s kingdom, His soldiers must act in concert. He calls for a united army, which moves steadily forward, not for a company composed of independent atoms. The strength of His army is to be used for one great purpose. Its efforts are to be concentrated upon one great point, the magnifying of the laws of His kingdom before the world, before angels, and before men.’ *SDA Bible Commentary, volume 4*, page 1146.

4. What then should be the aim of every Christian? Ephesians 4:3.

NOTE: ‘Let none be self confident, as though God had given them special light above their brethren. Christ is represented as dwelling in His people; and believers, as “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.” “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord,” says Paul, “beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”’ *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 45.

‘Let us reason together’

5. When controversy arose in the early church, with what spirit was the matter resolved? Acts 11:18. Read verses 1-18

NOTE: 'When a doctrine is presented that does not meet our minds, we should go to the word of God, seek the Lord in prayer, and give no place for the enemy to come in with suspicion and prejudice. We should never permit the spirit to be manifested that arraigned the priests and rulers against the Redeemer of the world. They complained that He disturbed the people, and they wished He would let them alone; for He caused perplexity and dissension. The Lord sends light to us to prove what manner of spirit we are of. We are not to deceive ourselves. In 1844, when anything came to our attention that we did not understand, we kneeled down and asked God to help us take the right position; and then we were able to come to a right understanding and see eye to eye. There was no dissension, no enmity, no evil-surmising, no misjudging of our brethren. If we but knew the evil of the spirit of intolerance, how carefully would we shun it!' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 43.

6. In what spirit does God approach His people? Isaiah 1:18, first part.

NOTE: 'The infinite God, whose throne is in the heavens, condescends to address His people, "Come now, and let us reason together;" [Isaiah 1:18.] but frail, erring men proudly refuse to reason with their brethren. They stand ready to censure one who accepts any light which they have not received, as though God had pledged Himself to give no more light to any one than He had given to them. This is the course pursued by opposers of the truth in every age. They forget the declaration of the Scriptures, "Light is sown for the righteous." [Psalm 97:11.] "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." [Proverbs 4:18.] It is a sad thing when a people claiming to be reformers cease to reform. If professed Christians would but carefully and prayerfully compare their views with the Scriptures, laying aside all pride of opinion and desire for the supremacy, a flood of light would be shed upon the churches now wandering in the darkness of error. As fast as His people can bear it, the Lord reveals to them their errors in doctrine and their defects of character.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4*, page 186.

'Fully persuaded in his own mind'

7. What principle should we apply when differing conclusions are reached among us? Romans 14:5.

NOTE: 'In matters of conscience the soul must be left untrammelled. No one is to control another's mind, to judge for another, or to prescribe his duty. God gives to every soul freedom to think, and to follow his own convictions. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." No one has a right to merge his own individuality in that of another. In all matters where principle is involved, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Romans 14:12, 5. In Christ's kingdom there is no lordly oppression, no compulsion of manner.' *Desire of Ages*, page 550.

8. Who especially should we bear in mind when disputed matters arise? Romans 15:1. Consider Romans 14:21, 19.

NOTE: 'Paul urged his brethren to ask themselves what influence their words and deeds would have upon others and to do nothing, however innocent in itself, that would seem to sanction idolatry or offend the scruples of those who might be weak in the faith. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." The apostle's words of warning to the Corinthian church are applicable to all time and are especially adapted to our day.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 317.

'Choice flowers reveal the advantages of culture. They teach us that it is our privilege to improve. God desires us to bring fragrance into our lifework. We are to be the plants of the Lord, serving Him in whatever way He wills. Let us do all in our power to beautify our characters. Tender care must be given to the delicate plants. The useless offshoots must be taken away. The bruised parts must be carefully bound up. So those who are weak in the faith must have fostering care. We are to bind to our stronger purposes the weaklings in the Lord's garden, giving them support. From the endless variety of plants and flowers, we may learn an important lesson. All blossoms are not the same in form or colour. Some possess healing virtues. Some are always fragrant. There are professing Christians who think it their duty to make every other Christian like themselves. This is man's plan, not the plan of God. In the church of God there is room for characters as varied as are the flowers in a garden. In His spiritual garden there are many varieties of flowers.' *Our High Calling*, page 254

'They . . . spake often one to another'

9. What group were especially commended by God? Malachi 3:16.

NOTE: 'From time to time we need unitedly to examine the reasons of our faith. It is essential that we study carefully the truths of God's Word; for we read that "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." We are in grave danger when we lightly regard any truth; for then the mind is opened to error. We must take heed how and what we hear. We need not seek to understand the arguments that men offer in support of their theories, when it may be readily discerned that these theories are not in harmony with the Scriptures. Some who think that they have scientific knowledge are by their interpretations giving wrong ideas both of science and of the Bible. Let the Bible decide every question that is essential to man's salvation.' *Daughters of God*, page 78.

10. What should be our motive as we discuss together? Colossians 2:2-3.

NOTE: 'As the church of Christ, labour to be in harmony among yourselves, to be one in heart, one in sympathy. If you cannot all see alike on every subject, do not allow hard feelings to arise. When the cause was young, if there was one who did not view some point of truth as the body viewed it, a day of fasting and prayer was observed. We did not then try to see how far apart we could get; but we prayed, and searched the Scriptures until the light of truth illuminated the darkened mind, and all

could see eye to eye. The truth is a unit, so powerful that our enemies cannot controvert it. Therefore they try to excite jealousies, to create variance, among brethren, that they may be led to separate their affections from God and from one another. In unity there is strength.' *Historical Sketches*, page 125.

'We must blend together in the bonds of Christlike unity; then our labours will not be in vain. Draw in even cords, and let no contentions be brought in. Reveal the unifying power of truth, and this will make a powerful impression on human minds. In unity there is strength. This is not a time to make prominent unimportant points of difference. If some who have not had a strong living connection with the Master reveal to the world their weakness of Christian experience, the enemies of the truth, who are watching us closely, will make the most of it, and our work will be hindered. Let all cultivate meekness, and learn lessons from Him who is meek and lowly in heart.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 168.

'There is safety'

11. What is likely to ensure safe decisions among God's people? Proverbs 11:14.

NOTE: 'God's people should be subject one to another. They should counsel with each other, that the lack of one be supplied by the sufficiency of the other.' *Review and Herald*, April 18, 1871.

12. What will ensure that God's people go forward in safety? Proverbs 15:22.

NOTE: 'God has not passed His people by and chosen one solitary man here and another there as the only ones worthy to be entrusted with His truth. He does not give one man new light contrary to the established faith of the body. In every reform men have arisen making this claim. Paul warned the church in his day: "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The greatest harm to God's people comes through those who go out from among them speaking perverse things. Through them the way of truth is evil spoken of. Let none be self-confident, as though God had given them special light above their brethren. Christ is represented as dwelling in His people. Believers are represented as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord," says Paul, "beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." *Testimonies, volume 5*, page 291.

Lesson 8: August 15-21 **'He will guide you into all truth'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come.' John 16:13.

STUDY HELP: *Early Writings*, pages 258-261.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: John 17:17-22.

LESSON AIM: To study how truth is a system where every piece interacts with other aspects of truth, and the dangers of changing even one aspect of truth.

Introduction

'The divine Sower scattered grains of precious seed, which we cannot see until a skilful labourer, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, gathers them together and presents them to us as a complete system of truth, unfolding the depths of divine love. For all ages Jesus, the author of truth, through prophets and people, had presented truth upon truth to the Jews, from the pillar of cloud and fire. But the truth He had given had become mingled with error, and it was necessary to separate from the companionship of heresy and evil. It was necessary to readjust it in the framework of the gospel, in order that it might shine forth in its original lustre and illuminate the moral darkness of the world. Wherever He found a gem of truth that had been lost from its setting, or had been marred with error, He reset it, and stamped upon it the signature of Jehovah. He proved Himself to be the word and the wisdom of God.' *Lift Him Up*, page 259.

'Christ, His character and work, is the centre and circumference of all truth. He is the chain upon which the jewels of doctrine are linked. In Him is found the complete system of truth.' *Our High Calling*, page 16.

Compiler's note: You will find that this lesson is constructed rather differently from the others in this series. In order to understand the interconnectedness of the various aspects of truth, you will be asked to consider how changing one aspect of truth affects one's understanding of other aspects of truth. Each section is only an introduction; you will probably see other effects from changing one aspect of Bible truth. This lesson is to encourage you to delve into the 'complete system of truth, connected and harmonious.'

Links between death, judgement and the Second Coming

1. What does the Bible teach about the state of man in death? Ecclesiastes 9:5-6. Compare Psalm 146:4.

NOTE: 'In the very day when the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken (Ecclesiastes 12:6), man's thoughts perish. They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun. Job 14:21. Blessed rest for the weary righteous! Time, be it long or short, is but a moment to them. They sleep; they are awakened by the trump of God to a glorious immortality. "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. . . . So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:52-54. As they are called forth from their deep slumber they begin to think just where they ceased. The last sensation was the pang of death; the last thought, that they were falling beneath the power of the grave. When they arise from the tomb, their first glad thought will be echoed in the triumphal shout: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Verse 55.' *Darkness before Dawn*, page 17.

2. If you accept the teaching that man's soul is immortal and that the soul goes to heaven, hell or purgatory at the time of death, what other aspects of truth are affected?

- The judgement. Consider Acts 17:31, Revelation 14:6-7, Daniel 7:9-12. Do these verses teach that each man is judged at the time of his death or at some future time?
- The Second Coming of Christ. Consider 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. Do these verses teach that immortality is already ours? Do these verses teach that the dead in Christ already have immortality? Or do they teach that all the righteous, living and resurrected, receive immortality together?

NOTE: 'Nowhere in the Sacred Scriptures is found the statement that the righteous go to their reward or the wicked to their punishment at death. The patriarchs and prophets have left no such assurance. Christ and His apostles have given no hint of it. The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Job 14:10-12.' *Darkness before Dawn*, page 17.

Links between creation, the relationship of man to God and the Sabbath

3. What does the Bible teach about the origin of the earth and mankind in particular? Genesis 1:1, 26, John 1:3, Acts 4:24, Revelation 14:7.

NOTE: 'After the earth with its teeming animal and vegetable life had been called into existence, man, the crowning work of the Creator, and the one for whom the beautiful earth had been fitted up, was brought upon the stage of action. To him was given dominion over all that his eye could behold. God created man in His own image. Here is no mystery. There is no ground for the supposition that man was evolved by slow degrees of development from the lower forms of animal or vegetable life. Such teaching lowers the great work of the Creator to the level of man's narrow, earthly conceptions. Men are so intent upon excluding God from the sovereignty of the universe that they degrade man and defraud him of the dignity of his origin. He who set the starry worlds on high and tinted with delicate skill the flowers of the field, who filled the earth and the heavens with the wonders of His power, when He came to crown His glorious work, to place one in the midst to stand as ruler of the fair earth, did not fail to create a being worthy of the hand that gave him life. The genealogy of our race, as given by inspiration, traces back its origin, not to a line of developing germs, molluscs, and quadrupeds, but to the great Creator. Though formed from the dust, Adam was "the son of God.'" *Conflict & Courage*, page 11.

4. If you accept that man evolved over millions of years, what other aspects of truth are affected?

- The nature of man's relationship to God. Consider Psalm 100. Would it affect our relationship to God if we were simply 'naked apes,' as one evolutionist has expressed it?
- The Sabbath. Consider Exodus 20:11. (Notice from verse 1 who spoke these words.) Does the belief that the earth evolved over billions of years make these words of God into a lie?

NOTE: 'The assumption that the events of the first week required thousands upon thousands of years strikes directly at the foundation of the Fourth Commandment. It represents the Creator as commanding men to observe the week of literal days in commemoration of vast, indefinite periods. This is unlike His method of dealing with His creatures. It makes indefinite and obscure that which He has made very plain. It is infidelity in its most insidious and hence most dangerous form; its real character is so disguised that it is held and taught by many who profess to believe the Bible. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." "For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." [Psalm 33:6, 9.] The Bible recognises no long ages in which the earth was evolved from chaos. Of each successive day of creation, the sacred record declares that it consisted of the evening and the morning, like all other days that have followed.' *Christian Education*, pages 190-191.

Links between sin, God's law and salvation

5. What did Jesus come to save His people from? Matthew 1:21

NOTE: 'Jesus died to save His people from their sins, and redemption in Christ means to cease the transgression of the law of God and to be free from every sin; no heart that is stirred with enmity against the law of God is in harmony with Christ, who suffered on Calvary to vindicate and exalt the law before the universe. Those who make bold assumptions of holiness give proof in this that they do not see themselves in the light of the law; they are not spiritually enlightened, and they do not loathe

every species of selfishness and pride. From their sin-stained lips fall the contradictory utterances: "I am holy, I am sinless. Jesus teaches me that if I keep the law I am fallen from grace. The law is a yoke of bondage." The Lord says, "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." We should study the Word of God carefully that we may come to right decisions, and act accordingly; for then we shall obey the Word and be in harmony with God's holy law.' *Faith & Works*, page 95.

6. If you accept the teaching that Christ's death abolished God's law, and therefore people are under no obligation to obey the Ten Commandments, what other aspects of truth are affected?

- Are we then no longer sinners, since the Bible teaches that sin is the transgression of God's law? See 1 John 3:4.
- If we are no longer obliged to keep God's law, what is it that Christ now saves us from? Consider 1 Timothy 1:15.

NOTE: 'Sin is the transgression of the law, and no man can be saved in sin. The sinner must repent toward God, and become obedient to God's law through faith in Christ. Faith is the hand that lays hold on Omnipotence. When we do those things that are lawful and right, through the grace of Christ, we are keeping God's commandments; and to such God has pledged His word that He will do great things. Like Daniel, you may make confession of your sin, and present daily supplication unto God; but however poor and unworthy and erring you may feel yourselves to be, it is your privilege to appropriate the promises of God. You may obtain the grace and help which Christ alone is able to give you. God can no more forget one of His children who is seeking to be obedient to His holy requirements than He can forget Himself. The Scriptures declare that Christ has graven us on the palms of His hands, that He holds us in everlasting remembrance.' *Signs of the Times*, March 24, 1890

Links between the Second Coming, the Gospel Commission and salvation

7. How does the Bible describe Christ's Second Coming? 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Matthew 24:27, Revelation 1:7, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8.

NOTE: 'The Saviour has warned His people against deception upon this point, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming. "There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. . . . Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth; behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:24-27. See also verse 31; 25:31; Revelation 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This coming there is no possibility of counterfeiting. It will be universally known, witnessed by the whole world.' *Darkness before Dawn*, page 42.

8. If you accept the teaching that Christ's Second Coming will be to snatch away His Church secretly, while the rest of the world continues for a further seven years (the so-called Secret Rapture), what other aspects of truth are affected?

- Does not this teaching offer mankind a second chance of salvation after the Second Coming? Does this invalidate verses like 2 Corinthians 6:2, Revelation 22:12?
- How does this teaching affect Christ's commission to His Church to preach the Gospel in the whole world? Matthew 24:14, Mark 16:15.

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 characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honour, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.' *Maranatha*, page 221.

Links between Christ's humanity and salvation

9. What does Scripture tell us about the nature Christ assumed when He became man? Hebrews 2:17.

NOTE: 'Satan represents God's law of love as a law of selfishness. He declares that it is impossible for us to obey its precepts. The fall of our first parents, with all the woe that has resulted, he charges upon the Creator, leading men to look upon God as the author of sin, and suffering, and death. Jesus was to unveil this deception. As one of us He was to give an example of obedience. For this He took upon Himself our nature, and passed through our experiences. "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren." Hebrews 2:17. If we had to bear anything which Jesus did not endure, then upon this point Satan would represent the power of God as insufficient for us. Therefore Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are." Hebrews 4:15. He endured every trial to which we are subject. And He exercised on His own behalf no power that is not freely offered to us. As man, He met temptation, and overcame in the strength given Him from God. He says, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. As He went about doing good, and healing all who were afflicted by Satan, He made plain to men the character of God's law and the nature of His service. His life testifies that it is possible for us

also to obey the law of God. By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 24.

10. If you believe that Christ was given a nature unlike those He came to save, e.g. ‘the nature of Adam before the fall,’ or through the ‘Immaculate Conception of Mary’, how does this affect man’s salvation?

- Does not this teaching mean that Christ was made unlike those He came to save? Hebrews 2:17.
- Does this suggest that His life cannot be an example to us? See 1 Peter 2:21.
- Does this not suggest that Christ cannot be the descendant of Adam (See Luke 2:23-38), since all Adam’s descendants inherited his nature after his fall?

NOTE: ‘In our humanity, Christ was to redeem Adam’s failure. But when Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigour of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation. Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam’s position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succour us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured.’ *Desire of Ages*, page 117.

Links between sin and salvation

11. What are we told is the 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.

12. If you believe in the teaching that we are born sinners, long before we are capable of transgressing God’s law (‘original sin’), how does this affect the nature of salvation?

- Does this teaching mean that, because of original sin, we are incapable of obedience? Consider Deuteronomy 11:26-28, Matthew 5:19, 1 John 2:3-4, 1 John 5:2-3.
- Does this teaching mean that we can blame our ancestors, all the way back to Adam, for our sins? Consider Ezekiel 18:20.
- Does this teaching mean that, so long as we are in this mortal flesh, we can never be saved from our sins (‘sinning till Jesus comes’)? Consider Matthew 1:21, Romans 6:12-16.

NOTE: ‘We hear many excuses: I cannot live up to this or that. What do you mean by this or that? Do you mean that it was an imperfect sacrifice that was made for the fallen race upon Calvary, that there is not sufficient grace and power granted us that we may work away from our own natural defects and tendencies, that it was not a whole Saviour that was given us? Or do you mean to cast reproach upon God? Well, you say, It was Adam’s sin. You say, I am not guilty of that, and I am not responsible for his guilt and fall. Here all these natural tendencies are in me, and I am not to blame if I act out these natural tendencies. Who is to blame? Is God? Why did God let Satan have this power over human nature? These are accusations against the God of heaven, and He will give you an opportunity, if you want it, of finally bringing your accusations against Him. Then He will bring His accusations against you when you are brought into His court of judgment. If God could have changed His law to meet man in his fallen condition, Christ need not have come to this world. Because the law was immutable, unchangeable, God sent His only begotten Son to die for the fallen race. But did the Saviour take upon Himself the guilt of human beings and impute to them His righteousness in order that they might continue to violate the precepts of Jehovah? No, no! Christ came because there was no possibility of man’s keeping the law in his own strength. He came to bring him strength to obey the precepts of the law. And the sinner, repenting of his transgression, may come to God and say, “O Father, I plead for forgiveness through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour.” God will accept all who come to Him in the name of Jesus.’ *Selected Messages, book 3*, page 179.

Lesson 9: August 22-28 ‘The seal of the living God’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.’ Revelation 14:5.

STUDY HELP: *Christ Triumphant*, page 102.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

LESSON AIM: To study how God will separate His people from the world with His seal.

Introduction

‘The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character. Those who receive the seal of the living God and are protected in the time of trouble must reflect the image of Jesus fully. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God, candidates for heaven. Love is expressed in obedience, and perfect love casteth out all fear. Those who love God, have the seal of God in their foreheads, and work the works of God.’ *Last Day Events*, page 221.

‘Before Him shall be gathered all nations’

1. How did Jesus teach that God will divide mankind into two distinct groups? Matthew 25:31-32.

NOTE: ‘The remnant people of God, who keep His commandments, will understand the word spoken by Daniel, “Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand” (Daniel 12:10). Satan has called this world his territory. Here his seat is, and he holds in allegiance to himself all who refuse to keep God’s commandments, who reject a plain, “thus saith the Lord.” They stand under the enemy’s banner; for there are but two parties in the world. All rank either under the banner of the obedient or under the banner of the disobedient.’ *Our Father Cares*, page 230.

‘Divisions will come in the church. Two parties will be developed. The wheat and tares grow up together for the harvest. There will be a shaking of the sieve. The chaff must in time be separated from the wheat. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. It is the very time when the genuine will be the strongest. The history of the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram is being repeated, and will be repeated till the close of time. Who will be on the Lord’s side? Who will be deceived, and in their turn become deceivers? The Lord is soon to come. There must be a refining, winnowing process in every church, for there are among us wicked men who do not love the truth or honour God. We are in the shaking time, the time when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The Lord will not excuse those who know the truth if they do not in word and deed obey His commands.’ *Last Day Events*, page 173.

2. What symbols did Jesus use to illustrate this separation? Matthew 25:32, Matthew 13:30, Matthew 13:47-48.

NOTE: ‘The judgment will be conducted in accordance with the rules God has laid down. By the law which men are now called upon to obey, but which many refuse to accept, all will be judged. As by it character is tested, every man will find his proper place in one of two classes. He will either be holy to the Lord through obedience to His law, or be stained with sin through transgression. . . . He will place the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left. Then men and women will see that their course of action has decided their destiny.’ *Lift Him Up*, page 348.

‘He shall separate them one from another’

3. On what basis will Christ make this division? Matthew 25:40, 45. Compare John 5:28-29, Mark 16:16, Matthew 7:21.

NOTE: ‘The first class had Christ interwoven into their character, and they were not conscious of anything they had done. “Come, ye blessed of My Father,” is the benediction, “inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” So we see Christ identifies His interests with fallen man. He turns to those on the left hand and says, “I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not.” And then they ask Him, “When saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?” And the answer comes, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.” Not the greatest but the least. Well, now we want to bring Christ into our everyday life. Those who had not fed the hungry, or clothed the naked, or visited the sick, were not conscious of it, and why? Because they had educated and trained themselves in the school of self-indulgence, and the result was they lost heaven and the eternity of bliss which they might have had had they devoted their powers to God.’ *Medical Ministry*, page 134.

‘The only question asked in the judgment will be, “Have they been obedient to My commandments?”’ *Gospel Workers*, page 315.

‘Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have lived in error, but from the fact that we have neglected Heaven-sent opportunities for discovering truth. The means of becoming conversant with the truth are within the reach of all; but, like the indulgent, selfish king, we give more attention to the things that charm the ear, and please the eye, and gratify the palate, than to the things that enrich the mind, the divine treasures of truth. It is through the truth that we may answer the great question, “What must I do to be saved?”’ *Bible Echo*, September 17, 1894.

‘In the Judgment the question will not be, “What profession did you make?” but, “What have you done for Me? What fruit have you borne to My glory?”’ *Signs of the Times*, April 17, 1901.

4. What awaits those in each group? Matthew 25:46. Compare Malachi 4:1.

NOTE: Notice that Jesus spoke of everlasting punishment, not everlasting punishing. The punishment of the ‘goats’ will not be reversed after a time but will be eternal in its effect. It will be a death from which there will never be a resurrection.

‘God sets before man life and death. He can have his choice. Many desire life, but still continue to walk in the broad road. They choose to rebel against God’s government, notwithstanding His great mercy and compassion in giving His Son to die for them. Those who do not choose to accept of the salvation so dearly purchased, must be punished. But I saw that God would not shut them up in hell to endure endless misery, neither will He take them to heaven; for to bring them into the company of the pure and holy would make them exceedingly miserable. But He will destroy them utterly and cause them to be as if they had not been; then His justice will be satisfied. He formed man out of the dust of the earth, and the disobedient and unholy will be consumed by fire and return to dust again. I saw that the benevolence and compassion of God in this matter should lead all to admire His character and to adore His holy name. After the wicked are destroyed from off the earth, all the heavenly host will say, “Amen!”’ *Early Writings*, page 221.

‘Come out from among them’

5. In what way are God’s people to make this separation themselves? 2 Corinthians 6:14-17.

NOTE: ‘We are not to associate with the ungodly and partake of their spirit, for they will lead the heart away from God to the worship of false gods. The steadfast soul, firm in the faith, can do much good; he can impart blessings of the highest order to those with whom he associates, for the law of the Lord is in his heart. But we cannot willingly associate with those who are trampling upon the law of God, and preserve our faith pure and untarnished. We shall catch the spirit, and unless we separate from them, we shall be bound up with them at last, to share their doom. It was by associating with idolaters and joining in their festivities that the Hebrews were led to transgress God’s law and bring His judgments upon the nation. So now it is by leading the followers of Christ to associate with the ungodly and unite in their amusements that Satan is most successful in alluring them into sin. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean.” God requires of His people now as great a distinction from the world, in customs, habits, and principles, as He required of Israel anciently.’ *The Adventist Home*, page 460.

6. In what way are God’s people not to make this separation themselves? Matthew 13:28-30.

NOTE: ‘Christ has plainly taught that those who persist in open sin must be separated from the church, but He has not committed to us the work of judging character and motive. He knows our nature too well to entrust this work to us. Should we try to uproot from the church those whom we suppose to be spurious Christians, we should be sure to make mistakes. Often we regard as hopeless subjects the very ones whom Christ is drawing to Himself. Were we to deal with these souls according to our imperfect judgment, it would perhaps extinguish their last hope. Many who think themselves Christians will at last be found wanting. Many will be in heaven who their neighbours supposed would never enter there. Man judges from appearance, but God judges the heart. The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; and the harvest is the end of probationary time. There is in the Saviour’s words another lesson, a lesson of wonderful forbearance and tender love. As the tares have their roots closely intertwined with those of the good grain, so false brethren in the church may be closely linked with true disciples. The real character of these pretended believers is not fully manifested. Were they to be separated from the church, others might be caused to stumble, who but for this would have remained steadfast.’ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pages 71-72.

‘The Lord knoweth them that are His’

7. With what symbol are we shown the separating work of Christ? Revelation 7:2-3.

NOTE: ‘It is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 287.

‘The seal of the living God will be placed upon those only who bear a likeness to Christ in character. As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ. It is obedience to the principles of the commandments of God, that moulds the character after the divine similitude. The seal of God’s law is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 287.

8. How are we shown the significance of this seal? 2 Timothy 2:19, first part.

NOTE: ‘The Lord will have a people as true as steel, and with faith as firm as the granite rock. They are to be His witnesses in the world, His instrumentalities to do a special, a glorious work in the day of His preparation. Ministers who have preached the truth with all zeal and earnestness may apostatise and join the ranks of our enemies, but does this turn the truth of God into a lie? “Nevertheless,” says the apostle, “the foundation of God standeth sure.” The faith and feelings of men may change; but the truth of God, never. It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives; and Satan, with all his arts and hellish power, cannot change the truth of God into a lie. While the great adversary will try his utmost to make of none effect the word of God, truth must go forth as a lamp that burneth. The Lord has singled us out and made us subjects of His marvellous mercy. Shall we be charmed with the pratings of the apostate? Shall we choose to take our stand with Satan and his host? Shall we join with the transgressors of God’s law? Rather let it be our prayer: “Lord, put enmity between me and the serpent.” If we are not at enmity with his works of darkness, his powerful folds encircle us, and his sting is ready at any moment to be driven to our hearts. We should count him a deadly foe. We should oppose him in the name of Christ. Our work is still onward. Let all who name the name of Christ clothe themselves with the armour of righteousness. The time has come when we must know for

ourselves why we believe as we do. Let us lay up for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life.' *Maranatha*, page 127.

'The mark of the beast'

9. In what way will Satan mark those who are his? Revelation 13:16.

NOTE: 'When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honour popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome, and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshipping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honour in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome, "the mark of the beast." And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast." . . . No one has yet received the mark of the beast. The testing time has not yet come. There are true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion. None are condemned until they have had the light and have seen the obligation of the fourth commandment. But when the decree shall go forth enforcing the counterfeit sabbath, and the loud cry of the third angel shall warn men against the worship of the beast and his image, the line will be clearly drawn between the false and the true. Then those who still continue in transgression will receive the mark of the beast.' *Evangelism*, page 233.

10. In what ways with the receiving of this mark be enforced? Revelation 13:17, 15.

NOTE: 'In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. See Revelation 13:11-17. But to the obedient is given the promise, "He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isaiah 33:16. By this promise the children of God will live. When the earth shall be wasted with famine, they shall be fed. "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied." Psalm 37:19.' *Desire of Ages*, page 121.

11. What awaits those who receive the mark of the beast? Revelation 14:9-11.

NOTE: 'The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel's message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God's judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them. Prophecy declares that the first angel would make his announcement to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The warning of the third angel, which forms a part of the same threefold message, is to be no less widespread. It is represented in the prophecy as being proclaimed with a loud voice, by an angel flying in the midst of heaven; and it will command the attention of the world. In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond" (Revelation 13:16), to receive "the mark of the beast," yet the people of God will not receive it. The prophet of Patmos beholds "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God" and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Revelation 15:2, 3.' *Great Controversy*, pages 449-450.

'I will receive you'

12. In what ways is the character of this faithful remnant described? Revelation 14:5. Compare Zephaniah 3:12-13, Revelation 14:12.

NOTE: 'The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out, the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ. The remnant that purify their souls by obeying the truth gather strength from the trying process, exhibiting the beauty of holiness amid the surrounding apostasy. All these, He says, "I have graven . . . upon the palms of my hands" [Isaiah 49:16]. They are held in everlasting, imperishable remembrance. We want faith now, living faith.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 12, page 324.

'It is a solemn statement that I make to the church, that not one in twenty whose names are registered upon the church books are prepared to close their earthly history, and would be as verily without God and without hope in the world as the common sinner. They are professedly serving God, but they are more earnestly serving mammon. This half-and-half work is a constant denying of Christ, rather than a confessing of Christ. So many have brought into the church their own unsubdued spirit, unrefined; their spiritual taste is perverted by their own immoral, debasing corruptions, symbolising the world in spirit, in heart, in purpose, confirming themselves in lustful practices, and are full of deception through and through in their professed Christian life. Living as sinners, claiming to be Christians! Those who claim to be Christians and will confess Christ should come out from among them and touch not the unclean thing, and be separate.' *Christian Service*, page 41.

13. What awaits those who refuse to allow themselves to be influenced by the evil surrounding them? 2 Corinthians 6:17-18. Consider Revelation 3:21, Revelation 15:2-4.

NOTE: 'Heaven is worth everything to us. We must not run any risk in this matter. We must take no venture here. We must know that our steps are ordered by the Lord. May God help us in the great work of overcoming. He has crowns for those that overcome. He has white robes for the righteous. He has an eternal world of glory for those who seek for glory, honour, and immortality. Everyone who enters the City of God will enter it as a conqueror. He will not enter it as a condemned criminal, but as a son of God. And the welcome given to everyone who enters there will be, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34.' *Child Guidance*, page 567.

Lesson 10: August 29-September 4
'O LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' 1 Timothy 4:8.

STUDY HELP: *Selected Messages, book 1*, pages 120-128.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: 2 Peter 1:2-8.

LESSON AIM: To study our need for a revival of true godliness, individually and as a church.

Introduction

'God calls for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation. Unless this takes place, those who are lukewarm will continue to grow more abhorrent to the Lord, until He will refuse to acknowledge them as His children. A revival and a reformation must take place, under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganisation, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.' *Selected Messages, book 1*, page 128.

'Wilt Thou not revive us again?'

1. How does Christ picture the spiritual state of His Church in the last days? Revelation 3:15-17.

NOTE: 'There seemed to be a paralysis upon the cause of present truth. The work of God seemed stayed. Ministers and people are unprepared for the time in which they live, and nearly all who profess to believe present truth are unprepared to understand the work of preparation for this time. In their present state of worldly ambition, with their lack of consecration to God, their devotion to self, they are wholly unfitted to receive the latter rain and, having done all, to stand against the wrath of Satan, who by his inventions would cause them to make shipwreck of faith, fastening upon them some pleasing self-deception. They think they are all right when they are all wrong.' *Testimonies, volume 1*, page 466.

2. What prayer should be offered by God's people in these last days? Psalm 85:6.

NOTE: 'A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfil the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer.' *Last Day Events*, page 189.

'To revive the heart of the contrite ones'

3. How does God describe His attitude towards those who are humble and contrite? Isaiah 57:15.

NOTE: 'In the vision that came to Isaiah in the temple court, he was given a clear view of the character of the God of Israel. "The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy," had appeared before him in great majesty; yet the prophet was made to understand the compassionate nature of his Lord. In beholding his God, the prophet had not only been given a view of his own unworthiness; there had come to his humbled heart the assurance of forgiveness, full and free; and he had arisen a changed man. He had seen his Lord. He had caught a glimpse of the loveliness of the divine character. He could testify of the transformation wrought through beholding Infinite Love. . . The heart of Infinite Love yearns after those who feel powerless to free themselves from the snares of Satan; and He graciously offers to strengthen them to live for Him. "Fear thou not," He bids them; "for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.'" *Conflict & Courage*, page 235.

4. What assurance are we given if we are truly contrite? Psalm 34:18.

NOTE: 'God does not leave His erring children who are weak in faith, and who make mistakes. The Lord hearkens and hears their prayer and their testimony. Those who look unto Jesus day by day and hour by hour, who watch unto prayer, are drawing nigh to Jesus. Angels with wings outspread wait to bear their contrite prayers to God, and to register them in the books of heaven.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 80.

'Come, and let us return unto the LORD'

5. What remedy does Hosea propose for those who recognise their spiritual need? Hosea 6:1-2.

NOTE: 'Our faith is too weak; it does not reach out, and take hold of the promises of God in times of darkness. We need more sympathy and love. There is too much Pharisaism among us. We must cultivate love. We must talk of Jesus and His love, and our hearts will be softened, and subdued under divine influences. There is too much of the spirit that feels, "I am holier than thou." Many are like the Pharisee that stood praying in the temple, and said, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are." The publican who smote upon his breast, and would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner," stood higher before God than did the self-righteous Pharisee. We should seek to understand our own need. We must have the righteousness of Christ to cover us. If we have left the snow of Lebanon, and forsaken the living streams, let us return, and drink at the fountain of life.' *Review & Herald*, July 2, 1889.

6. What promise is given to those who are willing to return to the Lord? Hosea 6:3.

NOTE: 'Let us have an eye single to the glory of God. Let us not allow anything to interpose between us and Him. "If we follow on to know the Lord," we shall know that "His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." If we are partakers of the divine nature, we shall reflect in life and character the image of our divine Lord. We cannot be indolent in seeking this perfection of character. We cannot yield passively to our surroundings, and think that others will do the work for us. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." We must be workers together with God. Life must become to us a humble, earnest working out of salvation with fear and trembling; and then faith, hope, and love will abide in our hearts, giving us an earnest of the reward that awaits the overcomer.' *Lift Him Up*, page 333.

'I am with you, saith the LORD'

7. What picture are we given in the Old Testament of a revival among God's people? Haggai 1:2-7, 12. Note from verses 1 & 15 how long it took for this revival to take place.

NOTE: 'There is need today of such a revival of true heart-religion as was experienced by ancient Israel. We need, like them, to bring forth fruit meet for repentance, to put away our sins, cleansing the defiled temple of the heart that Jesus may reign within. There is need of prayer, earnest, prevailing prayer. Our Saviour has left precious promises for the truly penitent petitioner. Such shall not seek His face in vain. He has also by His own example taught us the necessity of prayer. Himself the Majesty of Heaven, He often spent all night in communion with His Father. If the world's Redeemer was not too pure, too wise, or too holy to seek help from God, surely weak, erring mortals have every need of that divine assistance. With penitence and faith, every true Christian will often seek "the throne of grace that he may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'" *Signs of the Times*, January 26, 1882.

8. What picture of revival are we shown in the New Testament? Acts 2:1. Compare Mark 9:34. Consider the length of time between these two scenes.

NOTE: 'Candidly and seriously we are to consider the question, Have we humbled ourselves before God that the Holy Spirit may work through us with transforming power? As children of God, it is our privilege to be worked by His Spirit. When self is crucified, the Holy Spirit takes the broken-hearted ones, and makes them vessels unto honour. They are in His hands as clay in the hands of the potter. Jesus Christ will make such men and women superior in mental, physical, and moral power. The graces of the Spirit will give solidity to the character. They will exert an influence for good because Christ is abiding in the soul. Unless this converting power shall go through our churches, unless the revival of the Spirit of God shall come, all their profession will never make the members of the church Christians. There are sinners in Zion who need to repent of sins that have been cherished as precious treasures. Until these sins are seen, and thrust from the soul, until every faulty, unlovely trait of character is transformed by the Spirit's influence, God cannot manifest Himself in power. There is more hope for the open sinner than for the professedly righteous who are not pure, holy, and undefiled.' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 1, page 366.

'Exercise thyself rather unto godliness'

9. How does Peter describe the process of Christian growth that should take place in the genuine follower of Christ? 2 Peter 1:3-7. Consider Matthew 7:16-17.

NOTE: 'God expects those who bear the name of Christ to represent Him in thought, word, and deed. Their thoughts are to be pure and their words and deeds noble and uplifting, drawing those around them nearer to the Saviour. In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in this world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last message of mercy for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. What manner of persons, then, ought they to be? Our lives should show steady spiritual growth. But I have seen that which makes me tremble, men and women dwarfed in character, possessing the Word of God, which tells them what they must do in order to be saved, yet

unsanctified and unholy. There needs to be a deeper work of grace in the hearts of God's people. Less of self, and more of Christ, must be seen. Tests, close and sharp, are coming to all. The religion of the Bible must be interwoven with all that we do and say. Every business transaction must be fragrant with the presence of God. My brother, my sister, I urge you to prepare for the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Day by day cast the love of the world out of your hearts. Understand by experience what it means to have fellowship with Christ. Prepare for the judgment, that when Christ shall come, to be admired in all them that believe, you may be among those who will meet Him in peace. In that day the redeemed will shine forth in the glory of the Father and the Son. The angels, touching their golden harps, will welcome the King and His trophies of victory, those who have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. A song of triumph will peal forth, filling all heaven. Christ has conquered. He enters the heavenly courts, accompanied by His redeemed ones, the witnesses that His mission of suffering and sacrifice has not been in vain.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 332.

10. Against what kind of religion have God's people been warned? 2 Timothy 3:5.

NOTE: 'Oh, what a solemn moment! The angels of God standing with scales, weighing the thoughts of His professed children, those who claim to be dead to the world and alive to God. The scale filled with thoughts of earth, vanity, and pride quickly went down, notwithstanding weight after weight rolled from the scale. The one with the thoughts and interest tending to heaven went quickly up as the other went down, and oh, how light it was! I can relate this as I saw it; but never can I give the solemn and vivid impression stamped upon my mind, as I saw the angel with the scales weighing the thoughts and interest of the people of God. Said the angel: "Can such enter heaven? No, no, never. Tell them the hope they now possess is vain, and unless they speedily repent, and obtain salvation, they must perish." A form of godliness will not save any. All must have a deep and living experience. This alone will save them in the time of trouble. Then their work will be tried of what sort it is; and if it is gold, silver, and precious stones, they will be hid as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion. But if their work is wood, hay, and stubble, nothing can shield them from the fierceness of Jehovah's wrath. I saw that many measure themselves among themselves, and compare their lives with the lives of others. This should not be. No one but Christ is given us as an example. He is our true Pattern, and each should strive to excel in imitating Him. We are co-workers with Christ, or co-workers with the enemy. We either gather with Christ or scatter abroad. We are decided, wholehearted Christians, or none at all. Says Christ: "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth.'" *Counsels for the Church*, pages 41-42.

'What manner of persons ought ye to be?'

11. What warning are we given concerning those who remain in a poor spiritual state and do not respond to Christ's call for revival? Revelation 3:16.

NOTE: 'Even more than God abhors infidelity, He abhors indifference in religious matters, because religious pretension without genuine religion is a continual stumbling block to sinners. The more cold and formal men are in the religious life, the more they are filled with egotism, and egotism always works against Christ. You may have much knowledge, but unless you are the possessor of true, pure religion, your knowledge is worthless to Christ.' *Lift Him Up*, page 229.

12. In view of the nearness of Christ's coming, what sort of person does Peter admonish us to be? 2 Peter 3:11.

NOTE: 'Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth, there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His Word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time, to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming. The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavour to prevent it, by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power, he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Wherever men neglect the testimony of the Bible, turning away from those plain, soul-testing truths which require self-denial and renunciation of the world, there we may be sure that God's blessing is not bestowed.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 326.

Lesson 11: September 5-11
'I will restore health unto thee'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.'
3 John v.2.

STUDY HELP: *Counsels for the Church*, page 214.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Psalm 103:1-5.

LESSON AIM: To study some of the guidance God has given because of His concern for our health.

Introduction

'The health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. Men and women cannot violate natural law by indulging depraved appetites and lustful passions, without violating the law of God. Therefore He has permitted the light of health reform to shine upon us, that we may realise the sinfulness of breaking the laws which He has established in our very being.' *Maranatha*, page 119.

'The LORD . . . who healeth all thy diseases'

1. How are we shown God's desire for man to be free from disease? Psalm 103:1-3.

NOTE: God 'designs that the subject [of health reform] shall be agitated, and the public mind deeply stirred to investigate it; for it is impossible for men and women, while under the power of sinful, health-destroying, brain-enervating habits, to appreciate sacred truth. Those who are willing to inform themselves concerning the effect which sinful indulgence has upon the health, and who begin the work of reform, even from selfish motives, may in so doing place themselves where the truth of God can reach their hearts. And, on the other hand, those who have been reached by the presentation of Scripture truth are in a position where the conscience may be aroused upon the subject of health. They see and feel the necessity of breaking away from the tyrannising habits and appetites which have ruled them so long. There are many who would receive the truths of God's word, their judgment having been convinced by the clearest evidence; but the carnal desires, clamouring for gratification, control the intellect, and they reject truth because it conflicts with their lustful desires. The minds of many take so low a level that God cannot work either for them or with them. The current of their thoughts must be changed, their moral sensibilities must be aroused, before they can feel the claims of God.' *Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene*, page 9.

2. Upon what condition will the Lord keep us free from disease? Exodus 15:26.

NOTE: 'Our bodies are Christ's purchased possession, and we are not at liberty to do with them as we please. All who understand the laws of health should realise their obligation to obey these laws, which God has established in their being. Obedience to the laws of health is to be made a matter of personal duty. We ourselves must suffer the results of violated law. We must individually answer to God for our habits and practices. Therefore the question with us is not "What is the world's practice?" but "How shall I as an individual treat the habitation that God has given me?"' *Child Guidance*, page 367.

'Healing all that were oppressed'

3. How did Jesus reveal God's desire for the healing and health of mankind? Matthew 8:2-3, 5-7, Acts 10:38.

NOTE: 'Christ feels the woes of every sufferer. When evil spirits rend a human frame, Christ feels the curse. When fever is burning up the life current, He feels the agony. And He is just as willing to heal the sick now as when He was personally on earth. Christ's servants are His representatives, the channels for His working. He desires through them to exercise His healing power.' *Desire of Ages*, page 823.

4. What does God promise to those who are willing to work as Jesus did? Isaiah 58:8.

NOTE: 'Those who, so far as it is possible, engage in the work of doing good to others, by giving practical demonstration of their interest in them, are not only relieving the ills of life in helping them to bear burdens, but are at the same time contributing largely to their own health of soul and body. Doing good is a work that benefits both giver and receiver. If you forget self in your interest for others, you gain a victory over your own infirmities. The pleasure of doing good animates the mind, and vibrates through the whole body. If thou clothe the naked, and "bring the poor that are cast out to thy house," and "deal thy bread to the hungry," "then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily."' *Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene*, page 102

'Behold I have given you . . .'

5. What are we told about man's original diet when he was created? Genesis 1:29.

NOTE: 'God is trying to lead us back, step by step, to His original design, that man should subsist upon the natural products of the earth. Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view and endeavour to work steadily toward it.' *Last Day Events*, page 81.

6. What modification did God make to this diet after man sinned? Genesis 3:18, last part.

NOTE: 'In order to know what are the best foods, we must study God's original plan for man's diet. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food. "Behold," He said, "I have given you every herb yielding seed, . . . and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food." Upon leaving Eden to gain his livelihood by tilling the earth under the curse of sin, man received permission to eat also "the herb of the field." Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigour of intellect, that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet.' *Counsels on Diet & Foods*, page 81.

'To make a difference between the unclean and the clean'

7. What provision for man's diet did God make in the altered situation after the Flood? Genesis 9:3-4.

NOTE: 'God gave our first parents the food He designed that the race should eat. It was contrary to His plan to have the life of any creature taken. There was to be no death in Eden. The fruit of the trees in the garden was the food man's wants required. God gave man no permission to eat animal food until after the Flood. Everything had been destroyed upon which man could subsist, and therefore, the Lord in their necessity gave Noah permission to eat of the clean animals which he had taken with him into the ark. But animal food was not the most healthy article of food for man.' *Testimony Studies on Diet and Foods*, page 125.

8. How had God shown Noah that not all creatures are fit to eat? Genesis 7:2. Compare Leviticus 11:1-23.

9. In view of the claim that the distinction between 'clean' and 'unclean' was a mere matter of ritual (see *Good News Bible: Genesis 7:8*), how are we shown that this was really concerned with man's diet? Leviticus 11:46-47.

NOTE: Notice that, even before the Flood began, God showed Noah and his family which creatures were clean and which unclean. This distinction would be important when, after the Flood, God granted permission for Noah to eat the flesh of animals, showing him which were safer to eat.

'The distinction between clean and unclean was made in all matters of diet: "I am the Lord thy God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing, . . . which I have separated from you as unclean." Leviticus 20:24, 25. Many articles of food eaten freely by the heathen about them were forbidden to the Israelites. It was no arbitrary distinction that was made. The things prohibited were unwholesome. And the fact that they were pronounced unclean taught the lesson that the use of injurious foods is defiling. That which corrupts the body tends to corrupt the soul. It unfits the user for communion with God, unfits him for high and holy service.' *Ministry of Healing*, page 280.

10. What other thing were God's people warned not to indulge in? Proverbs 20:1, Proverbs 23:29-35, Proverbs 31:4.

NOTE: 'Intoxication is just as really produced by wine, beer, and cider as by stronger drinks. The use of these drinks awakens the taste for those that are stronger, and thus the liquor habit is established. Moderate drinking is the school in which men are educated for the drunkard's career. Yet so insidious is the work of these milder stimulants that the highway to drunkenness is entered before the victim suspects his danger. Some who are never considered really drunk are always under the influence of mild intoxicants. They are feverish, unstable in mind, unbalanced. Imagining themselves secure, they go on and on, until every barrier is broken down, every principle sacrificed. The strongest resolutions are undermined, the highest considerations are not sufficient to keep the debased appetite under the control of reason. The Bible nowhere sanctions the use of intoxicating wine. The wine that Christ made from water at the marriage feast of Cana was the pure juice of the grape. This is the "new wine . . . found in the cluster," of which the Scripture says, "Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it." Isaiah 65:8. It was Christ who, in the Old Testament, gave the warning to Israel, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 20:1. He Himself provided no such beverage. Satan tempts men to indulgence that will becloud reason and benumb the spiritual perceptions, but Christ teaches us to bring the lower nature into subjection. He never places before men that which would be a temptation.' *Ministry of Healing*, pages 332-333.

'Man did eat angels' food'

11. What provision did God make for Israel when they were in the wilderness? Exodus 16:4. Compare Exodus 16:31.

NOTE: 'In the morning there lay upon the surface of the ground "a small round thing, as small as the hoarfrost." "It was like coriander seed, white." The people called it "manna." Moses said, "This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." The people gathered the manna, and found that there was an abundant supply for all. They "ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it." Numbers 11:8. "And the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." They were directed to gather daily an omer for every person; and they were not to leave of it until the morning. Some attempted to keep a supply until the next day, but it was then found to be unfit for food. The provision for the day must be gathered in the morning; for all that remained upon the ground was melted by the sun. In the gathering of the manna it was found that some obtained more and some less than the stipulated amount; but "when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." An explanation of this scripture, as well as a practical lesson from it, is given by the apostle Paul in his second epistle to the Corinthians. He says, "I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: as it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack." 2 Corinthians 8:13-15.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 295.

12. When the people asked for meat instead, what was the result? Numbers 11:4, 18-20, 33.

NOTE: 'God gave the people that which was not for their highest good, because they persisted in desiring it; they would not be satisfied with those things that would prove a benefit to them. Their rebellious desires were gratified, but they were left to suffer the result. They feasted without restraint, and their excesses were speedily punished. "The Lord smote the people with a very great plague." Large numbers were cut down by burning fevers, while the most guilty among them were smitten as soon as they tasted the food for which they had lusted.' *Patriarchs & Prophets*, page 382.

'Temperate in all things'

13. What can we learn from those who enter athletic contests? 1 Corinthians 9:25.

NOTE: The word 'temperance' has become specialised in usage to mean abstention from alcoholic drinks. This is not, however, its correct meaning. The following note provides a correct definition of temperance.

'True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful. Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power, these are the true remedies. Whatever injures the health not only lessens physical vigour but tends to weaken the mental and moral powers. Indulgence in any unhealthful practice makes it more difficult for one to discriminate between right and wrong and hence more difficult to resist evil.' *Last Day Events*, page 81.

14. How are we shown that temperance is needful for Christian growth? 2 Peter 1:5-8. Compare Galatians 5:22-23.

NOTE: 'The world should be no criterion for us. It is fashionable to indulge the appetite in luxurious food and unnatural stimulus, thus strengthening the animal propensities, and crippling the growth and development of the moral faculties. There is no encouragement given to any of the sons or daughters of Adam that they may become victorious overcomers in the Christian warfare unless they decide to practice temperance in all things. If they do this, they will not fight as one that beateth the air.' *Counsels on Diet & Foods*, page 65.

Lesson 12: September 12-18 **'That the man of God may be perfect'**

MEMORY VERSE: 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' 2 Timothy 3:16.

STUDY HELP: *Reflecting Christ*, page 369.

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

LESSON AIM: To study the principle that the Bible, and the Bible only, is to be our basis for all teaching and practice.

Introduction

'God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority, not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord" in its support.' *Darkness before Dawn*, page 37.

'By inspiration of God'

1. What is the source of the Scriptures and why were they given? 2 Timothy 3:16.

NOTE: 'The Bible is its own expositor. One passage will prove to be a key that will unlock other passages, and in this way light will be shed upon the hidden meaning of the word. By comparing different texts treating on the same subject, viewing their bearing on every side, the true meaning of the Scriptures will be made evident. Many think that they must consult commentaries on the Scriptures in order to understand the meaning of the word of God, and we would not take the position that commentaries should not be studied; but it will take much discernment to discover the truth of God under the mass of the words of men. How little has been done by the church as a body professing to believe the Bible, to gather up the scattered jewels of God's word into one perfect chain of truth? The jewels of truth do not lie upon the surface, as many suppose. The master mind in the confederacy of evil is ever at work to keep the truth out of sight, and to bring into full view the opinions of great men. The enemy is doing all in his power to obscure heaven's light through educational processes; for he does not mean that men shall hear the voice of the Lord, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." [Isaiah 30:21.]' *Christian Education*, page 85.

2. What will the Scriptures do for those whose lives are committed to God? 2 Timothy 3:17.

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

'If they speak not according to this Word'

3. What principle have we been given to evaluate the claims of those who claim alternative sources of inspiration?

Isaiah 8:20.

NOTE: 'Some will claim that they are wholly led by the Spirit, and consequently they have not much use for the law of God or any portion of God's Word. Those who claim great light and are not sanctified through the truth are dangerous people, but they can be easily tested. "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.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 240.

'The Spirit was not given, nor can it ever be bestowed, to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. Says the apostle John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1. And Isaiah declares, "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.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 92.

4. What has been given us to provide guidance for our lives? Matthew 4:4. Compare Deuteronomy 8:3.

NOTE: 'The only thing in our world upon which we can rely is the word of God. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33. Even in this life it is not for our good to depart from the will of our Father in heaven. When we learn the power of His word, we shall not follow the suggestions of Satan in order to obtain food or to save our lives. Our only questions will be, What is God's command? and what [is] His promise? Knowing these, we shall obey the one, and trust the other.' *Desire of Ages*, page 121.

'If any man shall take away . . .'

5. What solemn warning has been given about tampering with God's Word? Revelation 22:18-19. Compare Deuteronomy 4:2.

NOTE: Those familiar with the recent versions of the Bible will be aware of the many omissions in them. Seventeen verses are omitted from most modern versions, together with portions of a further 178 verses. In addition, some passages are labelled as spurious in these versions, including the closing verses of Mark's Gospel and the opening section of John 8. Many other verses have significant words altered in meaning to lend support to alternative doctrines.

'Those who, by their human construction, shall make the Scripture to utter that which Christ has never placed upon it, weaken its force, making the voice of God in instruction and warnings to testify falsehood, to avoid the inconvenience incurred by obedience to God's requirements, have become signboards, pointing in the wrong direction, into false paths, which lead to transgression and death.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 386.

6. What did Jesus say of those who teach others to break any of God's commandments? Matthew 5:19.

NOTE: 'Thus did the Saviour declare the validity of the moral law. Those who disobey the commandments of God, and teach others to do the same by their example and doctrine, are condemned by Christ. They are the children of the wicked one, who was the first rebel against the law of God. . . Many religious teachers of today are themselves breaking the commandments of God, and teaching others to do so. In place of those holy commandments, they boldly teach the customs and traditions of men, regardless of the direct testimony of Christ that such ones should be "least in the kingdom of Heaven." Jesus declared to the multitude assembled to hear him, to the Pharisees, who sought to accuse him of lightly regarding the law, and to the people of all time, that the precepts of Jehovah were immutable and eternal.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 2*, page 219.

'A light unto my path'

7. How did the Psalmist describe the value of God's Word? Psalm 119:105.

NOTE: 'Only those who have been diligent students of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon His word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and the Bible only? Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day. He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up their way, entangle them with earthly treasures, cause them to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that their hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life and the day of trial may come upon them as a thief.' *Great Controversy*, page 625.

8. If we are to be acceptable in God's sight, what part does the Word of God play? Psalm 119:9-11.

NOTE: 'It is the duty of every one to search the Scriptures for himself. We cannot accept the assertions of men as infallible. To those who oppose and denounce our faith we say, Show us from the Bible that we are in error. God's word is to judge us at the last day, and we want to know what saith the Scripture. We are regarded with jealousy and bitterness because we will not accept as evidence the assertions of men and the testimony of the Fathers; but we cannot purchase peace and unity by sacrificing the truth. The conflict may be long and painful, but at any cost we must hold fast the word of God. "The Bible, and the Bible only," must be our watchword.' *Historical Sketches*, page 197.

'In vain do they worship Me'

9. What did Jesus say of those who substitute man-made traditions for obedience to God's commandments? Matthew 15:9.

NOTE: 'There is today the same disposition to substitute the theories and traditions of men for the word of God as in the days of Christ, of Paul or of Luther. Ministers advance doctrines which have no foundation in the Scriptures of truth, and in place of Bible proof, they present their own assertions as authority. The people accept the minister's interpretation of the word, without earnest prayer that they may know what is truth. There is no safety in depending upon human wisdom and judgment. Said our Saviour, "Search the Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.'" *Signs of the Times*, June 21, 1883.

'Preach the Word. You may have inventive minds. You may be expert, as were the Jewish teachers, in getting up new theories; but Christ said of them, "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9. They presented to the people traditions, suppositions, and fables of all kinds. The forms and ceremonies they enjoined made it simply impossible for the people to know whether they were keeping the Word of God or following the traditions of men. Satan is well pleased when he can thus confuse the mind. Let not ministers preach their own suppositions. Let them search the Scriptures earnestly, with a solemn realisation that if they teach for doctrine the things that are not contained in God's Word, they will be as those represented in the last chapter of Revelation. [See Question 5.]' *Evangelism*, page 214.

10. How did Paul warn against those who claim to interpret God's Word without a correct understanding? 1 Timothy 1:6-7.

NOTE: 'Your views have found favour with some, but it is because these persons have not discernment to see the true bearing of the arguments you present. They have had but a limited experience in the work of God for this time, and they do not see where your views would lead them. They are ready to assent to your statements; they see nothing in them but that which is correct. But they are misled because you have woven together much Scripture in constructing your theory; your arguments appear conclusive to them. Not so, however, with those who have an experimental knowledge of the truth that applies in the last period of this earth's history. While they see that you hold some precious truth, they see also that you have misapplied Scripture, placing it in a framework of error, where it does not belong, and making it give force to that which is not present truth. The light God has given me is that the Scriptures you have woven together you yourself do not fully understand. I have had to speak plainly in regard to those who were then leading away from right paths. With pen and voice I have borne the message, "Go not ye after them." The hardest task I ever had to do in this line was in dealing with one who, I knew, wanted to follow the Lord. For some time he had thought he was obtaining new light. He was very ill, and must soon die. Those to whom he presented his views listened to him eagerly, and some thought him inspired. He had a chart made and reasoned from the Scriptures to show that the Lord would come at a certain date, in 1894 I think. To many his reasoning seemed to be without a flaw. They told of his powerful exhortations in his sickroom. Most wonderful views passed before him. But what was the source of his inspiration? It was the morphine given him to relieve his pain. No one has a true message fixing the time when Christ is to come or not to come. Be assured that God gives no one authority to say that Christ delays His coming five years, ten years, or twenty years. "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." All who are labourers together with God will contend most earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. They will not be turned from the present message, which is already lightening the earth with its glory. Nothing is worth contending for but the glory of God. The only rock that will stand is the Rock of Ages. The truth as it is in Jesus is the refuge in these days of error.' *Christ Triumphant*, page 343.

'Ye will not come to Me'

11. How did Jesus warn against a wrong method of Bible study? John 5:39-40.

NOTE: 'Had the Jews searched God's word as they should, they would have seen that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. But they searched with proud, selfish ambition as a guide, and they found a Messiah of their own imagination. Therefore when the Saviour came, a humble man, bringing to naught by His teaching long-established theories and traditions, presenting truth entirely opposite to their practices, they said: Who is this invader that dares to set aside our authority? Christ did not come as they had expected; therefore they refused to receive Him, and called Him a deceiver and an impostor. Instead of listening to Him that they might learn the truth, they listened with evil intent, that they might find something over which to cavil. And when once they had set their feet in the path of the great leader in rebellion, it was an easy matter for Satan to strengthen them in opposition.' *Review & Herald*, March 26, 1901.

12. What will the Scriptures achieve for the one willing to study them as God's Word to him? 2 Timothy 3:15.

NOTE: 'There is nothing more calculated to energise the mind and strengthen the intellect than the study of the Word of God. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigour to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God's Word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose that are rarely seen in these times. The search for truth will reward the seeker at every turn, and each discovery will open up richer fields for his investigation. But that which above all other considerations should lead us to prize the Bible is that in it is revealed to men the will of God. Here we learn the object of our creation and the means by which that object may be attained. We learn how to improve wisely the present life and how to secure the future life. No other book can satisfy the questionings of the mind or the cravings of the heart. By obtaining a knowledge of God's Word and giving heed thereto, men may rise from the lowest depths of degradation to become the sons of God, the associates of sinless angels. In searching the Scriptures, in feeding upon the words of life, O consider it is the voice of God to the soul. We may be confused sometimes over the voice of our friends; but in the Bible we have the counsel of God upon all important subjects which concern our eternal interests, and in

temporal matters we may learn a great deal. Its teaching will be always suited to our peculiar circumstances and calculated to prepare us to endure trial and fit us for our God-given work.' *A Call to Stand Apart*, page 69.

Lesson 13: September 19-25 **'All ye are brethren'**

MEMORY VERSE: Christ 'from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.' Ephesians 4:16.

STUDY HELP: *Christian Service*, pages 72-75.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 12:4-31.

LESSON AIM: To study God's principles for the organisation of His work.

Introduction

'Evil does not result because of organisation, but because of making organisation everything, and vital godliness of little moment. When form and machinery take the pre-eminence, and a laborious task is made of carrying on the work that should be done with simplicity, evil will result, and little will be accomplished in proportion to the effort put forth. The object of organisation is just the reverse of this; and should we disorganise, it would be like tearing down that which we have built up.' *Christian Education*, page 134.

'The thing that thou doest is not good'

1. What danger was brought home to Moses in his leadership of the people of Israel? Exodus 18:13-18.

NOTE: 'The heavy responsibilities should not rest upon one man in any branch of the work. Two or three should be fitted to share the burden, so that if one should be called to another post of duty, another may come in to supply his place. Provision has not been made half as extensively as it should have been, against any and every emergency.' *Review & Herald*, Oct. 12, 1886.

'The plans upon which God wishes us to work have been laid down. Never should the mind of one man, or the minds of a few men, be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and say what plans shall be followed. The burden of the work in this broad field should not rest upon two or three men.' *General Conference Bulletin*, April 10, 1903.

'No greater dishonour can be shown to God than for one man to bring another man's talents under his absolute control. The evil is not obviated by the fact that the profits of the transaction are to be devoted to the cause of God. In such arrangements the man who allows his mind to be ruled by the mind of another is thus separated from God and exposed to temptation. In shifting the responsibility of his stewardship upon other men, and depending on their wisdom, he is placing man where God should be. Those who are seeking to bring about this shifting of responsibility are blinded as to the result of their action, but God has plainly set it before us. He says: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Jeremiah 17:5.' *Testimonies*, volume 7, page 177.

2. What solution did Jethro propose to solve Moses' problem? Exodus 18:21-22.

NOTE: 'When Moses was much burdened the Lord raised him up in Jethro an advisor and helper. The advice was taken and the burdens that had come upon him were divided with others and a two-fold object was gained; Moses was relieved and he had a better chance for his life, and men were learning to bear responsibilities to qualify them to do work in positions of trust so that Israel should not learn to look to one man and trust in one man and think that no one could do any thing for them unless it came before that one man. Now it is hard I know to let go some responsibilities and give others an opportunity to get hold with all the advantages and counsel of your knowledge to help them. Unless this is done they will ere long have to carry an unwieldy load without the instruction and counsel which now it is their privilege to have.' *Christian Leadership*, page 55.

'Satan is very active, and with cunning plans he is seeking to deceive a leader that ought to be a faithful steward of means and of souls. Let this man cease accumulating so many burdens that the Lord has not placed upon him, burdens that will hinder him from studying the plan of God concerning him. Let him not continue to follow his own plans and load himself with many burdens that the Lord has not appointed him to bear. Hitherto, he has not heeded the warnings given him, but has taken upon himself burden after burden. This has necessitated great expenditure of means, and has drawn heavily upon his fund of physical and mental and moral power. The one who has become so heavily burdened should study to place some of these burdens upon others, that they may help him carry the load of responsibility which causes him to become impatient and fretful. Satan and his angels now look on the pitiful spectacle, and are highly pleased. The voice of Jesus is heard, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:26).' *Manuscript Releases*, volume 9, page 172.

'It shall not be so among you'

3. When appointed to a position of responsibility in the Church, what attitude of mind should always be avoided? Matthew 20:25-26.

NOTE: 'The lessons given to the disciples of Christ are full of significance, and present most profitable instruction for us who believe. We are not to act after the manner, precept, or example of men who are in authority in earthly positions, but to minister to others, to be servants to all, "even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." The kingdom of God is established on different principles than are the kingdoms of this world. There is to be no rank among the servants of Christ. Christ says, "All ye are brethren." The rich, the poor, the learned, the unlearned, the bond, and the free are equally God's heritage, and he who is most exalted in the sight of God is he who has most genuine humility, the deepest sense of his unworthiness, the greatest realisation of his dependence upon God. Those who truly love God truly love their fellow-men. They constantly seek to do good to all those who are connected with them. They are labourers together with God.' *Signs of the Times*, July 16, 1896.

4. What should be the spirit of those who take positions of responsibility in Christ's Church? Matthew 20:27-28.

NOTE: 'He, their Master, had set them an example of unselfish care for others. He was Lord of Heaven, and angels obeyed His word; yet He condescended to take upon Himself the weaknesses and infirmities of human nature, to live man's example and to die His sacrifice. He did not, while upon earth, choose for Himself wealth and honour and pleasant associations; but His life was spent among humble peasants in ministering to the wants of the needy and the afflicted. He did not shrink from contact with the most degraded and sinful; He preached the good news of pardon and peace to all who would accept it on Heaven's gracious and liberal terms. And in their ministry the disciples were to follow His example.' *Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1885.

'All the members . . . being many are one body'

5. What symbol did Paul use to demonstrate the way in which the people of God are to be organised? Ephesians 4:15-16.

NOTE: 'Unity in diversity is God's plan. Among the followers of Christ there is to be the blending of diverse elements, one adapted to the other, and each to do its special work for God. Every individual has his place in the filling up of one great plan bearing the stamp of Christ's image. One is fitted to do a certain work, another has a different work for which he is adapted, another has a still different line; but each is to be the complement of the others. The Spirit of God, working in and through the diverse elements, will produce harmony of action. There is to be only one master Spirit, the Spirit of Him who is infinite in wisdom, and in whom all the diverse elements meet in beautiful, matchless unity.' *Our High Calling*, page 169.

6. How did Paul explain the foolishness of a member regarding himself as more important than other members? 1 Corinthians 12:15-17, 21-22.

NOTE: 'Contention and strife as to who shall be the greatest have robbed the Lord's working force of grace and power. God calls for a decided change; it is His purpose that we shall be one in Christ. It is no time now for us to draw apart. Among God's people love and unity are to prevail. Each worker, while preserving his individuality, is to labour in harmony with every other worker. Each is to be united with his fellow workers in the bonds of Christian love, and all are to be united with the Lord. The aim of every one is to be the advancement of the cause of truth. Each is to seek earnestly for the impartation of the Holy Spirit. Each is to look to Jesus, believing that he will receive the blessings he must have in order to be a strength to the work.' *Review & Herald*, April 28, 1904.

'Christ is the head of the church'

7. Who is the head of the Church? Ephesians 4:15, Colossians 1:18. (Read from verse 13 to see who is referred to.)

NOTE: 'Let it be seen that Christ, not the minister, is the head of the church. The members of the body of Christ have a part to act, and they will not be accounted faithful unless they do act their part. Let a divine work be wrought in every soul, until Christ shall behold His image reflected in His followers.' *Signs of the Times*, January 27, 1890.

'God has never given a hint in His word that He has appointed any man to be the head of the church. The doctrine of papal supremacy is directly opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures. The pope can have no power over Christ's church except by usurpation.' *Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4*, page 53.

8. Since Christ is the head of the Church, to whom are those with positions in the Church responsible? Ephesians 4:11-12.

NOTE: 'Since His ascension Christ has carried forward His work on the earth by chosen ambassadors, through whom He speaks to the children of men and ministers to their needs. The great Head of the church superintends His work through the instrumentality of men ordained by God to act as His representatives. The position of those who have been called of God to labour in word and doctrine for the upbuilding of His church is one of grave responsibility. In Christ's stead they are to beseech men and women to be reconciled to God, and they can fulfil their mission only as they receive wisdom and power from above.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 360.

'For the perfecting of the saints'

9. How has Christ equipped His Church? 1 Corinthians 12:28-30, Ephesians 4:11.

NOTE: 'The promise of the Spirit is not appreciated as it should be. Its fulfilment is not realised as it might be. It is the absence of the Spirit that makes the gospel ministry so powerless. Learning, talents, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment,

may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner be won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them the channel for the outworking of the highest influence in the universe.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 328.

10. What are the reasons for the various spiritual gifts placed in the Church? Ephesians 4:12-15.

NOTE: 'All these gifts are to be in exercise. Every faithful worker will minister for the perfecting of the saints. There is something for everyone to do. Every soul that believes the truth is to stand in his lot and place, saying: "Here am I; send me." Give each one something to do for others. Help all to see that as receivers of the grace of Christ they are under obligation to work for Him. And let all be taught how to work. Especially should those who are newly come to the faith be educated to become labourers together with God. If set to work, the despondent will soon forget their despondency; the weak will become strong, the ignorant intelligent, and all will be prepared to present the truth as it is in Jesus. They will find an unfailing helper in Him who has promised to save all that come unto Him. The influence of the Holy Spirit is needed that the work may be properly balanced and that it may move forward solidly in every line.' *My Life Today*, page 38.

'That the world may believe'

11. What is the purpose for which Christ raised up His Church? John 17:21.

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.

12. What is Christ's desire for His Church? Ephesians 4:13.

NOTE: 'Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 69. 'Character is power. The silent witness of a true, unselfish, godly life carries an almost irresistible influence. By revealing in our own life the character of Christ we co-operate with Him in the work of saving souls. It is only by revealing in our life His character that we can co-operate with Him. And the wider the sphere of our influence, the more good we may do. When those who profess to serve God follow Christ's example, practising the principles of the law in their daily life; when every act bears witness that they love God supremely and their neighbour as themselves, then will the church have power to move the world.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 340.